กำลังมุ่งสู่ทางที่ผิดหรือ? พรมแดนของนักศึกษาระดับอุดมศึกษาจากกลุ่มประเทศเหนือ
สู่กลุ่มประเทศใต้: กรณีศึกษานักศึกษาชาวยุโรปในประเทศไทย

นายคริสเตียน เอเลียส ชไนเดอร์

# GOING THE WRONG WAY? TRENDS AND MOTIVATION IN THE NORTH-SOUTH CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENT OF TERTIARY STUDENTS: THE CASE STUDY OF EUROPEAN STUDENTS IN THAILAND

Mr. Christian Elias Schneider

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts Program in European Studies
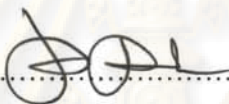(Interdisciplinary Program)
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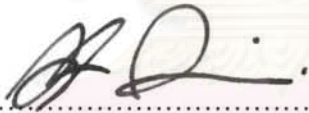Chulalongkorn University
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| Thesis Title | Going the Wrong Way? Trends and Motivations in the North-South Cross-Border Movement of Tertiary Students: The Case Study of European Students in Thailand |
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| By | Mr. Christian Elias Schneider |
| Field of Study | European Studies |
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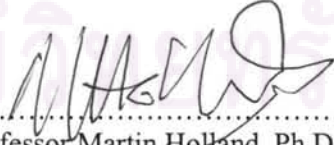
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คริสเตียนเอลิเอสชไนเดอร์:กำลังมุ่งสู่ทางที่ผิดหรือ? พรมแดนของนักศึกษาระดับอุดมศึกษาจากกลุ่มประเทศ
เหนือสู่กลุ่มประเทศใต้:กรณีศึกษานักศึกษาชาวยุโรปในประเทศไทย. (Going the Wrong Way? Trends and
Motivations in the North-South Cross-Border Movement of Tertiary Students: The Case Study of European
Students in Thailand) อ. ที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์หลัก: ผศ. สุรัตน์โหราชัยกุล,159หน้า.


การเคลื่อนย้ายถิ่นฐานข้ามพรมแดนเป็นผลลัพธ์ที่ปรากฏชัดเจนที่สุดของการทำให้อุดมศึกษามีความเป็น
นานาชาติเนื่องด้วยกระบวนการ โลกาภิวัตน์และการทำให้การอุดมศึกษามีความเป็นนานาชาติโดยสถาบันอุดมศึกษา
และรัฐชาติต่างๆการเคลื่อนย้ายถิ่นฐานข้ามพรมแดนของนักศึกษาได้เพิ่มจำนวนขึ้นอย่างมีนัยยะสำคัญภายในไม่กี่
ทศวรรษที่ผ่านมาจนถึงขณะนี้งานศึกษาส่วนใหญ่ในหัวข้อนี้มักให้ความสนใจกับประเด็นการเคลื่อนย้ายถิ่นฐานของ
นักศึกษาจากประเทศที่ด้อยพัฒนากว่า/กำลังพัฒนาไปสู่ประเทศที่พัฒนาแล้ววิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ถือว่าเป็นงานชิ้นแรกๆ
ที่ศึกษาการเคลื่อนย้ายถิ่นฐานของนักศึกษาจากประเทศที่พัฒนาแล้วไปสู่ประเทศที่กำลังพัฒนาด้วยกรณีศึกษาของ
นักศึกษาชาวยุโรปในประเทศไทย

ภายในกรอบการศึกษานี้วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ต้องการตอบคำถามหลักสองประการคือปัจจัยทั้งบวกและลบที่มี
ผลต่อการตัดสินใจของนักศึกษาชาวยุโรปว่าจะย้ายเข้ามาประเทศไทยเพื่อการศึกษาหรือไม่นั้นคืออะไรและประโยชน์
ที่ประเทศไทยจะได้รับจากการรับนักศึกษาชาวยุโรปให้เข้ามาพักอาศัยและศึกษาในประเทศคืออะไร

เพื่อที่จะตอบปัญหาเหล่านี้ผู้ศึกษาได้ทำการสำรวจข้อมูลจากนักศึกษาที่มาจากหลายประเทศในยุโรปทั้งที่
เป็นนักศึกษาแลกเปลี่ยนและนักศึกษาประจำในประเทศไทยจำนวน26คน

ผลการสำรวจแสดงให้เห็นว่าขณะที่นักศึกษาส่วนใหญ่ให้ความสำคัญกับปัจจัยทางสังคมและสิ่งแวดล้อมเช่น
รูปแบบการใช้ชีวิตและวัฒนธรรมที่แตกต่างสภาพภูมิอากาศและโอกาสในการเดินทางท่องเที่ยวหรือความรู้สึกของ
"การได้อยู่ไกลบ้าน" นักศึกษาอีกส่วนซึ่งหลายคนได้ใช้ชีวิตอยู่ในประเทศไทยก่อยการเข้าศึกษาอยู่แล้วให้ความสำคัญ
กับปัจจัยทางโอกาสในการศึกษาและสถานะทางการเงิน

ประโยชน์ที่ได้รับคือรายได้ที่เห็นเป็นรูปธรรมในทันทีจากค่าเล่าเรียนของนักศึกษาเหล่านี้และประโยชน์ที่ไม่
เห็นเป็นรูปธรรมในทันทีเช่นการแลกเปลี่ยนถ่ายโอนความรู้และทักษะปฏิสัมพันธ์ระหว่างวัฒนธรรมและกลุ่มศึกษา
ความรู้ร่วมกันซึ่งสามารถพัฒนาผ่าความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างบุคคลนอกจากนี้วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ยังแสดงให้เห็นว่า
นักศึกษาต่างชาติสามารถสร้างความผูกพันที่หยั่งรากลึกกับประเทศเจ้าภาพได้และด้วยความผูกพันนี้นักศึกษาต่างชาติ
สามารถรับบทบาทเป็น "ทูต" สำหรับประเทศเจ้าภาพซึ่งในระยะยาวจะก่อให้เกิดประโชน์ต่อประเทศเจ้าภาพในด้าน
เศรษฐกิจธุรกิจและความสัมพันธ์ระดับทางการ

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| สาขาวิชา: ยุโรปศึกษา | ลายมือชื่อนิสิต........................................................... |
| ปีการศึกษา: 2552 | ลายมือชื่ออ.ที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์หลัก........................... |

CHRISTIAN ELIAS SCHNEIDER: GOING WRONG WAY? TRENDS AND MOTIVATIONS IN THE NORTH-SOUTH CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENT OF TERTIATY STUDENTS: THE CASE STUDY OF EUROPEAN STUDENTS IN THAILAND. THESIS ADVISOR : ASST. PROF. SURAT HORACHAIKUL, 159 pp.

Cross-border movements are the most visible outcome of the internationalisation of higher education. Due to the processes of globalisation, and the internationalisation of higher education by higher education institutes and nation-states, cross-border movements by tertiary students have increased dramatically over the last decades. Up to date, most studies in this field have focused on the South-North movement of students. This pioneering study however, researches the North-South movements at the example of European students in Thailand.

Within this frame, this study aims to answer two questions: What are the push- and pull factors for European students to move to Thailand for study-purposes and what are the possible benefits for Thailand from hosting European students?

In order to answer these two questions, a detailed survey of 26 European exchange and degree students from different European countries studying in Thailand has been conducted.

The results of these surveys have shown that whereas for most students, social and environmental factors such as the different lifestyle and culture, the weather and travel or a general feeling of "getting away from home" have dominated, for other students, who often already live in Thailand, educational and financial factors are leading.

The benefits for Thailand are on the one hand the tangible immediate financial gains from the expenses study fees of the students. On the other hand however, intangible benefits such as the transfer of knowledge and skills, inter-cultural ties and clusters of knowledge can develop through people-to-people links. Additionally, it has been shown in this study that foreign students can develop a very strong bond to the host country. Through this bond, students can act as "ambassadors" for the host country, in the long run benefitting the host on an economic, business or official level.

Field of Study : European Studies    Student's Signature ..........................
Academic Year : 2009    Advisor's Signature ..........................

# Acknowledgements

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# List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| AEI | Australia Education International |
| CHE | Commission on Higher Education |
| DEP | Department of Export Promotion |
| DETYA | Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs |
| GATS | General Agreements on Trades in Services |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GMS | Greater Mekong Sub-Region |
| HEI | Higher Education Institute |
| MOE | Ministry of Education |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| SAR | Special Administrative Regions |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation |
| WTO | World Trade Organisation |
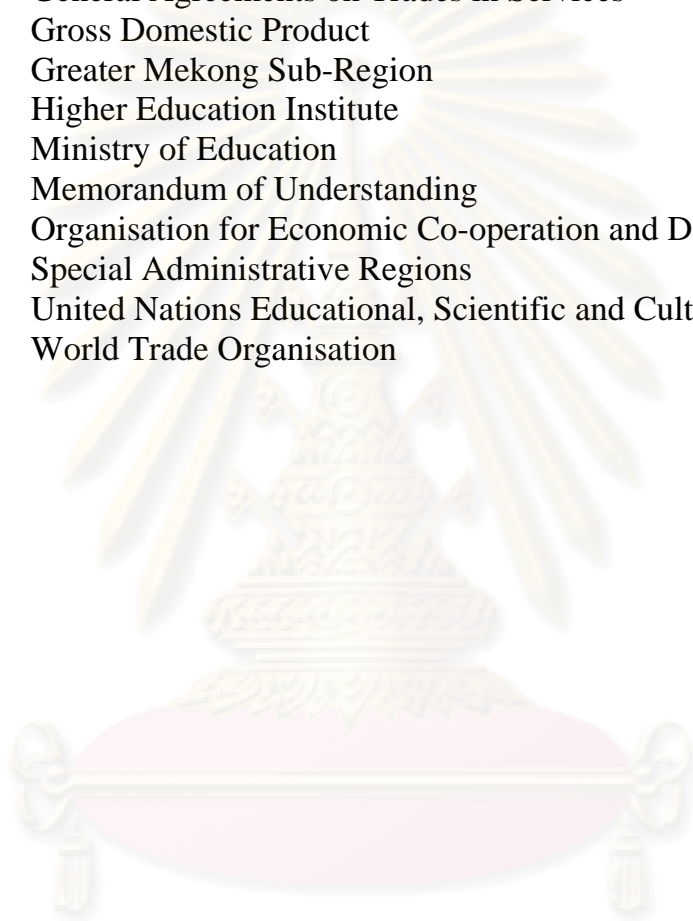
# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Background Issue

There is a long history of personal and educational connections between Thailand and Europe. In the 17th century, during the reign of King Narai, King of Siam of the Ayutthaya dynasty, connections with Europe flourished. At the court in the capital, Ayutthaya and in neighbouring Lopburi, Western diplomats and missionaries had considerable influence. Personal contacts between the King and his advisors, such as the Greek Constantine Paulkon, who became the advisor to the King, were immensely important. Diplomatic exchanges with European countries were increased as European countries active in colonial dealings in Southeast Asia tried to influence the Siamese court. After the relocation of the Siamese capital to Bangkok and the ascent of the Chakri Dynasty, personal contacts between royal Siam and Europeans intensified again under the reign of King Mongkut in the 19th century.[1] These contacts were driven by intellectual, religious, philosophical and educational exchanges between Siamese royals and civil servants, and Western officials, missionaries and teachers on the other hand. During the reign of King Mongkut, there was a gradual inflow of Western teachings in science, particularly astronomy and physics, but also in medicine, the English language and military science. Foreign trade increased rapidly and resulted in a growing community of Western governments, businessmen and missionaries.[2]

It was however during the reign of King Chulalongkorn, where educational connections between Siam and Europe were intensified the most. King Chulalongkorn, who is commonly credited with modernising, or even "Europeanising" Siam, personally had a mixed education, first following traditional patterns, but then gradually being immersed into English language, science and literature.[3] Later during his reign, Chulalongkorn decided it to be beneficial to extend the education the royals enjoyed to a wider public and to establish

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[1] Wyatt DK. **The politics of reform in Thailand: Education in the reign of King Chulalongkorn**. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1969, 30.

[2] Ibd, 31.

[3] In his early years, Chulalongkorn was taught by Anna Leonowens, the famous English travel writer, social activist and educator.

Western-style schools teaching Thai and English.[4] At the same time, Siamese students were also sent abroad for modern education, so that they could import Western ideas and knowledge. By the end of the 19th century, a considerable amount of royal students were studying abroad, mostly in Germany and the United Kingdom. The influence of the Western education on the Siamese royals did not just lie in the immediate acquisition of Western knowledge, but also in its cultural impact. Thus, Chulalongkorn started to favour Western dress and manners in the palace, and later reformed government, introduced Western-style education, culminating in the foundation of the first university, Chulalongkorn, in 1917.

In this very brief account of the beginning and intensification of connections between the Siamese Kingdom and Europe, the tradition of educational links between Europe and Thailand becomes apparent. Traditionally though, these links have been a very one-sided with Siam importing education from Europe through different means: importing methods of teaching, importing textbooks, importing teachers, sending students abroad, importing school systems and structures, etc. Interestingly, studying the history of Siamese and European education connections also reveals the importance of personal contacts, and the defining character of such personal contacts. People-to-people links, be it between teacher and student, advisor and ruler, or just between acquaintances can leave long-lasting, or even permanent impressions. This is especially the case in education, where the personal character is formed and knowledge and skills are passed on. Since Chulalongkorn's reign, decades have passed. Today, a globalised society, whereby people are more interconnected, information and trade flows more freely and at a much faster speed, is emerging. People, and also students in particular, move between countries in much higher numbers and at a higher frequency. The internationalisation of higher education has become a factor impossible to ignore for all stakeholders in higher education. Nevertheless, personal connections and ties remain important in this age of global competition. Due to the invention of new technologies, information has become abundant, rendering personal, trusted connections ever more important. Communication between personal contacts has therefore also become much easier, presenting stakeholders with an opportunity to gain an upper hand in the global competition.

Globalisation is commonly referred to as being at the beginning of many recent economic, political and societal changes. Studies and theories on globalisation are as extensive as the consequences ensuing from these changes. Since the term "globalisation" is often used to describe changes in very different fields of study, a definition of globalisation is challenging. Consequently, the academic debate centred on globalisation is extremely extensive and often controversial. Taking into account these issues, how, then, could

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[4] Wyatt, 63.

globalisation be defined? Even though significant differences in terms of the extent, the characteristics and a possible finality of globalisation exist, most definitions focus on the increasing interconnectedness in areas such as the economy, society, culture, people-to-people links, migration and also politics. Most definitions also see globalisation as a process, differ however on the question whether there is a finality to these processes and what that finality would be. Another problem in definitions of globalisation can be that they are often only fragmental, e.g. concerning only economic implications of globalisation and therefore do not suffice to describe and explain the entire phenomenon of globalisation. Nevertheless, as mentioned before, a common pattern to globalisation definitions can be found in the increased *"interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life."*[5]Even though catching the essence of globalisation, this definition is far too broad for an effective application to this thesis. Therefore, globalisation and its definition will be discussed extensively in the theory section of this thesis.

The difficulties of definition however are far from being the only challenges regarding the academic discussion of globalisation. Perhaps more importantly than the definition of globalisation, the question of the real effects of globalisation whereby the direct consequences of globalisation are assessed is a central issue. Specifically of interest for this thesis are the effects of globalisation on the development of higher education. Globalisation stands at the beginning of a paradigm change in higher education, whereby different areas of higher education, such as the management of higher education institutions, higher education policy making by governments and also the actual teaching have been internationalised. Due to this emerging trend, the internationalisation of higher education has received increasing academic attention, up to the point that it is now generally treated as a separate academic discipline.

The first question, with which this thesis will deal with, is the theoretical background of globalisation and the question of its influence on the internationalisation of higher education. This is an important first step on which the further elaboration of the thesis bases. The academic discipline of the internationalisation of higher education stands at the centre of this thesis. The theoretical arguments and analysis as well as the practical outcomes of this study will be mostly based on the discipline and literature of the internationalisation of higher education. Even though an academic debate about the precise meaning of the internationalisation of higher education is still taking place, it is generally accepted that the field of study involves an active role being taken by the different actors, which have stakes in

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5 Held D, McGrew AG, Goldblatt D, Perraton J., eds. **Global transformations: politics, economics and culture**. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999, 2.

higher education.[6] This active role, which concerns the introduction of an international, global, inter-cultural, or regional dimension into all areas of higher education, eventually constitutes the processes of internationalisation.

One of the most visible symptoms of the internationalisation of higher education is the increasing transnational mobility of students. The causes for this trend are manifold, but can be traced back to the different actors responsible for the internationalisation of higher education. *Governments* for example have contributed to increased mobility by negotiating bi- and multilateral agreements with other governments in order to ease the barriers of cross-border movement of people. More specifically in the area of higher education, governments have concluded regional agreements (especially in Europe), facilitating the transnational movement of students due to the emergence of common degree and assessment structures and standards, and the financial support of exchange students.[7]*Higher education institutes* on the other hand have contributed to increased movement due to more inter-universitary exchange agreements and the increasing inclusion of an international dimension in the curriculum. Finally, the *students* themselves often live in a much more internationalised environment and have access to a large amount of information about other countries. Due to the more internationalised environment, also created by the other actors (the nation-states, the regional organisations and the universities) and the ease of access to information, students are more likely to consider studying in another country.

The mobility of students, seen in the context of the internationalisation of higher education is the main topic around which this thesis revolves. Within this topic, the focus will be laid on the reasons, rationales and explanations why students cross borders for higher education. Commonly, within the academic field of the internationalisation of higher education, reasons, rationales and explanations are classified by listing push- and pull factors, which are the factors contributing to "pushing" the student away from his home country or "pulling" him or her to the host country. In the academic literature, a number of lists containing such push -and pull factors have been published and are reviewed in the literature review and the theory part of the thesis below. Additionally, a number of empirical studies which research a group of student's rationales for crossing borders for education have been conducted.

[6] Such actors include e.g. national governments, higher education institutions, regional organisations, the students themselves.

[7] For example the Bologna Convention in Europe: The Official Bologna Process Website 2007-2010 - **The official Bologna Process website 2007-2010 - About the Bologna Process - How it works.**[online].http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/about/how_it_works.htm (2009, 2 December).

Apart from the main topic of explaining the movement of students and in order to increase the scope and value of the thesis, the question of why the attraction of tertiary students can be important to states, will also be examined. This approach is mostly grounded in macroeconomic theories of growth and the importance of human capital therein. These theories usually research the importance and movement of highly skilled people in general. Tertiary students are usually included in definitions of "highly skilled" persons and are therefore considered part of the theories.[8] Macroeconomic theories of cross-border movement of highly skilled frequently focus on the human capital of developing countries moving to developed countries. Such movements are often associated with a "brain drain", a loss of human capital for the sending, developing country. Recently however, academics have also included possible benefits from cross-border movement of the highly educated. Since the physical cross-border movement of human capital and the flow of information have been facilitated by the effects of globalisation, benefits for the sending (developing) country can often be considerable, and perhaps even rival the disadvantages of the "lost" human resources. Benefits can appear through the physical return of human capital with higher accumulated knowledge and skills. Even if the migrant does not return, benefits for the sending country can occur through frequent visits as well as through personal contacts and networking abroad. Therefore, since the effects of the movement of human capital are not one-sided, it is considered more appropriate to talk about "brain circulation".

As described above, theories regarding the movement of human capital usually describe a movement originating in a developing country to a developed country. The movement this thesis researches however is contrary to the predominant body of research, as the focus of the thesis is laid on students from a developed and wealthy region, Europe, to a developing country, Thailand. In literature, the terms "north" and "south" are frequently used to paraphrase the developed/developing country dichotomy. Thus, the Europe-Thailand student-movements, which are being examined in this thesis, can be called "North-South" movements. Even though much smaller in absolute numbers then North-North-, South-North-, or even South-South movements, North-South movements can be important, especially for the receiving country. Importantly, the movement of highly skilled, e.g. students from a developed country to a developing country can not be explained by most prevalent theories in the field of the movement of human capital. Since the explanation of the push- and pull-factors for European students studying in Thailand can barely be found within the theoretical explanations, the thesis will therefore use additional methods in order to explain the movements. Apart from the two theoretical models and fields explained above, the main

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[8] Further discussion on a definition of the highly skilled can be found in the literature review of this thesis.

evidence will be drawn from empirical primary research. This primary research, it is hoped, will give a crucial insight into the decision-making process and the eventual decision of European students who have chosen to study in Thailand. Since the theoretical basis and the academic discussion of North-South movements in higher education is extremely weak, this primary research is not only contributing substantially to the validity of this thesis, but also offers a pioneering insight into push- and pull-factors in the North-South movement of tertiary students. Using an inductive method of investigation, it may even be possible to enhance the current theories on the motives of student movements. The information gained from this primary research is however not solely focused on the push- and pull-factors and the decision-making process. On the contrary, a large part of the primary research data concerns the actual experience of the European students in Thailand. This is important primary information, since and the European students' feelings towards the host country are significantly influenced by the experience of their stay in Thailand. Thus, Thai officials and universities could apply the data of the surveys to gain feedback, build on their strengths and improve their weaknesses. Finally, data has also been gathered to gauge the future involvement of the European students with Thailand. It is suggested that incoming exchange students are beneficial for the host country because of strong bonds between the exchange student and the host country. Such theories can be examined and the long-term benefit Thailand can reap from incoming European students can be assessed.

The structure of the thesis will broadly follow the introductory explanations made above. After the introduction, leading to the research question and hypothesis, the research objectives and the novelty and benefits of the thesis will be outlined. Finally, a detailed literature review covering the academic discussions and theories pertinent to this thesis and a section on the methodology, which will mainly focus on the primary empirical research, will complete the introductory part of the thesis. Following the introduction, the theory part will lay the theoretical foundations to eventually answer the research questions and hypothesis. In doing so, globalisation theories and definitions will form the basis of the theoretical analysis. After discussing globalisation, its influence on the internationalisation of higher education will be examined. The theories and discussions centred on this field of study will also form the core of the theoretical context of the thesis. The third theoretical field will aim to explain the reasons and consequences of cross-border movement of tertiary students. This will be grounded on the one hand on macroeconomic theories of human capital and its movement, resulting in brain drain, brain gain or brain exchange. This part will contribute to possible explanations of the importance of incoming tertiary students. Furthermore, the motivations for cross-border movement of students will be explained by using the previous macroeconomic models, but also previous studies of push- and pull-factors. Using these different approaches

guarantees a solid theoretical base on which this thesis can be built upon and the research questions can be answered conclusively and accurately. In the case of this thesis however, the theoretical explanations of the existing theories are likely to lead to an inconclusive situation, whereby the research question cannot be answered satisfyingly. This is mainly because of the topic of the thesis, the North-South movement of students, has not been researched previously. Therefore, additional explanations, as well as practical empirical evidence needs to be added to answer the research question. Firstly, this additional evidence will include a brief summary of worldwide cross-border movements of students. The aim of this part of the thesis is to offer the reader a numerical contextualisation of the movements under research (Europe to Thailand) with other cross-border movements. This short analysis will reveal that such North-South movements are highly unusual and therefore rather low in numbers compared to North-North, South-North and even South-South cross-border movements. These results can be explained by consulting the theoretical analysis of push- and pull-factor models. After having contextualised the cross-border movements of students, the situation of Thailand will be put under the spotlight. Firstly, in order to solidify the background of the thesis, the Thai higher education system will be introduced shortly and the national policies of attracting tertiary education students from abroad will be outlined. Then, the main patterns of countries of origin of incoming tertiary students to Thailand will be analysed in order to understand the role of European students in Thailand. Since neither the theories nor the discussion of the Thai policies of attracting foreign students can offer useful explanations as to why European students move to Thailand for tertiary education, the case study will be crucial. The case study, which includes 26 detailed interviews of European students in Thailand, including their respective reasons of coming to Thailand, their experience and satisfaction of studying in Thailand as well as their future engagement with Thailand, is aimed at answering the research- and sub-questions. Additionally, it may even be possible to use the findings of the interviews in an inductive way, and integrate them into the existing theories of push- and pull-factors for students studying abroad.

## 1.2. Research Objectives

In most cases, the topic of the cross-border movement of tertiary students combined with the movement of knowledge (brain drain, gain, exchange) has been researched in the context of students from developing countries moving to first-world countries. Rarely however, the discussion is lead from the point of view of the developing country attracting highly-skilled human resources from developed countries. The specialisation of the thesis, the push- and

pull-factors for North-South movements of tertiary students is also a very lightly researched topic. Studies in North-South movements and their characteristics are practically inexistent. Therefore, this study aims to make a pioneering first step in filling this scholarly gap. In doing so, the thesis aims to reach several different objectives.

This thesis aims to give a much-needed insight into the decision-making of students from developed countries choosing to study in a developing country. Even though the thesis is focused primarily on the prevalent push- and pull-factors in these cross-border movements, it is by no means consigned to them. On the contrary, based on the primary empirical research, some conclusions can be drawn regarding to the European students' experience and level of content regarding their studies in Thailand. Also based on the empirical research, some of the benefits in attracting foreign students will become apparent. As mentioned earlier, research on developing countries as destinations for cross-border movement of skilled human resources is not very common, especially in the area of higher education. Therefore, a comparison, specifically of the push-and pull factors found in the example of the European students coming to Thailand, and the factors used in the prevalent models used by academics can enrich the academic field and offer real benefits to policy-makers. Through the results of the empirical research, this thesis thus aims to fill a gap and inspire more research in this field of study. Furthermore, it is even possible that through the inductive approach, e.g. by taking the results of the empirical research, existing theories and common knowledge about the push- and pull factors of students crossing borders for education might eventually be altered.

## 1.3. Benefits, Importance and Envisioned Outcomes

The topic of tertiary student movements and the prevalent factors in their decision making process is not a new topic and is already well researched. Research in this field has been driven strongly by the interests of countries, where the export of tertiary education forms an important part of the country's respective economy (e.g. Australia). Apart from monetary and economic motivations, whereby states invest in research to find out more about potential markets for the export of education (akin to customer research in marketing), other studies with non-economic motivations also exist. Most studies however focus on North-North, South-North or South-South movement of tertiary students. Therefore, the novelty of this thesis is that the vantage point of the thesis is the developing country (Thailand) and the movement of first-world tertiary students (from Europe) to the developing country. Evidently, there are explanations for this thin body of research on the North-South movement of tertiary

students. Firstly, the amount of North-South cross-border movements is much smaller than the other three patterns of movement. The reasons for this disparity are numerous and can be explained by the prevailing push-and pull factors, which will be described thoroughly in the theory chapter of this thesis. In researching the push- and pull factors of European students who come to Thailand, this thesis can make an interesting and also important contribution to the existing body of research. Since the thesis examines the North-South movement of students, the established theories of push- and pull factors of cross-border moving students can be tested for their universal application.

In the introduction above, it was mentioned that Thai policy makers on the national level, as well as on universitary level could benefit from this study, since it includes primary empirical research. Attracting students, especially the relatively wealthy students from developed countries can be immensely important for developing countries in terms of human resource accumulation and the increased popularity of the host country. For universities, foreign students can contribute financially by paying international fees, which are often significantly higher than the local ones. Since North-South student movements are largely neglected in academia, yet could potentially be very important for the host (developing) country, this body of research fills a critical gap. By offering explanations as to why the European students have chosen to study in Thailand, what aspects of their stay they are pleased with and what their future engagement with Thailand looks like, conclusions can be drawn regarding the unique selling points of Thailand as a destination for higher education as well as the importance and value of European students in Thailand.

## 1.4. Literature Review

The focal point of this study is the analysis of transnational student flows, especially from Europe to Thailand and the predominant push- and pull factors, which decidedly contribute to this trans-national movement of students. Secondly, the thesis aims to suggest possible benefits for a country like Thailand in attracting foreign students. The theoretical discussion of this thesis mainly bases itself on globalisation theories, the ensuing internationalisation of higher education, including the involved actors and rationales, as well as the socio-economic effects and triggers (push- and pull-factors) for cross-border movement. Additionally, the movement of the highly skilled, of which tertiary students form a part of, will be looked at from the point of view of human resource and knowledge movement, which can result in a brain drain or a brain exchange. Since the theoretical analysis following the introductory part

is centred on the three fields described above (globalisation theory, internationalisation of higher education and the movement of knowledge), the discussion and review of the literature discussing the pertinent theories will follow a similar pattern.

*"Internationalization is changing the world of higher education, and globalization is changing the world of internationalization".* [9] Jane Knight, one of the most proficient academics in the field of the internationalisation of higher education sums up the overarching context of this field very succinctly. The internationalisation of higher education has only recently emerged as a separate academic field and has been receiving increased attention by academics and practitioners alike. [10] Since the 1980s however, the context, in which the internationalisation of higher education is taking place, has changed significantly, leading to considerable confusion over the terms of internationalisation and its relationship to globalisation. [11] Due to the increasing links to other topics, such as management, economics or politics, the internationalisation of higher education has become multidimensional, or "fuzzy", leading to an unclear demarcation of concepts. [12] As early as in 1987, several authors have commented on the lack of a working definition and clarity in the field. [13] In an early definition of internationalisation in 1980s, the focus was laid on the institutional cooperation of higher education institutions in the form of programmes and other activities. [14] Subsequently, in the 1990s, first definitions emphasising the process-character and the need to integrate internationalisation into all areas of higher education institutions appeared. [15] Despite this theoretical innovation, the main focus of the definitions still laid on the higher education

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[9] Knight J. Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, Rationales. **Journal of Studies in International Education** 2004; 8 (1): 5-31.

[10] For a review of the academic debates on the internationalisation of higher education, consult: Kehm BM, Teichler U. Research on Internationalisation of Higher Education. **Journal of Studies in International Education** 2007; 11 260-273.

[11] Knight, Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, Rationales, 9.

[12] Kehm and Teichler, 262.

[13] Groennings S. The Impact of Economic Globalization on Higher Education. **New England Board of Higher Education** 1987; Teichler U. Research on Academic Mobility and International Co-operation in Higher Education: An Agenda for the Future. In Blumenthal P, Goodwin C, Smith A, Teichler U, (eds), **Academic Mobility in a Changing World: Regional and Global Trends,** London: Jessica Kingsley, 1996; Wilson DN. Comparative and International Education: Fraternal or Siamese Twins? A Preliminary Genealogy of our Twin Fields. Presidential Address. **Comparative Education Review** 1994; 38 449-486.

[14] Arum S, Water, Jack van de. The Need for a Definition of international education in U.S. universities. In Klasek CB, Garavalia BJ, Kellerman KJ, Administrators AoIE, (eds), **Bridges to the Future Strategies for Internationalizing Higher Education,** Carbondale, IL: Association of International Education Administrators, 1992.Schoorman D. The Pedagogical Implications of Diverse Conceptualizations of Internationalization: A U.S.-Based Case Study. **Journal of Studies in International Education** 1999; 3 (2): 19-46.

[15] Knight J. **Internationalization: Elements and checkpoints**. Ottawa: Canadian Bureau for International Education, 1994.

institutions. Progressively however, definitions became wider and started to include systematic efforts by other actors to make higher education more responsive to challenges by globalisation. In van der Wende's definition, the immediate relationship between globalisation and internationalisation appears for the first time.[16] Knight broadened the definition and proposed the internationalisation of higher education to be: *"the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education."*[17]Whereas the above-definition of internationalisation of higher education strongly focuses on the operational side of institutional and governmental actors, this thesis centres on the students and their increasing cross-border movements as actors. Therefore, it might seem at first that the definition at hand does not fit the role of the internationalisation of higher education in this thesis. Regarding the connection between the definition of the internationalisation of higher education and the cross-border migration of students however, two different viewpoints are possible. Firstly, it could be argued that the above-definition does not include the students themselves as actors of internationalisation and is therefore deficient. Secondly however, it could also be argued that the increased student mobility does not form part of the internationalisation of higher education as such but is rather a direct result of the internationalisation. Thus, the increased cross-border migration can be seen as being facilitated by the internationalisation of higher education. In either way however, the internationalisation actions of the higher education institutions as well as of states are crucial to the increased movement of tertiary students and therefore need to be analysed thoroughly.

The emergence of the term "globalisation" in different disciplines has resulted in notable confusion over the usage of terms. Globalisation, perhaps one of the most discussed concepts in recent history has engaged academics, politicians, analysts and activists in various different disciplines and areas such as in economics, social sciences, political science, international relations, management and finance. Due to the breadth of the field, it would be impossible to discuss all the involved debates in the disciplines into this analysis. Therefore, after classifying the globalisation debate into three different schools of thought, Held et al. make some overarching points, which can summarise contemporary globalisation. [18]

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[16] van der Wende M. Missing links: the relationship between national policies for internationalisation and those for higher education in general. In Kalvermark T, Wende Mvd, (eds), **National Policies for the Internationalisation of Higher Education in Europe,** Stockholm: Hogskoleverket Studies, 1997.

[17] Knight J. Updated Internationalization Definition. **International Higher Education** 2003; 33 2-3.

[18] Held et al. The three different schools of thought, determined by Held et al. are: *hyperglobalisers, sceptics* and *transformationalists.* These three schools of thought mainly differ in their general attitude towards globalisation and the perceived endpoint of it, the role of national governments in a globalised world, the patterns of stratification and motifs and the conceptualisation of globalisation. The main

According to Held et al., globalisation is a set of processes, which has global spatial reach and causes increased transnational interconnectedness through complex webs and networks, in turn causing both deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation of socio-economic and political space.[19] Only few areas can escape the reach of these powerful processes.

Higher education, and the cross-border movement of students are influenced strongly by these above-mentioned processes and their consequences. The relationship between globalisation and the internationalisation of higher education has been disputed among academics. Some, such as Peter Scott and Barbara M. Kehm & Ulrich Teichler have argued that the relationship is dialectical, and that the new globalisation may be the rival or substitute of the old internationalisation.[20] Other authors have pointed out the fact that whereas globalisation refers to borderless world systems, internationalisation strictly only concerns nation-state to nation-state arrangements.[21] Despite the realisation that the terminology and concepts in the academic field lack clarity, considerable efforts by a number of academics to streamline the former have only been partially successful. As summarised by Altbach and Knight, there is a majority opinion emerging, which stipulates that globalisation processes are part of a reality, which are nearly impossible to influence for an actor alone.[22] Internationalisation on the other hand is the policies and practices which are undertaken by the different actors, such as individuals, higher education institutes, nation-states or, crucially to this study, regional organisations. In the context of this thesis, policies by regional organisations and to a lesser degree also by nation-state governments are used as a comparative variable, in order to determine their respective degrees of regional integration.[23]

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proponents of the respective ideas are: Kenichi Ohmae (hyperglobalisers), Paul Hirst and Graeme Thompson, Samuel Huntington (sceptics), Anthony Giddens, James Rosenau (transformationalists).

[19] Held et al., 27.

[20] Scott P. Massification, Internationalization and Globalization. In Scott P, (ed), **The Globalization of Higher Education,** Buckingham: SRHE/Open University Press, 1998.

[21] Marginson S. Rethinking academic work in the global era. **Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management** 2000; 22 (1); Currie J, DeAngelis R, de Boer H, Huisman J, Lacotte C. **Globalizing practices and university responses: European and Anglo-American differences**. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003.

[22] Altbach PG, Knight J. The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motivations and Realities. **Journal of Studies in International Education** 2007; 11 290-305.This argument is supported by Beerkens: Beerkens E. Globalisation and Higher Education Research. **Journal of Studies in International Education** 2003; 7 (2): 128-148.

[23] The complexities and contemporary character of the topic of internationalisation of higher education is perhaps also symbolised by the recent emergence of international higher education blogs, written by well-respected academics and practitioners on a wide variety of topics. Beerkens E. **Beerkens' Blog**[online].http://blog.beerkens.info/ (2009, 2 December). Olds K, Robertson S. **GlobalHigherEd**[online].http://globalhighered.wordpress.com/ (2009, 2 August).

As elaborated before, the internationalisation of higher education is commonly defined as a set of voluntary actions, which can be undertaken on different levels, such as by the higher education institutions, the governments of nation-states or even regional organisations. According to Enders, despite the complex realities of higher education, the policies on higher education are still predominantly shaped on the nation-state level.[24] Nevertheless, and as seen in the previous discussion on globalisation and internationalisation and noted by several authors, the role of the nation-state in higher education is slowly beginning to change and other actors are increasingly shaping internationalisation policies.

The increasing emergence of globalisation, and therefore also the internationalisation of higher education has lead to the realisation among some actors that internationalisation activities should be more guided and planned. Knight calls this a shift from a reactive to a proactive or even strategic position, whereby the actor's policies and actions are guided by rationales and goals.[25] She classified systematic approaches to internationalisation, which can be taken either on the institutional or on the nation-state level.[26] In line with the argument by Beerkens that competencies of higher education are shifting to other levels, such as to regional organisations, these latter would have to be included in Knight's model. The rationales, why nation-states pursue policies of higher education integration are mostly economic, political and socio-cultural. Academically, the rationales are based in a variety of fields, mostly however situated within the broader spectrum of social studies.

In the economic arena, one of the main rationales, used by nation-states and regional organisations, is the development of human resources. The development and fostering of a highly educated populace or in macroeconomic terminology – the investment in human capital – is an important driver of economic growth and development.[27]

One group of actors, which has increasingly been involved with internationalisation, are the higher education institutions. Enders points to the increasing activity of higher education institutions, setting up policies such as mobility schemes and cooperative research programmes.[28] As will be seen later in this thesis, the increased financial and political

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[24] Enders J. HIgher Education, Internationalisation, and the nation-state: Recent developments and challenges to the governance theory. **Higher Education** 2004; 47 361-382.

[25] Knight J. **IAU Global Survey Report on Internationalization of Higher Education**. [podcast] *CIHE Podcast Initiative*. Boston: CIHE Boston, 2007.

[26] Knight. "Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, Rationales.",23.; Beerkens. "Global Opportunities and Institutional Embeddedness.", 19.

[27] de Wit H. **Internationalization of Higher Education in the United States of America and Europe: A Historical, Comparative, and Conceptual Analysis**. 2nd ed. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2009.

[28] Enders, 362.

autonomy of higher education institutions and their internationalisation activities are crucial factors in the increase of mobility of tertiary students. The trend towards more independence of higher education institutes from nation-states often coincides with decreasing state-funding and the need to increasingly rely on income generation and a marketisation of the international higher education environment through multi-lateral free-trade negotiations under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).[29] Nevertheless, according to the IAU Global Survey Report on Internationalization of Higher Education, higher education institutes themselves largely focus their internationalisation efforts on academic inter-universitary cooperation and network building, as these fields are perceived to be the main benefits of internationalisation. International competition and the generation of income however are not pursued as actively and mainly compounded to certain regions.[30]

Internationalisation of higher education from the point of view of the individuals mostly focuses on the cross-border movement of students. Despite the contemporary complexities of the field, a lot of research is undertaken in this particular sub-field of the internationalisation of higher education. Within the topic of the cross-border movement of students, research in a variety of different academic fields is conducted. For example, some studies analyse the psychological and sociological impacts of cross-border movements on the students and the society as a whole.[31] Concerning Europe, the Erasmus-effect, the emergence of a pan-European youth culture, is discussed.[32]

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[29] For more information on trends in internationalisation and commercialisation of higher education concerning HEI, consult: Healey N. Is Higher education *really* internationalising? **Higher Education** 2008; 55 333-355.For a detailed discussion on the context of the GATS negotiations, read: Knight J. **HIgher Education Crossing Borders: A Guide to the Implications of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) for Cross-Border Education**. Paris: UNESCO Commonwealth of Learning, 2006.This is the case especially in Anglo-Saxon countries: de Wit. 91.

[30] Knight, Jane. *IAU Global Survey Report on Internationalization of Higher Education.*

[31] Examples for such studies, which generally tend to be empirical studies dominated by qualitative arguments are: McLeod M, Wainwright P. Researching The Study Abroad Experience. **Journal of Studies in International Education** 2009; 13 (1): 66-71. Sawir E, Marginson S, Deumert A, Nyland C, Ramia G. Loneliness and International Students: An Australian Study. **Journal of Studies in International Education** 2008; 12 (2): 148-180. Brown L. The Incidence of Study-related Stress in International Students in the initial stage of the international sojourn. **Journal of Studies in International Education** 2008; 12 (1): 5-28. Simpson K, Tan WS. A Home away from Home?: Chinese student evaluations of an overseas study experience. **Journal of Studies in International Education** 2009; 13 (1): 5-21.

[32] An example of the emergence of a pan-European youth culture through Erasmus is the "Café Babel" website, which calls itself *the first multilingual European current affairs magazine, designed for readers across borders."* Babel International. **Café Babel: The European Magazine**[online].http://www.cafebabel.com/eng/ (2009, 2 December).

The motivations for the actors in internationalising higher education are manifold, and differ depending on the actor. With regards to the students themselves, the motivations and rationales are frequently outlined within a push- and pull factor models. Within these models, the push-factors describe the factors that push a student away from his home country and the pull-factors represent the factors pulling a student towards the host country. Importantly, there is no standard model of push- and pull factors being used in the academic literature. Rather, there are some authors who adopt a more theoretical approach and list factors, which appear to be very influential for the student's decision-making process. Other academics however apply an inductive strategy and compile lists of factors based on studies conducted on students. Additional difficulties to summarise the literature on the push- and pull factors of students arise from the fact that the different models are usually rather tailored to either a specific country-to-country movement of (e.g. from China to Hong Kong, from India/China/Indonesia/Taiwan to Australia) or on an economic direction of movements (South-North/developing-developed country). Only very few studies attempt to find universal push-and pull factors. Since this study emphasises the North-South movements, and has conducted its own research on push- and pull factors, it remains to be seen in what way the different models of these factors can explain the movement of students from Europe to Thailand.

As in the discussion on migration flows in general, the discussion of the determinants of student migration is strongly linked to economic studies.[33] However, economists such as Dreher and Poutvaara also argue that there is a cultural dimension to migration.[34] A good example of a study of specific region-to-region (South-America to Europe) movement has been published by Solimano and Pollack.[35] Even though this study includes migration in general, it gives an important overview of migration factors. The main factors are the costs of migration and social networks (cost of travelling, job search, psychological stress, existing networks of friends/family), political determinants of migration (political problems in home country) and the shortage of skill labour in the developed country. Even though this model includes a broad variety of migration, it mentions important factors, which are sometimes neglected in education-specific studies. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, most models that include push- and pull-factors focus on the South-North movement of students. Altbach belongs to this group and has published his model of push- and pull factors in several

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[33] See: Borjas GJ. The Economics of Immigration. **Journal of Economic Literature** 32 (4): 1667-1717.

[34] Dreher A, Poutvaara P. **Student Flows and Migration: An Empirical Analysis**. Center for Economic Studies & ifo Institute for Economic Research, Institute for the Study of Labour, 2005.

[35] Solimano A, Pollack M. **International Mobility of the Highly Skilled: the Case between Europe and Latin America**. Vol. 1, *BID-ECLAC Working Paper*. 2004.

publications. [36] His chosen push-factors focus on educational/structural, (availability of scholarships for study abroad, poor-quality educational facilities, lack of research facilities, lack of appropriate educational facilities and/or failure to get admission to local institution, recognition of inadequacy of existing forms of traditional education) political/social (politically uncongenial situation, discrimination against minorities) and economic (enhanced value of a foreign degree in the marketplace) values. [37] The pull-factors on the other hand are very similar and mostly reflect the push-factors, with "the opportunity for a general international life experience" being the only variable without counterpart on the pull-side. [38] These listed variables, which ought to help in determining and estimating student flows are plausible, yet not backed up by evidence. In order to back up the claim that economic changes in the host- or sending country affects the cross-border exchange of students, empirical and longitudinal studies would need to be carried out. Other authors, which mostly come from the economic field, have calculated push- and pull models including variables that might either "push" a student away from the home country or "pull" the student to another country. For example, in McMahon's "push-model", variables such as the home country's GDP, involvement in the international economy, the percentage of GDP spent on education and the availability of educational opportunities. [39] The "pull-model" on the other hand reflects the relative economic size of the two countries, the economic interaction between the two countries, the political and the educational linkages. [40] Such models however have proven to be a lot less efficient and useful than individual studies, which have been relatively numerous. Especially in the case of Australia, research on the decisive factors of choice of its incoming students has been undertaken. The most detailed study has been conducted by Mazzarol and Soutar, who have interviewed 404 Indonesians, 361 Taiwanese, 152 Indians and 689 Chinese between 1996 and 2000 on behalf of Australia Education International (AEI) and the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA). The interviewees were all future international students and the purpose of the interviews, which were conducted in focus groups and individual questionnaires, was to identify reasons why students selected a particular study destination. [41] Important influencing factors were of educational (quality of the course/education, reputation of the institution, difficulty to gain entry at home, course not

[36] Altbach PG. Impact and Adjustment: Foreign Students in Comparative Perspective. **Higher Education** 1991; 21 (3): 305-323.

[37] Altbach PG. **Comparative higher education: Knowledge, the university, and development**. Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1998.

[38] Ibd.

[39] McMahon ME. Higher education in a world market. **Higher Education** 1992; 24 (4): 465-482.

[40] Ibd.

[41] Mazzarol T, Soutar GN. Push-pull' factors influencing international student destination choice. **International Journal of Educational Management** 2002; 16 (2): 82-90.

available at home, recognition of own qualification) and socio-economic nature (intention to migrate, better understanding of the West, parents/relatives recommending, lower fees, lower travel costs, lower cost of living, job opportunities, safe environment, low discrimination, established population of overseas students, exciting place to live, comfortable climate, quiet-studious environment).[42] Li and Bray have conducted an interesting study focusing on Mainland Chinese students in Hong Kong and Macau, surveying their respective motivations for studying in the Special Administrative Regions (SAR).[43] The expected benefits in Hong Kong and Macau featured income- and career-related factors (economic income, employment market) but also educational (academic ability) and social (social and cultural experience).[44] A further study analysing the reasons for studying abroad and the decision-making process involved 1000 Asian undergraduate students from China; Hong Kong; China; India; Indonesia; Japan; Malaysia; Singapore; Korea; Chinese Taipei and Thailand who were studying in the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia at the time of the study (2001).[45] Interestingly, most international students chose their destination and course primarily by country (54%), course (18%), institution (17%) and city (10%). This result has important implications for the different actors, such as nation-states and higher education institutes, who are pursuing internationalisation. When quizzed about their reasons for studying abroad, most respondents mentioned either educational (better quality of education (28%), education highly respected (17%), course not offered locally (14%) and the desire to improve English (10%)) or socio-economic (desire to broaden experience (26%), desire to live overseas (23%), family wanted student to study abroad (14%)).[46] In this survey, more than in others before, an emphasis on the reputation of the institution and the degree was laid. This, along with the desire for better quality of education can explain South-North cross-border movements of students are so numerous, whereas North-South movements are rare. Marginson's segmentation of higher education institutes confirm the preferences for developed countries as a destination for higher education. Universities in the first three segments are without exception situated in developed countries (elite universities, national research universities, teaching-focused export institutions).[47] Only in Segment 4 (nationally-

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[42] Mazzarol and Soutar.

[43] Li M, Bray M. Cross-border flows of students for higher education: Push and pull factors and motivations of Mainland Chinese students in Hong Kong and Macau. **Higher Education** 2007; 53 (6): 791-818.

[44] Ibd.

[45] Marginson S, McBurnie G. Cross-border post-secondary education in the Asia-Pacific region. **Internationalisation and trade in higher education: Opportunities and challenges** 2004; 137-204.

[46] Ibd.

[47] Marginson S. Dynamics of national and global competition in higher education. **Higher Education** 2006; 52 (1): 1-39.

bound research universities) and Segment 5 (lesser status national/local institutions) can universities from developing countries be found. Moving the example of the thesis, which concerns European students in Thailand, it seems rather unusual that students from higher segments (in Europe) would move to institutions in lower segments (in Thailand) for educational purposes.

An important aspect of student movements concerns the role of human resource development. As described above, studies regarding cross-border movements of students and their motives are mostly focused on students from developing countries moving to developed countries. Often, such studies also mention the possible problem of a "brain drain" for the developing country, stemming from the physical loss of human resources to a developed country. Miyagiwa defines brain drain as *"the emigration of skilled and professional personnel from developing countries to advanced industrial nations […]."*[48] Similar to the discussion of the push- and pull factors for cross-border movements, this definition implies a one-way South-North movement of skilled personnel. This movement, it is often claimed, can have negative impacts for the developing countries due to the loss of human resources. Economists call this a negative externality of the migration of the skilled.[49] Viewed from the other angle (from the host country), the immigration of skilled personnel would represent a positive externality, because additional human capital is available to the economy. The economic signification of human capital is reflected in the relatively recent "new growth theory", whose most prominent proponent is Paul Romer.[50] Whereas earlier models of growth focus on other factors as the biggest drivers for growth (such as the savings rate or technological progress), the endogenous "new growth theory" concludes that human capital is a crucial factor for economic growth.

If human capital then is such a crucial factor for growth, the question remains how it could be defined. Solimano and Pollack separate skilled personnel into three groups: business, banking and education/science.[51] The business sector is divided into professions such as engineers, information technology experts and managers; the banking sector into risk analysis experts, portfolio managers and strategists. Students, scientists, scholars and researchers on the other hand form part of the education and science sector.[52] According to this

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[48] Miyagiwa K. Scale economies in education and the brain drain problem. **International Economic Review** 1991; 743-759.

[49] Straubhaar T. **International mobility of the highly skilled: Brain gain, brain drain or brain exchange**. Vol. 88, *Hamburg Institute of International Economics DP*. 2000.

[50] Romer PM. New goods, old theory, and the welfare costs of trade restrictions. 1994;

[51] Solimano and Pollack, 2.

[52] Ibd.

categorisation of highly skilled, students, which are at the centre of this thesis, are included in studies on the movement of the highly skilled. Therefore, it can be said that the consequences of the brain drain discussion can also be applied to the movement of students. There are a number of other categorisations of the highly skilled. Mahroum differentiates between five different groups of highly skilled migrants: Managers & executives, engineers and technicians, academics and scientists, entrepreneurs, students. [53] Unlike the previous classification by Solimano and Pollack, the one used by Mahroum differentiates by profession, yet they both to a large part include the same people. It has been established above that the immigration of skilled personnel leads to positive economic externalities. Straubhaar, who bases his arguments strongly on the previously mentioned "new growth theory" separates human resources into human skills and knowledge.[54] Human skills, according to Straubhaar are a private good and are thus excludable and the principle of rivalry applies. In other words, one person can only consume human skills at a time and though it is possible to exclude other people from this skill, the person possessing it, is inseparable from the skill. Knowledge on the other hand is more difficult to classify. Whereas generally, knowledge is non-excludable and can be shared by people, there are many cases where knowledge can be excluded, for example insider knowledge. Since knowledge in general is transferable, it is also separable from its bearer.[55] In reality however, this seemingly clear-cut differentiation between human skills and knowledge has been blurred, since skills are needed to create knowledge in the first place. Additionally, globalisation, especially the easier flow of information as well as more widely available information technologies have made sharing knowledge, but also protecting it easier. Nevertheless, a large share of human skills can still be bound to the individual, which in the case of a high degree of migration can lead to locally limited, or clumped knowledge.[56] This situation is desirable for a country, a region or a city, since the local increase in human capital (through the immigration of skills, and the eventual creation of knowledge) increases productivity and therefore the economic welfare. In the light of these considerations, there are two different ways for a country to increase its human capital: either it educates personnel at home, or it attracts higher skilled people by immigration from abroad.[57] Using the argument developed above, the sending countries, which are primarily

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[53] Mahroum S. Highly Skilled Globetrotters: The International Migration of Human Capital. 180; a more extensive discussion on the definition of highly skilled can be found here: OECD Japan Institute of Labour. **Migration and the Labour Market in Asia: Recent Trends and Policies**. Paris: OECD, 2002.

[54] Straubhaar, 14.

[55] See figure in Straubhaar, 15.

[56] Ibd.

[57] Ibd.

developing countries, would lose and the receiving countries stand to gain from the migration of highly skilled.

Empirical studies on the consequences of a brain drain are numerous and are mostly conducted by economists using models in order to calculate possible changes of wealth in the sending countries. Such studies, conducted for example the pioneering work by Grubel and Scott, as well as by Berry and Soligo as well as later studies by Bhagwati and Hamada, Vidal and Beine et al. have generally shown that the existence of losses of income for the sending country continuing to reside in the sending country.[58] Therefore, the conclusion could be that developing countries have no interest in their citizens studying abroad, or moving abroad in general. More recent studies on the effects of migration however, such as the above mentioned ones by Vidal and Beine et al, as well as by Solimano and Pollack suggest that there are not only negative externalities to the outward migration of students.[59] On the contrary, there are positive externalities such as the possible later return of the person with a much higher accumulated knowledge and skills, networks of migrants from the same country abroad, the general promotion of the home country abroad, which can result in increased foreign investment, and frequent visits home on which knowledge can be exchanged. Therefore, the term "brain exchange" exchange has largely replaced "brain drain".[60] Saxenian uses the example of Indian and Chinese engineers, who were educated in the USA and are working in the Silicon Valley to demonstrate that the emigration of skilled can create benefits for the home country through a re-export of the skills and knowledge as well as through the creation of crucial business links.[61]

As the previous review of studies on push- and pull factors of student movements, as well as on the economic impact of the movement of the highly skilled revealed, most academic activity in this field centres on the South-North movement of students or the highly-skilled in general. This study conducted here however is researching the opposite movement,

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[58] Miyagiwa; Grubel HB, Scott AD. The international flow of human capital. **The American Economic Review** 1966; 268-274. Berry RA, Soligo R. Some welfare aspects of international migration. **The Journal of Political Economy** 1969; 778-794. Vidal JP. The effect of emigration on human capital formation. **Journal of Population Economics** 1998; 11 (4): 589-600. Beine M, Docquier F, Rapoport H. Brain Drain and Human Capital Formation in Developing Countries: Winners and Losers. **The Economic Journal** 2008; 118 (528): 631-652.

[59] Vidal; Beine et al; Solimano and Pollack.

[60] See: Marginson S. Five Somersaults in Enschede: Rethinking Public/Private in higher Education for the Global Era. In Enders J, Jongloed B, (eds), **Public-private dynamics in higher education: expectations, developments and outcomes,** 2007.

[61] Saxenian AL. From brain drain to brain circulation: Transnational communities and regional upgrading in India and China. **Studies in Comparative International Development (SCID)** 2005; 40 (2): 35-61.

the North-South movement of students. Studies on the North-South movement of students are practically inexistent, yet a small amount of research has been conducted on expatriates from the point of view of the sending and the receiving countries.[62] This research mainly discusses the amount of expatriates in the respective countries and the lacking social integration of the highly skilled. In the case of Malaysia, special programmes for foreigners over the age of 50 to reside in Malaysia are also mentioned.[63] In this publication, the main factors why highly qualified foreign workers are considered important for a developing country such as Malaysia are very similar to the established benefits of highly skilled immigration, discussed above. The main positive externality is the import of skills, which can lead to higher productivity of the labour force, and eventually higher economic growth. For developing countries, highly qualified expatriates, through their knowledge and skills, can aid the country in developing from a labour intensive to a capital-intensive economy.[64]

Since there are relatively few studies on North-South movement of the highly skilled, and practically no studies on the movement of students in particular, it will be difficult to gauge benefits for Thailand resulting from the influx of European students. Although the survey conducted among the 26 students will go some way in identifying potential benefits, the lack of precedence complicates the answer of the research question. Another possible way of determining benefits that can be drawn from incoming international students is to apply the common nation-states' rationales of internationalisation of higher education. These rationales, widely discussed in the academic field of the internationalisation of higher education, are

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[62] Some statistics and a discussion of the role of highly qualified expatriates in Indonesia, Malaysia and Viet Nam can be found in this OECD publication: OECD, and Japan Institute of Labour. Expatriates from developed countries in developing countries are usually more qualitative and often conducted from a sociological, psychological or management point of view. For example on corporate policy: Selmer J. Expatriation: Corporate policy, personal intentions and international adjustment. **The International Journal of Human Resource Management** 1998; 9 (6): 996-1007. Grainger RJ, Nankervis AR. Expatriation practices in the global business environment. **Research and Practice in Human Resource Management** 2001; 9 (2): 77-92. Beaverstock JV. Transnational elites in global cities: British expatriates in Singapore's financial district. **Geoforum** 2002; 33 (4): 525-538. On Malaysia: Tahir AHM, Ismail M. Cross-Cultural Challenges and Adjustments of Expatriates: A Case Study in Malaysia. **A hernatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations** 2007; 6 (3 & 4). Abdullah Z. Towards International Cultural Diversity Management of Public Relations: Viewpoints of Chairmen/CEOs. **Int Journal of Economics and Management** 2007; 1 (2): 285-299. Fisher G, Härtel C, Bibo M. Does Task and contextual performance measurement apply across cultures? An empirical study of Thai and western managers and professionals. **Transcending Boundaries: Integrating People, Processes and Systems**, Brisbane. And: Fisher GB, Hartel CEJ. Evidence for crossvergence in the perception of task and contextual performance: a study of Western expatriates working in Thailand. **Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal** 2004; 11 (2): 3-15.

[63] OECD, and Japan Institute of Labour, 241.

[64] Ibd.

discussed and tabled by Knight and de Wit in their respective publications.[65] Both authors differentiate between economic rationales, such as economic growth and competitiveness and global labour market considerations, as well as political and social rationales, such as public diplomacy or strategic alliances.[66] Integrating these popular rationales with the previous discussion centring on benefits of human resource improvement should give an adequate theoretical basis, to which the survey of the 26 European students will add crucial primary data on the possible benefits of the European students for Thailand.

## 1.5. Research Question and Sub-Questions

Based on the previous introduction into the field of this study, the guiding research question for this thesis will be:

- **What are the prevalent push- and pull-factors for European tertiary students studying in Thailand?**

This precise research question above will be followed by additional sub-questions. Whereas the first sub-question concerns the wider context of the research question, the second one considers the practical implications of the other two questions.

- **How do these prevalent push- and pull-factors of European tertiary students studying in Thailand compare to the existing models and theories of the push- and pull-factors in the cross-border movement of the tertiary students?**
- **What benefits can Thailand draw from foreign students, in particular from European foreign students?**

## 1.6. Methodology

This body of research is based on a multidisciplinary approach and bases on theories and previous research in the areas of internationalisation of higher education, studies on globalisation and the economic analysis on the movement of highly skilled. In order to apply

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[65] Knight, Jane. "Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, Rationales."; de Wit.
[66] Ibd.

the different theories effectively and thus answer the research question conclusively, differentiated methodological approaches are needed.

For a large part, this thesis relies on secondary sources, including books and scientific articles by reputable authors in the aforementioned theoretical areas. Regarding the push- and pull factors of students for studying overseas, reports commissioned by international organisations or national agencies and previous studies conducted by academics are used. It is important to note however that in the field of macroeconomic analysis of the cross-border movement of students and the possible economic value of human capital export or import, only a very limited amount of mathematical calculations are used. This thesis is not specialising in economics however, and therefore, the use of macroeconomic sources will be restricted to basic analysis.

In the chapter that summarises and classifies global higher education movement patterns and also specifically focuses on Thailand and incoming tertiary students, mostly primary sources are used. For the analysis of the global movement patterns, the UNESCO Institute of Statistics Database (UIS) will be used.[67] This database is the most reputable and complete source of cross-border higher education movements and is regularly updated with data provided from national sources (mostly ministries). In all the tables and figures where data from the UIS is used, the respective newest set of data is taken. Therefore, in comparisons between different countries, data from different years are sometimes compared with one another. Additionally to the UIS database, especially in the historical analysis of global higher education movement patterns, secondary sources will also be consulted. Regarding the data specifically involving Thailand, including the amount of European students studying in Thailand, as well as their distribution by country of origin, current institution and fields of study in Thailand, the publication by the Thai Commission on Higher Education summarising foreign student stocks in Thailand in 2008 provides reliable and accurate information.[68] It is important to note however that the data in the Thai publication lists the stocks of foreign students in a particular year. This is contrary to the UIS database, which lists cross-border movements. Therefore, some disparities between the two databases occur.

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[67] UNESCO Institute for Statistics. **Data Centre**[online].http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/TableViewer/document.aspx?ReportId=143&IF_Language=eng (2009, 1 December).

[68]Commission on Higher Education. **International Students in Thai Higher Education Institutions**. Bangkok: 2008.

Since this thesis focuses on European students, it is crucial to define this term. Firstly, the term "students" can be used interchangeably with "tertiary students". In this context, the definition of "tertiary students" employed by the UNESCO (ISCED levels 5 and 6) is used.[69] "European" means students with citizenship of any European country (excluding Russia and Turkey).

The last part of the thesis, the case study of European students in Thailand consists of primary empirical research. In order to determine the push- and pull factors and rationales for European students studying in Thailand, as well as their experiences and future engagement with Thailand, interviews with 26 European students were conducted. Based on information on the stocks of European students at the different Thai higher education institutes, students attending the six most popular Thai universities were chosen as potential interviewees. By concentrating the effort on the six most popular Thai universities, (Chulalongkorn University, Thammasat University, Ramkhamhaeng University, Bangkok University, Assumption University, Mahidol University) the thesis aimed to have a choice of interviewees representative of a wide majority of European students in Thailand. Additionally, time and practicality constraints dictated certain limits in terms of the scope of the survey. Based on the choice of the six above-mentioned universities, the international offices of the respective universities were contacted and contact data of the European degree and exchange students requested. This strategy did not prove effective, as only Chulalongkorn University replied and eventually supplied the necessary data. Other universities however did not respond to the requests at all. Subsequently, with the gracious help of the supervisor Asst. Prof. Surat Horachaikul, the remaining five universities were contacted again by using personal contacts of the supervisor. Eventually, after a number of contact attempts and lengthy processes, Ramkhamhaeng University, Bangkok University and Assumption University provided contact data of some of the current students of European origin. Emails containing the survey as well as a short explanation of the study were then sent to all the provided electronic addresses. The return rate for surveys using the electronic approach was however very low and further efforts were needed in order to increase the amount of returned surveys. With the help and personal contacts of the supervisor, Asst. Prof. Surat Horachaikul, personal face-to-face meetings with potential interviewees were organised. This strategy proved more successful and thus, the final tally of 26 interviewees was reached.[70] Therefore, the most effective strategy in

[69] UNESCO. **International Standard Classification of Education ISCED 1997**[online].http://www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/doc/isced_1997.htm (2009, 30 November).

[70] Finally, the sample includes 6 students from Chulalongkorn, 2 from Ramkhamhaeng, 10 from Bangkok University, 5 from Assumption, 2 from Bangkok School of Management and 1 from Rangsit University.

surveying the European students in Thailand has proven to be via personal contact with the students, facilitated by the supervisor, rather than by electronic contacts. Among these 26 interviewees, the distribution regarding their university is not exactly corresponding to the distribution of the total European students.  The main difference between the actual distribution of the European students and between the distribution of the interviews in the survey is the absence of Mahidol University students. As with the other universities, several attempts were made to contact the international office for help, yet despite the help of the supervisor, Asst. Prof. Surat Horachaikul, Mahidol University did not provide any contact data. Attempts to contact the international students via the only contact portal Facebook were also unsuccessful.[71] A further slight disparity between the total European students in Thailand and the survey sample can be observed with regards to their fields of study. In the survey, some fields of study, especially business-related fields, but also economics have been slightly over-represented. This asymmetry stems from the difficulty of sourcing a high number of interviewees. In some cases, interviewees, who have been willing answer the form have been helpful in forwarding the survey to their own friends, who often studied in the same programme. Therefore, an over-representation of some areas of study has taken place.

Importantly, this study featured degree and exchange students from Europe. There are no numbers available regarding the ration between degree and exchange students of the total European students and therefore, it is impossible to compare the survey ratio with the total ratio of degree versus exchange students. Due a comparison of patterns of nationalities, host universities and fields of study, it is however highly likely that a large majority of European students in Thailand are indeed exchange students. This survey consists of a sample of 15 exchange and 11 degree students. There are several reasons why both, exchange and degree students were chosen to take part in the survey. Firstly, the sample size of only one group of students would have been too small. Therefore, it was decided to integrate both groups of students into the study. Thus, the two different groups could be compared with regards to the main areas of the study, the motivations of the students for studying in Thailand and the eventual benefits for Thailand. An additional reason for the inclusion of both groups is the fact that due to this wider sample, a more complete picture of European students, their motivations for coming to Thailand, their levels of satisfaction and their future engagement with Thailand emerges. The results of the survey (an example of which is attached in the Annex of this thesis) have vindicated the inclusion of both groups of students. Whereas there were relatively clear differences between the two groups with regards to the push- and pull factors, their levels of satisfaction in Thailand as well as their future plans of engagement with

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[71] **Facebook**[online].http://www.facebook.com (2009, 2 December).

Thailand are very similar. Thus, the thesis has shown that both groups of students, degree and exchange students can develop strong bonds to the host country, which ultimately also benefit the host country.

The format and content of the survey was decided on even before the contacts were received. The surveys would be conducted face-to-face and would consist of four parts: information on the interviewee (nationality, age, gender, previous education and current degree), the way to Thailand (including push- and pull-factors, other options of destinations), the stay in Thailand (including academic and country-specific questions as well as questions regarding the interviewee's social life and engagement with Thailand) and finally the prospects after Thailand (benefits drawn from studying in Thailand and further plans regarding the engagement with Thailand). The questions are mostly open-ended. There were however also questions where the interviewees are asked to assess by giving grades (from 1 to 10, one being the worst and 10 being the best) and other questions where interviewees need to list. Having received the Chulalongkorn contacts first, three students were successfully interviewed face-to-face. Due to the difficulties in dealing with the other universities and finding contacts for conducting the interviews face-by-face, the strategy was changed and the retrieved contacts were being asked to fill out the survey online.

The empirical primary research part of this thesis faced difficulties, on the one hand in the location of potential interviewees but also on getting a healthy return rate. The return rate, with only in total only 26 completed interviews is relatively small and therefore vulnerable for claims of un-representativeness. Additionally, the diverse interviewing techniques used (online, face-to-face) place some additional constraints on the validity of the results of this survey. The concentration of the interviewees on the six main university destinations (with the exception of three interviewees from the Bangkok School of Management) also somewhat lessens the representativeness of the survey. Despite these constraints however, a considerable amount of raw, empirical and valuable data has emerged and, as will be seen later in the thesis, numerous interesting, and useful conclusions can be drawn from these surveys.

# CHAPTER II

# THEORY

## 2.1. Globalisation Theory

In this chapter, the central theories pertinent to this thesis, globalisation, the internationalisation of higher education and the more general theories on the movement of human resources are discussed. Because of their central role as a trigger and enforcer of the internationalisation in higher education, globalisation processes need to be defined and explained first.

Globalisation is commonly referred to as being at the beginning of many recent societal, economic and political changes. In the academic, economic, political and cultural fields, countless definitions of globalisation exist. These definitions and interpretations of globalisation are often only fragmental and thus only concern a certain area within which globalisation processes are influential. Additionally, because of its wide-ranging implication, the discussion on globalisation is often highly politicised and emotionalised, thus hampering a precise and comprehensive definition. Nevertheless, a common pattern to globalisation definitions can be found in the increased *"interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life."*[72] This definition however is too broad, unclear and does not take into account different opinions on globalisation.

### 2.1.1. Hyperglobalists, Sceptics and Transformationalists

In search for a more comprehensive and useful definition of globalisation, further enquiry into globalisation theories is necessary. According to Held et al, theorists of globalisation are commonly divided into three different schools of thought: *hyperglobalists*, *sceptics* and *transformationalists*. [73] *Hyperglobalists*, led by the Japanese business strategist Kenichi Ohmae, believe that nation-states are an outdated form of governance and will be substituted

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[72] Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, and Perraton, 2.
[73] Ibd.

by new forms of social organisation, on the local and regional level.[74] Globalisation *sceptics* on the other hand apply a strictly economic point of view and argue that a globalised economy whereby the "law of one price" applies is by no means achieved and that nation-states still regulate international activity. Sceptics however accept that rather than globalisation, a regionalisation of trade is taking place. Therefore, the world is getting increasingly fragmented into blocs in terms of economy, politics and culture.[75] Similar to hyperglobalists, *transformationalists* believe that globalisation is the driving force behind social, political and economic changes and are reshaping modern societies and the world order.[76] In the transformationalist school of thought however, globalisation is seen as a transformative force, which blurs distinctions between international, national and local spheres. Contrary to the previous two theories, transformationalists do not predict a future regional or global order, but rather emphasise the process of this historically unprecedented phenomenon. Due to the processes of globalisation, which bring together communities, which do not necessarily correspond to national borders, nation-states, although retaining their ultimate sovereignty, increasingly are entangled in transnational organisations. Therefore, globalisation causes a transformation of the relationship between sovereignty, territoriality and state power.[77] Taking into account the three major schools of thought regarding globalisation, Held et al., rather than defining globalisation, makes some basic assumptions.

- Globalisation has to be understood as a set of processes leading to interregional networks and an **enmeshment of national and societal systems** in a global process.
- As a consequence, **complex webs and networks between communities, states, international institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGO's) and multi-national corporations** are weaved.
- Globalisation processes of increased interconnectedness are reflected in **all social domains**, e.g. economic, political, legal, military and environmental.
- Globalisation is associated with the **deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation of socio-economic and political space** from legal and territorial boundaries.
- Through increased interconnectedness, globalisation **restructures power relations**.[78]

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[74] Ohmae K. The rise of the region state. **Foreign Affairs** 1993; 78–87.

[75] Huntingtons's theory of a "clash of civilisations" is an example of a globalisation critique. Huntington SP. **The Clash of Civilisations and the remaking of World Order**. Simon & Schuster, 1997.

[76] Giddens A. The Consequences of Modernity. **Polity, Cambridge** 1990;

[77] Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, and Perraton, 8.

[78] Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, and Perraton, 28.

Combining Beerkens' diagram and the summarisation of Held et al., the different aspects of globalisation can be illustrated in the following way:

| Point of Reference | Concept | Globalisation/New Reality |
|---|---|---|
| Unconnected Localities | **Geography** | Interconnectedness. Increase of flows in people. Internationalisation. |
| | **Economy & Trade** | Interconnectedness. Increase of flows in trade in goods and services and information. Internationalisation. |
| Resulting from the increase of flows and interconnectedness: | | |
| Nation-state Sovereignty | **Authority & Power** | De- and re-territorialisation of socio-economic and political space. |
| Nation as bearer of identity, citizenship | **Institutions & Society** | Cosmopolitanisation.Culture, Institutions: transformation of social arrangements. |
| Mosaic | **Culture** | Cultural convergence and divergence. |

**Table 1: A Concept of Globalisation**[79]

Student exchanges, the main topic of this thesis, has numerous effects on the different actors, which are involved in the exchanges. These effects can be discussed by applying table 1 above to student exchanges. Since the calculation of economic effects of student movements is far beyond the goal of this thesis, the political and social effects and implications will be at the centre of the theoretical and practical discussion of the cross-border movements.

Hyperglobalist theories are based strongly on economic processes. Through global integration of business and production, social and political spheres become globalised. Using hyperglobalist explanations, increased student movements could be explained by the demand for a more internationalised or even globalised workforce. Therefore, it could be expected that the patterns of cross-border movements would increasingly diversify, since the economies and social and political spheres would integrate globally. This is called "a more complex architecture of economic power".[80] It could also be expected that the motivations of students

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[79] Beerkens, Eric. "Global Opportunities and Institutional Embeddedness.", 12.
[80] Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, and Perraton, 4.

for studying in another country would be dominated by economic considerations and specialisations.

Globalisation sceptics on the other hand argue that globalisation is essentially a myth, and that processes of integration are exaggerated, leading to regionalisation at most. Sceptics also note that North-South-divisions will continue to exist and point to patterns of investment and trade, where the developed nations primarily trade with each other and invest in each other's economies. For student movements, this would mean that akin to the movement of goods and investments, certain patterns of flows remain dominant. These patterns could follow either economic patterns or also reflect civilisational ties. Motivations for movements along economic patterns are again explainable by economic motives. If two countries trade and invest heavily in each other, it is more likely that students will feel compelled to study in a country with close economic relations to their host country. The argument of civilisational boundaries, developed by Huntington would predict frequent cross-border movements of students to culturally similar countries.

Proponents of the transformationalist theory, much more than sceptics and hyperglobalists emphasise the broad range of effects of globalisation processes in different fields. For transformalists, globalisation processes are responsible for blurring the borders, or "shaking up" political, economic and social spaces. Contrary to the previous theories, transformationalists also believe that borders between the North and the South, the First World and the Third World are not longer geographically determinable, but in a constant state of change. Globalisation can thus act as an accelerating force for the economic rise or fall of an economy, which does not necessarily correspond to nation-state borders. Taking the transformationalist theory of globalisation as a basis, it is difficult to predict a trend in the movement of students. Since the transformationalist theory uses a broad approach and predicts increasing global interconnectedness and a reorganisation of economic, political and social spaces, a general increase of cross-border movements of students could be expected. The streams of the movements however cannot be predicted. The reasons for increased cross-border student movements can be explained by the increase of interconnectedness of economies, regions and people in general. Through this increased interconnectedness, resulting in increased information and easier travel possibilities, barriers to experience another culture through educational exchange are lowered.

The above theories of globalisation have all helped explaining the movements and motivations of students on a theoretical basis. Table 1 summarises the theories. Since the transformational theory provides the best theoretical basis for explaining the background of cross-border student movements, table 1 focuses on the transformational explanations. Table

1 shows a model of globalisation processes in the economic, political and social arenas and displays previous points of reference and the new realities. Due to its design, this table is also very useful in elaborating some consequences of student exchanges and the increased connectedness of people.

The increased movements of people in general, but also of students in particular, parallel with increasing international economic and political ties, have resulted in a number of new realities. In the case of the increased flows of students, these effects can be mostly found in the areas of society and culture. Increasing movements of students will automatically also increase the student's contact with people from other countries. New friends are made in- and outside of the academic life, and mostly, a large part of them will be from the host country. These social contacts have great influences on students, as well as on their environment. Through intensive contacts with people from other cultures, the moving students are likely to constantly question their own culture and values. This might lead to a sense of alienation but can also lead to a change in the student's values and behaviour, thereby taking on board some of the customs, behaviours and beliefs prevalent in the hosting country. In this case, the people-to-people links and interactions can cause a change in not only the student's but also in the student's social contacts' attitudes and beliefs. This argumentation implies that people can be carriers of culture, and therefore, through extensive contacts with people from other cultures, contribute to the spreading of their own culture. The positive consequences, or benefits, stemming from increased international people-to-people links can be viewed from different angles. On the one hand, it could be said that people-to-people links foster cultural connections, and therefore enrich both, the host country's culture, as well as the student's culture. Through this enrichment and the increased social competences, mutual understanding of different cultures is facilitated, and frequent dialogue on a personal level, but also on an economic or even political level, more likely. There are however also tangible, economic benefits which can be drawn from cross-border student movements. These benefits are constituted on the one hand by the direct financial income for higher education institutes and the national economy through the expenses of the incoming student. On the other hand however, and much more difficult to quantify, by becoming a carrier of the host country's culture and identity, the student can act as an "ambassador" for the host country once back in his home country, or anywhere else in the world. In a more competitive world, such "ambassadors" could be of great help, especially for a developing country like Thailand.

## 2.1.2. Higher Education and Globalisation

Higher education is an area, which, much more than others, has always been internationally connected. This is mainly due to its output, knowledge, which easily crosses boundaries. During the times of Ancient Greece, Persia, India, Confucian China and in the late medieval Europe, universities such as Bologna, Paris, Oxford and Cambridge were cosmopolitan places of learning where scholars and students from across the world acquired and exchanged knowledge, mostly free from the constraints of borders and nation-states.[81] In Europe, a transformation of the characteristic of higher education began in the 16th century, when the protestant reformation heralded a fragmentation of higher education. Furthermore, nation-states emerged as stronger entities and started to control the flow of people in general. Crucially, nation-states also began to foster national identity building through patriotisms and increased nationalisation of the economy, religion, society and education.[82] This trend even increased in the 20th century, when nation-states put more emphasis on nationalised higher education, whereby skilled human capital could be developed, either for technological progress or for a more effective bureaucracy.[83] Therefore, a trend away from tertiary education, as a cosmopolitan forum for the transnational exchange of ideas and knowledge towards the political and economical instrumentation took place. This trend had wide implications for the way in which universities were organised and also for the extent to which international people-to-people links occurred.

Even though the origins and traditions of Southeast Asian higher education vary greatly from country to country, Western, mostly European, colonisers had a great influence in shaping each country's higher education system. Thailand, being the only Southeast-Asian country not colonised by a European power traditionally followed a model, whereby education was provided in temples and the court. Under King Rama V, who fostered close relations to European nations and visited Europe as well as the British Southeast Asian colonies several times, a modernisation of the Thai higher education system took place. In 1910, the Royal Page School was transformed into Civil Servants School in 1916 and thus, Chulalongkorn University was founded. The establishment of the four other early universities, Thammasat, the University of Medicine (later to become Mahidol University), Kasetsart and Silpakorn University was also dominated by the state's need for educated civil servants.[84] This short history of higher education in Thailand shows the crucial influence of European principles in higher education, in which the national aspect of higher education is often very pronounced. These systems, although developed and diversified since then have persisted to

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[81] Kerr C, Gade ML, Kawaoka M. **Higher education cannot escape history: Issues for the twenty-first century**. State Univ of New York Pr, 1994, 7.
[82] Ibd, 8.
[83] Ibd, 10.
[84] Ibd, 206.

various degrees through the last decades. Due to the close association of Thai higher education with European systems, a traditional educational bond between Europe and Thailand had been formed.

The long-lasting trend towards nationalised higher education is however being reversed slowly. With the advent of globalisation and the ensuing increased interconnectedness, a trend towards a de-territorialisation, or de-nationalisation of higher education is becoming apparent. In academic circles, this field of study is commonly called "internationalisation of higher education". Despite widespread academic discussion of internationalisation of higher education however, there is no academic compromise on a definition of this phenomenon. Especially the relationship between "globalisation" and "internationalisation" needs some explaining. Having already discussed the concept and definition of *globalisation* above, the focus will now shift to *internationalisation.*

At the beginning, *internationalisation of higher education* was seen as a mere set of activities performed by higher education institutions such as universities.[85] According to this narrow definition of internationalisation*,* the main actors in the process of internationalisation were the institutions providing higher education, which would in turn execute activities and programmes such as international studies, international exchanges of students, staff and curricula as well as other technical cooperation.[86]Later, internationalisationbecame to be seen as a process, which ought to be integrated into the institutions, e.g. the teaching, research and service functions of the institution. [87] The novelty in this definition being that internationalisationwas now rather seen as a process and organisational approach which was integrated into the whole functioning of the higher education institution, and not just limited to international programmes. This development of the definition could therefore be seen as a move towards a holistic approach, yet it was still fragmented due to its narrow focus on institutions. This continuing strong focus on institutions however was criticised as one-sided and broader definitions inclusive of other actors were suggested. Van der Wende created the following definition. Internationalisation is:

*"Any systematic effort aimed at making higher education responsive to the requirements and challenges related to the globalization of societies, economy and labour market."[88]*

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[85] Knight. Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, Rationales., 9.
[86] Arum and van de Water, 202.
[87] Arum and van de Water, 202.
[88] Van der Wende, 18.

This proposed definition offers two wide-ranging changes. On the one hand, the relationship between globalisation and internationalisation has been clarified by stating that internationalisation is a reaction that is taking place and is caused by the processes of globalisation. Additionally and importantly, van der Wende also broadens the spectre of internationalisation. In her definition, "any systematic effort" automatically also includes any possible actors within the field of higher education. Additional examples of actors could be the nation-state, a supranational or inter-governmental organisation, a business or the HEI itself. Furthermore, by including challenges related to the labour market, this definition also incorporates an economic component into the definition, thereby hinting that economic rationales can play an important role in the internationalisation of higher education. This viewpoint was criticised in 2002 by Soderqvist, who adopts a somewhat *hyperglobalist* standpoint and believes that the process of internationalisationis*:*

*"A change process from a national higher education institution to an international HE institution leading to the inclusion of an international dimension in all aspects of its holistic management in order to enhance the quality of teaching and learning and to achieve the desired competencies."[89]*

By emphasising the new reality of an international HEI, the definition by Soderqvist could be seen as a paradigm change in higher education, marking a departure from the nation-state model towards a cosmopolitan reality. However, Soderqvist's definition did not go that far, as he confined the change towards a more cosmopolitan reality to the institutional level.[90] Thus, Soderqvist excludes the influences of policy-makers and the students themselves on the internationalisation process. Nevertheless, this definition can be seen as a quantum leap, due the acceptance that the international dimension would lead to a change process in *all* dimensions of the institution's holistic management.[91] Knight on the other hand criticises the definition because of its rationales, which limit the applicability of internationalisation theory to the enhancement of quality of teaching and learning in order to achieve desired competencies. Therefore, the numerous acts caused by internationalisation, which do not concern the quality of teaching and learning and do not have the goal of achieving "desired competencies", are not included in this definition. Knight then proposes a new working definition of internationalisation in order to facilitate the discussion of the discipline. She emphasises that both, the institutional level as well as the national- and sectoral level must be included in such a definition and that a definition should not be confined to rationales.

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[89] Soderqvist M. Internationalisation and its management at higher-education institutions: Applying conceptual, content and discourse analysis. **Helsinki School of Economics: Helsinki, Finland** 2002;
[90] Soderqvist.
[91] Ibd.

*"The process of integrating an international, intercultural or global definition into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education."[92]*

Knight's definition is similar to the previous one by Soderqvist, yet still offers some central differences. Firstly, Knight is more inclusive in terms of what "international" means, adding "intercultural" and "global" to her definition. This definition therefore rightly takes into account globalisation trends discussed above, which decouple culture and identity from the nation-state towards a more cosmopolitan reality. According to Knight, "internationalisation" has to be understood in terms of a new alignment of geography, politics, the economy, institutions, culture and identity. The other notable novelty of Knight's definition concerns the education specific second part of her definition, which clearly points out in what concepts of education "internationalisation" is integrated into. The *purpose* of higher education, which will be discussed in greater detail at a later stage, means the role and objective that the higher education sector has for a country or a region as well as, more specifically the mission or mandate of a specific HEI.[93] The *functions* of higher education include the more specific, practical tasks of the higher education system and the institution itself, namely teaching/training, research and others.[94] Thirdly, the description of the *delivery* of higher education is even slightly narrower, signifying the actual offering of courses and programmes.[95]

## 2.2. The Internationalisation of Higher Education

### 2.2.1. Globalisation versus Internationalisation

Globalisation processes, as displayed in table 1 are immensely strong processes, which influence all areas of our socio-economic and political surrounding. One of the processes, the increasing interconnectedness of the economy, resulting in higher volumes of trade in goods and services as well as more open economies in general has increased competition among nation-states and regional blocs. Nation-states, which despite globalisation and regionalisation processes are still the main policy-makers and legislators of higher education, have reacted to the increased competition, and try to gain an edge through improving their systems of higher

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[92] Knight. Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, Rationales., 11.
[93] Ibd, 12.
[94] Ibd.
[95] Ibd.

education and thus attract foreign students. Within this process of increasing global economic competition also falls the liberalisation of services under the General Agreement on Trades in Services (GATS) under the auspices of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Within GATS, negotiations are taking place in order to open up the four modes of supply of services, namely "cross border supply", "consumption abroad", "commercial presence" and "presence of natural persons".[96] The OECD defines cross-border higher education as: "*higher education that takes place in situations where the teacher, student, program, institution/provider or course materials cross national jurisdictional borders.*"[97] In practice, this means that it would be easier for education institutes to open up campuses abroad, employ foreign teachers, teach foreign students or use franchise its study model across borders. These are however only some examples of new possibilities for education service providers.[98]

In summary, it can be said that globalisation processes *influence* or even trigger the more voluntary processes of internationalisation. This relationship can be observed in Van der Wende's definition of internationalisation, which states that higher education is made more "*responsive to the requirements and challenges related to the globalization of societies, economy and labour market*", thereby acknowledging the causal relationship of globalisation and internationalisation. Citing Altbach and Knight:

"*Globalization and internationalization are related but not the same thing. Globalization is the context of economic and academic trends that are part of the reality of the 21st century. Internationalization includes the policies and practices undertaken by academic systems and institutions—and even individuals—to cope with the global academic environment.*"[99]

Another important aspect of internationalisation, which perhaps is not instantly recognisable from the definitions above, is the factor of choice. Whereas globalisation

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[96] Madugula SK. Cross border mobility for transnational education: Would students and academics benefit from educational services liberalisation in Europe under WTO-GATS mechanism - an analysis of European Bologna Process Model for ASEAN regional educational policy. **The Bologna Process and Shaping of the Future Knowledge Society** 2005;

[97] OECD. **Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education**. Paris: OECD, 2005. A very good overview of the issue of GATS negotiation and international higher education can be found here: Knight, Jane. **Higher Education Crossing Borders: A Guide to the Implications of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) for Cross-Border Education.**

[98] For a discussion on the potential benefits or risks of GATS in international higher education on the example of the Netherlands and the Czech Republic: Vlk A, Westerheijden D, van der Wende M. GATS and the steering capacity of a nation state in higher education: case studies of the Czech Republic and the Netherlands. **GLOBALISATION SOCIETIES AND EDUCATION** 2008; 6 (1): 33.

[99] Altbach and Knight. The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motivations and Realities.

processes are practically unalterable by education institutes or even by nation-states, the internationalisation of higher education is a choice. The policies, programmes or initiatives of internationalisation, on the international, the national and the institutional level do not happen by itself; rather they follow decisions by policy-makers or managers of institutions. Knight suggests grouping actors on how active they are in internationalising their higher education sector. She suggests that states' behaviour in regards to internationalising higher education can either be classified as passive, reactive, active or strategic.[100]

As mentioned above, globalisation processes have a strong influence on the internationalisation policies of actors. The relationship however is a two-sided one. In some ways, policies and programmes of internationalisation also have a reinforcing influence on globalisation. These impacts occur in every area of globalisation: due to the increased international and –cultural contacts of students, increased internationalisation of higher education causes:

- Increased interconnectedness of people and economic activities
- Increased inter-state competition due to better human resources
- De-territorialisation of socio-economic and political space and cosmopolitanisation of culture & society due to more flexible human resources and changed identities

Therefore, internationalisation of higher education re-engineers and accelerates the very processes of globalisation, which initiated it. Thus, a scenario of a self-reinforcing circle unfolds.

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[100] Knight. **IAU Global Survey Report on Internationalization of Higher Education.**

INCREASED...
-competition
-trade
-interconnectedness

Globalisation

International-
isation

INCREASED...
-interconnectedness of
people and economy
-deterritorialisation of
the socio-economic space
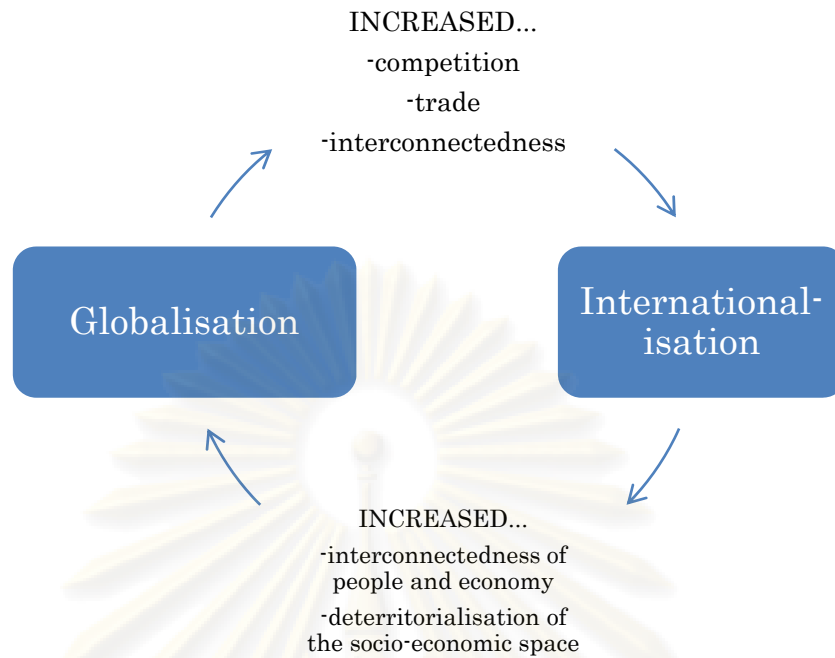
**Figure 1: Globalisation and Internationalisation of Higher Education[101]**

### 2.2.2. Actors and Rationales in Internationalisation of Higher Education

Having cleared up some of the common misconceptions and confusion about the internationalisation of higher education, we have established that taking part in the internationalisation of higher education can be a choice for the different actors. Therefore, it is crucial to discuss the rationales of these different actors in planning and implementing policies to internationalise higher education. Rationales for internationalisation can be divided according to the involved actor, mainly national governments and higher education institutions (institutional actors) but also the students themselves. Even though this thesis focuses on the students as actors of internationalisation, the rationales of institutional actors, especially national governments are crucial. As mentioned in the theoretical introduction, a significant goal and contribution of this thesis is the assessment of possible benefits for the host country. The rationales of nation-state governments for internationalisation, which will be elaborated below, can therefore act as a gauge to the future expectation of benefits, assuming that the nation-states act rationally.

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[101] Own source.

According to Knight and de Wit, the main rationales of national actors can be broadly dissected into economic, political and social rationales.[102] Among the economic rationales, are "economic growth and competitiveness", "the development of human resources" and "commercial trade".[103] As discussed above, globalisation, in the form of increasing economic interconnectedness, is reflecting growing trade in goods, services and easier flow of information. Due to these increased flows, borders have become more porous and not just economic goods but also people can move across borders more easily. This new globalised reality demands adaptations from governments and institutions. Probably the most important rationales, why governments react to globalisation and adapt policies are of economic nature. The transformation of the world economy from an "industrial economy", where manufacturing provided the main source of income into a "knowledge-economy", where the production and trade of services is taking centre-stage is causing the state to redefine its role. In a knowledge-economy, knowledge itself, information and eventually people who possess it, are the key factors of development.[104] This development gives higher education a new meaning, from an intellectual breeding ground to one of the central engines of economic growth. The process of transformation to a knowledge economy is less advanced in developing countries, where agriculture or manufacturing often still form the basis of the economic performance. Therefore, in developing countries, the export of higher education is only slowly being seen as an area of economic growth. This will become apparent later in this thesis, when Thailand's policies on internationalising higher education will be discussed.

Due to this change of the role of higher education and the simultaneously operating processes of globalisation, economic factors and the internationalisation of higher education have taken centre-stage for governments and also lead to a certain commercialisation of higher education. Unsurprisingly, economic rationales for actions in the internationalising environment rank highly. The argument of economic growth and competitiveness through an improved development of human resources is at the centre of the assumption of the commercialisation of higher education. The rationale is that economic growth and competitiveness are the most important reasons for investment into higher education because it will have a positive effect on technological development. The Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs of the European Union is a clear example of an application of this rationale. It includes 24 guidelines on macro- and microeconomic policies and also includes provisions on education. Guideline no 24 for example states that the Member States should have the goal of:

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[102] Knight, Jane. "Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, Rationales.", 25.; de Wit, 83.

[103] See below for a more detailed theoretical discussion of the effects of human resource movements.

[104] Gürüz K. **Higher education and international student mobility in the global knowledge economy**. State Univ of New York, 2008.

"enlarging possibilities for mobility for students" and "responding to new occupational needs, key competences and skill requirements".[105] These policies are an example of the increased link between higher education and economic growth, a fact that even the EU, as a regional organisation unit, seems to have realised and taken on board. In an international context and a global pool of willing students, states try to attract foreign students by giving them research grants and facilitating a future career, so they can become the decision-makers of tomorrow. By investing in foreign students, states hope that either a large percentage of the students will continue to live in the country or at least keep having a special relationship, which could eventually be economically beneficial, to it. Through this special relationship between the moving student and the host country, which ideally emerges, the visiting student can act an "ambassador" for the host. Additionally, an increase in the international dimension of teaching is encouraged. Governments hope to equip students better in an international economic environment by increasing studies in intercultural understanding and languages.[106] The second rationale, the labour market is closely connected to the first one. Since labour markets have become more internationalised due to more open borders and government-schemes facilitating skilled migration, graduates face greater competition for jobs in a more international environment. Therefore, there is a certain demand for "internationalised" graduates, from multi-national corporations and governments alike. Through people-to-people links, a country like Thailand can benefit from foreign students, since they will inevitably internationalise other students, thus increase also the domestic human resources. Again linked to the education of human resources is a rationale, which is more pronounced in smaller countries. The domestic institutes cannot meet national demand for educated graduates in many countries, either because they lack the quality of teaching or the quantity of available study spaces. Therefore, countries such as Singapore send highly talented students abroad in order to increase their human resources.[107] Eventually, the students must return home and can benefit the home economy through their acquired skills and knowledge. This external education is especially important for developing countries, which struggle to equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge. The final economic rationale is the direct generation of income through internationalising higher education, by which the higher education institute can benefit from student fees, and the economy can benefit as a whole through the expenses of the visiting student. Exporting education is a recent trend, which has reached a rather big dimension for some important exporters. A calculation of the value of export of tertiary

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[105] European Commission. **Communication to the Spring European Council: Working together for Growth and Jobs: Integrated guidelines for growth and Jobs (2005-2008)**. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2005.

[106] Knight. Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, Rationales. , 22.

[107] de Wit, 91.

education (by means of foreign students studying in the host country) of the five leading exporters (United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and New Zealand) estimates a total amount of 28.3 billion US\$ in 2005, up from 16.6 billion US\$ in 1999.[108] This increase in the trade of higher education is on the one hand caused by globalisation in general, but also by the active role that governments are taking in promoting their country is an education destination, again for primarily economic reasons. Another parallel development of the increase in higher education trade has been the development of foreign programmes and institutions, such as branch campuses, double or joint degrees, twinning, franchised and validated programmes, as well as distance learning.[109] Governments perceive this growth as beneficial for the country due to economic considerations but also due to the increased income of institutes, thereby easing the pressure for government financing.[110] This is more the case in Anglo-Saxon countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia and New Zealand, but much less in continental Europe.[111]

Purely political rationales of pursuing a strategy of internationalising higher education are not frequent and often mixed with social rationales. Nation building is a particularly important rationale, has however somewhat lost its original meaning. Traditionally, universities used to be, and still are in some countries, at the heart of a government-driven nation building effort. Nowadays however, financially weak nation-states, who cannot afford to provide good education to its citizens, rather tend to import education. By importing higher education, they are thus also importing development and technical assistance, which can in turn contribute to their nation-building process. Talented individuals, which have studied abroad and acquired important human resources can become opinion leaders in their home country, once returned, and thus contribute to the social-, political- and economic nation building. Public diplomacy is a rationale, which is gaining increasing importance. By fostering ties with other countries, it is hoped that an economic, political or social engagement between countries is something like a diplomatic investment into the future. Students play a particularly important role in this Furthermore, incoming students are expected to develop affection for the host country, an understanding of its political system, its culture and its economy.[112] Thus, exchange students can become "lifelong ambassadors" and carriers of identity for the host country. Countries such as the United States (Fulbright), Great Britain

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[108] Bashir S. Trends in International Trade in Higher Education: Implications and Options for Developing Countries. Education Working Paper Series, Number 6. **World Bank Publications** 2007; 98.

[109] Bashir, 29.

[110] de Wit, 91.

[111] Ibd.

[112] Ibd, 85.

(British Council), Germany (DAAD), Japan (Japan Foundation) operate large schemes of scholarships, in order to attract the most able students.[113] Similarly, the rationale of strategic alliances also concerns geo-political arguments. It is said that governments strategically support the internationalisation of higher education through exchanges or collaborative research with selected partners.[114] Thus, governments hope to increase ties with these selected countries, in order to commonly increase their competitive edge. This rationale could be seen as one of the reasons, why common, EU-wide policies on higher education are being intensified. Fostering peace and mutual understanding is a rationale, which perhaps does not quite carry the weight of political and economic rationales. Nevertheless, this original of all rationales, which dominated in early internationalisation efforts, is argued to still carry some importance.[115] Perhaps however, as suspected by Knight, this rationale is more dominant on the institutional level than on the nation-state level.

| ECONOMIC | | POLITICAL & SOCIAL | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Rationale* | *Benefits* | *Rationale* | *Benefits* |
| **Economic growth & competitiveness** | Improved economic growth through better education | **Nation building** | Building of national identity; can be imported |
| **Global labour market** | Internationalised graduates more successful | **Public diplomacy** | Diplomatic investment in future ties |
| **National demand** | Import of education, if own demand cannot be met | **Strategic alliances** | (Regional) collaboration in HE, more efficiency |
| **Generation of income** | Binding graduates to host country; easing of financing pressures for governments | **Peace and mutual understanding** | Fostering peace through international linkages |

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[113] Institute of International Education. **Fulbright**[online].http://us.fulbrightonline.org/home.html (2009, 23 October). British Council. **British Council**[online].http://www.britishcouncil.org/new/ (2009, 23 October).; Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst. **DAAD**[online].http://www.daad.de/en/index.html (2009, 2 October). Japan Foundation. **Japan Foundation**[online].http://www.jpf.go.jp/e/ (2009, 23 October).

[114] Knight. Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, Rationales., 24.

[115] Ibd, 25.

**Table 2: Economic and Political Rationales for Internationalisation of Higher Education[116]**

In this short analysis of rationales of mainly nation-states in being active in supporting the process of internationalisation, a trend towards "hard" economic or political rationales can be traced. This trend is due to the commercialisation of higher education and globalisation processes in general. Additionally, "soft" factors such as public diplomacy and strategic alliances are becoming increasingly important, as the competition between nation-states for human resources intensifies.

According to de Wit, cross-border student circulation is *"the most important factor in the process of higher education's internationalization"*.[117] How do the cross-border student movements then fit into the picture of concerted efforts of nation-states, regional organisations and higher education institutes, which are internationalising higher education? It could be said that the students, similar to nation-states and other actors are also actors, which internationalise higher education, mainly through cross-border movements. On the one hand, cross-border movements have been facilitated by globalisation (freer flow of information) but also by the efforts of internationalisation of higher education institutes (through exchange programmes) and national governments (easing legal constraints for crossing borders for the purpose of education). On the other hand however, the increasing popularity of studying abroad has increased the demand for internationalisation for higher education institutes and governments alike. In this case, Marginson and van der Wende describe cross-border student movements as an important *driver* of internationalisation and globalisation.[118] Contrary to other actors, the motivations of students for *driving* internationalisation are however not called rationales, but rather outlined by describing the push- and pull-factors of students for crossing borders.

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[116] Knight. Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, Rationales.; de Wit.; Own source.

[117] De Wit H, Agarwal P, Said ME, Sehoole MT, Sirozi M. **The Dynamics of International Student Circulation in a Global Context**. Sense Publishers, 2008.

[118] Marginson S, van der Wende M. **Globalisation and Higher Education**. *Education Working Paper No.8*. Paris: OECD, 2007.

## 2.3. The Movement of Human Resources

Some of the economic, political and social rationales for national governments to attract international students have already been mentioned above. Whereas political and social rationales contribute to a better standing of the country in world affairs or a more peaceful world in general, economic ones are centred on immediate or long-term gains of wealth. Within the economic rationales, the argument that improved human resources will lead to increased national wealth is somewhat dominant. Therefore, this argument will be elaborated further in this chapter on the movement of human resources.

According to Romer and Straubhaar, a differentiation of human resources into human capital and knowledge is necessary.[119] Human capital, or human skills are embodied in the person who owns them. Therefore, skills are excludable from other people and, since they can only be consumed by one person at a time, it can be said that skills are akin to a private good.[120] The classification of human knowledge however is more difficult. On the one hand, knowledge is clearly non-rivalrous, meaning that knowledge is not tied to an individual. The question of excludability however cannot be answered easily. This is the case because whereas most human knowledge is available to everyone at a very low cost, some knowledge is internalised in firms through property rights. A clear differentiation between human skills and knowledge is hardly possible. Since skills are needed to create new knowledge, knowledge is not entirely inseparable from persons. Additionally, complicated knowledge is also much more easily acquirable by people who already possess skills in a similar area. Therefore, highly skilled people create locally limited positive externalities, which can be called spillovers, or clusters of knowledge. According to the New Growth Theory, which aims to explain the importance of different factors in economic growth, human resources form a crucial part of the determination of economic wellbeing for a country.[121] Since human resources are so crucial in the determination of economic growth, and since the presence of highly skilled people are creating positive externalities in terms of the creation of knowledge (brain gains), countries have an enormous interest in harbouring skills. In order to accumulate a high level of human resources, and thus a highly skilled and knowledgeable work base, countries have two options: either produce brain gains themselves through investing in education, or import human capital produced outside the country. Traditionally, countries

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[119] Straubhaar, 15. Romer.

[120] A private good is defined by its excludability (it is possible to hinder people from accessing it) and its rivalry (only one person can own it at a time). An example of a human skill would be the ability to play the bagpipe.

[121] Romer.

have solely invested in producing their own human capital. Lately however, especially since globalisation has lowered transaction costs, the import of human resources through the import of skilled workers has gained more importance. Since this thesis focuses on the movement of tertiary students, it is mainly interested in the second option, the import of highly skilled human resources.

In the discussion on the cross-border movement of people and its economic merits, a distinction between highly skilled and low-skilled migrants is usually made. This thesis focuses on the implications of the movement of educated migrants; hence a clarification of the term "highly skilled" is needed. Even though a number of definitions of the highly skilled workers exist in academia as well as in the different national immigration laws, similarities can be found. Herein, the OECD classification of highly skilled movements in four different types can act as a benchmark.

| Type | Name | Including |
|------|------|-----------|
| Type A | Core HS | Temporary movement; intra-corporate; researcher; specialist; professional (with degree or qualification) |
| Type B | Additional Channels | Business travellers; supply of services; **students** |
| Type C | Permanent HS | Permanent residence through employment- or points based immigration |
| Type D | Outside HS | Others |

**Table 3: Definition of the Highly Skilled**[122]

According to table 3, cross-border student movements are part of the additional channels of highly skilled movements. They do not form part of the core group of highly skilled (type A) because they have not achieved a higher formal qualification (degree) yet. Students are still part of highly skilled persons however, because they are in the process of acquiring skills and knowledge and might also have better access to the foreign labour market after graduation. [123] This inclusion is important, since this thesis will base some of its assumptions regarding the benefits of inwards tertiary student migration on theories of the movement of the highly skilled.

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[122] OECD, and Japan Institute of Labour, 33.
[123] Ibd.

### 2.3.1. Higher Education and Brain Drain, Brain Gain and Brain Exchange

As mentioned in the introduction, tertiary education has historically been a cosmopolitan field, whereby universities were heavily internationalised places of acquiring and sharing knowledge. After a period of nationalisation of higher education, students and thus also skills and knowledge can transfer borders relatively easily. Miyagiwa, confirming the argument by Straubhaar, asserts that the productivity of work increases with a higher concentration of similar professionals in one region.[124] Therefore, if a state can succeed in attracting a large number of highly skilled, clusters of knowledge, which are economically beneficial, can emerge. While tertiary students are not yet highly qualified per se, the environment of the universities, especially their research and academic activities as well as the people-to-people exchanges, can contribute immensely to the building of a local cluster of knowledge.

The movements of highly skilled, especially students, are largely concentrated on movements towards the rich, developed countries of the "North". Marginson classifies the global movements of students into three different categories.[125]

- Firstly, the student movements between OECD countries, which are mostly within Europe and on short-term basis.
- Secondly, the movements from developing countries, especially in Asia, to the English-language nations (USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand), Western Europe and Japan.
- Finally, the movements within importing nations through either branch campuses, distance learning, or through the inwards movement from other developing countries.[126]

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[124] Miyagiwa.
[125] Marginson, S. "Dynamics of National and Global Competition in Higher Education.", 18.
[126] Ibd.; A more detailed analysis of cross-border student flows will follow in Chapter 3.
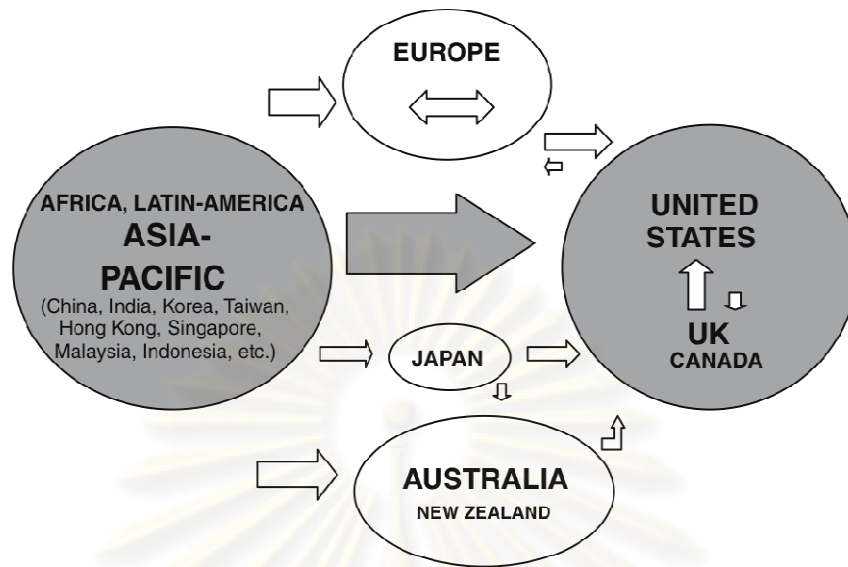
**Figure 2: Global Movements of Students**[127]

Figure 2 summarises the three different categories above into a diagram, which displays the main flows of tertiary students. Visibly, the United States and other developed countries as recipients of international student flows are dominating the picture of cross-border movements in higher education. Other noticeable flows in terms of numbers of movements are within Europe, as well as from other Asia-Pacific countries to Japan. Movements between developing countries are developing, but still negligible compared to the dominating movements.

As can be seen from this short and general introduction to international student flows, the developing countries, among them Thailand, generally suffer from a net loss of students to the developed countries. This constitutes a problem for developing countries, because firstly, a share of the students will not return, and secondly, precious human skills and knowledge, which could contribute to the development of the country, are overseas. According to Marginson, the net brain drain in terms of the outwards movement of students is concentrated on countries with *"the least capacity to attract inward flows of students and graduates to compensate for outward flows"*.[128] Therefore, it could be suggested that for countries with a large net outflow of students, the cross-border movement of students created negative externalities, or a brain drain. A brain drain can be defined as: *"emigration of skilled and*

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[127] Marginson, S. Dynamics of National and Global Competition in Higher Education., 19.
[128] Marginson, S. Five Somersaults in Enschede: Rethinking Public/Private in Higher Education for the Global Era., 210.

*professional personnel from developing countries to advanced industrialised nations".*[129] Following this logic, it would be economically beneficial to attract a high number of foreign students, and countries must promote themselves as study-abroad destinations while facilitating immigration procedures. This is however a strongly simplified logic, and certain reservations must be made. Importantly, Solimano and Pollack state: "not all departure of qualified human resources has to be considered as a *brain drain".*[130] On the contrary, in the long run, the emigration of qualified people might even entail a human resource gain for the exporting country. An important component of such an argument would be the return rate of the emigrated people. If education is inadequate in the home country, emigrants have a chance to accumulate knowledge and skills while abroad. This is especially the case for students, which can have the chance to study at respectable universities with the latest technological equipments and facilities and the best professors, therefore having better chances of acquiring knowledge and skills. While abroad, students and other highly skilled often establish "knowledge networks" among their fellow nationals, whereby the emigrants can exchange information and knowledge, as well as keep in touch with their home country. Additionally, it is highly likely that highly skilled emigrants will periodically travel to their home country, thereby again transferring knowledge and skills back to the home country. Thus, a large amount of skilled people abroad can benefit the sending country through increased inwards knowledge flows and collaboration, for example with research institutes abroad. Through people-to-people links, emigrants can also act as overseas ambassadors, promoting their home country abroad.

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[129] Lee JJ, Maldonado-Maldonado A, Rhoades G. The political economy of international student flows: Patterns, ideas, and propositions. **HIGHER EDUCATION-NEW YORK-** 2006; 21 545.

[130] Solimano and Pollack.

| SENDING COUNTRIES: POSSIBLE POSITIVE EFFECTS | RECEIVING COUNTRIES: POSSIBLE POSITIVE EFFECTS |
|---|---|
| **Development effects**<br>* Increased knowledge flows and collaboration, higher international mobility leads to increased ties with foreign research institutions<br>* Export opportunities for technology<br>* Remittances and venture capital from diasporas networks<br>* Successful overseas entrepreneurs bring valuable management experience, capital and increased access to global networks<br><br>**Human capital effects**<br><br>* Increased incentive for natives to seek higher skills<br><br>* Possibility of exporting skills reduces risk/raises expected return form investment in education at individual level. | **Development and Technology Effects**<br>*Increased R&D due to enhanced availability of individuals with a higher stock of knowledge<br><br>*Inflow of entrepreneurship<br>* Knowledge flows and collaboration with sending countries<br>* Immigrants can foster diversity and creativity<br>* Creation of export opportunities for technology<br><br>**Higher education systems and fiscal effects**<br>* Increased enrolment in graduate programmes<br><br>   • Renewal of faculty and researchers<br>   • Increased tax revenues levied on human capital<br><br>**Labour Market**<br>*Easing of labour shortages of high skill workers. Wage moderation in high growth sectors with labour shortages<br>*Immigrant entrepreneurs foster job creation<br>*Immigrants can act as magnets for accessing other immigrant labour (network hiring effects) |
| SENDING COUNTRIES: POSSIBLE NEGATIVE EFFECTS | RECEIVING COUNTRIES: POSSIBLE NEGATIVE EFFECTS |
| **Human capital and fiscal effects**<br>* "Brain drain" , lose of productive potential due to (at least temporary) absence of higher skilled workers and human capital<br>   • Lower returns from public investment in tertiary education (waste of national public resources)<br>   • Loss of fiscal revenues from taxation of human capital | **Higher education systems**<br>*Decreased incentive of natives to seek higher skills in certain fields. Crowding-out of native students for foreign students form best schools<br>**Science and technology**<br>*Technology transfers to foreign competitors and possible "hostile" countries in situations of potential conflict. |

| POSSIBLE GLOBAL EFFECTS |
|---|
| * Increased flows of knowledge across countries, formation of international research/technology clusters (Silicon Valley, CERN).<br>* Increased efficiency in global labor markets for high skills workers, researchers, information technology experts.<br>* Increased concentration of global expenditure in science and technology in OECD countries.<br>* International global competition for scarce human capital raises, incentives for individual human capital formation<br>  Increase in global real income due to human capital reallocation from lower return countries to higher return countries.<br>* Increases in global inequality |

**Table 4: Economic Effects of Highly Skilled Migration[131]**

Table 4 summarises the possible effects of migration of highly skilled on both, the sending and the receiving countries. Clearly, the cross-border emigration of highly skilled, including tertiary students does not simply have negative consequences. Moreover, the cross-border movement of highly skilled entails a complex situation of brain circulation. Especially

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[131] Solimano and Pollack, 13.

regarding developing countries, some studies have shown that it is possible to reap economic benefits from emigrating human resources.[132]

### 2.3.2. Motivations, Push- and Pull Factors for Movement

Studies and models on the motivations of students to cross a border for higher education form the immediate theoretical basis of the research question of this thesis. The motivations for cross-border movement are usually determined by describing the push- and pull-factors that either push students away from the home country or pull them towards the hosting country. Such factors of course depend strongly on the respective flows and also on the individual. Nevertheless, there are general theories and models on the factors, which influence the cross-border movement of tertiary students.

Similar to most general studies on the cross-border movement of tertiary students, the majority of push- and pull-factor models also focus on the South-North movement. The central question of this thesis will be whether these models, which suggest relatively similar motivations, can be applied to the movement of European students to Thailand. As mentioned in the literature review above, there are different types of studies and models on the push- and pull factors of studying abroad. The first group creates general models without apparent empirical research. These models are mostly describing South-North cross-border flows of students. The second group estimates the deciding push- and pull factors based on calculations centred on economic theories. The third group on the other hand employs an inductive technique. Researchers belonging to this group attempt to generate models of push- and pull factors on the basis of empirical research (interviews, surveys). Generally accepted by most researchers of push- and pull factors of students moving abroad is the differentiation of the prevailing factors into educational, economic, political and social factors.

Altbach belongs to the first, "generalist" group and proposes a model containing the following factors, affecting the decision to study abroad made by students from developing countries.

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[132] Beine, Michel, Docquier, Fréderic, and Rapoport, Hillel.

| Home Country (Push Factors) | Host country (Pull Factors) |
|---|---|
| Availability of scholarships for study abroad | Availability of scholarships to international students |
| Poor-quality educational facilities | Good-quality education |
| Lack of research facilities | Availability of advanced research facilities |
| Lack of appropriate educational facilities and/or failure to gain admission to local institution(s) | Availability of appropriate educational facilities with likely offer of admission |
| Politically ungenial situation | Congenial political situation |
| Enhanced value (in the market place) of a foreign degree | Congenial socioeconomic and political environment |
| Discrimination against minorities | Opportunity for general international life experience |
| Recognition of inadequacy of existing forms of traditional education | |

**Table 5: Push- and Pull Factor Model by Altbach[133]**

The model authored by Altbach shown in Table 5 focuses primarily on educational factors. According to this model, the main factors influencing a student's decision to study abroad are the availability of scholarships to cover the cost of education abroad, the differing educational and research facilities and teaching methods, as well as a possible difficulty to gain admission to a local institution. Social, political and economic factors are also mentioned, receive however not the importance of the educational factors.

McMahon uses a different method, setting up two hypotheses concerning the flow of students from developing countries to the United States, which are subsequently tested through calculations employing economic formulae and theories. The two hypotheses are the following:

 1 The flow of students out from a Third World nation to the world at large varied directly with the level of the sending country's economic strength, its involvement in global trade, state emphasis on education and lower levels of home educational opportunities.

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[133] Altbach, Philip G. **Comparative Higher Education: Knowledge, the University, and Development,** 172.

2  The flow of students to the USA varied directly with measures of the economic capacity of the sending nation relative to that of the U.S., levels of trade between the U.S. and the sending nation, the flow of U.S. foreign assistance to the sending nation, and levels of institutional support from the United States. [134]

The study was carried out in the 1960s and 1970s, so its validity for today's motivations could be limited. Regarding the hypotheses, two different models were proposed: a "push" and a "pull" model. The push model describes the number of students studying abroad relative to the home country tertiary enrolment in a given year. This percentage of abroad students is then determined by the following factors, all connected to the home country: Economic power (Gross Domestic Product (GDP)/capita), level of international trade, percentage of national resources spent on education, school enrolment percentage.[135] All the four mentioned variables therefore influence the outflow of students. The pull model on the other hand describes the variables, which can affect the concentration of students in one centre, e.g. the United States The determining factors are again the relative wealth (GDP/capita), the economic linkage between the sending country and the United States. (measured in the concentration of sending nation trade with the United States), the United States' political interest in the sending nation (foreign assistance relative to the GDP) and the United States' support for international students (percentage of foreign students supported by United States funding). [136] Using this model as a determinant of cross-border movements between countries would render the level of higher education movements between any two countries calculable. These calculations are mainly based on the level of economic disparity and the economic and political engagement of the hosting nation with the sending nation in both, the "push" and the "pull" model. The "push" model considers the economic and educational failings of the home country and would therefore lead to picture where relatively poor countries with inadequate educational facilities export the most students. The application of the "pull" model would result in a somewhat international realist model, whereby the states where large developed nation-states have the biggest political and economic interests would also send the most students. In any case, McMahon's model fails to explain North-South movements of students, which, even though not numerous, still exist. Additionally, personal preferences and perceptions of potential abroad students are not considered. A group of researchers employs an inductive technique. Researchers belonging to this group attempt to generate models of push- and pull factors on the basis of empirical research (interviews,

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[134] McMahon, 467.
[135] Ibd.
[136] Ibd, 469.

surveys). One example of this technique is the study on Mainland Chinese students in SAR Macau and SAR Hong Kong, conducted by Li and Bray.
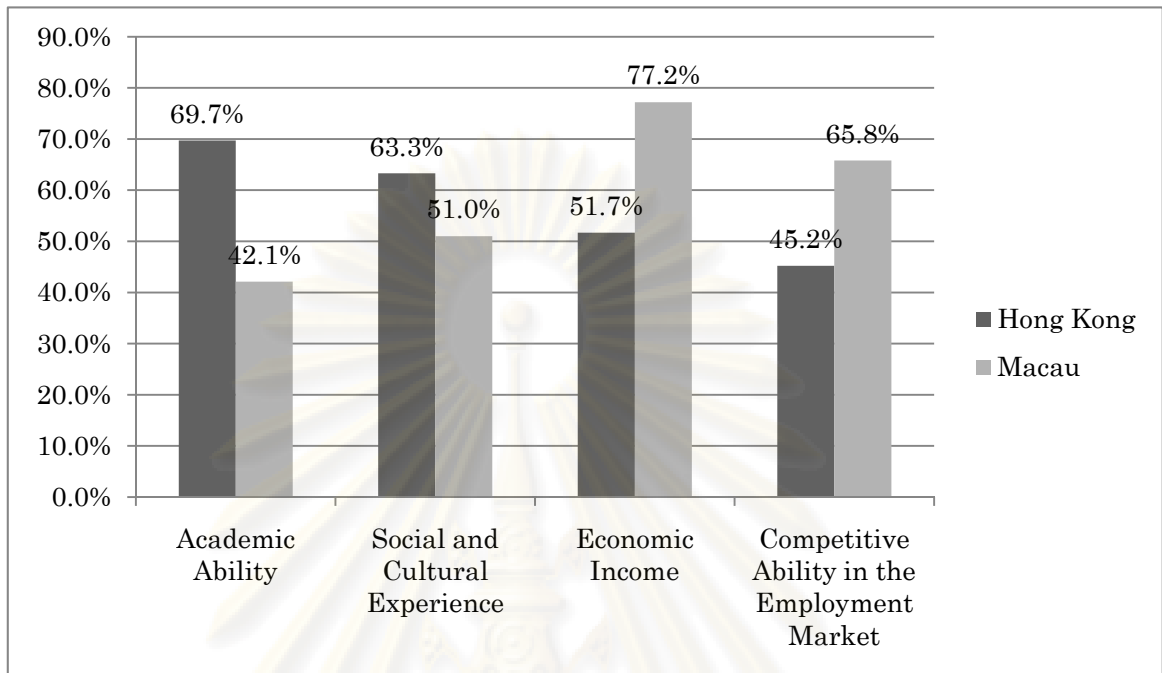


**Figure 3: Pull-Factors for Chinese Students in SAR Macau and SAR Hong Kong**[137]

This study on pull-factors, which is based on 323 surveys of Mainland Chinese students studying in SAR Macau or SAR Hong Kong, demonstrates the diversity of factors, which contribute to students crossing borders for education. Whereas in the case of Hong Kong, academic and socio-cultural motivations dominate, the case of Macau emphasises the economic component of pull-factors. The same students were also asked about the reasons why they left Mainland China in the first place for tertiary education.

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[137] Li, M, and Bray, M., 802.
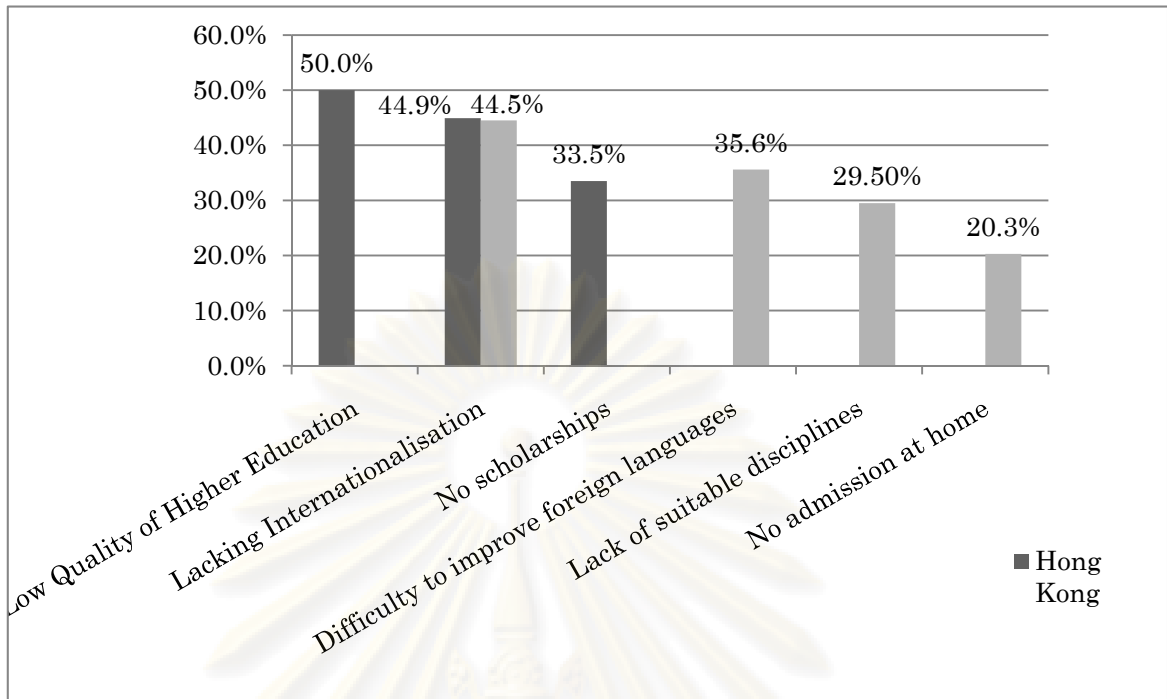
**Figure 4: Push-Factors for Chinese Students in SAR Macau and SAR Hong Kong**[138]

Figure 4 shows the reasons for leaving Mainland China for higher education. In this case, most students depart their home country because of educational reasons, be it the low quality of the education or the lacking internationalisation. This study by Li and Bray is particularly significant for this thesis because it does not focus on the traditional flows from the developing countries in Asia to the developed English-speaking countries. Even though the student flow between Mainland China and Hong Kong, respectively Macau differs from the usual flows researched on, it still reflects a cross-border movement from a developing country to a more developed region.[139]

The extensive study by Mazzarol and Soutar, on the contrary, researches a rather typical cross-border flow of students: from Indonesia, Taiwan, India and China to Australia. Between 1996 and 2000, Mazzarol and Soutar interviewed 404 Indonesians, 361 Taiwanese, 152 Indians and 689 Chinese between 1996 and 2000 on behalf of Australia Education International (AEI) and the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs

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[138] Li, M, and Bray, M., 805.

[139] CIA World Factbook estimations of GDP/capita (PPP) for China: 6,000 US$ (2008 est.); Macau: 30,000 US$ (2007); Hong Kong: 43,800 US$ (2008 est.).CIA. **The World Factbook - Country Comparison: GDP - Per Capita (PPP)**[online].https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html?countryName=China&countryCode=ch&regionCode=eas&rank=133#ch (2009, 1 December).

(DETYA).[140] All 1606 interviewees were future international students. Frequently, a typology of educational, economic, social/environmental, political push- and pull factors is used in order to group the factors and gain a better overview over their respective importance. In the following four Tables, the results of the survey conducted by Mazzarol and Soutar are used and reformatted according to the typology. This typology will also be used later for the analysis of the European students in Thailand.
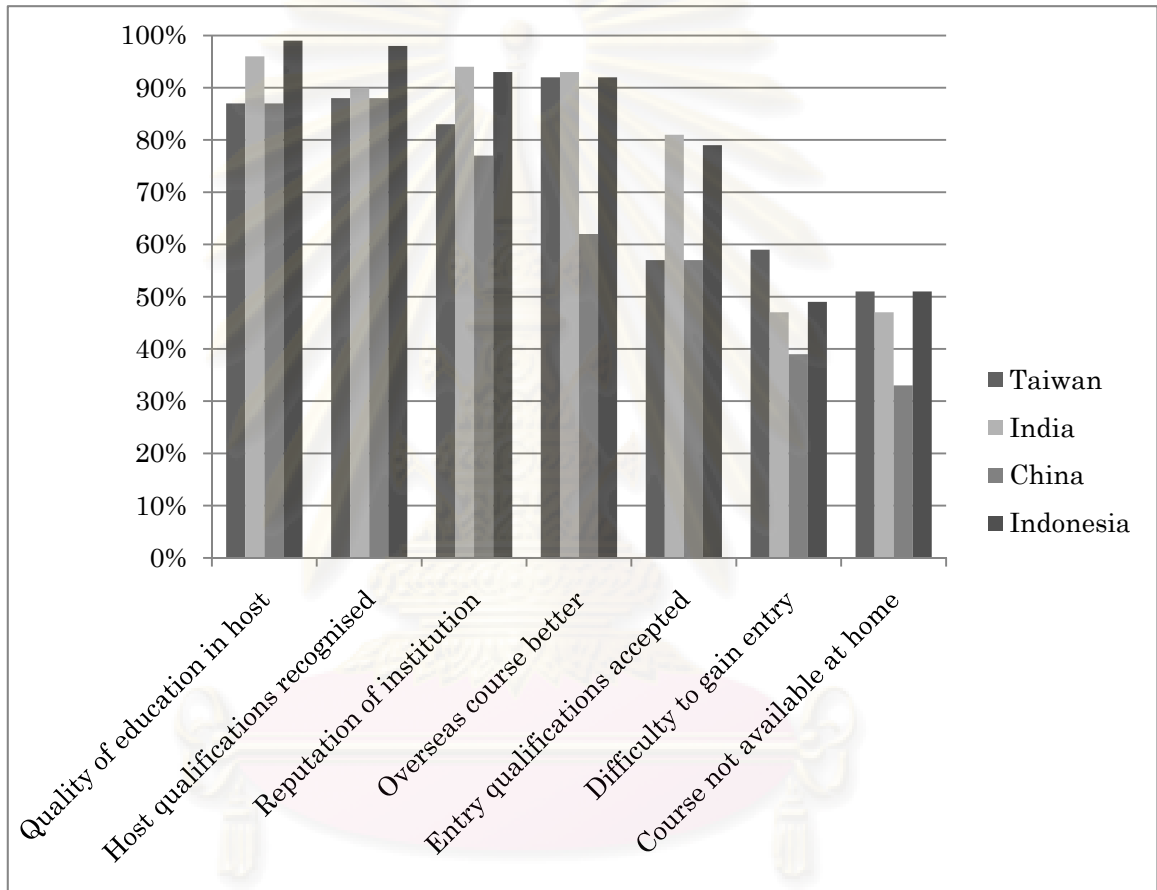


**Figure 5: Educational Push- and Pull Factors[141]**

Figure 5 shows the educational motivations for students from the four mentioned countries to study overseas. Ranking very highly are factors associated with the high quality of education and courses as well as the reputation of the institution abroad. Interestingly, it seems that

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[140] The fact that such studies on the push- and pull factors of potential international students are conducted with the support of national government agencies reflects the status of internationalised education as a crucial economic and political factor for certain countries.

[141] Mazzarol, T, and Soutar, GN. "Push-Pull' Factors Influencing International Student Destination Choice.", 87.

students from the four Asian countries can mostly find a similar course at home, but chose to study abroad. In all four countries, the reputation of the institution is considered to be an important factor in the decision-making process. Taking the segmentation of higher education institutes by Marginson, elite universities in the United States and the United Kingdom, followed by prestige-driven national research universities in the other English-speaking countries, (Canada, Australia) Western Europe and Japan represent the two highest segments of higher education institutes. These are also the institutes, which have the best reputation. Developing countries on the other hand face an upward struggle to achieve a higher status than Segment 4. Therefore, it is also extremely difficult for universities in developing countries to achieve a reputation, which could lift the student's value on the employment market due to the highly reputable degree.

| Segment 1<br>World market of<br>elite universities | The American doctoral sector and the high prestige universities in UK. Prestige not profit-driven. Prestige rests on research reputation and global power of degree |
|---|---|
| Segment 2<br>Exporting national<br>research universities | Research universities in the UK, Canada, Australia, Europe, Japan. Prestige-driven at national level but often run foreign degrees as a profit-making business |
| Segment 3<br>Teaching-focused<br>export institutions | Lesser status institutions in the export nations, operating commercially in the global market, catering to a lower cost/ lower quality echelon of foreign education. |
| Segment 4<br>Nationally-bound<br>research universities | Prestige providers within a single nation, normally research intensive universities. Nationally competitive with Segment 2 (but not 1), minor cross-border role |
| Segment 5<br>Lesser status national/<br>local institutions | Confined to national competition and local demand. No cross-border role. The largest group of institutions, especially in importing nations |

**Figure 6: Segmentation of Higher Education Institutes**[142]

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[142] Marginson, S. Dynamics of National and Global Competition in Higher Education, 21.
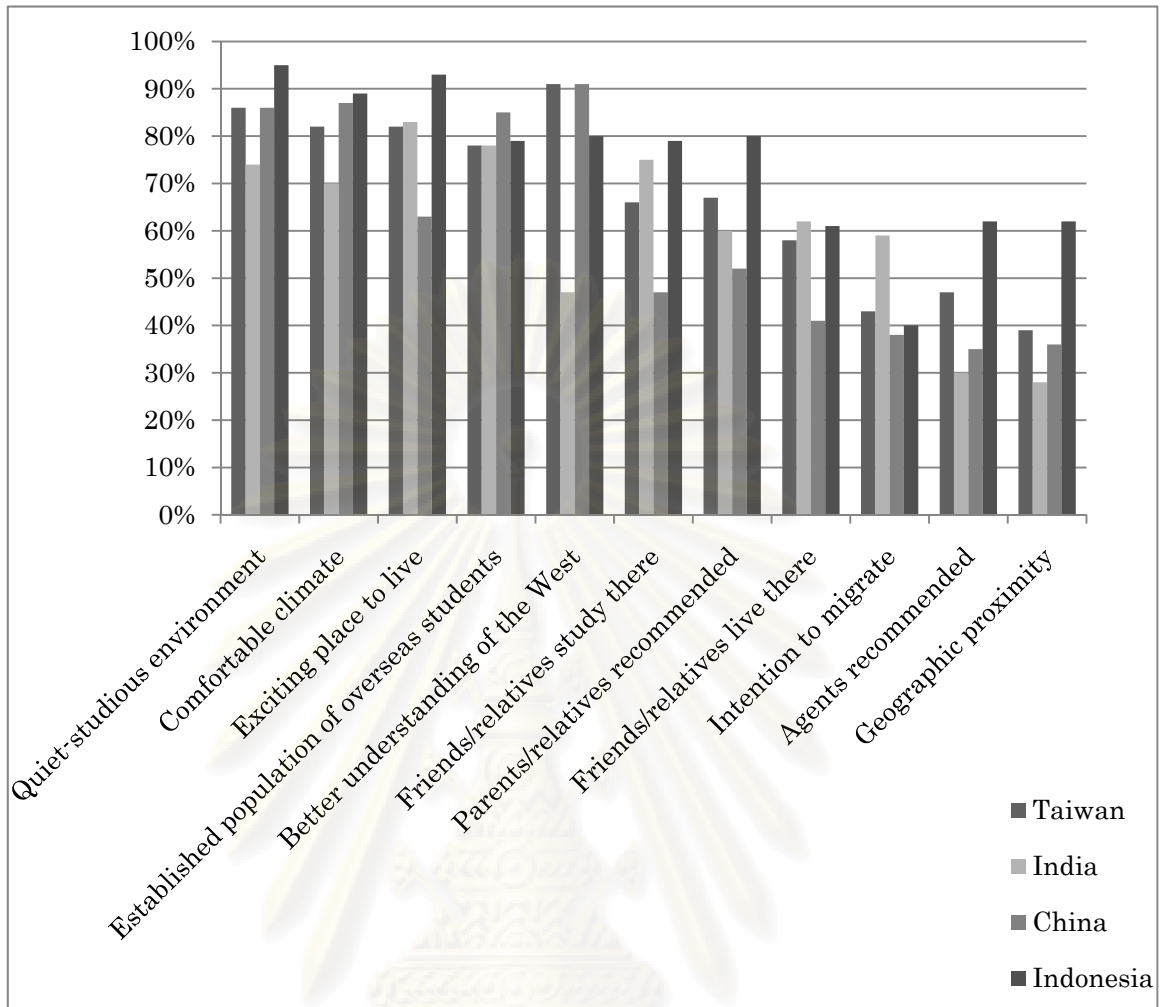
**Figure 7: Social/Environmental Push- and Pull Factors**[143]

Social and environmental push- and pull factors are often underestimated and do not feature prominently in the general model by Altbach. Therefore, the classification of these social and environmental factors is perhaps the most insightful data from this study. These push- and pull factors show that the environment in which the studies are taking place can be at least as important as the factors immediately associated with academia. Thus, factors like the climate and the exciting or quiet and studious environment rank among the highest. Social connections are also extremely important. Having an established population of overseas students from the same country, or friends/relatives staying in a country can be important factors for studying in a specific country. This shows that people-to-people contacts are a tremendously important factor in the decision-making of students going abroad. This factor of people-to-people contacts will later be picked up again when the decision-making of

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[143] Mazzarol, T, and Soutar, GN. Push-Pull' Factors Influencing International Student Destination Choice., 87.

European students studying in Thailand, and the possible benefits for Thailand will be researched. Another important motivation for the Asian students was the willingness to gain a better understanding of the West. This motivation could be compared with Li and Bray's "social and cultural experience" above in figure 3. This is interesting, since it is often assumed that migration is predominantly taking place within similar cultural spheres (see also the study by McMahon, which predicts higher flows from third countries to the United States, where the United States economic and cultural influence is the greatest). The high curiosity for the "West" could be explained by the will to explore and experience something "different".
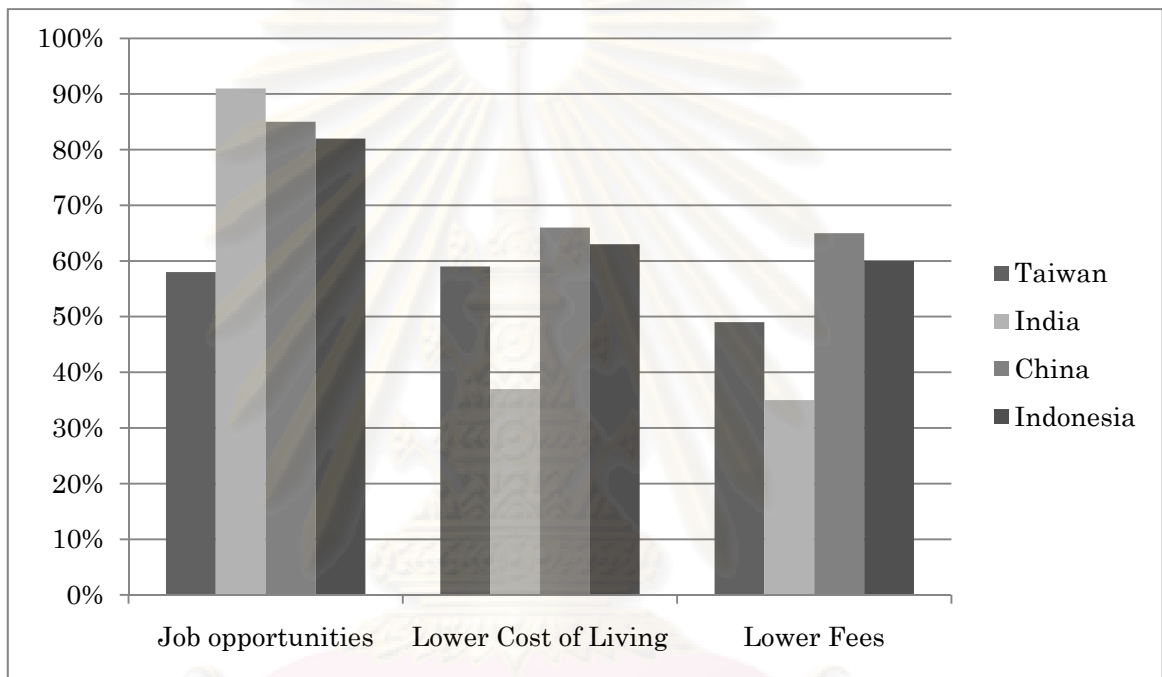


**Figure 8: Economic Push- and Pull Factors[144]**

The argument that highly qualified persons, and also students will benefit economically from moving, or studying abroad, is at the centre of most studies. Figure 8 somewhat confirms that the anticipation for better job opportunities is important to many students. Interestingly however some educational and also some environmental factors are at least as important as the expected future economic benefit. It could be argued however that some educational arguments such as the quality of education and the reputation of the institution imply an expected future economic gain. Therefore, economic factors can also be hidden in the educational ones.

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[144] Mazzarol, T, and Soutar, GN. Push-Pull' Factors Influencing International Student Destination Choice., 85.
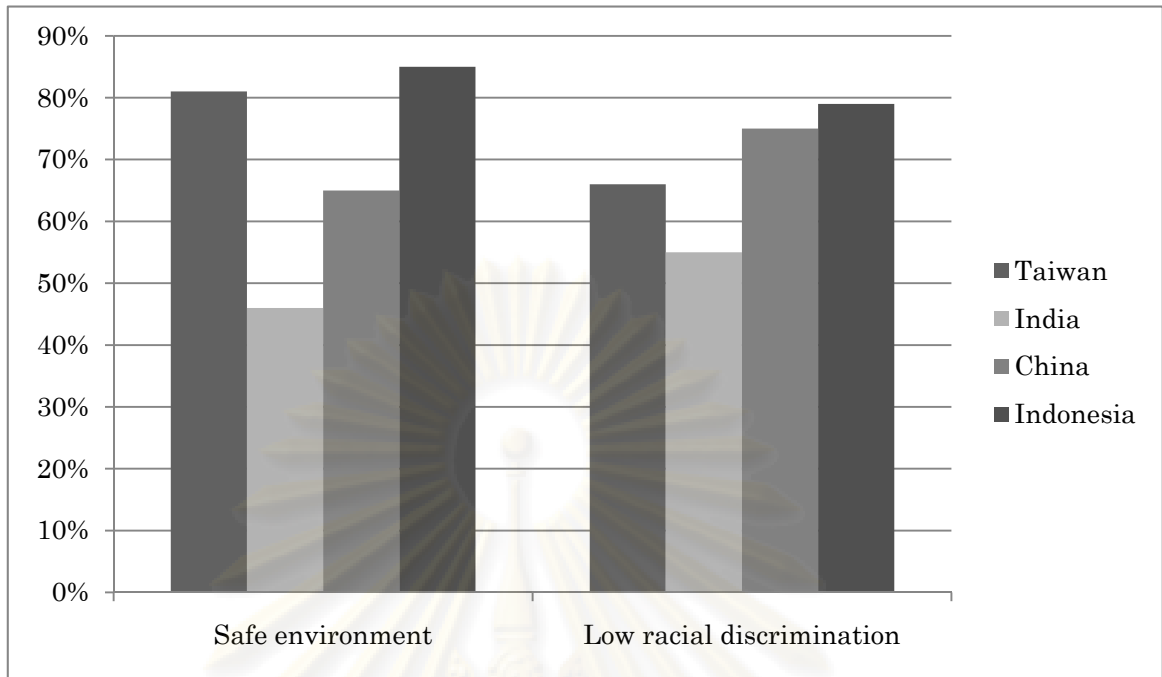
**Figure 9: Political Push- and Pull Factors[145]**

Finally, political factors for Asian students moving abroad are not quite as important as most educational, social/environmental and economic factors. It must be taken into account though that the two factors above only concern pull-factors, factors, which may help the student decide on the future country of education. Possible political push-factors, such minority discrimination at home, or a politically uncongenial situation (see Table 5, the model by Altbach) are not included, yet could be crucial in some cases. Such factors however do not help to determine where a student will move to, but rather explain why a student moves away from the home country.

This collection of four figures on the push- and pull factors in decision-making for international students in regards to their future study-abroad destination presents an overview of crucial factors in different fields. These influencing factors can give some hints into the decision-making process of potential international students. Many of the factors in the Mazzarol and Soutar study have not been mentioned in the more mainstream analysis of push- and pull-factors above, and could also be applied to European students considering studying in Thailand. The purpose of this detailed list of influencing factors for Taiwanese, Indian, Chinese and Indonesian students is not to discuss the precise outcome of the survey or to explain the differences among the different countries, but rather to demonstrate that the

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[145] Mazzarol, T, and Soutar, GN. Push-Pull' Factors Influencing International Student Destination Choice., 86.

decision-making process for students considering to move abroad for higher education purposes is extremely complex. In fact, the two first examples, the study by McMahon and to a lesser extent the general model by Altbach can be criticised for failing to incorporate personal, social and environmental factors, and have too heavily focused on (calculable) economic and educational factors. Even though the quality of education and the reputation of the institution (typical educational factors) are still ranking very highly, social and environmental factors such as an established overseas population, or even friends and relatives studying or living in the host nation, a good environmental mix of an exciting life and a quiet-studious environment are also crucial. For a developing country like Thailand, it is very difficult to match the quality, the reputation and the job opportunities a reputable institution in a developed country can offer. Therefore, it could be mostly other, social and environmental factors, which can be decisive for attracting students.

A similar study, which analysed the push- and pull factors for studying abroad, and involved 1000 Asian undergraduate students from China; Hong Kong; China; India; Indonesia; Japan; Malaysia; Singapore; Korea; Chinese Taipei and Thailand studying in the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia at the time of the study (2001) reveals similar results.[146] Contrary to the study by Mazzarol and Soutar however, this study primarily determines the main unit of decision-making for studying abroad. (country, city, institution, course) . The results can be seen in the figure below.

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[146] Marginson, and McBurnie.
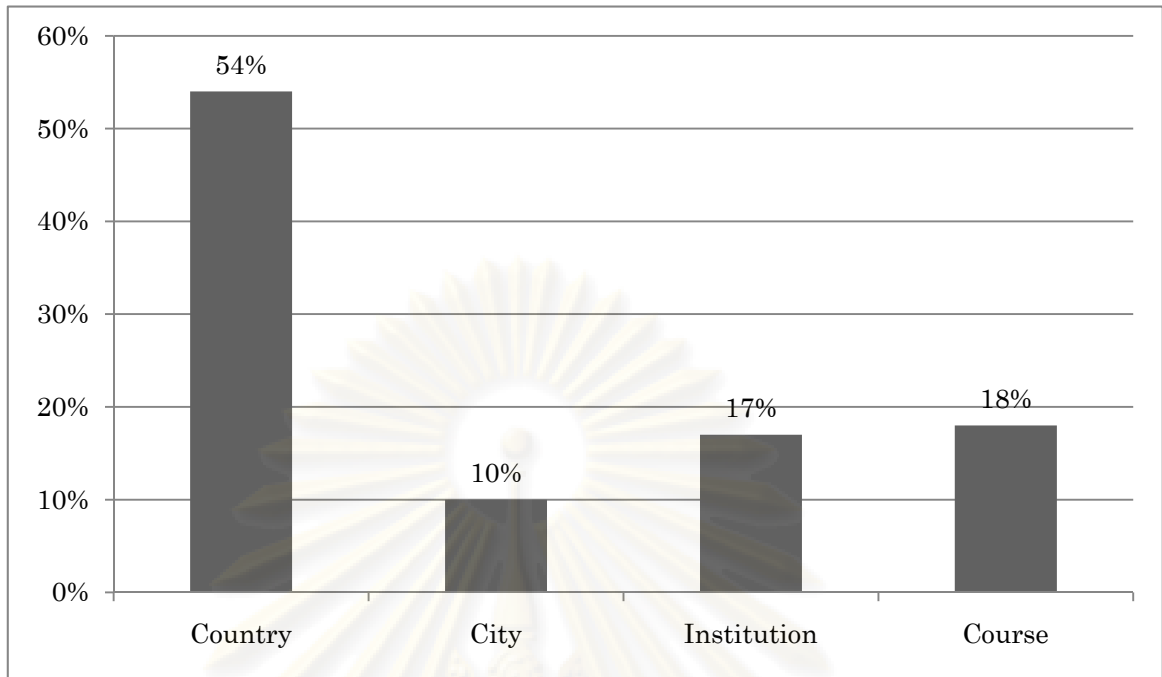
**Figure 10: Units of Decision-Making for Students Studying Abroad[147]**

The results of this survey have important consequences and add crucial information to the decision-making process of students considering studying abroad, as well as for the marketing of countries, cities or institutions as overseas study destinations. According to this survey, the majority of students make their decision on where to study based on the country. This means that the reputation of the country as a place for quality education with an ideal environment is perhaps the most important factor in decision-making. Therefore, marketing a country as a study-destination seems to be the most efficient. The second most important key factors, or units were the course and the institution. Students choosing these factors are likely to be motivated primarily by educational (quality and availability of the course, reputation and quality of education institute), but perhaps also by some economical factors (better chances in the employment market due to reputation of education institute). The survey also featured a more traditional question on the push- and pull factors of the students. The results are shown in Figure 11 below. [148]

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[147] Marginson and McBurnie.
[148] Ibd.
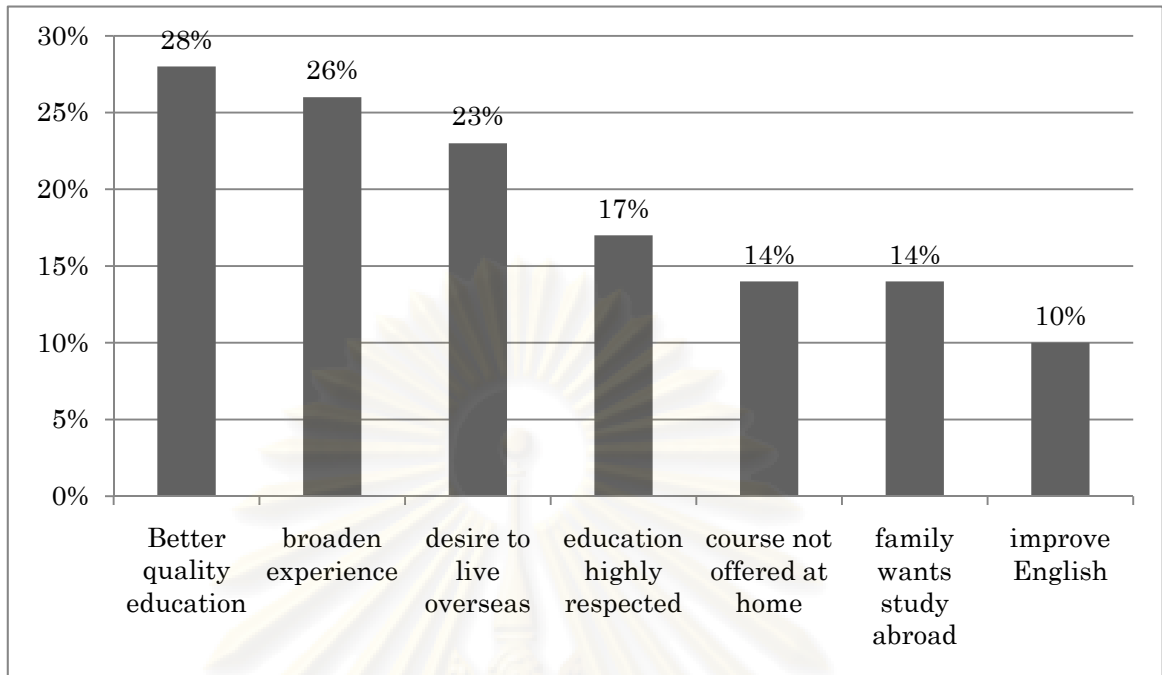
**Figure 11: Main Push- and Pull Factors for Studying Abroad[149]**

Figure 11, displaying the main push- and pull factors of 1000 Asian students studying abroad shows a similar picture to the survey above. Educational factors, especially the quality of education is dominating. Social and environmental factors, especially the desire to broaden experience and live overseas (similar to "better understanding of the West in figure 7 and "social and cultural experience" in figure 3) are almost equally important. Similarly to the previous survey, course-related factors, although important, do not quite rank as highly. The push-factor of the family wanting the student to move abroad for studying has not been mentioned in other studies. This factor is likely to be significantly less important in the decision-making process of Western students, who might consider studying in Thailand, since family ties tend to be stronger in Asian societies.

This extensive summary of surveys of push- and pull factors of students going abroad for study purposes have shown that the decision-making process is very complex and diverse. Therefore, general models of push- and pull factors are difficult to compile and most likely inaccurate and incomplete. Additionally, the vast majority of the studies target Asian students studying, or planning to study in an English-speaking developed country. Such studies are also often commissioned by governments, since attracting and retaining foreign students is a vital national policy of human resources in some countries (especially in Australia). This

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[149] Marginson and McBurnie, 172.

study however, researching European students in Thailand cannot count on any previous research on flows from the North to the South. Therefore, it will be immensely interesting to see whether the main factors will correspond the factors mentioned in the above surveys.

### 2.3.3. North-South Movements

Following the theoretical explanations above, which set the scene for the empirical part of this thesis, it becomes clear that most theories and models specifically research the movement of the South-North cross-border movement of the highly skilled, or students specifically. Since this thesis targets the contrarian flow though, from North to South, the application of such theories are slightly problematic. This thesis will therefore chose an inductive approach, and compare the push- and pull factors of European students in Thailand with the leading factors established in previous studies, especially the ones by Li and Bray, as well as by Mazzarol and Soutar.[150] Through this comparison, important knowledge can be gained regarding the differences of motivations in the South-North movement compared with the North-South movement of students. Since many of the main factors for cross-border movements of students include arguments centred on the expected improved economic fortunes thanks to a degree from an better-quality institution with a high reputation, it is hard for developing countries, whose universities are either situated in Stage 4 or 5 (according to Marginson's classification) to offer the same comparative advantage for students from developed countries. Therefore, it can be expected that the primary motivations for studying in a developing country, such as in Thailand, are different to the ones found in the South-North movement. Not only can students from Europe who study in Thailand be expected to defy economic arguments, and to a certain extent also educational arguments, but also the Huntingonian argument of dominating movements within civilisational borders. In short, they can be expected to look for a "different" experience, a change in the social environment, and perhaps also a change in the educational environment.

The effects of these movements on the sending and on the host country are however similar to the ones found in the South-North movement of skilled human resources. Since the actual numbers of persons moving from a developed country to a developing country are relatively small, the effects on the sending countries can be expected to be small. The effects on the receiving countries however (the developing country) could be substantial.[151] As

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[150] Li and Bray; Mazzarol and Soutar.
[151] A summarisation of the possible effects can be found above in Figure 3.

mentioned in the literature review above, research on skilled workers in developing countries, often called "expatriates", is relatively thin. Specific research on students on the other hand, is virtually inexistant. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, research on expatriates in developing countries, rather than studying their impact regarding the skill- and knowledge accumulation in the hosting country, largely concentrates on the sociological and psychological situation of expatriates in developing countries. Such research, even though targeting the same flow (North-South) as the thesis, is not helpful as a theoretical background.

# CHAPTER III

# THAILAND AND THE GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION MOVEMENT PATTERNS

Cross-border student circulation is at the centre of the internationalisation of higher education. Students are actors in the internationalisation model but their cross-border movements area also among the main drivers of the internationalisation of higher education. They are also perhaps the most visible outcome or symptom of the internationalisation of higher education. Hans de Wit therefore called the cross-border student circulation *"the most important factor in the process of higher education's internationalization"*.[152]

Cross-border student flows are also at the centre of this thesis. This chapter will determine and quantify the growth of global flows of students, in order to illustrate the rapidly increasing importance. In a second step, the main patterns of flows of student cross-border movement will be analysed. In the introductory and the theory part of this thesis, movements were generally distinguished between four categories: North-North, South-North, South-South and North-South. It was established that due to the prevalent rationales, South-North, as well as North-North movements are dominant. This thesis however focuses on European students in Thailand, and therefore finds itself in the realm of North-South movements. Whereas the motivations (rationales) of these movements are going to be discussed in the next chapter, this chapter focuses on the quantitative comparison of North-South movements (especially to Thailand) and the other three categories of movements.

## 3.1. Global Movement Patterns

Global cross-border movements of tertiary students have grown immensely in the last decades. Factors that have contributed to the accelerated growth include a general trend towards free flowing capital, goods and persons through regional unions and preferential trade agreements. Due to the increasing internationalisation and globalisation of business, more international graduates, competent in foreign languages are in demand. Therefore,

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[152] De Wit, H, P Agarwal, ME Said, MT Sehoole, and M Sirozi, 1.

governments are investing in mobility schemes to fund incoming as well as outgoing students, in order to increase their skills and knowledge. Universities are also increasingly operating in a global market, and therefore need to focus on attracting foreign students, for the improvement of the quality of teaching, but also in order to increase their reputation and financial situation. The global competition for human resources has also stifled and nation-states are fiercely competing for skilled persons. Tertiary education is paramount to building skills and knowledge, as well as retaining them in the own nation-state. Therefore, nation-states have an interest in a high number of incoming students.

The results of all these trends, motivations and contributors can be seen in figure 12, which displays the total foreign student enrolment in a given year. Clearly visible is the steady increase of foreign students from roughly 0.8 million in 1975 to 1.9 million in 2000.[153] After 2000 however, the increase is steeper, reaching 3 million students in 2007. Estimates for future foreign student enrolments by reputable authors and reports suggest that the increase will steepen again, as 5.8 million international students are projected for 2020, and finally up to 8 million in 2025.[154]
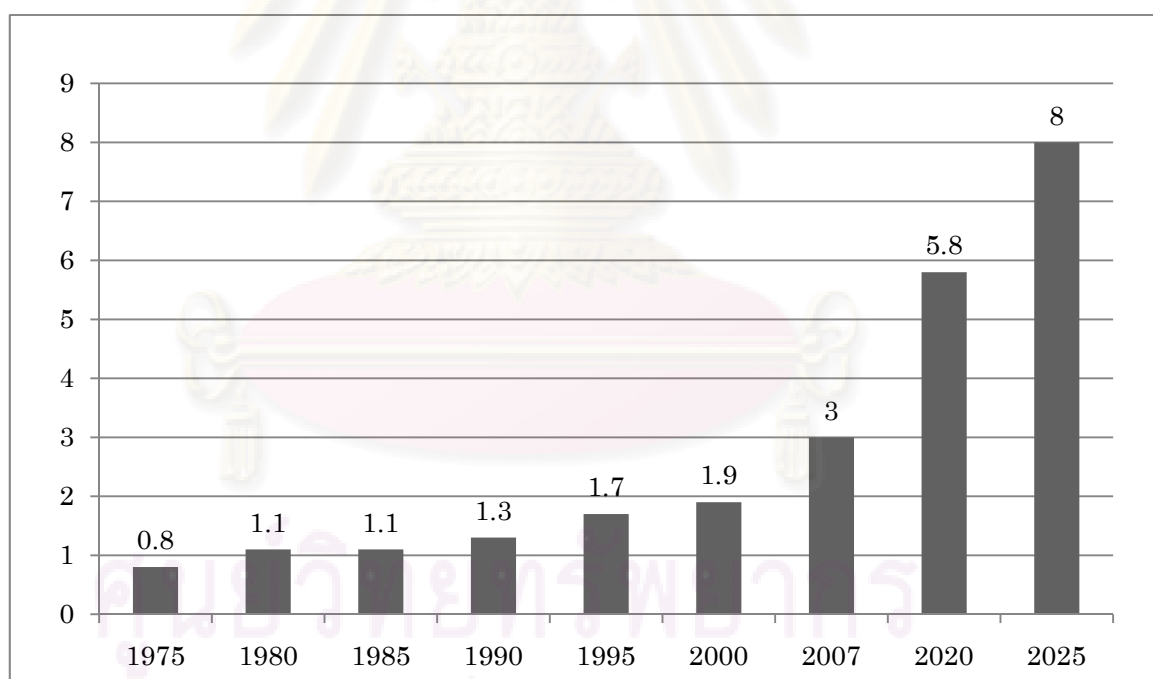


**Figure 12: Total Foreign Student Enrolment (in Million students)[155]**

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[153] Gürüz, 162.; OECD. **Education at a Glance 2009**. Paris: OECD, 2009, 313.
[154] Ibd.
[155] Gürüz, 162; OECD, **Education at a Glance 2009**, 313. Figures for 2020 and 2025 are estimates.

Measuring flows of international students is challenging, since each state's immigration laws have different rules and classifications on international students. Difficulties of measurement can arise for example when permanent residents but not citizens of a country become tertiary students, or when people whose main reason of immigration is not education enrol in tertiary studies programmes. Furthermore, the national agencies measuring and reporting the annual flows of students may differ (Department of Immigration, Department of Statistics, Department of Education, Department of Tertiary Education among others) and may not be very reliable. Therefore, it is paramount to the research and comparison of cross-border flows that the most reputable sources available are consumed. These would be international organisations such as UNESCO and the OECD, who continuously monitor the sources of the data and conduct research on issues of higher education cross-border movement themselves.

An analysis of the main senders and receivers of higher education cross-border movements can explain some of the dynamics and issues that arise in the cross-border movements of tertiary students. Such an analysis however is still relatively inconclusive of the actual flows of the movements, since the figures for the main senders and recipients do not show from where to where students move. Therefore, in a second step, important flows, classified according to the four categories of movements (North-North, South-North, South-South, North-South) will be discussed.
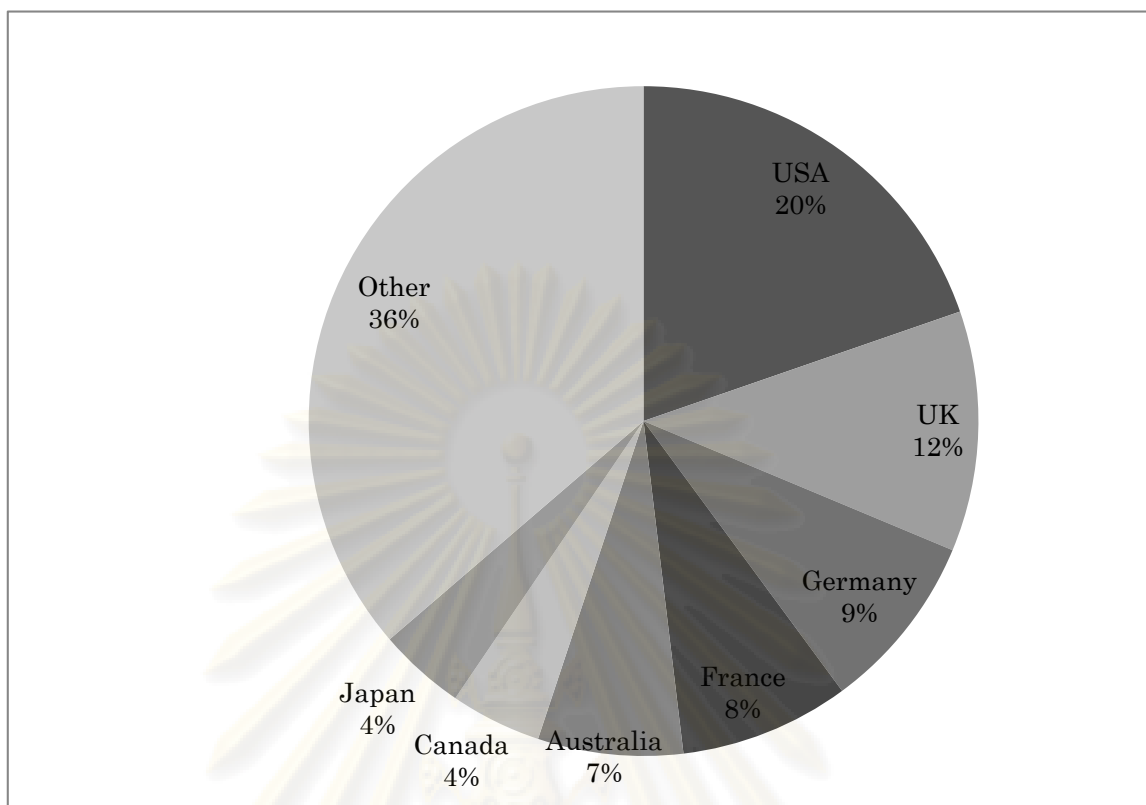
**Figure 13: Main Recipient Countries of International Students**[156]

Above, in Figure 13, the main recipient countries of international students are shown. Immediately, it becomes clear that the Western industrialised countries, with the exception of Japan, are dominant. Another important factor is the English language of instruction, which is dominant in most of these leading recipients of international students.

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[156] OECD, **Education at a Glance 2009**, 314.

**Figure 14: Main Sender Countries of International Students[157]**

The display of the main sender countries of international students reveals that China is dominant, sending over 450,000 students overseas in 2007. The next country, India sends only a third of this (roughly 150,000). Following are Korea, Germany, France, Turkey and Japan.

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[157] OECD. **Education at a Glance 2009: Indicator C2, Table C2.7**[online].http://www.oecd.org/document/24/0,3343,en_2649_39263238_43586328_1_1_1_1,00.html
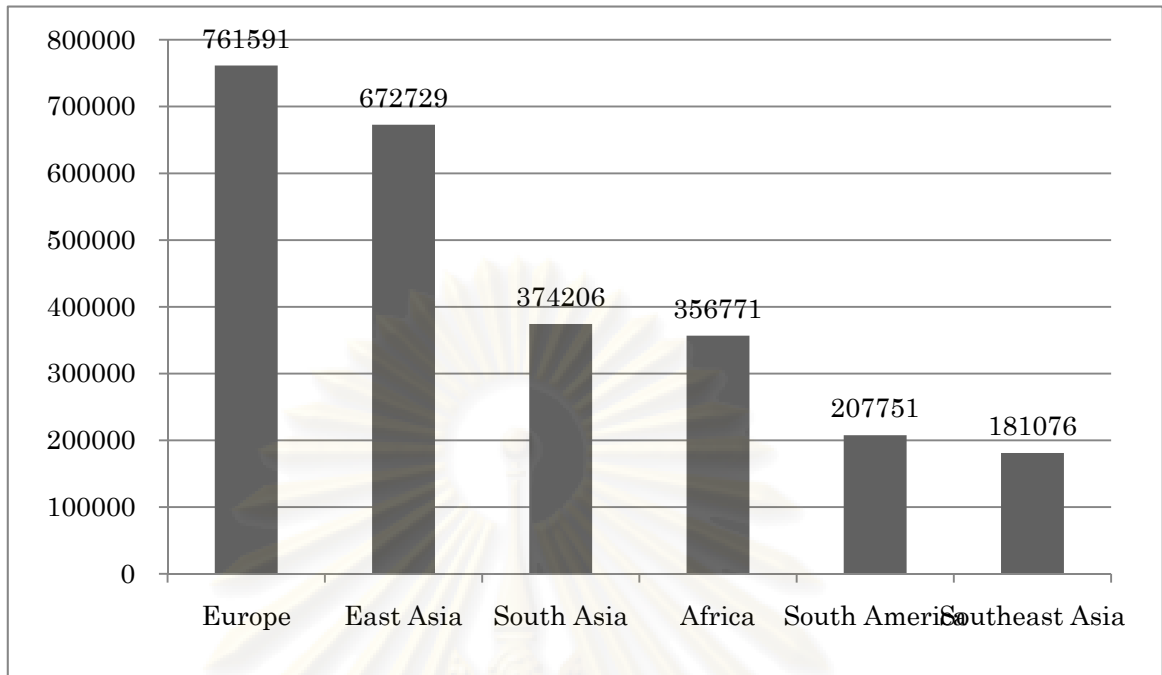
**Figure 15: Main Sender Regions of International Students[158]**

Grouping the main senders of international students into regions gives a better overview of the main origins of international students. As a continent, Asia is clearly leading and the biggest provider of international students. In Figure 15 however, Asia has been split up into "East Asia", "South Asia" and "Southeast Asia". Therefore, Europe is the leading regional source of international students, closely followed by East Asia. South Asia is in third place, Africa, South America and Southeast Asia follow behind. The three figures above, highlighting the main countries and regions sending and receiving international students, partly echo the conclusions from the literature review and theoretical analysis, which stipulate the dominance of South-North movements. Thus, the main recipients of international students are all developed Western countries (with the exception of Japan), whereas the two main senders, China and India, are developing countries in Asia.. After China and India however, two developed Asian countries (Korea and Japan) and especially the big European countries France and Germany are perhaps somewhat surprisingly also important senders of international students. This suggests that the North-North movements are at least as important as the South-North movement, on which much of the academic research has been concentrated. Focusing on the Asia Pacific, a pattern, reflecting the typology of Asia Pacific countries by McBurnie and Marginson, is emerging. McBurnie and Marginson classified Asia Pacific countries into five groups, according to their status as importers or exporters of international higher education.

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[158] OECD. Education At a Glance 2009: Indicator C2, Table C2.7.

| 1. Developed exporter nations with strong domestic capacity and minor role as importers | 2. Developed nations with a strong domestic capacity but also active as importers | 3. Developed or intermediate nations with inadequate domestic capacity, active in both import and export | 4. Intermediate nations with inadequate domestic capacity globally active as importers only | 5. Undeveloped nations, with low domestic participation and relatively weak demand for education imports |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Australia, New Zealand<br><br>Trade focus. English-language education creates market potential as exporters | Japan, Korea (Taiwan)<br><br>Language base limits exporter function, though Japan is a large exporter. Non-trade objectives dominate policy approach | Singapore, Hong Kong (Taiwan) (Malaysia, India)<br><br>Major markets for provider nations. Import and export is mostly English-language education. Mixture of trade and other policies. Focus on building knowledge economy | China, Vietnam, Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan (Malaysia, India) (Bangladesh, Fiji)<br><br>Major markets for provider nations, especially English-language education. Policy dilemmas: import or build domestic capacity? | Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, small island nations (Bangladesh, Fiji)<br><br>As they develop these nations will join group 4 |

Note: Intermediate cases are indicated in brackets.

**Table 6: Asia-Pacifc Typology of Cross-Border Education[159]**

Australia and New Zealand, as developed English-speaking countries are classified exporter nations with a strong domestic capacity. Japan and Korea, and to a certain extent Taiwan, are developed nations with a strong domestic capacity, just as Australia and New Zealand. They are however also active as importers, as could be seen in Figure 14 (Korea is the third biggest sender of international students, Japan the seventh). Classified in a third group are developed or developing nations who have a somewhat inadequate domestic capacity, but are still important recipients of international students. These countries, Singapore, Hong Kong, and to a certain extent also Taiwan, Malaysia and India however are also significant senders of international students. Most Southeast Asian countries, including Thailand are included in Category 4, which contains developing countries with an inadequate domestic capacity, active as importers of higher education only. Finally, the poorest Southeast Asian countries, as well as the Pacific Islands belong to Category 5, nations with low domestic participation in higher education and weak demand for education import. This classification is very helpful in understanding the positions the different Asia-Pacific countries find themselves in, in regards to international higher education and the cross-border movement of higher education. This position will be further explained below, when individual countries as well as the major flows of students will be discussed.

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[159] Marginson and McBurnie , 147.

### 3.1.1. North-North Movements

By definition, North-North movements entail a cross-border movement between two developed countries. Therefore, since there is a rough equality in wealth between the sending and the receiving country, economic wealth arguments could be expected to play a minor role in determining the cross-border movements. As seen in the analysis of global flows above, the United States are the biggest receiving country, and Europe is the biggest sending region of international students. North-North exchanges would therefore be likely to be dominated by movements between Europe and America. What other factors then could determine the North-North flow of students?

Regarding the dominant flows of North-North movements, it could be expected that the EU-United States axis would play a dominant role. Taking the theory by McMahon, discussed in Chapter 2.3.2., which predicts higher flows of students between countries who, among other factors, trade intensively with each other, flows between the EU and the United States should also be dominant.[160]
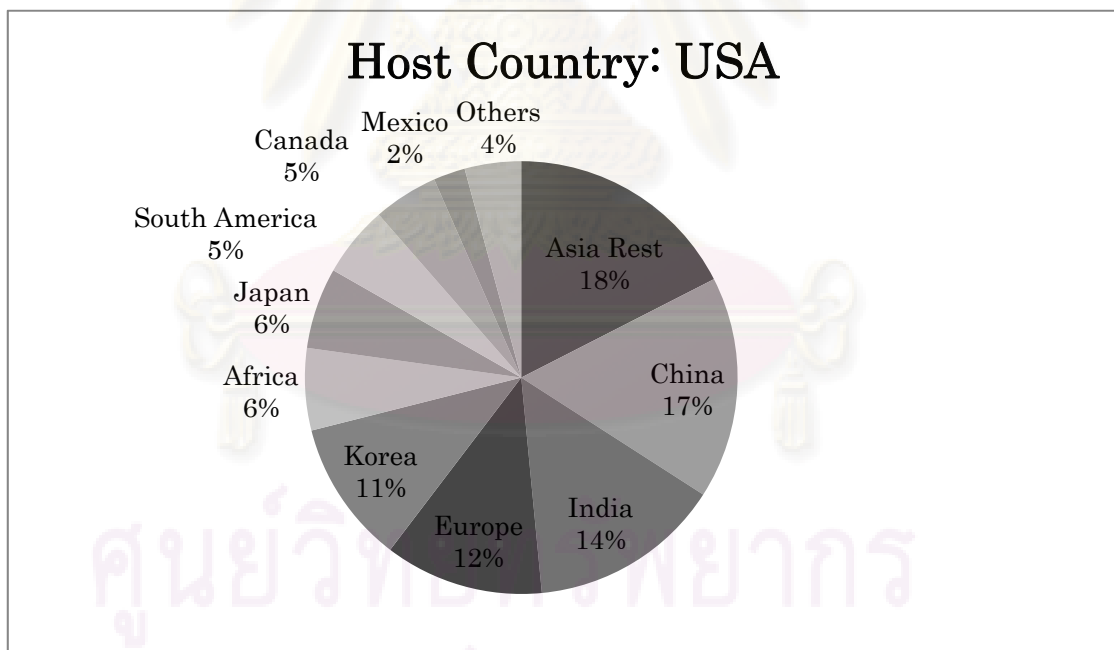


**Figure 16: Distribution of International Students by Country: Host United States (2007)[161]**

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[160] McMahon.
[161] UNESCO Institute for Statistics. **Data Centre**.

Figure 16 demonstrates that for the United States, the most important host country of international students in the world, Trans-Pacific flows dominate and are far more frequent than Inter-American or Trans-Atlantic flows. Impressively, around two thirds of all incoming students in the United States are from Asia. Most of the Asian students come from the two major developing countries, China and India. These movements can be relatively easily explained by the major existing theories of economic, educational, political and social/environmental push- and pull-factors for students, discussed at length above. Since the level of wealth in their home country is much higher, students from Korea and Japan however, the two developed Northeast Asian economies could have slightly different, perhaps less economic and more educational or social motivations. Despite being clearly outnumbered by Asian students, European students still make up a sizeable amount of incoming students into the United States. This points to the fact that for many European students, the United States are an attractive destination for studying with a high quality English-speaking teaching environment. Regarding the distribution of European countries, which send the most students to the United States, it is striking that apart from the largest European countries, (Germany, France, United Kingdom, Italy) Eastern European countries (and Russia) are also sizeable senders of international students. This shows that it is important to distinguish within North-North movements. The categorisations used in general can be dangerously inaccurate, as it is important to differentiate within groups (e.g. "the North") and regions (e.g."Europe"). Movements, as well as the motivations for movements can be dependent not just on factors of respective wealth of the involved countries, but also on political links, cultural and geographic links as well as linguistic issues.
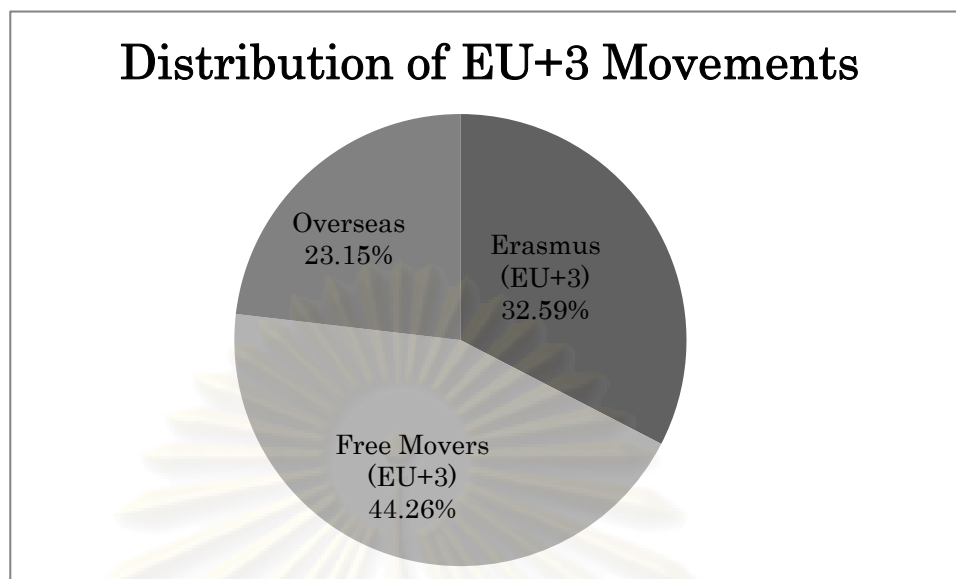
**Figure 17: Distribution of EU+3 Outwards Cross-border Movements in 2006[162]**

As seen above in figure 15, Europe is one of the main sender regions of international students. The destinations of European students can be seen in figure 17. The distribution of the outgoing EU+3 movements demonstrates that Trans-Atlantic movements are clearly outnumbered by intra-regional movements within Europe. Therefore, the figure above does not reflect the predictions made by McMahon above, that due to the intensive trading relationship between the EU and the United States, European foreign students would dominate the North-North flows.[163] Interestingly, more than three quarters of all European students studying abroad do so in another European country. Therefore, the share of intra-regional movements, which are part of North-North movements of students in general, is extremely high in the case of Europe. An important factor influencing this high intra-regional share could be the activities of the European Union in integrating higher education Especially the Erasmus programme, under which grants are given to students who chose to study abroad, has encouraged many students to study abroad, yet remain in the same region. The European Union hopes that due to this high degree of intra-regional exchange activity, it can improve its human resources and also increase unity among the European states through intensive people-to-people contacts. This stream of thought demonstrates the immense importance of people-

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[162] For the Erasmus students: European Commission. **European Commission - Education and Training: Erasmus - Statistics**[online].http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc920_en.htm ; For the other movements: For the student exchanges: UNESCO Institute for Statistics. **Data Centre.**
[163] McMahon.

to-people links among students, which is difficult to measure, but which is regarded as a major factor in shaping identities.
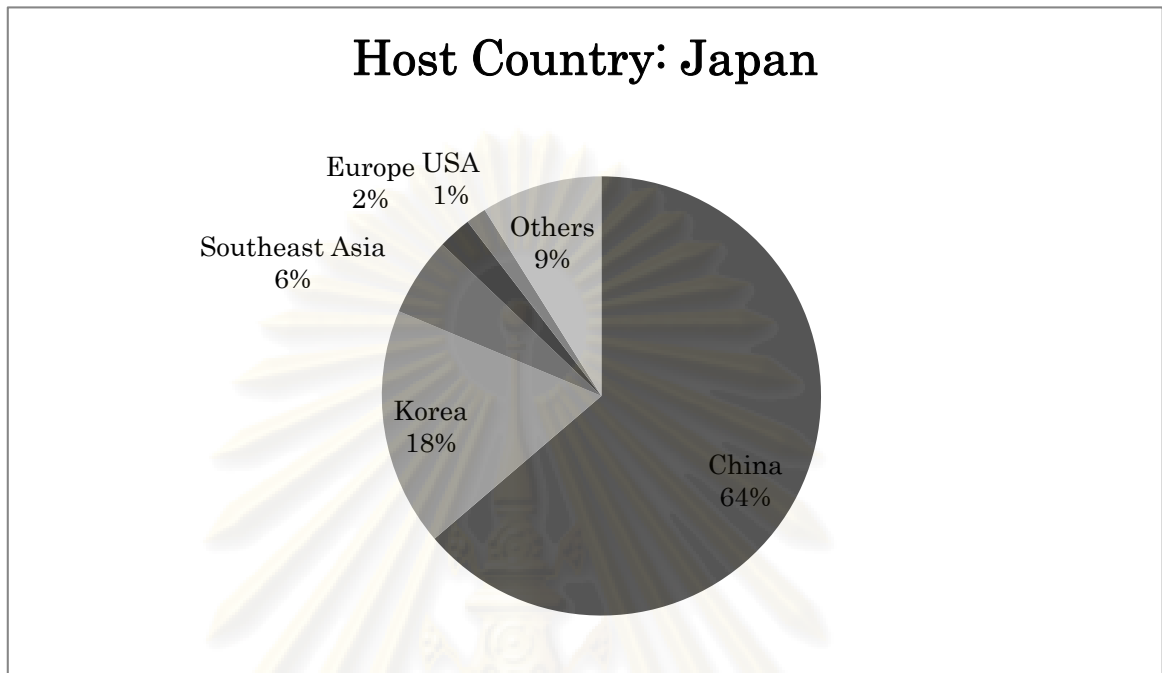


**Figure 18: Distribution of International Students by Country: Host Japan (2007)** [164]

Japan is the only non-western country that has a substantial inflow of international students. The biggest Asian economy also enjoys a reputation for high quality higher education and is an active player in the education export market, mostly by supporting foreign students with scholarships. According to the typology of Asian countries in table 6, Japan is a large exporter of higher education despite linguistic barriers. The distribution of countries importing Japanese higher education, and thus sending their students to Japan however, is very lopsided. Nearly two thirds of all foreign students in Japan are Chinese. Koreans make up nearly one fifth and Southeast Asians 6% of all incoming students. Therefore, the evidence clearly points to Japan being a major regional hub in the higher education export market. Because the main inwards movements into Japan do not come from other developed countries, but rather from substantially poorer countries in the immediate neighbourhood (China, Southeast Asia and to a certain extent Korea), North-North flows into Japan are small. Unlike Australia and New Zealand, the other main exporters of the Asia-Pacific region, Japan does not primarily follow trade-related rationales and rather focuses on the promotion of its language and culture through financed exchange programmes as well as providing aid to developing countries of

[164] UNESCO Institute for Statistics**. Data Centre**.

Southeast Asia through scholarships.[165] Japan's rationales for attracting students from other countries are therefore primarily political. The attraction of Japan as a destination for studying abroad to Western developed countries is small. The main reasons for this small attraction are the language-barriers, with little English-language courses offered, the relative unfamiliarity and perceived foreignness of Japan, cultural differences of Europeans and Americans with Japan, and the fact that Japan is not known in these places for high-quality education.[166] The Japanese example can therefore be seen in the light of globalisation sceptic theory, which postulates that interconnections are not increasing globally but rather follow regional or cultural traces. The difficulties for Japan, a highly developed country with a high-quality higher education system, in attracting students from Western countries should be kept in mind when discussing the case of European students in Thailand.

In the above-examples North-North movements have been shown to be very diverse. Importantly, and contrary to the economic equality that is suggested by the classification of such movements, North-North movements often contain a component of wealth difference. This however may not be apparent from the three figures above, because they for example do not distinguish between the different country-to-country movements within the EU. Thus, despite their status as developed economies, movements within developed countries still often take place from a poorer country to a richer country with better educational facilities, often in the same region. Therefore, there is a strong correlation between cross-border movements of students and economic development of a country.

### 3.1.2. South-North Movements

The South-North movements of tertiary students are the most significant and also most researched group of movements. This is because most cross-border movements of students take place from a poorer to a wealthier country for reasons of expected better quality of education and thus also better future economic chances. In the South-North movements, educational and economic motivations for movements are usually dominant, but political and social/environmental motivations can also play an important role. As mentioned before, the South-North movements are dominant in absolute numbers. Additionally, movements between developed countries (North-North) and between developing countries (South-South)

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[165] Marginson and McBurnie, 159, 177.

[166] OECD, Education At a Glance 2009, 316. **JPSS: Japan Study Support**[online].http://www.jpss.jp/eng/ (2009, 2 December).

often also occur from a less developed to a more developed country, thereby reflecting the South-North pattern in a lighter version. Thus, the motivations of South-North movements can be very similar to North-North or South-South movements. Because patterns and also motivations of movements overwhelmingly point to an expected move up the economic ladder, the academic coverage of cross-border student movements generally also focuses on such movements and motivations. The main area of research of this thesis however describes North-South movements, that is, flows of students from wealthier to less wealthy countries. The reason why this thesis also discusses some aspects of South-North flows is that in order to understand North-South flows, it is important to contextualise them by comparing them to other groups of movements – regarding the numbers of movements and the motivations of the students for movement. Whereas a discussion of the prevalent motivations of the more common, South-North flows of students has already been led in the theoretical part of the thesis, this chapter will offer a short analysis of flows. Since this thesis focuses on the flows of students from Europe to Thailand, a discussion of the opposite direction, from Thailand to Europe can offer important insight into the relationship of these two counterparts in terms of cross-border higher education.

As seen in figure 14 and 15 above, Asia-Pacific countries are globally by far the main senders of international students with the main share coming from the three Northeast Asian giants China, Korea and Japan, and also from India. Among these four countries however, distinctions have to be made. Whereas China and India are developing countries with, according to McBurnie and Marginson "inadequate domestic capacity" in higher education, Japan and Korea as members of the OECD have a well developed and high-quality tertiary education systems.[167] Therefore, the push- and pull factors for studying abroad between China and India, as well as Japan and Korea, are set to differ slightly. Since Korean and Japanese movements to Western study destinations rather fall into the North-North movement category, the focus of this analysis lies on China and India. The main destinations of Chinese and Indian students will also be compared with the Thai students moving abroad.

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[167] Marginson and McBurnie, 147.

# Chinese Students Abroad

Hong Kong 1%
Thailand 1%
Malaysia 1%
Macau 2%
Canada 3%
New Zealand 3%
France 4%
Korea 5%
Germany 5%
United Kingdom 11%
Australia 11%
United States 22%
Japan 18%
Others 13%
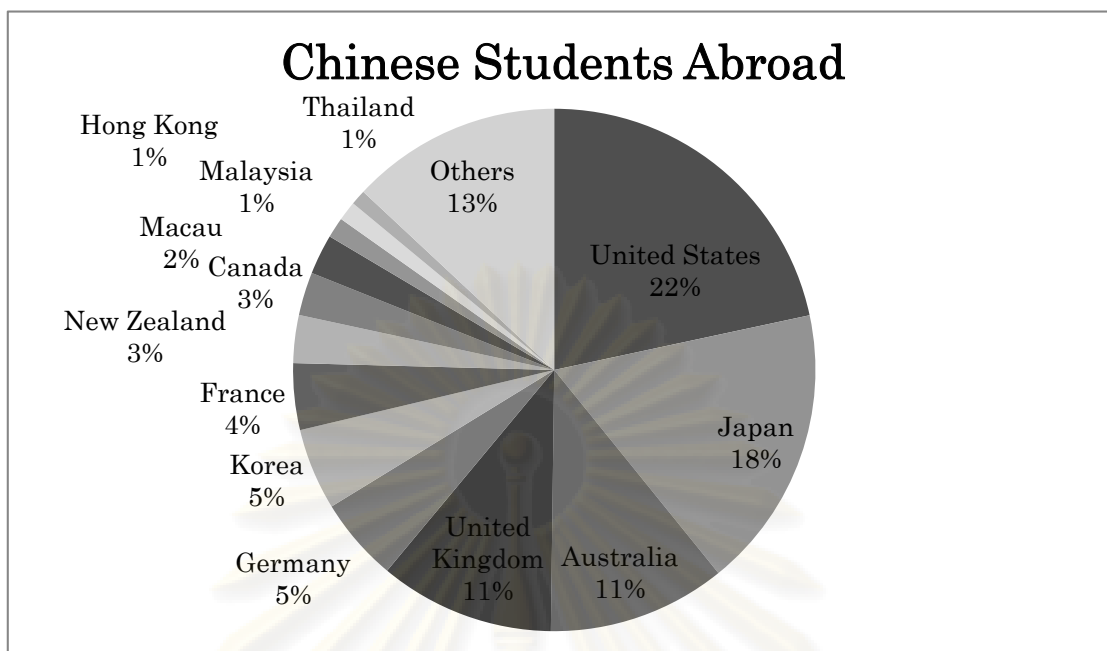
**Figure 19: Distribution of Chinese Students Abroad[168]**

# Indian Students Abroad

New Zealand 1%
Canada 1%
Germany 2%
Others 13%
United Kingdom 15%
Australia 15%
United States 53%
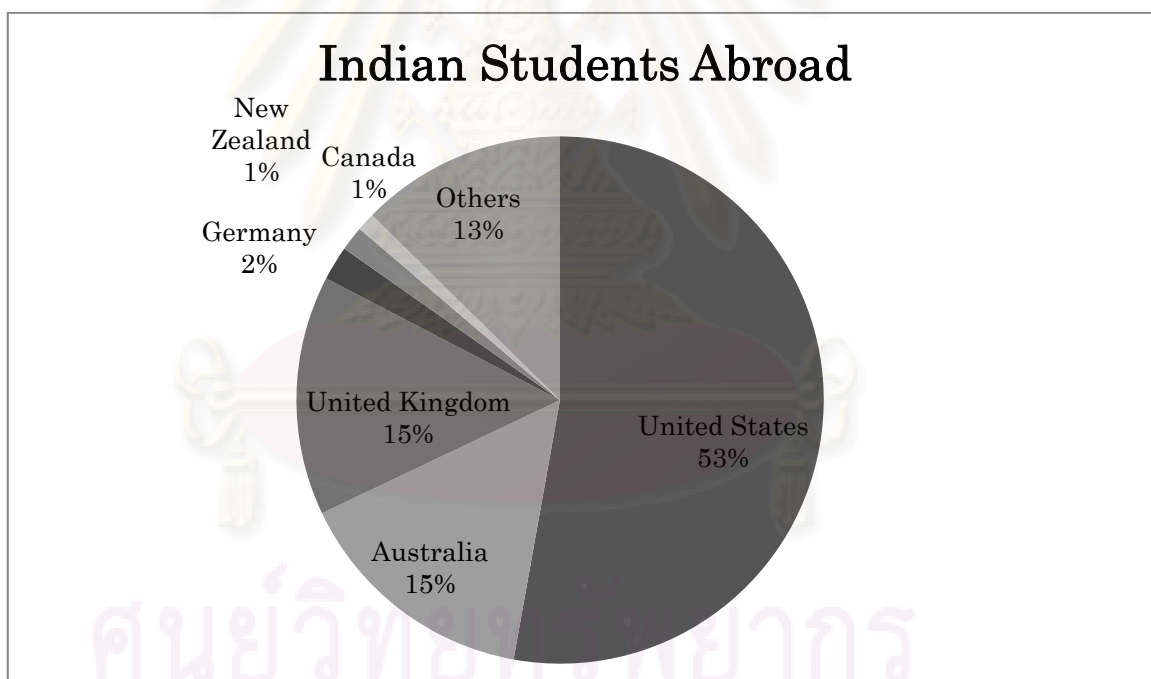
**Figure 20: Distribution of Indian Students Abroad[169]**

Figures 19 and 20 display the distribution of destinations of Chinese respectively Indian students by destination country. The distribution of the student destination countries in

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[168] UNESCO Institute for Statistics. **Data Centre**.
[169] UNESCO Institute for Statistics. **Data Centre**.

the case of China is very balanced. The biggest destination is the United States, followed by Japan, Australia and the United Kingdom. Further destinations of importance are Germany, Korea and France. This distribution is perhaps surprisingly reflective of the broader foreign policy interests of China. Thus, there is a near-balance between the Asian neighbours (Japan and Korea), the United States and Europe in terms of percentages of Chinese students. Interestingly, the English language, which is often cited as a major motivation for trans-border movements might not play the dominant role it plays in other sending countries. Only 54% of the outgoing students studies in a country where the main language of teaching is English. Other trends however, which were discussed above, such as the dominant movement from less wealthy to wealthier states for higher education are confirmed in the case of China. This trend is not only reflected in the extremely high number of moving students, but also in a more localised movement from the border regions of China to Hong Kong and Macau. These two Special Administrative Regions both much wealthier than neighbouring territories in Mainland China, are also perceived to offer better education and a freer lifestyle.[170]

Indian students' destinations for overseas flows on the other hand are strikingly concentrated. More than half of all moving students chose the United States as their destination. The distant followers are Australia and the United Kingdom, both getting a similar share of about 15%. This choice of destinations, and the lack of geographically nearer destinations, such as Japan and Korea in the case of China can be explained with the regionally leading role of India, which does not have competing super-powers on its doorstep. A reason for the leading role of the United States might be that Indian students who study overseas are usually very highly educated postgraduates, who study in fields of IT or science, all fields in which American universities are leading. The surprisingly small share of Indians studying in continental Europe might be explained on the one hand by the historic links of India to Britain, which receives a higher share of Indian students (15%) than Chinese students (11%). On the other hand however, continental European states might not sell themselves well enough to potential Indian students, or simply not have the reputation of American institutes. The striking concentration on English-speaking countries might also be explainable by the fact that Indian higher education is conducted in English and therefore, the need to learn another language might be much lessened, compared to for example China.

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[170] See Li and Bray for the results of the study.
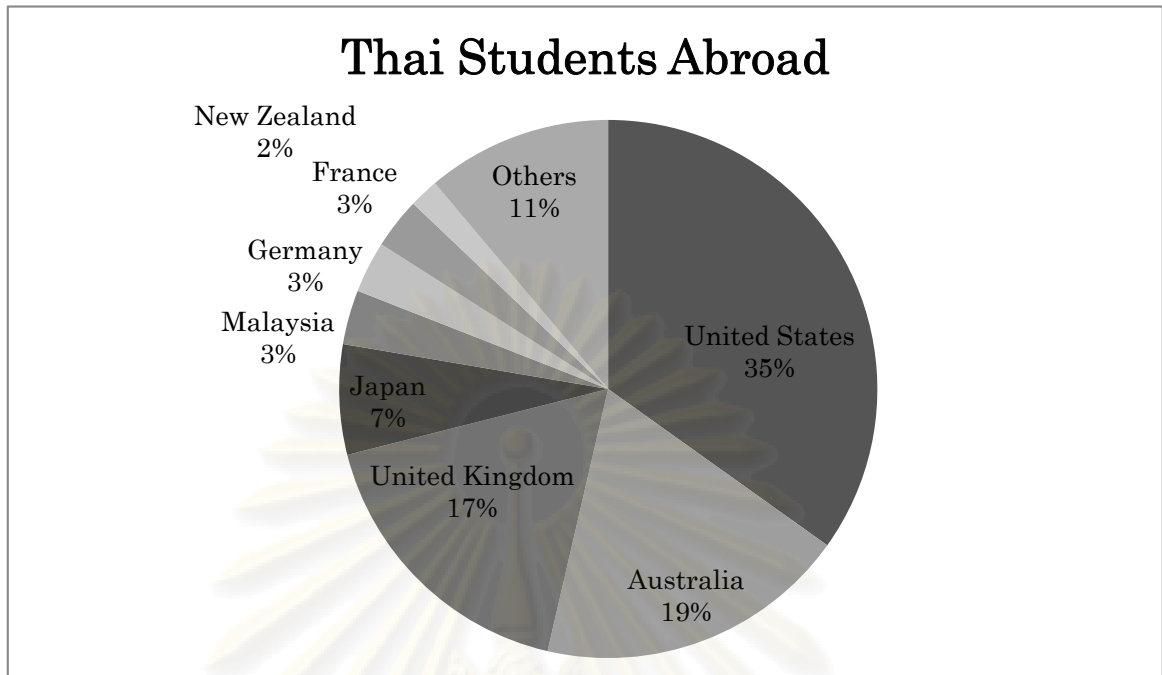
**Figure 21: Distribution of Thai Students Abroad**[171]

The distribution of the Thai students' study-abroad destinations is roughly in between the Indian and the Chinese case. Unlike India's students, Thai students' destinations are more diversified, but not quite as balanced as China's. The United States are, similar to the Indian case, the dominant destination for higher education abroad (35%). Australia however also manages to catch a high percentage of Thai students (19%). The United Kingdom follows just after Australia (17%). Further destinations are Japan and Malaysia, as well as Germany and France. The strong showing of Australia can be explained by the geographical proximity whereas the high percentage of the United Kingdom can be attributed to the traditional Thai-United Kingdom links in higher education.[172] Similar to the case of China, a significant percentage of Thai students also move regionally. Especially Japan, with 7% of the students but also Malaysia (3%) can benefit from the inflow of Thai students. Since this thesis is focusing on the flows of students between Europe and Thailand, the Thai student's destinations in Europe will be analysed further.

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[171] UNESCO Institute for Statistics. **Data Centre.**
[172] This special relationship has been touched on in the introduction.
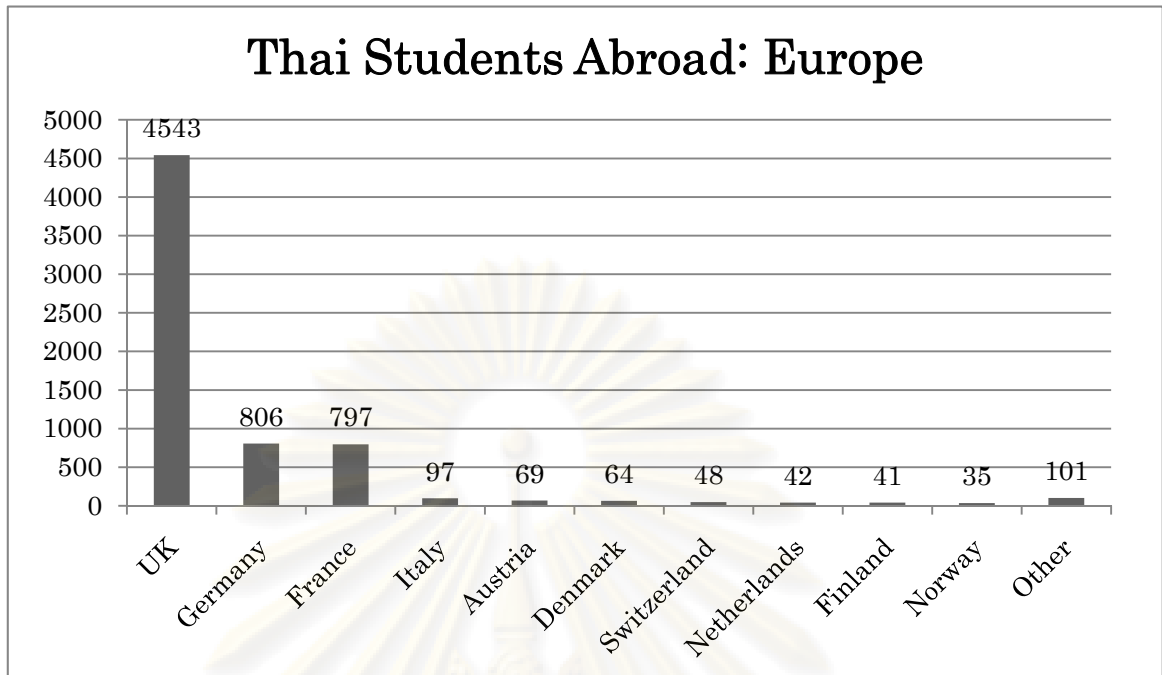
**Figure 22: Thai Students Abroad: Distribution by Country of Destination in Europe[173]**

The dominance of the UK as a study destination for Thais within Europe is staggering. Only two other countries can claim some importance as a market for Thai students: Germany and France, which both have about the same amount of Thai students. Other countries all captured less than 100 Thai students in 2007. Thus, as can be easily seen from figure 22, the dominance of the three European heavyweights is overwhelming, with the UK in turn keeping Germany and France clearly at bay. It will be interesting to compare this result to the patterns of movements in the opposite direction, from Europe to Thailand.

This short analysis of some of cross-border movements has given some interesting insights into patterns of movements and their determinants. Most strikingly, a large majority of cross-border movements is taking place from an economically poorer to a more wealthy country. Interestingly, such arguments of economic disparity do not just play a role in the South-North movements but also in the North-North movements. Presumably, economic rationales play an important role in most movements. Additionally, it could also be said that there is a correlation between the quality of education and the level of wealth in a country. Therefore, a wealthier country can provide better education, and thus attract more international students. Additionally, the reputation of a country as an education destination might also very high due to its wealth, thus multiplying the drawing effect of a study destination. Political and social/environmental motivations, even though important for the movements could not be shown to visibly influence the student's destination of choice.

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[173] UNESCO Institute for Statistics. **Data Centre.**

Nevertheless, all the major destinations of students are Western (except Japan) liberal democracies. Another pattern of movements, which has shown to be crucial, especially in Europe, are intra-regional movements. Thus, the power of geographical proximity cannot be underestimated. In the case of Europe, institutional policies, such as the Erasmus programme and the Bologna Declaration have also contributed strongly towards more regional integration in higher education movements. Furthermore, a factor, which cannot be underestimated, is the factor of cultural and historical ties. This is apparent in the Indian example, whose students almost exclusively move to English-speaking countries. Language has also been shown to play an important part in the choice of a study destination. Thus, the United Kingdom, being smaller than Germany has a far bigger share in the market for higher education exports, mainly due to its language advantages. Another example, where the importance of regional and cultural ties is reflected, is Japan. Japan is the only non-Western developed country with a significant intake of foreign students. Interestingly, Japan however only plays an important role in the immediate regional environment (Korea and China) as well as in its extended region (Southeast Asia). Western students however only make up 3% of the total intake of foreign students. As mentioned above, this example must be kept in mind when dealing with the Thai intake of European students.

## 3.2. Thailand and Patterns of Global Higher Education Movements

### 3.2.1. Thai Higher Education Reforms

Traditionally, higher education in Thailand followed a model, whereby education was provided in temples and the court. Under King Chulalongkorn, who fostered close relations to European nations and visited Europe as well as the British Southeast Asian colonies several times, a modernisation of the Thai higher education system took place. In 1902, the Royal Pages School was formed, focusing on government. Later, in 1911, the Royal Pages School was transformed into the Civil Servants School, including a wider range of subjects, such as law, international relations, commerce, agriculture, engineering, medicine and teacher's education.[174] In 1917, the Civil Servants School was attributed full university status and called Chulalongkorn University. The establishment of the four other early and specialised universities, Thammasat, the University of Medicine (later to become Mahidol University), Kasetsart and Silpakorn University was also dominated by the state's need for educated civil

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[174] **A Brief History of Chulalongkorn University**[online].http://chula.ac.th/chula/en/visitor/brief_en.html (2009, 2 December).

servants.[175] In the 1960s, the need for higher education outside the capital, Bangkok, became more apparent. Up to then, with its concentration on Bangkok, higher education was seen as a luxury for the elite. Due to these deficiencies in Thai higher education, three steps were undertaken, with the goal of broadening the access to higher education to a wider public. Firstly, universities in each of the main regions were founded in Chiang Mai 1964, Khon Kaen 1964, and Hat Yai (Prince of Songkhla) 1967 in order to facilitate higher education access to the regional population.[176] In the 1970s, a further innovation changed the picture of Thai higher education: the introduction of two open-admission universities: Ramkhamhaeng and Sukhothai Thammatirat University.[177] Additionally, a number of teacher's colleges (Rajabhat Institutes) and institutes of technology were founded to further broaden the access to higher education. In the 1980s however, the need for a reform of the higher education system became more apparent. Several reasons contributed to this: stiff bureaucratic rules and complications, impeding the universities to adapt their curriculum, the inadequate skills of graduates, which, due to the long-standing focus on educating civil servants, were ill-prepared for jobs at private companies and the low level of research and development, which continues to be a problem in Thai higher education until today.[178] The 1999 National Education Act established the structures to start a process of higher education reform in Thailand.[179] It entailed mainly structural changes to the organisation, classification and operation of universities but also created common standard supervision and redirected the focus of higher education to student-centred lifelong learning. Structurally, the old Ministry of Education, Ministry of University Affairs and National Education Commission were merged into the new Ministry of Education (MOE).[180] Under the new MOE, the different divisions, called "commissions" would operate. In the area of higher education, the Commission on Higher Education is responsible for proposing policies, development plans and standards for higher education.[181] Operating under the newly established CHE are eight Bureaus, among which the

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[175] Altbach PG, Umakoshi T., eds. **Asian Universities: Historical Perspectives and contemporary challenges**. Baltimore: JHU Press, 2004.

[176] Commission on Higher Education (Thailand). **Higher Education in Thailand**. Bangkok.

[177] Ibd.

[178] Kiritkara K. Higher Education in Thailand and the national reform roadmap. **Thai-US Education Roundtable** 2001;

[179] For a general discussion of the reforms in the Thai higher education system since 1999, read: Sujatanond C. Thailand's Country Report. **Asia-Pacific Sub-regional Preparatory Conference for the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education "Facing Global and Local Challenges: the 'ew Dynamics for Higher Education"** 2008.

[180] Commission on Higher Education (Thailand). **Higher Education in Thailand.** Bangkok.;

[181] Commission on Higher Education (Thailand). *Higher Education in Thailand*, 16; Kiritkara K. Higher Education in Thailand and the national reform roadmap. **Thai-US Education Roundtable** 2001; Mandate of the CHE: Commission on Higher Education (Thailand). *Higher Education in Thailand*. 2nd ed. Bangkok, 3.

Bureau of International Cooperation Strategy.[182] It has a mandate to formulate strategies and directions for international cooperation, provide recommendations in order to increase the competitiveness of higher education, develop Thailand into a regional education centre and to encourage higher education institutes to maximise their international resources.[183]

Public universities, which under the old system were part of civil service, would now become more autonomous in their financial, academic and personal matters. As a consequence of the 1999 Education Act, a two-cycle higher education system,[184] and a system of national educational quality assurance under the newly established Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA) has been established.[185] The 40 Rajabhat institutions (formerly teacher's training institutions) and the 9 Rajamangala Universities of Technology were upgraded to universities and now fall under the CHE's supervision. After all these changes, universities would now be separated into three tiers: Public universities, private universities and community colleges, which all fall under the CHE. Currently, a total of 165 higher education institutes are operating in Thailand, with 78 public universities, 68 private universities and 19 community colleges.[186]

In order to guide the national economic and social development, as well as education and higher education specifically, the Thai Government regularly issues National Higher Education Development Plans. The most recent one is the 9th National Higher Education Development Plan, which ranges from 2001 to 2006. It emphasised the goal of developing quality graduates with academic and professional skills, which should help to increase the competitiveness of Thailand in a rapidly internationalising world.[187] Additionally, the plan seeks to promote Thailand as a regional hub for education. Following the completion of this plan, it was decided that the timeframe of 5 years would be too short and that a 15-Year Long Range Plan on Higher Education should be compiled. Thus, in 2008, the 2nd 15-Year Long Range Plan on Higher Education has been issued. This long-range plan in a first part focuses mainly on underlying national, regional and global socio-economic trends, which are

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[182] Commission on Higher Education (Thailand). **Higher Education in Thailand**. 2nd ed. Bangkok, 3.
[183] Ibn, 5.
[184] Office of the National Education Commission, Office of the Prime Minister Kingdom of Thailand. **National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999): and Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 (2002))**. 2542.
[185] Ibd, Chapter 6;  The Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessments (Public Organization) ONESQA. **ONESQA**[online].http://www.onesqa.or.th/en/home/index.php (2009, 1 August).
[186] Commission on Higher Education (Thailand). **Higher Education in Thailand**, 10.
[187] Study in Thailand. **Higher Education Policies**[online].http://studyinthailand.org/study_abroad_thailand_university/thai_higher_education_policies.html (2009, 2 December).

projected to be crucial factors in the development of Thai higher education.[188] It proposes general strategies and guidelines of how to deal with such underlying trends. The main goals of the long-range plan are the creation of knowledge and innovation through a quality education system in every part of Thailand.[189] The trends, which have influence on Thailand and its higher education, include demography, energy and environmental issues, employment situation in Thailand based on national and regional economic structures and developments, the decentralisation of Thailand's administration, the violence in Thailand's south, modern challenges for youth and the "sufficiency economy".[190] The long-range plan also demonstrates recognition of the rise of China and India as increasingly prominent players on the world stage, as well as the emergence of the ASEAN Community by 2015. Within the Community, Thailand strives to position itself as a regional leader in higher education. In order to address the identified trends successfully, the long-range report proposes the following measures for the Thai higher education system. An emphasis must be laid on basic education and vocational education, better enforcement of education standards, the fragmentation of the Thai higher education system, good governance and management, the introduction of a national research system, improved university financing, improved staff development and a higher education plan for Southern Thailand.[191]

In line with the 15-Year Long Range Plan on Higher Education, the government has recently announced a special fund of 12 billion baht on developing "National Research Universities".[192] As a condition, the universities must be ranked in the world's top 500 universities according to The Times Higher Education rankings in 2008. The funds will be used in order to improve research capacities in different areas of science, and also promote the status of research in Thai higher education.[193] It is also hoped that through improvements in the research capacities at Thai universities, the position of Thailand as a tertiary education exporter will be strengthened. Thus, the government is increasingly active in its quest to increase the number of foreign students in Thailand and thus establishing Thailand as a regional higher education hub. International education is an important export earner for Thailand, annually injecting roughly 50 billion THB into the Thai economy, according to

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[188] Commission on Higher Education (Thailand). **Executive Report: Framework of the Second 15-year Long Range plan on Higher education of Thailand**. Bangkok: 2551.
[189] Ibd, 1.
[190] Ibd, 3.
[191] Commission on Higher Education (Thailand). **Executive Report: Framework of the Second 15-Year Long Range Plan on Higher Education of Thailand**, 7.
[192] Na Machachai S. Bt12 billion to spend on national research universities. **The Nation**, 2009:.
[193] Phetdee W. Nation's Top 7 Universities qualify for national research. **The Nation**, 2009:.The following universities can benefit from the funds: Chulalongkorn, Mahidol, Kasetsart, Thammasat, Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen, Prince of Songkla.

Rachaen Pojjanasunthorn, Director-General of the Department of Export Promotion (DEP).[194] In order to improve the position of Thailand as a hub for higher education, the government has plans to spend 3 billion THB to modernize curricula, financially support the universities and promote courses abroad.[195]

Prior to the discussion of the situation of European students in Thailand, some basic analysis on the position of Thailand as a higher education exporter has to be made. Recently, Thailand has been successful in attracting more students. Whereas in 2006, 8,534 foreign students studied in Thailand, this number rose to 11,021 in 2007 and finally to 16,361 in 2008. This is an impressive increase of over 90% in just two years.
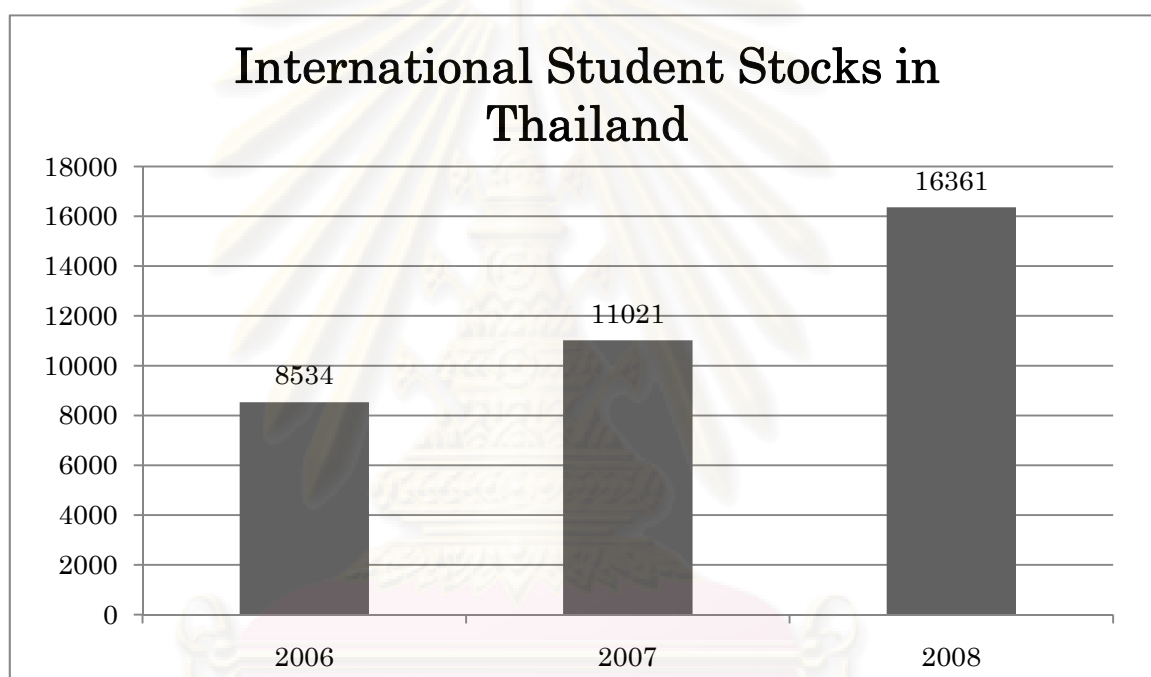


**Figure 23: International Student Stocks in Thailand: Distribution per Year[196]**

[194] ALM/ebp. **Thailand's education business likely to grow 10% annually**[online].http://balita.ph/2009/09/28/thilands-education-business-likely-to-grow-10-annually/ (2009, 2 December).

[195] Is Thailand ready to be an education hub? **The Nation**, 24 June 2009:.

[196] Commission on Higher Education. **International Students in Thai Higher Education Institutions**. It is important to note that unlike the previous graphs, which analysed cross-border *flows* this graph analyses the *stocks* of foreign students in Thailand at a given year.
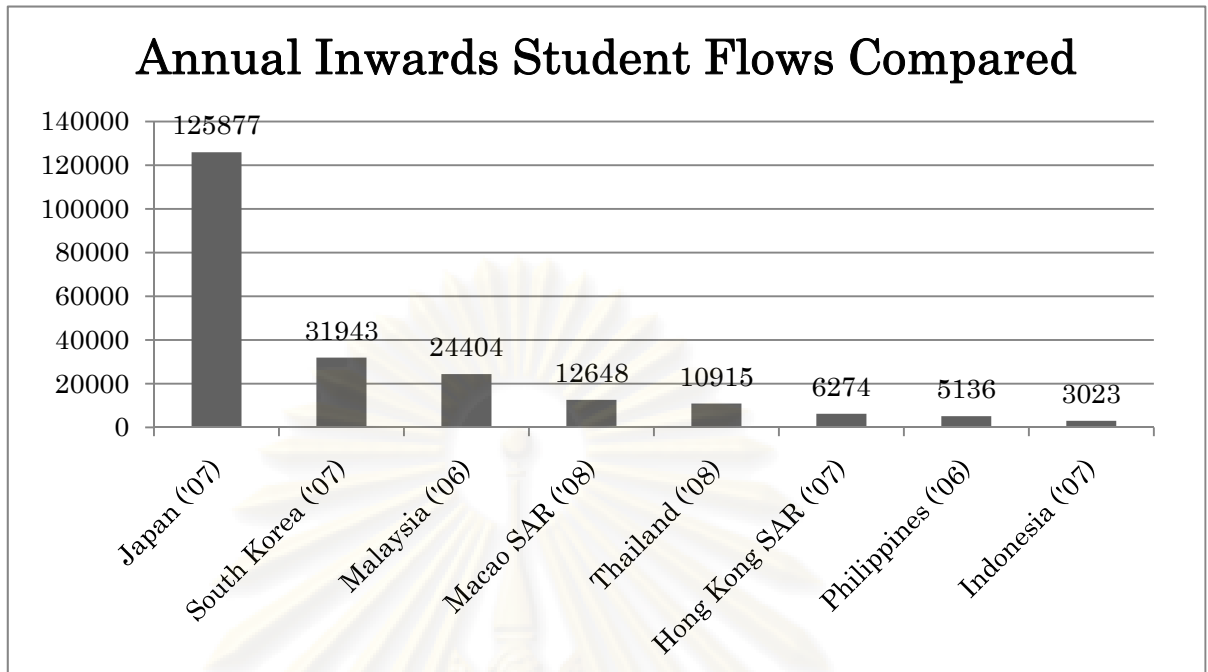
**Figure 24: Annual Inwards Student Flows: Thailand and its Competitors**[197]

Comparing Thailand with its main competitors in the Asia-Pacific region reveals that it is place in the midfield of countries regarding the amount of inwards movements of tertiary students. Japan is the clear leader in the Asia-Pacific, followed by Korea and Malaysia. Macau is a surprisingly important destination for tertiary students, mostly because of its proximity and linguistic similarities to the neighbouring Mainland China. Thailand is placed clearly before Hong Kong, the Philippines and Indonesia. The choice of the other seven destination countries as "competitors" of Thailand is arbitrary, since each student will have different preferences. Whereas for a Chinese student living near Macao, Japan is probably not an option due to the distance and the price, a Laotian student may not have another option but to study in Thailand. Japan, as the only major exporter of higher education in Asia might be a competitor to actors such as Australia, the United States or Germany, and not necessarily compete with Indonesia. The choice of countries however illustrates the position of Thailand as an exporter of higher education handily. Thailand is not a major exporter on the world market of tertiary education but it is clearly a leader in Southeast Asia.

### 3.2.2. Patterns of Foreign Students in Thailand

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[197] UNESCO Institute for Statistics. **Data Centre**.

The distribution of the countries of origin of foreign students in Thailand in 2008, shown in Figure 25 reveals that China is clearly the most important sender of international students. Nearly half (44.6%) of all foreign students in Thailand are Chinese. Students from ASEAN make up 28.5% of all foreign students in Thailand.[198] Among ASEAN students, nearly all students originate from the Greater Mekong Sub-Region (GMS), which consists of Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia and Viet Nam.  ASEAN and Chinese students clearly represent the bulk of foreign students in Thailand, with the rest accounting for only a bit more than a quarter. Within this quarter South Asian students, particularly from India and Bangladesh, represent 7.2%. Since these movements all originate in developing countries, these movements all fall under the South-South category. Movements from the developed countries of Northeast Asia (Korea 2.1%, Japan 2.3% are perhaps surprisingly small and are outnumbered by American students (5.1%) and European students (4.8%).[199] Judging from the distribution of students, Thailand attracts most students from its immediate neighbourhood. This includes China, whose southern regions can be counted to the GMS. Thus, Thailand can be said to be a regional hub for higher education for students from the GMS.

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[198] Commission on Higher Education. **International Students in Thai Higher Education Institutions**. 2008.
[199] Commission on Higher Education. **International Students in Thai Higher Education Institutions**. 2008.
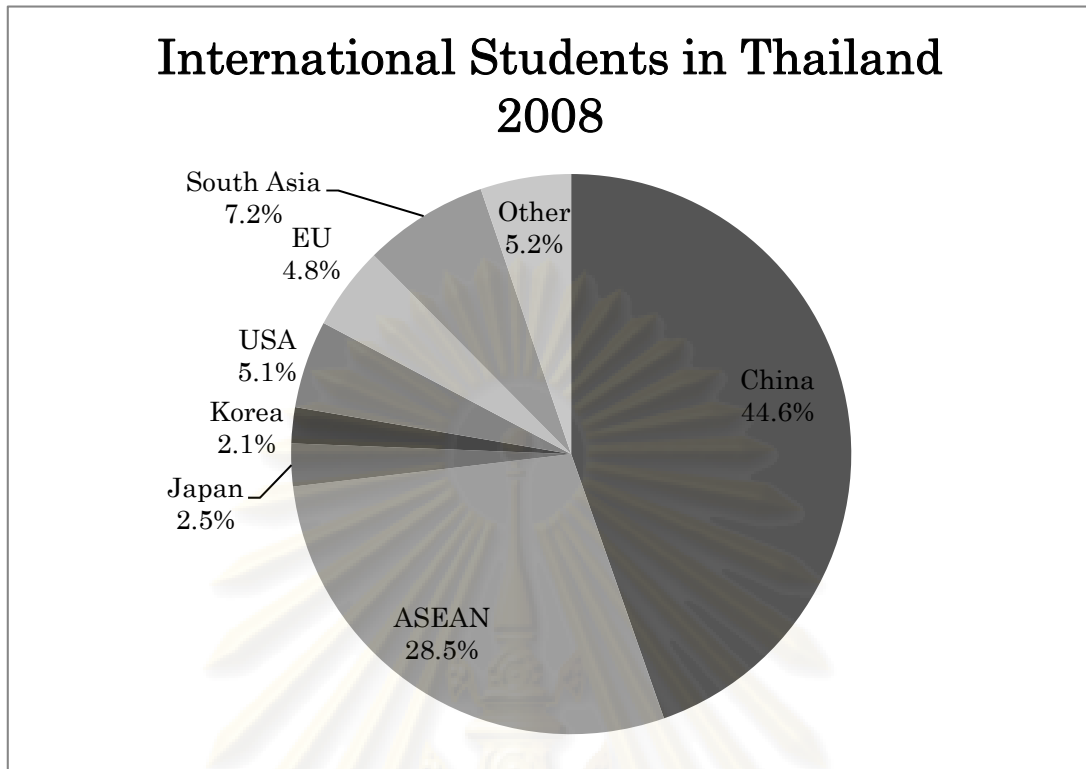
**Figure 25: International Students in Thailand: Distribution by Region/Countries of Origin[200]**

The Thai Commission of Higher Education (CHE) annually conducts a survey, whereby it classifies all foreign students in Thailand according to their country of origin, level of study, institution, fields of study and payment of the fees (possible scholarships). Thus, very accurate pictures of the distribution of foreign students can be made. The most populous group, Chinese students mostly study in fields such as Thai Language, Business Administration and English/Business English and are highly represented at Assumption University, and public universities (Burapha University and the Rajabhat universities).[201] Therefore, Thailand is a popular destination for Chinese students because of the demand for Thai language learning in China, the availability of international courses, mostly in the areas of Business and English studies and also its attractive price.

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[200] Commission on Higher Education. **International Students in Thai Higher Education Institutions.** 2008.

[201] Rajabhat universities are widely distributed across the rural provinces and were only upgraded from Rajabhat institutes to universities in 2004. Prior to the upgrade, they have focused on teacher's education. Currently, they are embarking on a process of diversification, and are also expanding their international programmes. See: Bovornsri V. Thailand. In UNESCO, (ed), **Higher Education in South-East Asia,** Bangkok: 2006.

Roughly 6% of foreign students in Thailand are from developed countries in Northeast Asia (Japan and Korea), the United States and Europe. Whereas the American students benefit from the liberal policy of the Thai Government in trade in education services, which lead to the opening of three campuses of American universities in Thailand, the European, Japanese and Korean students make use of the extensive exchange programmes between the well-acclaimed Thai universities and their foreign counterparts.[202]
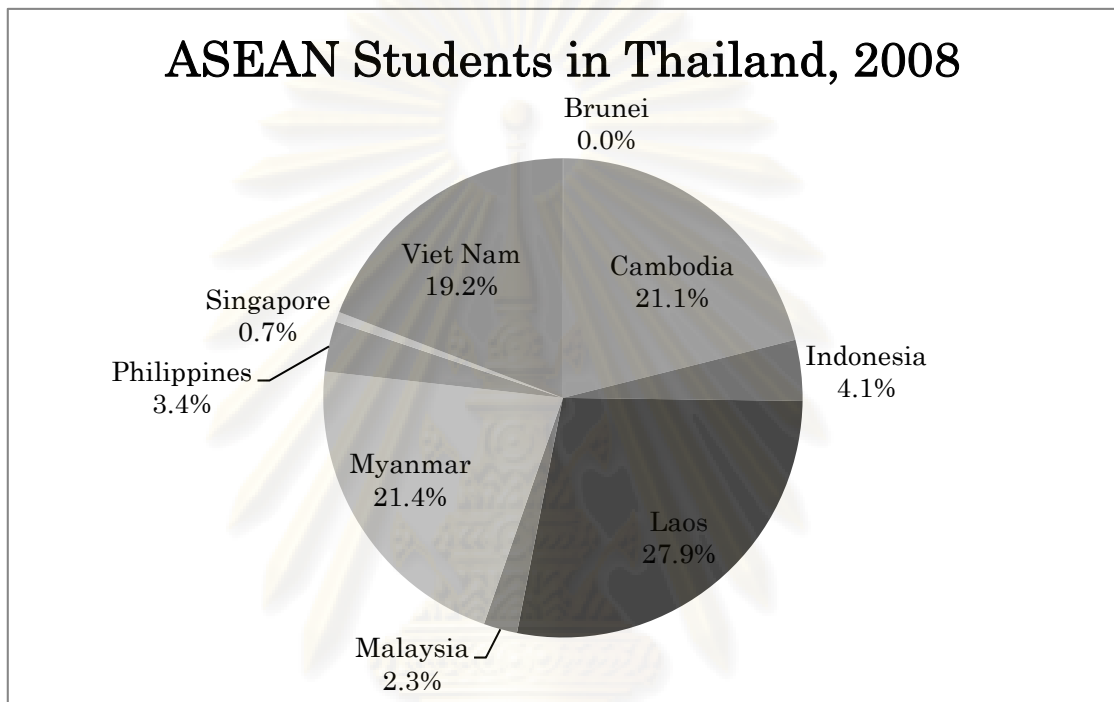


**Figure 26: ASEAN Students in Thailand: Distribution by Countries of Origin[203]**

ASEAN students have to be differentiated by their respective home countries. Nearly all international students in Thailand from ASEAN come from four countries: Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia and Viet Nam. Lao students, the most numerous group among the ASEAN students, predominantly management-related courses as well as English and political science, but show a much greater variety than Chinese students. They predominantly study in institutes along the Thai-Lao border, mostly in North-eastern Thailand. Myanmar students, the second biggest group, show an entirely different profile. Whereas business and marketing related courses are still ranking highly, health and technology courses, as well as English language are also heavily taken. Students from Myanmar, unlike Chinese and Laotian students

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[202] Bovornsiri. Mentioned are two institutions (St Theresa Inti College and Webster University). In the meantime however, Stamford University has also opened a campus.
[203] Commission on Higher Education. **International Students in Thai Higher Education Institutions**. 2008.

predominantly study at either reputable state universities such as Mahidol and Chiang Mai University or at private Christian universities, such as Assumption. Cambodian students are widely distributed across public and private specialist institutions, but also mostly study business or management, English and also political science. Finally Vietnamese students predominantly study in fields related to business administration, such as accounting, finance, marketing but also in IT and Thai language. Vietnamese students are also widely distributed across public and private universities.

There are several reasons for this concentration and high influx of students from GMS countries and China. Consulting Marginson and McBurnie's classification of Asia Pacific countries, all GMS countries, except Viet Nam fall into the lowest category, which means that they do not have adequate domestic capabilities in higher education to cover their own demand for higher education.[204] Thai universities, especially in comparison with local higher education institutes can therefore offer a wide range of international study programmes at a cost of a fraction of expensive programmes in Western universities.[205] Secondly, cost-advantages in tuition are reinforced by the fact that Thailand is situated in close proximity of the GMS countries, as illustrated by the choice of Lao students in North-eastern Thailand. Thirdly, the Thai Government and the Thai universities are pursuing a close relationship with GMS countries and offer numerous scholarships specifically aimed at students from GMS countries.[206] The reinforcing effect of the Thai-sponsored scholarships can be seen in the following figure.

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[204] Marginson and McBurnie, 147.

[205] The total number of international programmes offered at Thai universities in 2008 stands at 884. For a compilation and description of the whole range of international programmes, see here: Commission on Higher Education (Thailand). **Study in Thailand 2008-2009**.

[206] Commission on Higher Education (Thailand). **Guidelines for the Faculty and Student Exchange Program Between Thailand and Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) Countries for the Year 2009**. Bangkok:.
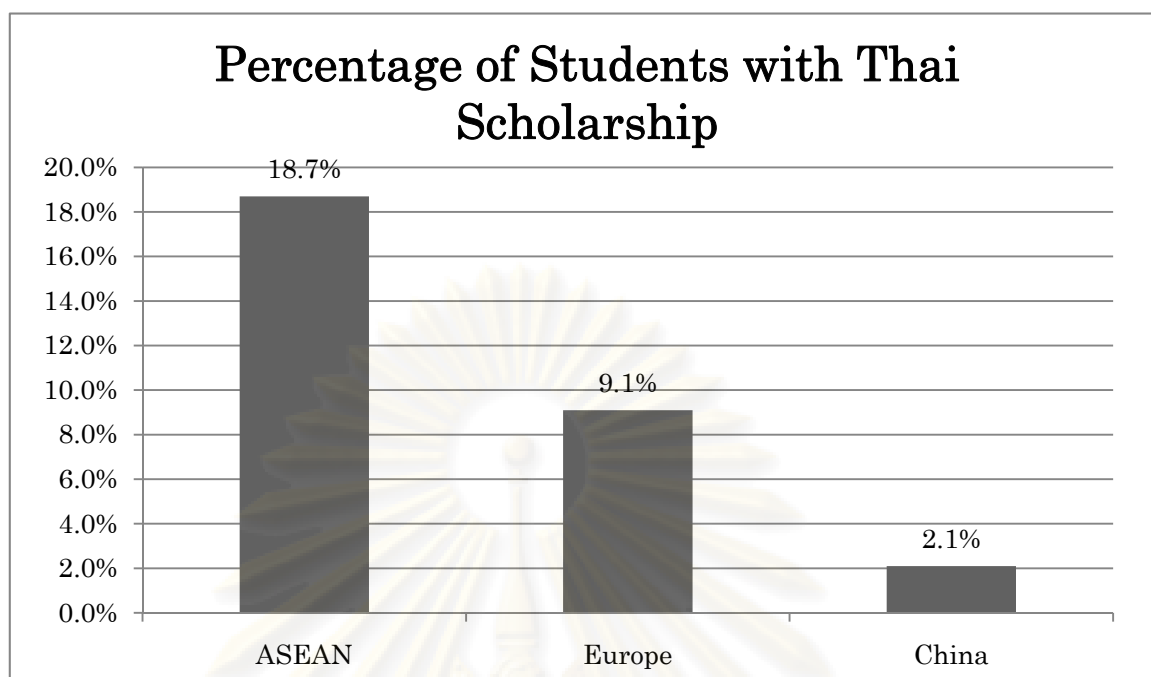
**Figure 27: Percentage of Students with a Thai Scholarship by Origin[207]**

Clearly, ASEAN students can benefit from more Thai scholarship support than other regions and countries. Especially the comparison to scholarships for Chinese students shows a stark contrast. European students are situated in the middle, with a bit over 9% getting a scholarship. However, to conclude that the high percentage of ASEAN students with Thai scholarships would stem from a government-sponsored programme to transform Thailand to a regional hub for higher education could be deceiving. Thus, the information on scholarships published by the CHE does not specify the scholarship-granting institution. Therefore, governments, universities, faculties or even private organisations could be sponsors of scholarships. Since the autonomy of universities in Thailand has recently increased significantly, the role of the state in coordinating and giving out scholarships to a certain targeted group might not be that great.

In conclusion, it can be said that the profile of foreign students in Thailand is clearly tilted towards two main sources of students: China and the other ASEAN countries. A number of reasons for this concentration of foreign students' origins have been mentioned above. The distribution of the countries of origin of students however does not necessarily reflect the respective importance of the students for Thailand. Factors influencing the transfer

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[207] Commission on Higher Education (Thailand). **Executive Report: Framework of the Second 15-Year Long Range Plan on Higher Education of Thailand.**

of knowledge and skills, such as the level of study, the interaction with local people, the retention rate and the experience in general greatly influence the benefits for the host country.

# CHAPTER IV

# CASE-STUDY: EUROPEAN STUDENTS IN THAILAND

The case study of European students and their motivations of studying in Thailand, as well as the possible benefits for Thailand form the core of this thesis. Above, numerous discussions have been led in order to contextualise the case study. Firstly, the theoretical background of globalisation processes and the internationalisation of higher education, with the different rationales of actors have been discussed, followed by the debate about the effects of cross-border movements of highly qualified. It was established that there are four different types of movements of highly skilled: North-North, South-North, South-South and North-South, and that all movements can ensue a transfer of knowledge and skills. Following these rather detailed theoretical accounts, some figures regarding the worldwide trade of higher education and the main recipients and senders of international students were analysed. By using the push- and pull factor models established in academic studies, some of the prevalent push- and pull factors for cross-border movements of students could be established. The focus hereby lay on the North-North and South-North movements, as a contrast to the North-South movements. Thailand's role as a destination for higher education, including the distribution of the main sender countries of students is then illustrated. This extensive work of preparation is crucial for this thesis, for without it, the specificity of the movement of European students to Thailand compared to other movements could not be grasped. In other words, the discussion of more general issues and of movements other than from Europe to Thailand puts the motivations and other parameters found in the survey of European students in Thailand into the context of the established academic theories and previous studies.

## 4.1. Analysis of Higher Education Stocks in Thailand

As seen before in Chapter 3.2.2., which discussed the stocks of foreign tertiary students in Thailand, 787 out of 16,361, or 4.8% of all international students in Thailand are from Europe. This may seem like a very small percentage, yet a comparison with other leading Asian countries show that the percentage of Europeans measured against the total number of

annual student movements is by far the highest in Thailand. Thailand's lead over the other Asian nations in attracting European students is even increased when, instead of the *stocks* of foreign students, the annual incoming *movements* are taken as the comparative basis. Thus, in 2008, 834 of 10,915, or 7.6% of all incoming students movements originated from a European country.[208] This clear lead over other Asian countries immediately raises the question why Thailand has such as significantly higher percentage of European students compared to other, more established student destinations such as Japan, Korea and even Malaysia. At this stage, answers to this question would only be speculative, and an analysis of the role of universities and their amounts of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with European students, the respective marketing of universities and national agencies or ministries in Europe would have to be conducted in order to make a conclusive statement about the diverging percentages. Based on the manual surveys conducted among European students however, some assumptions can be made about the high popularity of Thailand as an Asian study-abroad destination for Europeans. Firstly however, some basic analysis of the stocks of European students in Thailand is made. This analysis will be conducted in three steps, whereby the three main questions of "who studies?", "where do they study?" and "what do they study?" will be answered.
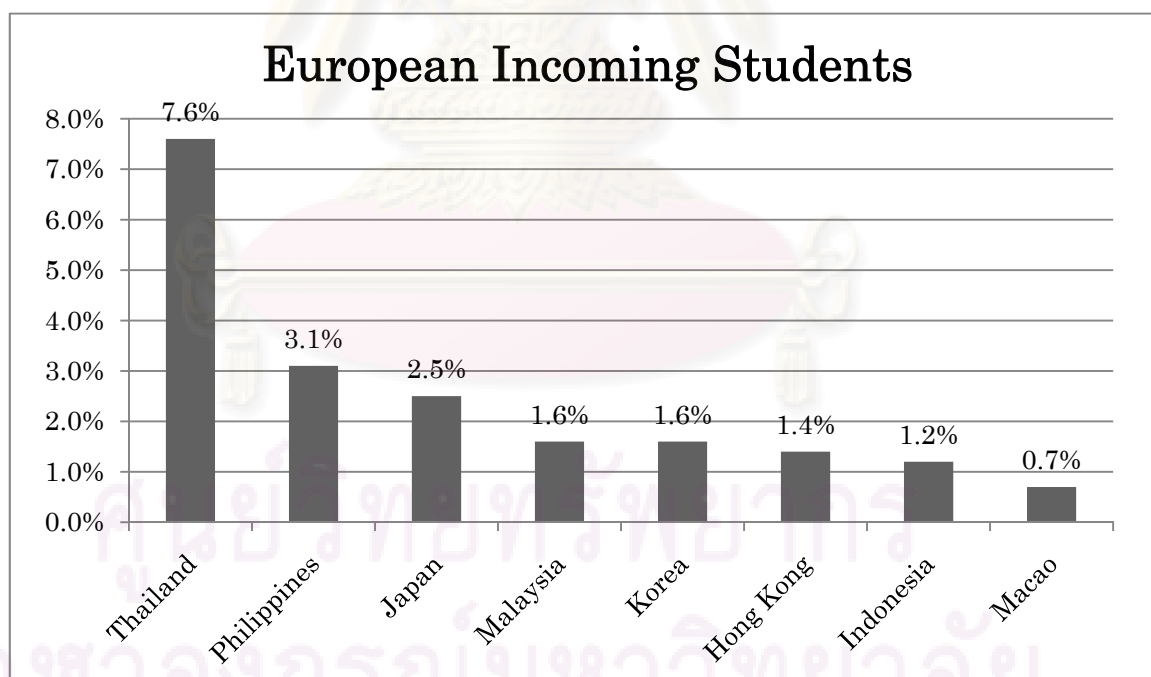


**Figure 28: European Incoming Students: Comparison Between Asian Countries[209]**

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[208] UNESCO Institute for Statistics. **Data Centre.**
[209] UNESCO Institute for Statistics. **Data Centre.**

The distribution of European students in Thailand by country of origin is the first step in creating an overview, or a typology of European students in Thailand. It can answer the question of "who" is studying in Thailand. The biggest two European sending countries are two large European nations, Germany and the United Kingdom. Because of their size, their lead can be somewhat expected. In 2008, there were 158 Germans and 134 British studying in Thailand. The third most important origin of European students in Thailand is Finland, with 110 students, followed by France with 77 and Sweden with 72 students. Therefore, two groups of European students are dominating the market: the large European countries Germany, the UK and France (not however Italy) and the Scandinavian countries, especially Finland and Sweden.
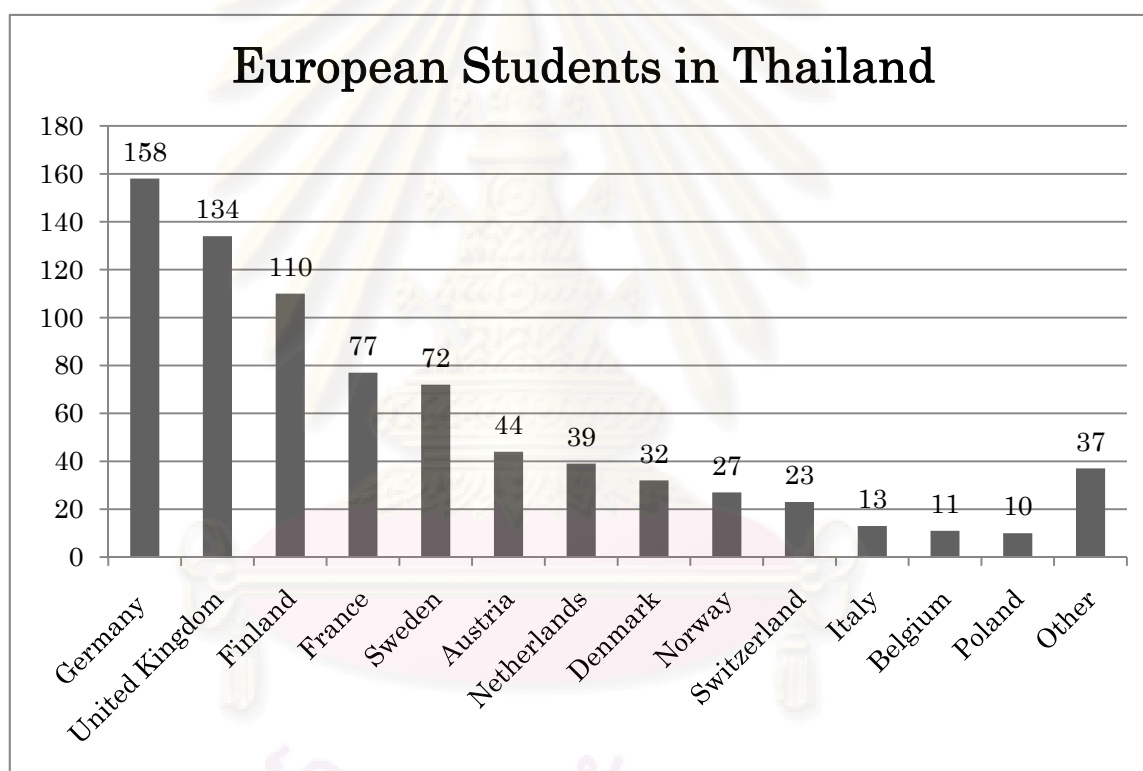


**Figure 29: European Students in Thailand: 2008, by Country**[210]

The distribution of the European students in Thailand by their host university takes on the second question in the overview: "where" do the students study? Firstly, it can be said that European students are enrolled in a very broad spectrum of universities. Slightly under a third of all students are enrolled in any of the "other" universities (as seen in figure 29), which are

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[210] Commission on Higher Education. **International Students in Thai Higher Education Institutions**.

often hosts to just a handful of European students. The prestigious and leading universities of the country however do succeed in attracting more significant numbers of European students. The clear leader university for European students in Thailand is Mahidol University. Following Mahidol, three universities have a similar number of European students: Bangkok University, Ramkhamhaeng and Assumption with between 95 and 80 European students. Webster , Chulalongkorn , Rangsit and Thammasat follow behind with just above 30 European students each.
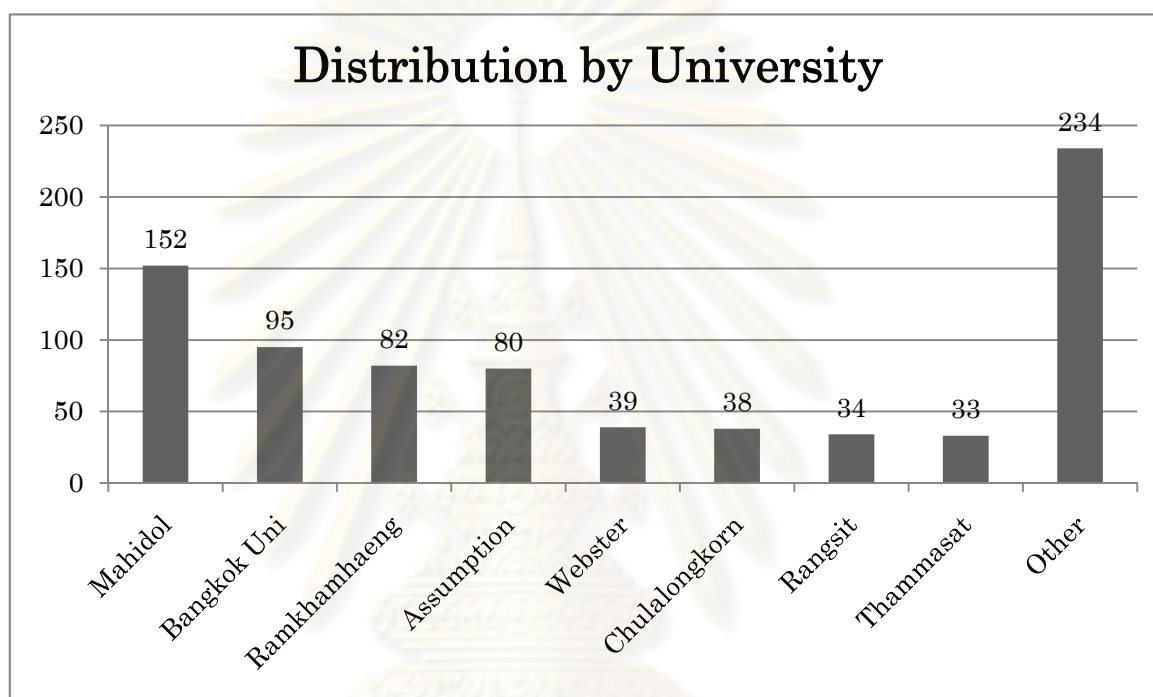


**Figure 30: European Students in Thailand: 2008, by University[211]**

This cross-analysis of the "who" and the "where" reveals some patterns, from which important conclusions regarding a typology of European students in Thailand can be drawn. Firstly, as mentioned above, the distribution of student origins and universities is very wide and therefore it is difficult to make assumptions regarding the motives of European students in Thailand and possible benefits. Therefore, a deeper analysis of the stocks of European students in Thailand is needed before proceeding to the survey.

Regarding the distribution of the different nationalities of European students at the different Thai universities, some patterns can shed lights on the rationales of European students in Thailand. German students, the biggest group of European students, are heavily

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[211] Commission on Higher Education. **International Students in Thai Higher Education Institutions**.

concentrated at Mahidol and Rakhamhaeng.[212] The distribution of British students is similar, but in their case, Assumption is also a popular university. The Finnish and Swedish students however are more concentrated on Bangkok University, as well as Rangsit (for Finland) and Mahidol (for Sweden). Whereas the French students are distributed between the big receivers of European students (Mahidol, Bangkok University and Assumption), the Austrian students are nearly all studying at Mahidol. Possible reasons for the respective distribution of European students to the different universities could be the individual MOUs of the Thai universities with their European counterparts, the promotion of a certain course abroad and even mouth-to-mouth propaganda.
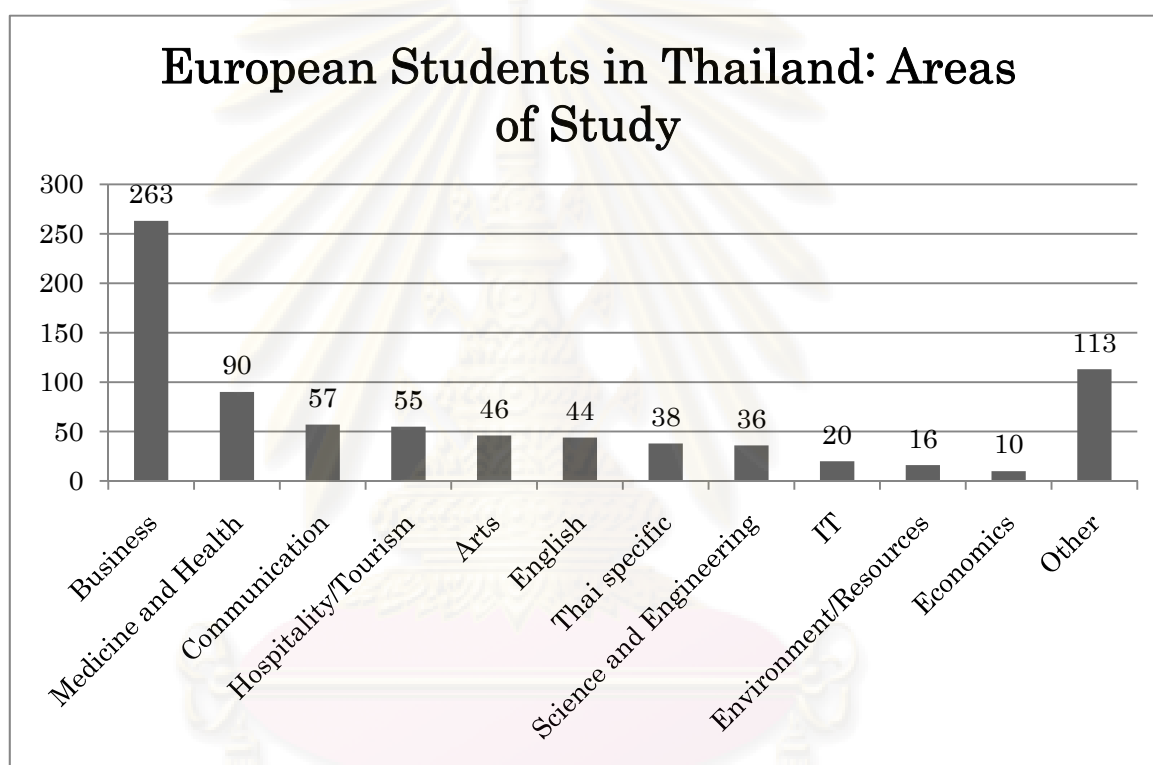


**Figure 31: European Students in Thailand in 2008: Areas of Study[213]**

The dimension of the area of study is a crucial addition to the analysis of European students in Thailand. It represents the third dimension in the analysis of the stocks of European students in Thailand. This dimension is an important addition to the puzzle because it gives further information about the rationales of European students who chose to study in Thailand. Additionally, the choice of areas of study also gives some indication towards the

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[212] This information is taken from: Commission on Higher Education. **International Students in Thai Higher Education Institutions**.

[213] Commission on Higher Education. **International Students in Thai Higher Education Institutions**.

concentration of skills of the European students. Through this additional piece of information regarding the skills of incoming students, more information about the benefits of European students for Thailand can be retrieved.

Among the areas of study of European students in Thailand, there is clearly a strong dominance of business-related courses, such as business administration, management, marketing, finance or international business. A third of all European students are taking business-related subjects. Regarding the distribution of the business-students according to universities and country of origin it can be said that students from practically all countries predominantly take business-related courses. There is an even stronger emphasis on business courses among students from Finland and Sweden, and to a lesser extent from Germany and France. Since Swedish and Finnish students mainly study at Bangkok and Rangsit University, it is safe to assume that these are the universities where the strongest focus on business-related subjects can be observed. Nevertheless, business-subjects are taken in universities across the board, and the dominance of business subjects is unchallenged. The second most popular discipline is medicine and health with 90 students attending courses in this area. Such courses are especially popular among Austrians and Danes, who primarily study these disciplines at Mahidol University. The field of communication, including mass communication studies and technologies is also relatively strongly represented among European students. In this area, German students make up a majority and take these courses mostly at Ramkhamhaeng and Mahidol University. Hospitality and tourism related courses were expected to rank higher, especially due to Thailand being a popular tourist destination. Only 55 students take courses in this area. Different arts disciplines, such as philosophy, international relations, and political science among many are also fairly popular, especially with French students. The appearance of English language as a subject, which is taken by 44 Europeans may seem odd at the first glance, especially because most of the English language students are British. It could however be explained that these students are long-term residents and are aiming to gain qualifications for teaching English to foreign language students. Only 38 European students take Thai specific courses, which include Thai studies and language, as well as Southeast Asian studies, Buddhist studies and tropical medicine.[214] The difference between these students and the ones taking the more general disciplines of business, medicine or even English language, students of Thai-specific courses would find Thailand their natural choice of an overseas exchange or even a degree.In earlier chapters, it was argued that Thailand is lagging behind in science and IT-related subjects and therefore, the government are investing a big sum of money to upgrade

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[214] Tropical Medicine, Southeast Asian studies and Buddhist studies were included in this category because even though these disciplines are not exclusively related to Thailand, there is a direct connection between the courses and Thailand.

the courses, the facilities and teaching. Perhaps due to these problems, few European students study in these areas. Within the areas of science and engineering, most of the 36 students included in this category are taking engineering courses. Studies of environment, resource management and agriculture were also low, with only 16 students enrolled in such programmes. Therefore, overall there is a clear tendency that most European students take courses in non-Thai-specific areas, especially business.

The overview of the stocks of European students in Thailand regarding their national provenience, distribution among the Thai universities and the respective fields of study are crucial to contextualise the following case study. Additionally, the data above can give some hints regarding the motivations and rationales of European students in Thailand. However, the body of research, from which the most important evidence will be drawn, will be the case study. From the analysis of the stocks of European students in Thailand, the motivations of European students for studying specifically in Thailand cannot be determined since the data is too broad and the information is not qualitative enough. As seen in the analysis in chapter 2.3.2., the main rationales for studying in a certain destination overseas can be divided into four different categories: educational, economical, political and social/environmental. Since the European students are not likely to be politically in danger, this category of rationales is unlikely to have any influence. Economical reasons might play a role if the subject the student studies requires an Asian or specifically Thai perspective, and thus, the expected career prospects can be enhanced by having some experience or even a degree from an Asian/Thai university. Educational motivations are also possible if the student expects an educational advantage from studying in Thailand. Such motivations are likely to be dominant in students, who take Thai-specific courses. Since only 38 European students take Thai-specific courses/degrees, one might deem educational rationales as unimportant. Such an early judgement would however oversee that for many students of business-related courses, communication, hospitality and tourism as well as for the different arts subjects, might contain a vital Asian or Thai-specific courses or point of view of teaching. Such factors might be crucial for some students in deciding which destination is chosen. The more likely rationales however are social and environmental. Figure 10, which displays a survey by Marginson and McBurnie revealed that for over 50% of students studying abroad, the main unit of decision making regarding their destination is the country. Regarding south-north movements to countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom or Australia, a student is likely to take a mix of educational (these countries are renowned for a high quality of tertiary education) and social/environmental (experiencing the West, getting away from home) rationales, focused on the country of choice. In the Thai case, the country-level is also likely to be the dominant level for decision-making regarding the European student's choice of

studying abroad. Thailand and its fine reputation as a laid-back tourist destination could be a major drawcard for students who prefer a more relaxed study-environment. Therefore, the image and brand of "Thailand", which most other Asian countries lack, could be decisive in attracting a comparatively large amount of European students.

The second focus of the thesis, the potential gain for Thailand drawn from the exchange students is difficult to be answered by the sole analysis of the stocks of European students in Thailand. In regards to the benefits, one question, which springs to mind is whether the distribution of students regarding their areas of study can give an indication as to how beneficial these students are to Thailand. In other words: does Thailand benefit more form a students majoring in Thai studies than in from a student majoring in marketing? Or is a student who studies medicine more valuable than a student enrolled in engineering courses? Finally, the area of study might not even be important for an indication of a student's benefit to Thailand, as other factors could prove more important. Such questions cannot be answered by analysing the stocks of European students in Thailand alone and will therefore be addressed in the analysis of the case study, as well as in the discussion of the results further below.

## 4.2. Case Study: Basic Analysis

The case study, in which 26 European students were surveyed forms the centre piece of this thesis and contains the main evidence on the rationales of European students in Thailand and the benefits for Thailand stemming from the European students. As explained in detail above in the methodology chapter, the 26 degree and exchange students were questioned regarding their basic personal and educational parameters, their rationales and expectations for studying in Thailand, their experience in Thailand and future engagement with Thailand.
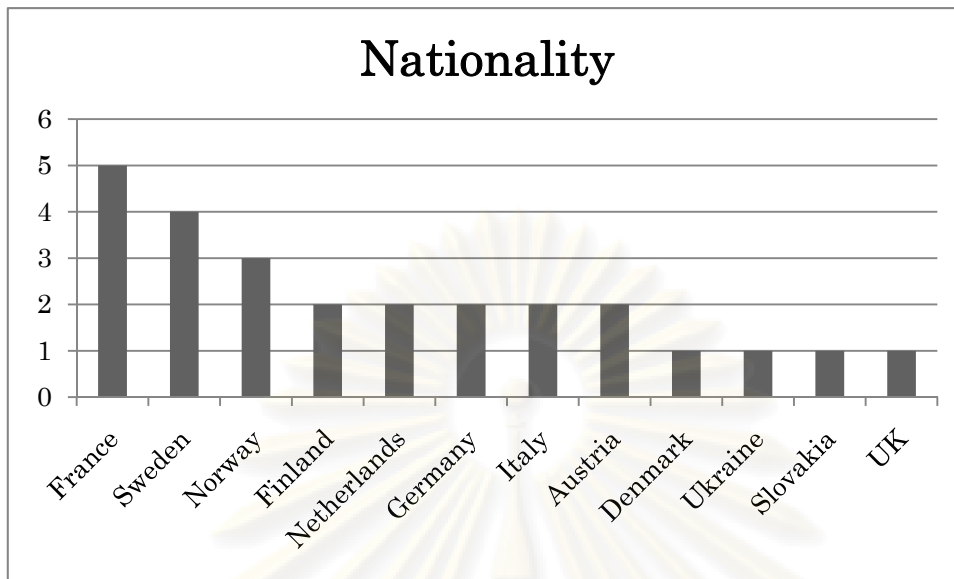
**Figure 32: Nationalities of Interviewees**[215]

Figure 32 above displays the nationalities of the 26 interviewees. Compared to the stocks of European students in Thailand (which can be seen in figure 29), German and British students are slightly underrepresented. Nevertheless, in general, the distribution of nationalities of the interviewees largely reflects the actual patterns of European students in Thailand.

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[215] Own source.
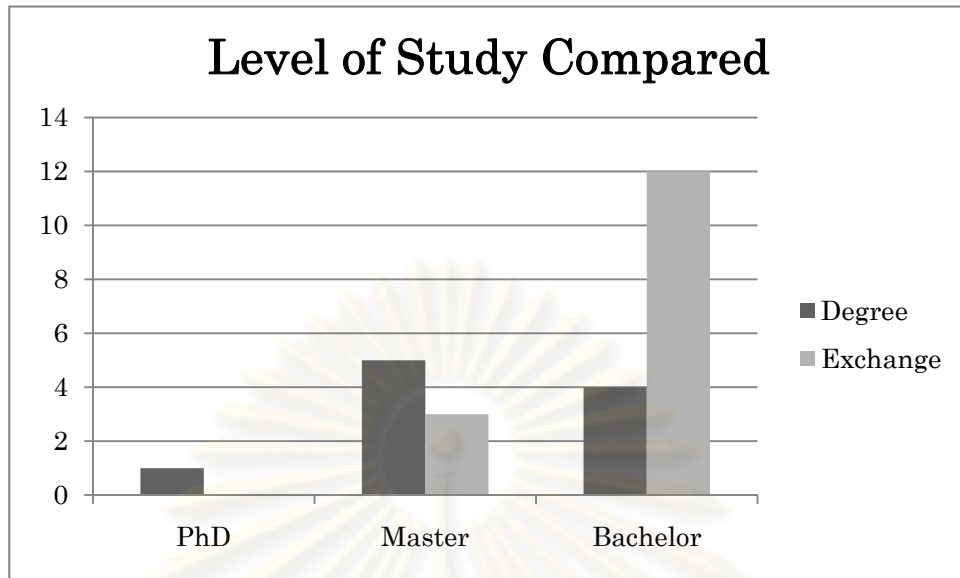
**Figure 33: Level of Study Compared**[216]

As mentioned above in the chapter on the methodology of the survey, both, degree and exchange students were interviewed for several reasons. The distribution of the respondents' level of study reveals that the two groups of students, degree and exchange show different patterns. Whereas exchange students are predominantly taking Bachelor-level courses, degree students are enrolled in both, Master and Bachelor courses. One respondent is even in the course of doing her PhD. This discrepancy could have an influence in the expected benefits for Thailand drawn from the European students. Since Master students usually have higher skills and knowledge than Bachelor students, their interaction with locals could yield more valuable human resource exchanges. The benefits through people-to-people contacts however do not solely depend on the level of study of the European students, but much rather on personal factors, such as the personal human skills and knowledge as well as the student's interaction and future involvement with Thailand. These factors will be studied more closely below.

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[216] Own source.
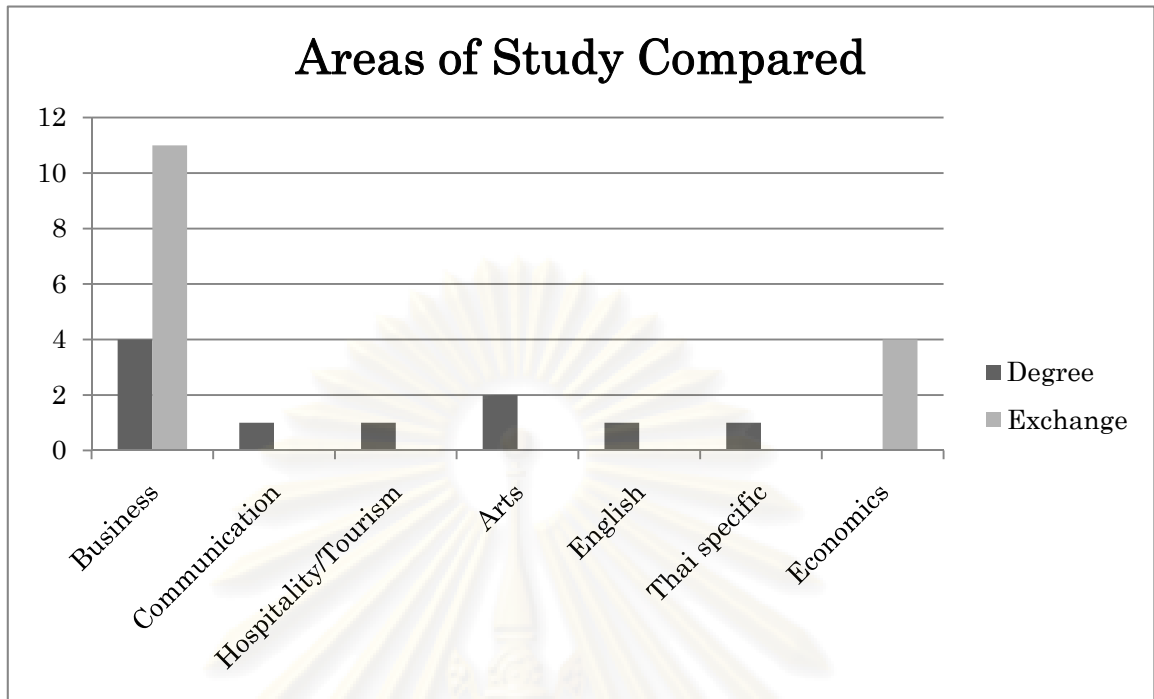
**Figure 34: Areas of Study Compared[217]**

While the differences between exchange and degree students are clearly visible in the level of study, they are also apparent when the areas of study are compared. The interviewed exchange students all studied subjects in either business- or economics-related areas. Presumably, the subjects are the same subjects as they study in the home universities and these students come to Thai universities on exchange programmes to partner universities. Degree students also frequently study business-related subjects, but are also enrolled in Arts programmes (development studies, international relations), communication, hospitality/tourism, English and Thai studies. Compared to the European stocks of students in Thailand, the strong lead of business-related subjects is reflected in the areas of study of the interviewees. The strong tilt towards these subjects, as well as economics however results from the fact that the personal contacts through the supervisor and students have been crucial in finding a significant amount of students willing to take the survey. Because these contacts often took the same classes, a certain re-enforcement of some subjects resulted. Similar to the distribution of the total stocks of European students in Thailand, most interviewees do not take courses directly related to Thailand. As will be seen below however, this certain lack of academic learning of Thailand does not necessarily mean that the interaction with Thai people, their interest in Thailand in general and their affinity to the country is low. On the contrary, the interviews have revealed

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[217] Own source.

that even though all but one interviewee did not study a Thailand-specific subjects, many students enjoy discussions about Thailand, Thai politics and the economy in class and even wish to find out more about such Thailand-related areas. Thus, by studying in Thailand, the interest of some students in Thai-related topics could be stimulated and further engagement with Thailand is more likely.
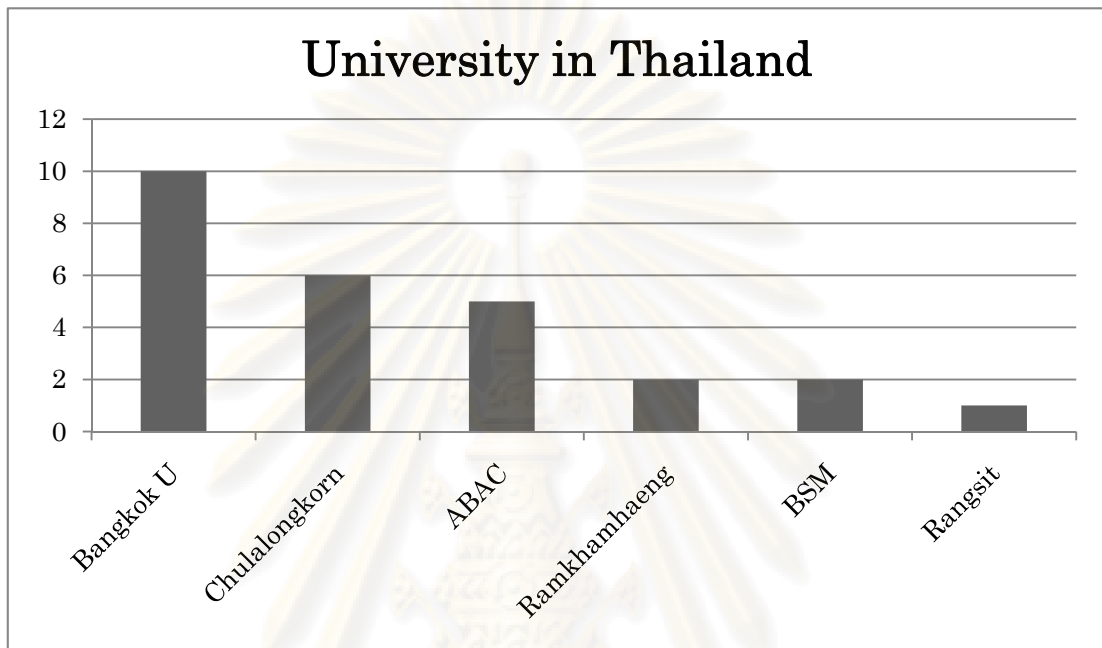


**Figure 35: Distribution of Interviewees by Thai Universities[218]**

Regarding the distribution of the interviewees by university, Bangkok University is leading with 10 students, followed by Chulalongkorn University with 6, Assumption with 5, Ramkhamhaeng and the Bangkok School of Management with 2 and Rangsit University with one student. Compared to the distribution of the total stocks of European students, the absence of Mahidol University and the over-representation of Chulalongkorn University are the most notable divergences. This was mainly due to the fact that it was much easier to make personal contacts with students at Chulalongkorn and Bangkok University, especially because of the contacts made through the supervisor.

A comparison of the course fee payment reveals that in the case of exchange students, predictably, the course fees are mostly paid through the home university. In the case of the degree students, roughly half paid by at least partly receiving loans from their home country governments while the other half pays the fees themself. No student receives a scholarship

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[218] Own Source.

from the Thai government of university, thereby confirming the low number of Europeans supported by Thai scholarships in figure 27. The survey question for the student's monthly expenses in Thailand (not including the study fees) revealed that the average monthly expenses of European students in Thailand is just under 33,500 THB for exchange students and just under 25,100 THB for degree students. The reasons for the difference between the exchange and degree students in monthly expenses are most likely because some degree students lived and worked in Thailand previously or even while studying, while exchange students mostly live on money earned or given from Europe. Added up to a 12 months period, all the 26 European students together spend roughly 9 million THB. If the average sum of 29,000 THB per student and month is extrapolated to the total of 787 European students in Thailand, a total of 273.9 million THB annual expenses can be calculated. This is a considerable sum of money and testimony to the economic effects of high-spending foreign students. This direct economic impact, stemming from the expenses as well as the study fees paid by the European students is the most immediate tangible benefit for the host country (in this case Thailand) in attracting foreign students. This effect can also be measured relatively easily, especially when compared to more complex benefits such as the increased human skills and knowledge, cross-cultural understanding and partnerships through people-to-people links.

## 4.3. Case Study: The Way to Thailand

The basic personal and educational parameters explained above in the previous chapter give important background information with regards to the interviewees. Additionally, the immediate and tangible financial benefits from foreign students have become apparent. This chapter on the other hand will discuss the way to Thailand for the interviewees. Questions with regards to their decision-making for studying in Thailand, their expectations and the channels of information that were consumed prior to arriving in Thailand can give crucial information about the push- and pull-factors for not only the interviewees, but European students in Thailand in general.

The first question addresses the initial reason for studying in Thailand. All 26 interviewees were asked to name an indefinite number of reasons how they came to study in Thailand. This is a central question for determining push- and pull factors for European students deciding to study in Thailand. The results are displayed in figure 36 below. The reasons for degree and exchange students are slightly different. Exchange students' primary

reasons for studying in Thailand are clearly social/environmental. They include push-factors, which could be described as a general feeling of wanting to "get away from home". In this case, Thailand is perceived as a "different culture" or just a "different environment" and European students deciding to study in Thailand want to "do something different". Therefore, it could be said that Thailand is perceived as the "other", culturally and geographically. Perhaps since these students are only on exchange, they are keen to experience a totally different environment. This argument is reinforced by the factor of travel and the weather, which dominates the pull-factors for exchange students. These students want to combine their studies with travels in and around Thailand. An additional reason is personal (knowing a friend or family in Thailand), demonstrating that personal ties can be a crucial factor for the movement of students. Financial and study-related reasons on the other hand are more important for degree students. The financial reasons are mostly related to the relatively cheap tertiary education in Thailand with one student even mentioning that he is studying to escape the currently unfavourable business climate. Directly study-related reasons for studying in Thailand score relatively low. Degree students however do show a specific interest in either studying in or about Thailand or Asia in general. For degree students, the major reasons for studying in Thailand are that they are already there or have travelled there before (previous knowledge). Thus, for the students living in Thailand already, studying in Thailand seems an obvious choice. For students who have previous knowledge of Thailand, it is likely that their studies in Thailand are planned previously, yet their reasons for studying in Thailand are not immediately obvious.
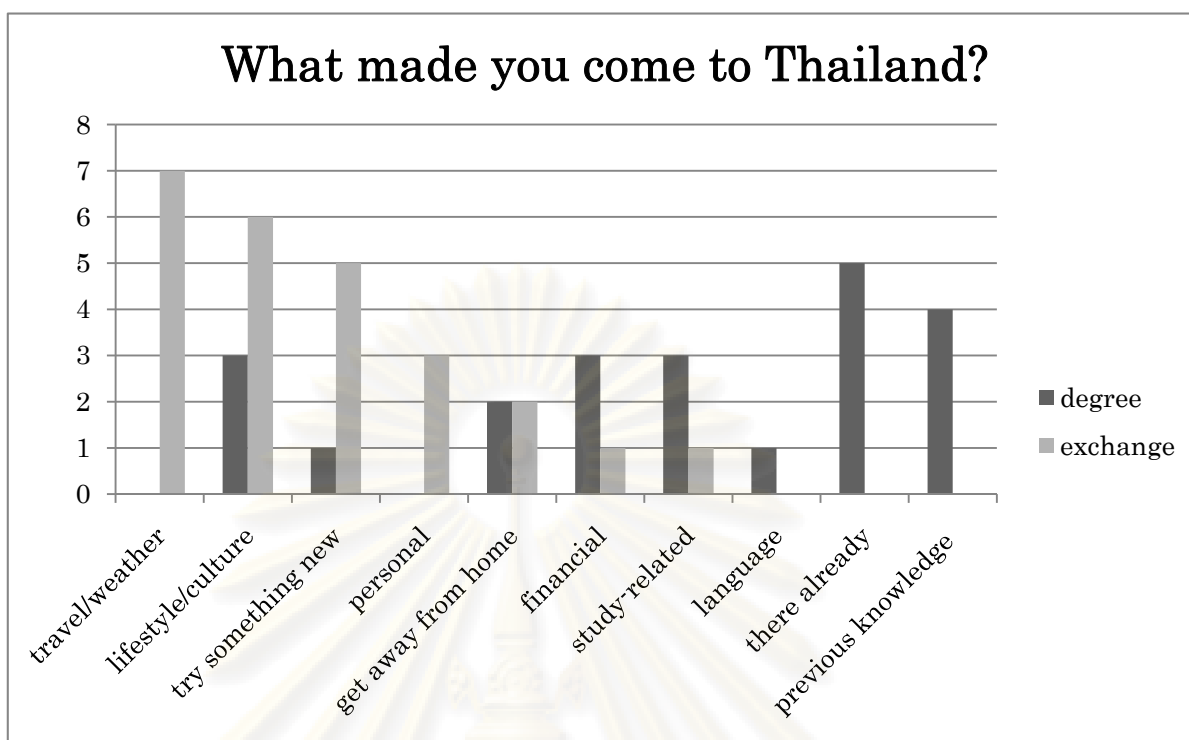
**Figure 36: What made you come to Thailand to study?**[219]

In conclusion, social and environmental push- and pull factors dominate the European student's rationales for studying in Thailand. Educational and economical factors are less important, and political factors are not traceable. Following the question about the reasons for studying in Thailand, the interviewees were asked what positives and negatives they had in mind when deciding on Thailand as a study-abroad destination. The respondents were again allowed to give multiple answers. In this question, it was hoped that more in-depth information regarding the rationales and push- and pull factors and the student's thought process could be gained.

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[219] Own source.
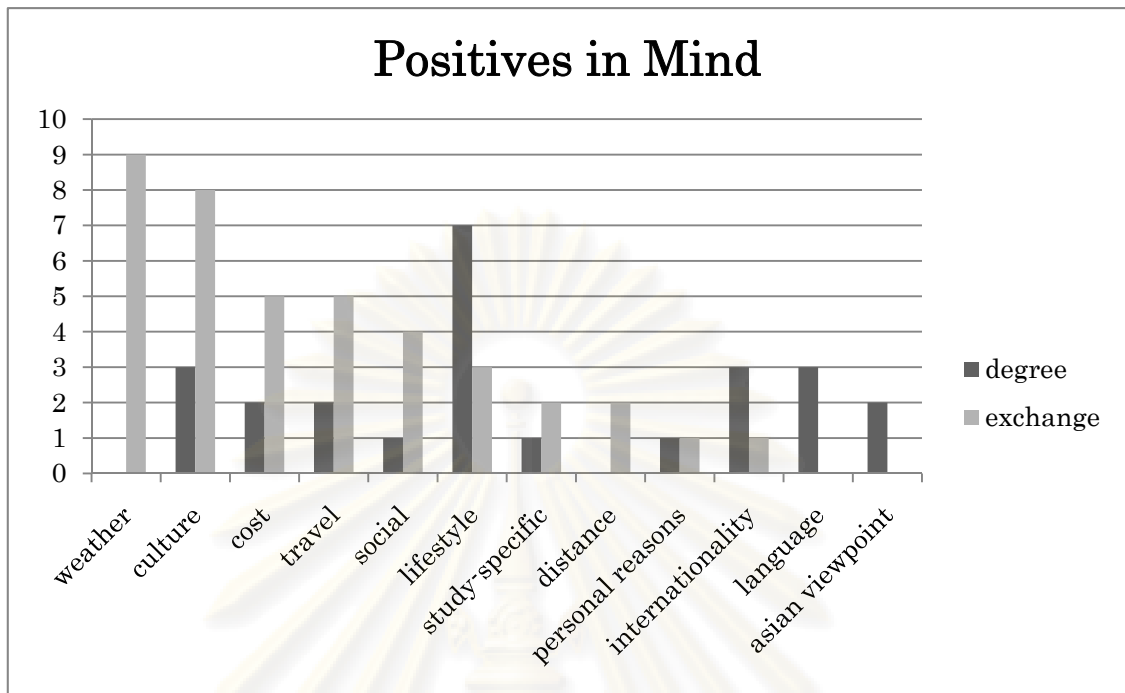
**Figure 37: Positives in Mind When Coming to Study in Thailand[220]**

The positives that European students have in mind when they decide to study in Thailand are also mostly related to social and environmental factors. For exchange students, the exoticism of Thailand in terms of culture, the attraction of Thailand as a tourist destination with warm weather and the distance to Europe are the most important factors. Thus, it can be seen that Thailand is especially interesting as a study destination for Europeans who want to "get away from home" and experience an exotic and faraway land. For degree students, who often already reside in Thailand, the positives they have in mind when they decide to study in Thailand are on the one hand also related to cultural and lifestyle factors. Apart from these factors, educational factors such as the internationality of Thai universities, the learning of the Thai language and the learning from an Asian viewpoint are valued highly. Therefore, most likely due the higher cost of studying for degree students as well as due to their mostly deep knowledge of Thailand before studying, the positives for degree students have a much stronger connotation to their actual education. A further positive factor for exchange and degree students is the comparatively low cost of education in Thailand.

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[220] Own source.
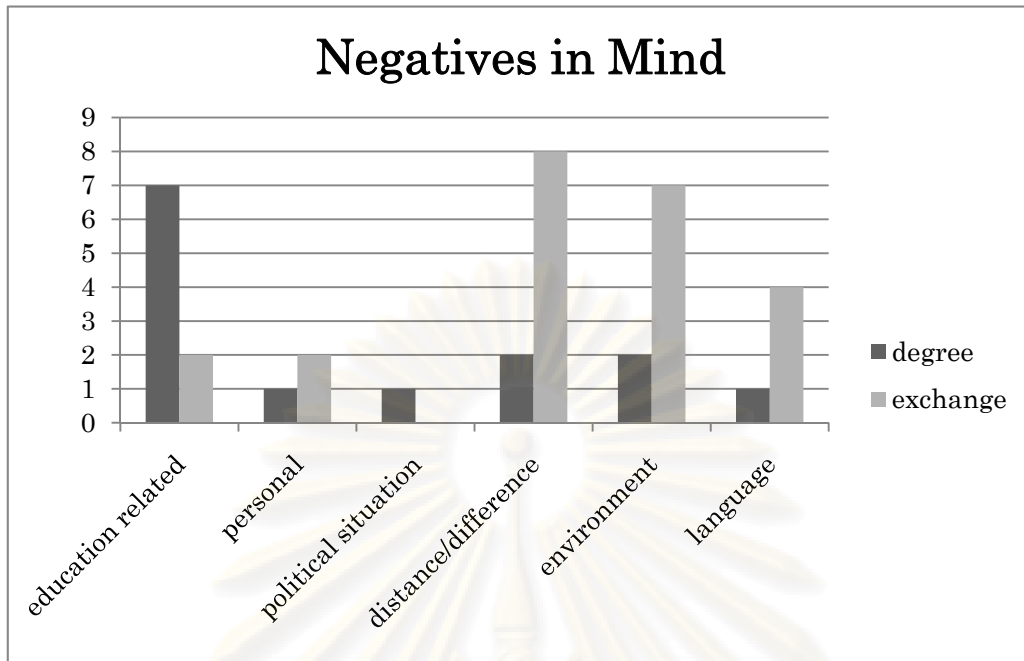
## Negatives in Mind



**Figure 38: Negatives in Mind when Coming to Study in Thailand**[221]

In general, European degree and exchange students have fewer negatives in mind than positives when they chose to study in Thailand. For exchange students, almost all negatives are related to the cultural and geographical distance of Thailand. Since the lifestyle and cultural experience is also mentioned as a positive, this demonstrates the dilemma for an exchange student on whether to "risk" choosing a faraway and culturally different country for study exchange or whether to stay closer to home, culturally and geographically. Additional to the distance and differences, environmental concerns about pollution, poverty and personal security also bothered a number of interviewees. Such concerns again stem from the fact that Thailand, unlike their home countries, is a developing country. Many exchange students have possibly never been, let alone lived in a developing country and are therefore somewhat insecure about how they are going to deal with economic differences. For degree students, and to a certain degree also for exchange students, the main negative in mind was related to educational factors and consisted mostly of two negatives: the problem of low quality education and the problem of accreditation or low value of a Thai degree. Such educational worries of students who have chosen to study a degree in Thailand need to be addressed, especially since educational factors have not figured highly on the anticipated positives above. Therefore, if only educational factors are included in the decision making of European students, the negatives outnumber the positives of studying in Thailand. As seen above in the

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[221] Own source.

theoretical part of the thesis, for Thailand as a developing country, which mainly imports higher education, it is difficult to achieve a reputation as a destination for high quality education, especially when compared to Western, developed countries. This fact can explain why European students have reservations about studying in Thailand due to possible problems in their own perception of the quality of Thai higher education as well as in the perception of other universities and future employers for the accreditation of academic achievements. Since these negatives can be somewhat expected, the lack of educational positives are perhaps the area where Thailand is underachieving as a destination for European students. Its advantages of the internationality of higher education while at the same time offering an Asian perspective not just on directly Thai-specific subjects but also on other subjects in business, economics and arts need to be communicated more efficiently to potential incoming students. Thus, European students interested in studying in Thailand would not overwhelmingly see educational factors as a negative, but would have a more balanced view on their prospective studies in Thailand.
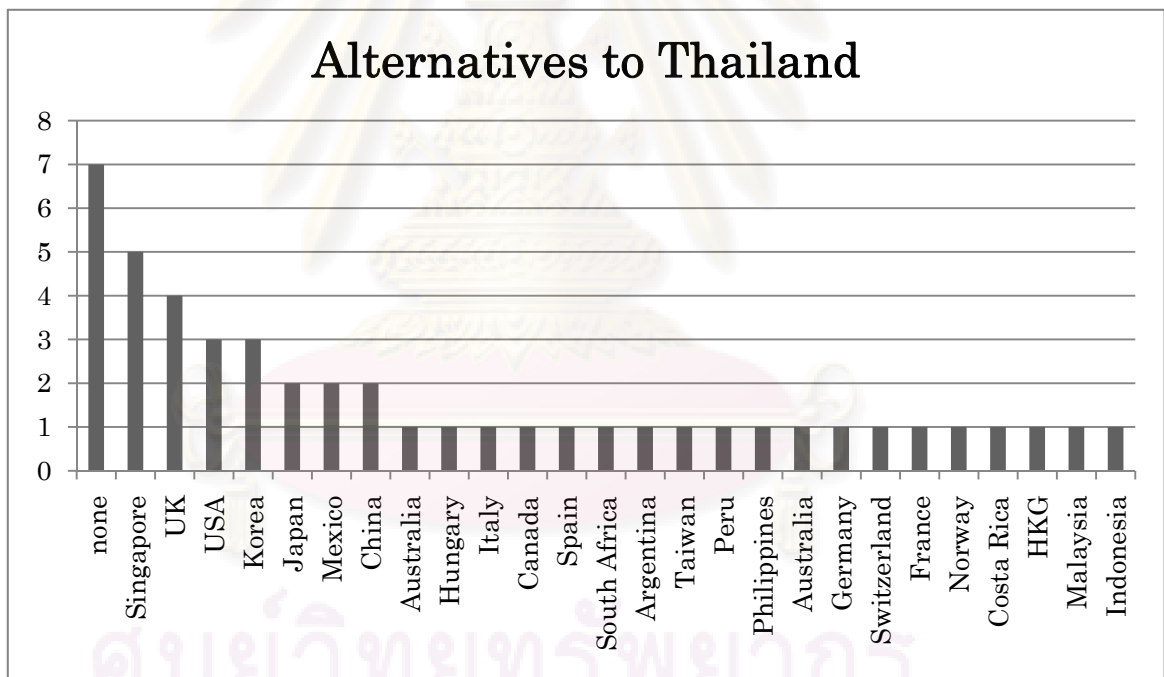


**Figure 39: Alternative Study Destination in Mind**

After the focus on the push- and pull factors for European students moving to Thailand for study-purposes, the question is asked whether and if, which, other options the students consider for their degree or exchange. The answers were hoped to give hints regarding the main competitors of Thailand as a study destination as well as to find out more about the students thought process regarding the choice of a study destination. The results were

relatively inconclusive with a high number of potential alternatives to Thailand mentioned. Most of these "competitors" however were only considered as an alternative to Thailand by one person. The alternative destinations receiving more than one vote were China, Mexico and Japan with two votes, Korea and the United States with three votes, the UK with four and Singapore with five votes. Evidently, there are two groups of alternatives, which were also considered by European students who eventually study in Thailand: Other Asian countries (mostly Singapore, but also Korea, Japan and China) and developed-world Western destinations of the UK and the USA. Interestingly, seven students did not have or think of an alternative to Thailand. In this group, the degree students make up 5 out of the 7 answers. Therefore, it can be seen from these results that whereas many students have a wide array of alterative destinations for studying abroad, some specifically search for a destination in Asia or in a developing country. Others again, especially exchange students chose between a culturally and geographically closer destination such as the UK or the USA and a more exotic destination such as Thailand. Interestingly however, seven students did not think of any alternatives but were sure they would study in Thailand. Most of these students were either already in Thailand and did not consider leaving Thailand for higher education or had a personal connection with Thailand through friends or a partner. Overall, no conclusive statement can be made regarding the main competitors or Thailand as a study destination. Perhaps the only competitor, who did emerge, more for degree students than for exchange students is Singapore. This could be a sign that these students are genuinely interested in the region of Southeast Asia and their interest in the domestic culture, society and politics might be high.

The interviewees were also asked whether they had taken part in any intra-European mobility programmes before studying in Thailand. This question was asked in order to gauge whether studying in Thailand is complementary to intra-European exchanges or whether Thailand is in fact a competitor to other European countries. As seen in figure 39, European countries, especially the UK is considered as alternative study destinations but do not emerge as the main competitors to Thailand. Since only three students have previously taken part in intra-European exchange programmes, it could be said that the students choosing Thailand over other destinations prefer a more exotic or even specifically Asian destination. Therefore, the influence of intra-European initiatives to strengthen intra-European exchanges and thus a more pan-European identity do not have a great influence on Europe as a market for Thai higher education exports. Nevertheless, based on these numbers, it is not known in which country students that have considered Thailand as a destination but eventually decided otherwise are studying. Therefore, even though evidence points to towards a low influence, it

cannot be conclusively said whether intra-European exchange programmes such as Erasmus have an influence on Thailand.

Another important piece of information in the quest to determine the students' decision-making is the way of information about the overseas university and course. Thus, it is hoped that some insight can be gained into which channels of information are crucial for Thailand as a higher education exporter and perhaps even how these channels could be improved.
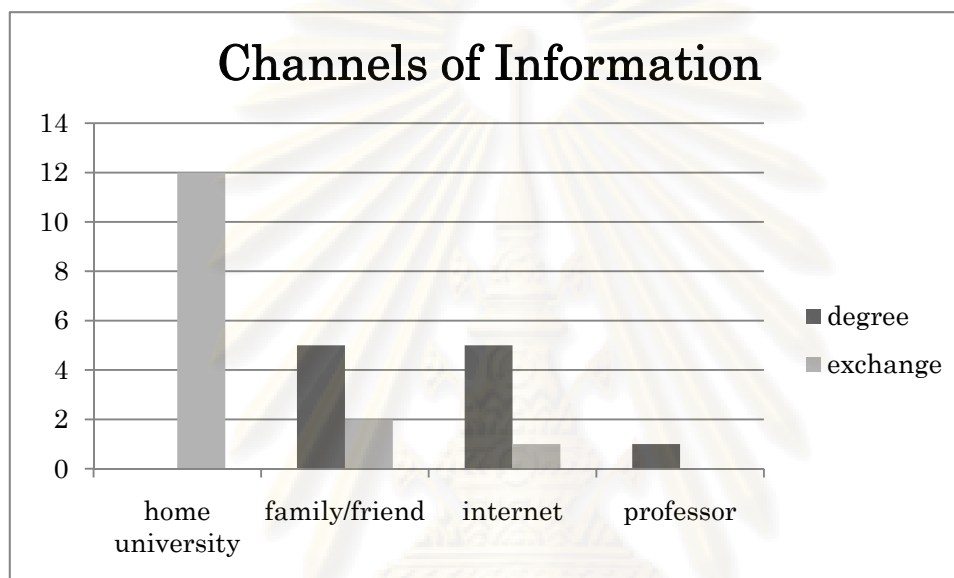


**Figure 40: Channels of Information about the Thai University Programme[222]**

The results show a clear divergence in the channels of information consumed between exchange and degree students. Exchange students overwhelmingly gather information about the Thai university and its programmes via the home university. This result further undermines the importance of MOU's for Thai universities with overseas universities. It is also important for the Thai university to provide information about itself and Thailand as an education destination through the channels of partner universities. For degree students, the main channels of information were friends and family as well as the Internet. One person also received information and a recommendation from a professor. For degree students, the word of mouth and the Internet portal of the Thai university are the crucial ways of information. The case of personal connections demonstrates that, just like in business, a satisfied student (or customer) can be enormously important, as students can recommend the university to their

[222] Own source.

friends or family members. The importance of Internet portals as a medium of information is can also not be underestimated and an informative and serious web portal can be crucial.

In this chapter on the "way to Thailand" for the European interviewees, a number of important points regarding both, the *research question* and the *sub-question 2* could be observed. It has been established that environmental and social factors dominate the push- and pull-factors for European students coming to Thailand. Educational factors however are frequently seen a negative point, as especially degree students are worried about the quality of education and the international value of the degree. A drawcard for exchange students on the other hand is the cultural and geographical distance as well as the lifestyle and possibilities for travel. Exchange students however are also worried about the cultural distance and the language barriers. The alternatives for Thailand have not given a clear picture but still established other Asian players (especially Singapore) and Western powerhouses in higher education (UK and the USA) as main competitors. Regarding the channels of information, the home university is leading among exchange students, whereas the Internet and the word of mouth from friends and family are dominating among the degree students. In all the parameters, notable differences could be observed between exchange and degree students. It remains to be seen whether these differences continue to exist in the following chapters about the students' experience in Thailand and their future engagement with the country.

## 4.4. Case Study: In Thailand

It is expected that the more a student enjoys the experience of living and studying in Thailand, the more positive image the student will keep of the country. The more passionate a student becomes about the host country, in this case Thailand, the more the student will also act as a lifelong "ambassador" for this country, carrying knowledge, sympathy and some of its values. An important factor in the determination of how emotionally attached to the host country a foreign student can become, is likely to be the frequency of people-to-people interactions with local people. Through more interaction, more local culture and also language can be conveyed and the more acquainted a foreign student can become with the local culture.

In order to determine the students' experience and content of studying in Thailand, several questions were asked. Firstly, it was enquired about the general impression of living in Thailand. Importantly, all but two respondents showed a generally positive attitude about their

stay in Thailand. Most students commented positively on the friendliness of the people, the more relaxed lifestyle in Thailand, the warm climate and the lower cost of living. Less enjoyed were mostly factors related to pollution and sometimes also the excessively hot weather. Taking these results, it seems that most students thoroughly enjoyed their time as students in Thailand and take back good memories. In order to specify the list of the positive, but also the negative connotations of European students with their life in Thailand, each interviewee was asked to mention a maximum of five things they like the most and the least about living in Thailand.
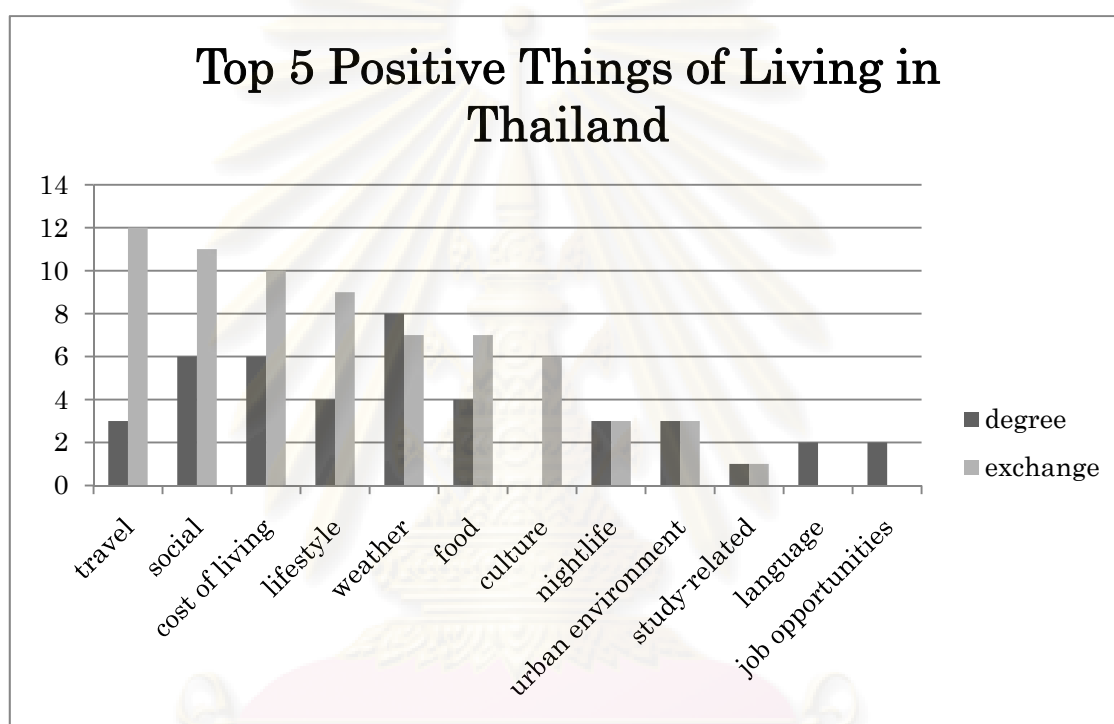


**Figure 41: Top 5 Positive Things of Living in Thailand[223]**

For the European students in Thailand, both, degree and exchange, the best things about living in Thailand are mostly related to the environment the students live in and not their education as such. For both, degree and exchange students the relatively low costs of living are leading. Thus, the students' expectations of low costs, which were among the leading positives they had in mind before studying in Thailand, have been met. Further popular things about living in Thailand concern social contacts with friends and the general lifestyle, nightlife and urban environment in Bangkok. For most students, a lot of them might come from a more rural background in Europe, Bangkok is being experienced as a lively and fun environment which

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[223] Own source.

is thoroughly enjoyed. Further mentioned as positive things of living in Thailand is the food, which is thoroughly enjoyed, as well as the weather and the travel possibilities. Especially for exchange students, travel possibilities are highly valued as they often combine their study-abroad experience with travel. It is worth noting that for two degree students, learning the Thai language and increasing future job and career opportunities has been a positive outcome of studying in Thailand. The students having given these answers evidently are interested in Thai culture and language as such as well as starting or continuing their career in Thailand.
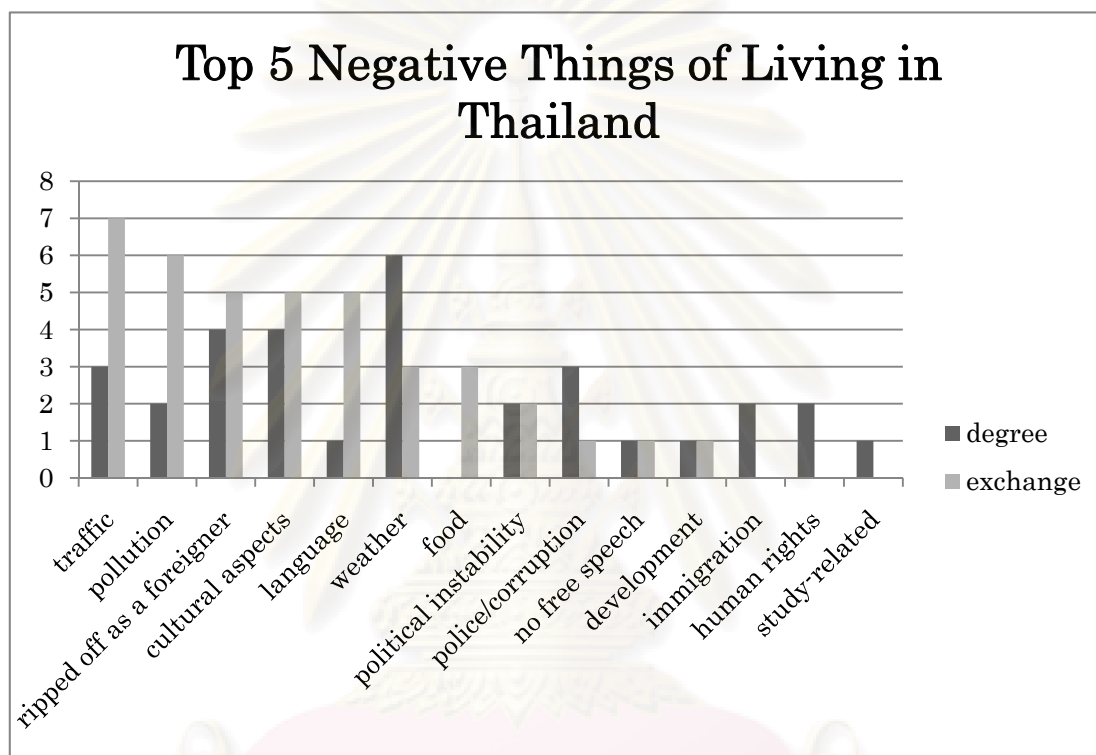


**Figure 42: Top 5 Negative Things of Living in Thailand**[224]

Things, which the European students enjoy least about living in Thailand, are listed in figure 42. Environmental factors such as traffic and pollution are leading in this category. Europeans, and especially rural Europeans might not be used to the level of pollution and traffic more commonly found in Southeast Asian cities. Cultural misunderstandings and difficulties relating to locals due to cultural and linguistic differences are also mentioned frequently. Quite a high number of students also feel that locals who might mistake them for tourists treat them unfairly. Degree students who have more experience living in Thailand complain about other issues relating to Thai internal politics, corruption and the police, human

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[224] Own source.

rights issues, the cumbersome immigration law and the lack of free speech and existence of certain taboo topics in Thai society.
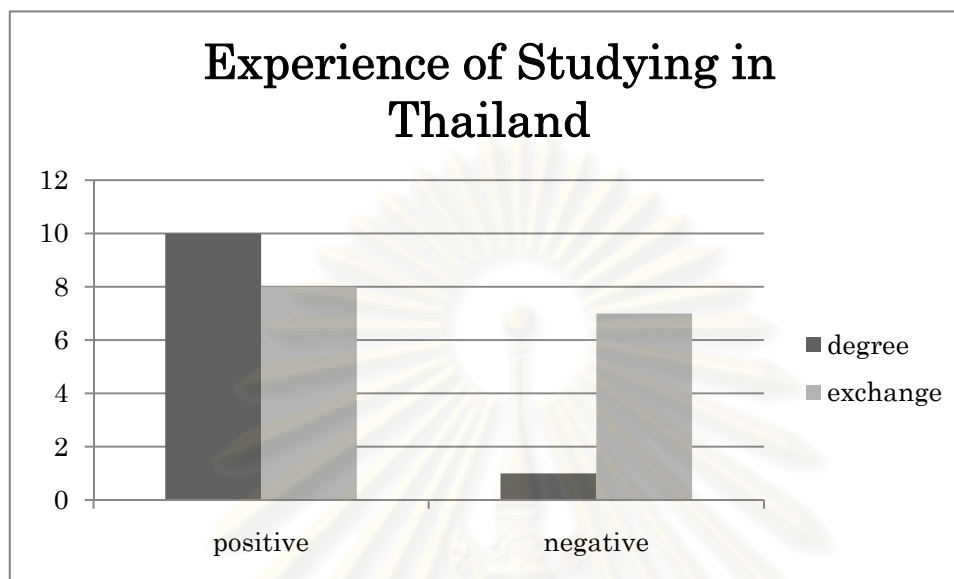


**Figure 43: Experience of Studying in Thailand[225]**

The same question asked above about whether the European students would enjoy their life in Thailand in general was repeated in a specific academic context. Whereas nearly all respondents said they had a positive time in Thailand, much more students said they did not enjoy studying as such in Thailand. Here the divergence between degree and exchange students is extremely pronounced with nearly all degree students enjoying their academic experience, but only just above 50% of the exchange students enjoying. The comments with regards to this question shed some light on this somewhat disappointing result for the exchange students. Crucially, despite half of all exchange students still enjoying their experience, nearly all of them made negative comments regarding the level of teaching and the English skills of the professors, the low academic level of their co-students and the general lacking challenges in the courses. Some degree students also complain about similar issues but generally enjoy the diversity and the teaching environment. It is highly likely that the students' experience depends on the respective university where they are enrolled in. Two degree students, who have previously studied at a less reputable university and have changed to a more reputable university for their Masters degrees commented that the intellectual level in their postgraduate course is much higher than in their undergraduate courses previously.

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[225] Own source.
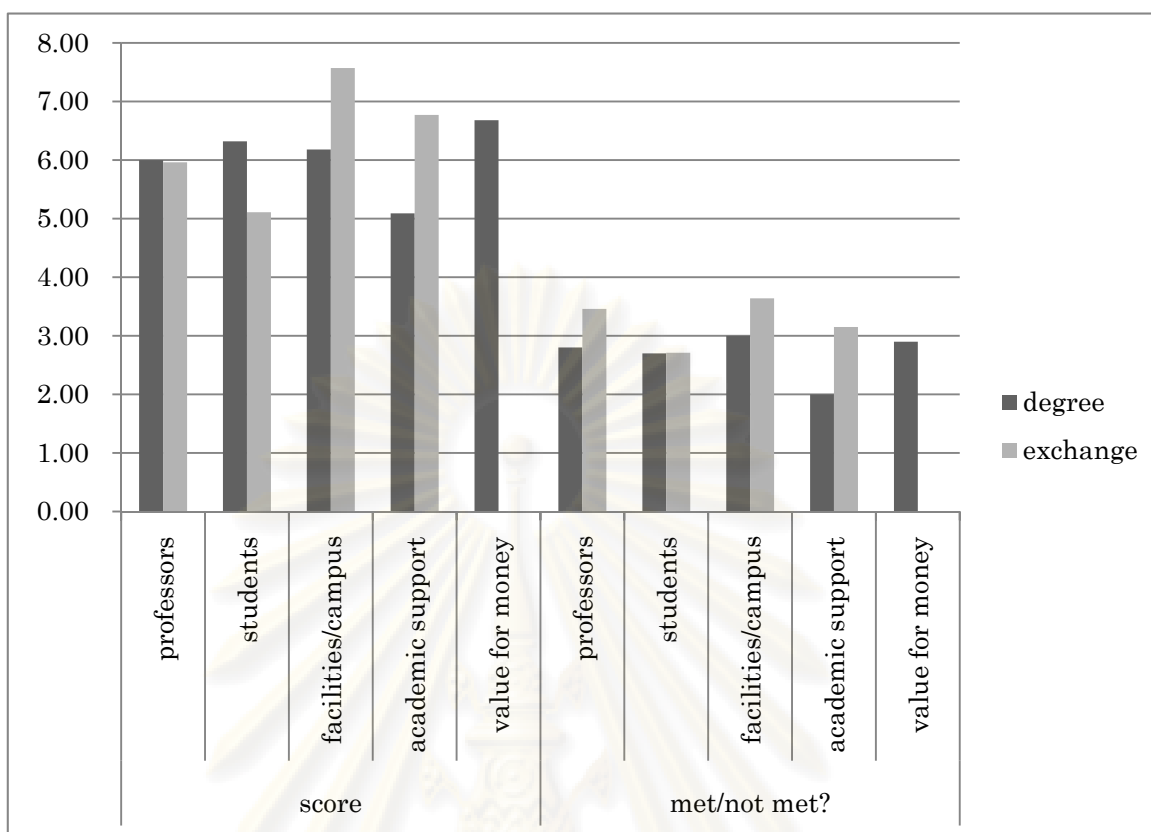
**Figure 44: Assessment of Different Areas Concerning Academia[226]**

After this general assessment of the students' opinions on their academic experience in Thailand, the survey goes more into detail and lets the interviewees give scores about their experiences with professors, fellow students, the facilities and the campus, the academic support and value for money. All of these categories can be given a score between 10 (best) and 0 (worst). Furthermore, the students are asked to assess whether their expectations in this particular area has been clearly not met (score: 1), not met (2), met (3), exceeded (4) or exceeded by far (5). In all areas and for both, the degree and exchange students, the scores given are slightly above average. Professors receive scores of around 6 and just perform according to the expectations of both, degree and exchange students. The scores were very widely distributed and ranged between 2 and 9. Comments were also made about the diverging quality of teaching. In the case of the fellow students, the expectations of both groups of European students were not quite met, yet the degree students attributed their fellow students a higher mark. Most likely, the degree students are more acquainted with the fact that Thai students tend to be less interactive in classes. This is echoed in the comments where

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[226] Own source. No score for "value for money" for exchange students because the overseas university pays for them.

comments regarding the diverging skills of fellow students, their lack of English skills and their passive behaviour were seen in a negative way. European students, especially the exchange students are used to more interactive classes and are generally more forthcoming. The campus and facilities were generally appreciated with especially the exchange students noting that their expectations have been exceeded. The academic support scores average for exchange students but badly for degree students. Comments were made about the lack of English skills of the supporting staff and the bad organisation of staff. This seems to be a serious problem for Thai universities. If Thailand desires to attract more foreign students to its international English language programmes, academic support needs to be more adequate. However, the degree students still thought that their courses were good value for money. In summary, it can be said that the students were rather lukewarm towards their academic experience in Thailand. Especially exchange students who were placed at less reputable Thai HEI's were not content with the academic quality and the fellow students. Degree students, who are more acquainted with Thai higher education were slightly more content regarding their studies in Thailand but were also somewhat less surprised about the low level of their fellow students for example. Importantly however, the degree students have had bad experiences with academic support, an area, which needs to be looked at in order to professionalise international higher education in Thailand.

Up to now, the analysis of the survey has only looked at the surveyors, the European students themselves and various parameters regarding their expectations and experiences about living and studying in Thailand. For the effects that foreign students have on a country, the personal interactions between the foreign students and the local people are crucial. It was established earlier that some of the main benefits of foreign students for the host country stem from people-to-people interactions and are intangible and thus very difficult to measure. Through these people-to-people interactions, it is estimated that the host country can benefit in terms of improving human resources through the internationalisation of local students and the creation of clusters of knowledge. Additionally, increased ties between people of two countries are bound to also lead to increased ties between these countries on more official and also on business levels. For these benefits to appear though, strong people-to-people links, in this case between the European students and the Thai students are necessary. In the survey, the students were asked whether during their stay in Thailand they have made "no" (score: 1), "a few" (2), "some" (3), "many" (4) or "only" (5) Thai friends. As seen in figure 44, the score for degree students is slightly above 3 and for exchange students between 2 and 3. In other words, degree students have made more than "some" Thai friends whereas exchange students have made between "a few" and "some" Thai friends. In order to measure the depth of the European students' relationship with their Thai friends they were asked whether they spend

their time "never" (score: 1), "rarely" (2), "frequently" (3), "nearly always" (4) or "always" (5) with their Thai friends. Degree students have a score of 3 and thus spend their time frequently with Thai friends. Exchange students however show a lesser depth in their relationship with Thai friends and spend time just above "rarely" with Thai friends. In both groups, degree and exchange students, the depth of the friendship with Thais is relatively small when compared to the amount of local friends they have made. Predictably, exchange students have less local friends and also spend less time with them compared to degree students, mainly because of their relatively short stay, which gives them less time to get accustomed to local culture and to bond with local people.
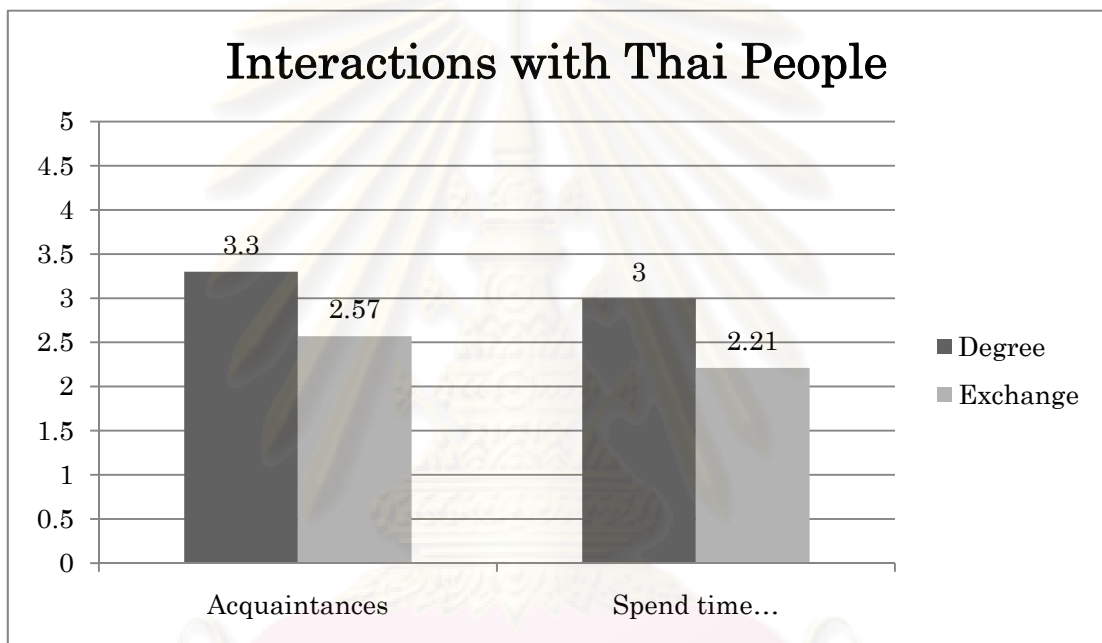


**Figure 45: Interactions with Thai People**[227]

In order to deepen the knowledge about the European students' people-to-people links with Thai people, the interviewees were also asked whether they have been or are in a serious romantic relationship with a Thai person during their stay in Thailand. Romantic relationships are obviously one of the deepest relationships and people-to-people exchanges in romantic relationships regarding both side's other's culture and language and way of life happens on a daily basis. Additionally, romantic relationships can be crucial in determining a person's future country of residence. Therefore, such links are important and can be advantageous for the host country.

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[227] Own source.

## Relationship with Thai Person
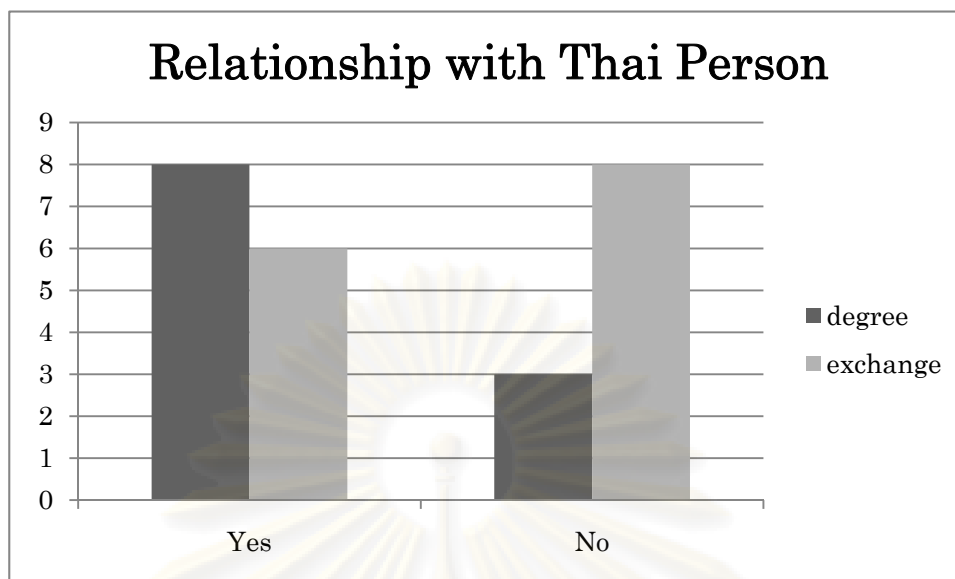


**Figure 46: Romantic Relationship with Thai Person[228]**

In fact, most degree students are or have been in a serious relationship with a Thai person during their stay in Thailand. Thus, this factor, which is in general under-researched, can significantly influence the students' perception of the host country and influence the choice of a future country of residence. Exchange students have been involved in less romantic relationships with Thai people, yet despite their relatively short stay in Thailand, six students have been or were in a serious relationship with a Thai person.

A further factor, which demonstrates the international students' levelof acquaintance with their host country, is their level of proficiency in the language of the host country. In the survey, students were asked about their abilities in the Thai language in speaking, writing and reading. Possible answers regarding the speaking were "no" (score: 1), "very little" (2), "a bit" (3), "quite well" (4), "fluently" (5). The question regarding reading and writing, and how they acquired their skills was kept open-ended.

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[228] Own source.
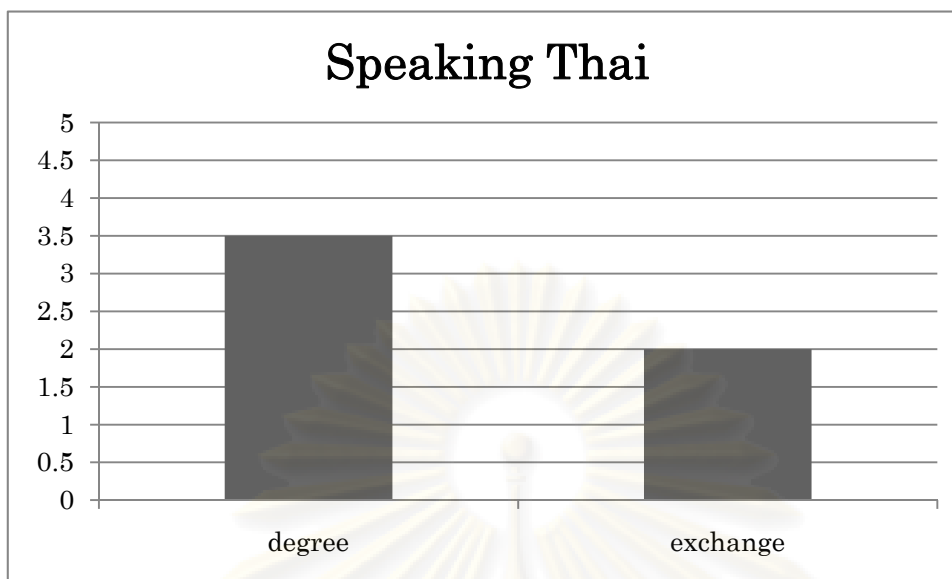
**Figure 47: Level of Proficiency in Thai Speaking**[229]

For degree students, their skills of speaking Thai lay between "a bit" and "quite well". With all degree students at least speaking basic Thai, their interactions with local people are facilitated and therefore, more valuable people-to-people exchanges can take place. Additionally, the relatively high Thai speaking skills for degree students also demonstrate the interest of the European foreign students in Thailand. Exchange students' level of Thai is unsurprisingly lower, yet most exchange students still have basic command of the language. Reading and writing the Thai language is much more difficult than just speaking it. Yet 7 out of the 11 degree students have learned at least basic reading or writing skills. For degree students which have arrived relatively recently, their will to learn reading and writing Thai language shows that they are very interested in Thailand and willing to invest time to acquire these skills. Once these skills are acquired, the level of interaction with not just Thai people but also the culture and current affairs is likely to be much higher, as Thai people feel more at ease to interact. Interestingly, most students who have some proficiency in the Thai language have learned the language from interacting with friends and in daily life, again emphasising the importance of the people-to-people links.

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[229] Own source.
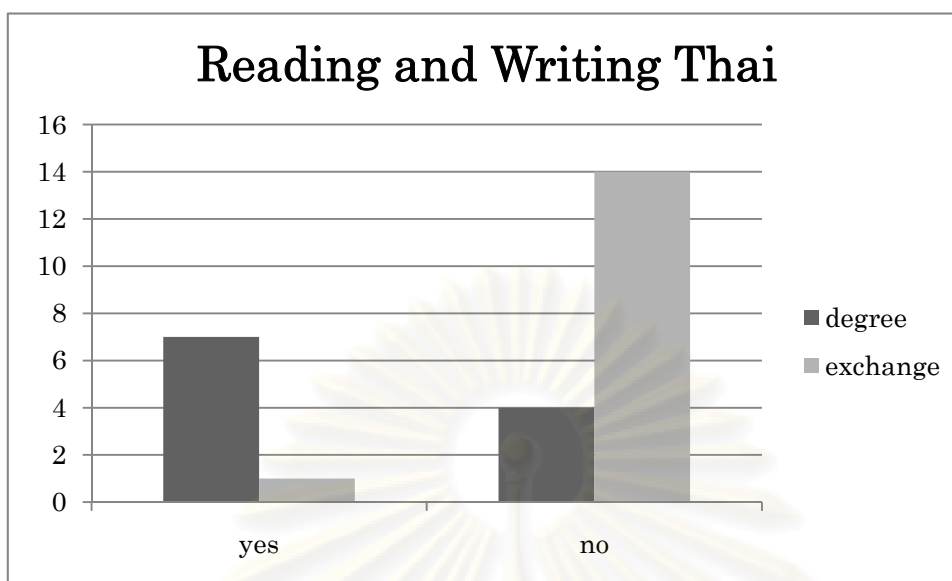
**Figure 48: Level of Proficiency in Thai Reading and Writing[230]**

Continuing from the analysis of the level of content of the European students in Thailand in terms of their life in Thailand in general and their academic experience, the inter-personal links between the European students and the Thai people were analysed. Evidently, degree students have more interactions with Thai people. They generally have quite a few Thai acquaintances and frequently spend time with them. Many also have been or are in a romantic relationship with a Thai person, and can speak, as well as read and write the Thai language. For the exchange students, all the values are lower, most likely since they spend less time in Thailand, which makes it learning the language and building up relationships more difficult. For exchange students, it is therefore more difficult to climb the "barriers of entrance" to Thai society. This might also impact the benefits for the host country, Thailand, for which a high degree of interaction between the foreign students and the Thai people is crucial for the transfer of knowledge and the forming of long-lasting bonds.

## 4.5. Case Study: After Thailand

In this last part of the survey, students were asked whether they would recommend another European to study in Thailand, where they thought the studies in Thailand benefited them the most and whether they intended to come back to Thailand. This part of the survey is crucial

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[230] Own source.

because even though some students might have not enjoyed aspects of their studies in Thailand, the students themselves will weigh the different factors subjectively. Importantly, this last section of the survey can capture this subjective judgement and the interviewed students can reflect themselves on their stay in Thailand.

In figure 40, it could be seen that word of mouth propaganda can be an important determinant for students in choosing their future location of study. Therefore, since the interviewed students have actually spent time in Thailand studying, they can be important ambassadors and even campaigners for attracting more European students to Thailand. If these students feel they cannot recommend studies in Thailand to their European friends and acquaintances, potential students are more likely to choose another destination.

Firstly, the interviewees were asked to give their opinion on whether they could recommend a European friend to study in Thailand. They could answer with either "yes", "probably", "depends", "probably not" or "no". In a follow-up question, the interviewees could specify their recommendation in an open-ended way.
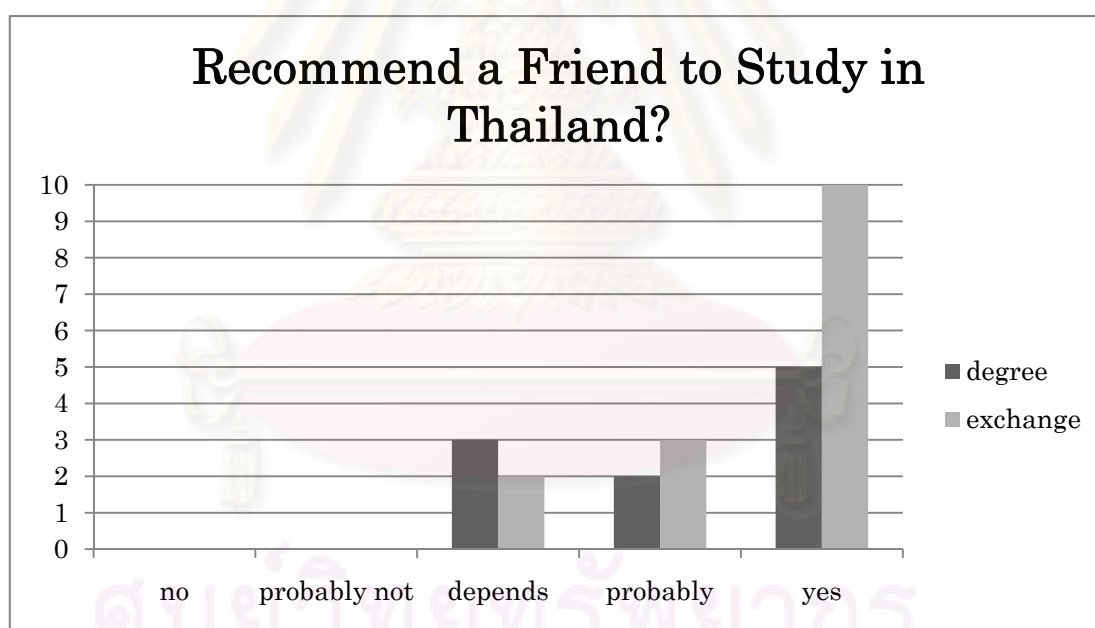


**Figure 49: Recommendation for a European Friend to Study in Thailand**[231]

Interestingly, despite the fact that exchange students earlier commented more negatively on their academic stay in Thailand, most of the students would recommend a European friend to study in Thailand. Degree students are more differentiated in their judgement yet would

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[231] Own source.

generally still make a positive recommendation. Thus, it is likely that for the exchange students, non-academic, social factors are weighed higher than academic ones in their subjective judgement on their stay in Thailand and their recommendation for a friend. Degree students on the other hand offer a more differentiated view, most probably because they weigh educational factors higher and would therefore recommend a friend to study in Thailand if the expectations regarding the level of higher education are somewhat adjusted. In the follow-up question, nearly all degree students say that whereas they greatly enjoy living in Thailand, the educational factors depend strongly on the potential student. In other words, studying in Thailand is not for everyone but can be enormously beneficial if the potential student is interested in the country, open-minded about the different culture and perhaps prefers a lighter academic load than in a Western country.

Subsequently, the interviewees were asked in what area they thought they benefited most from their stay in Thailand. This question is expected to give further information regarding the students' own assessment of their stay in Thailand and also how their actual experience has measured up against their expectations.
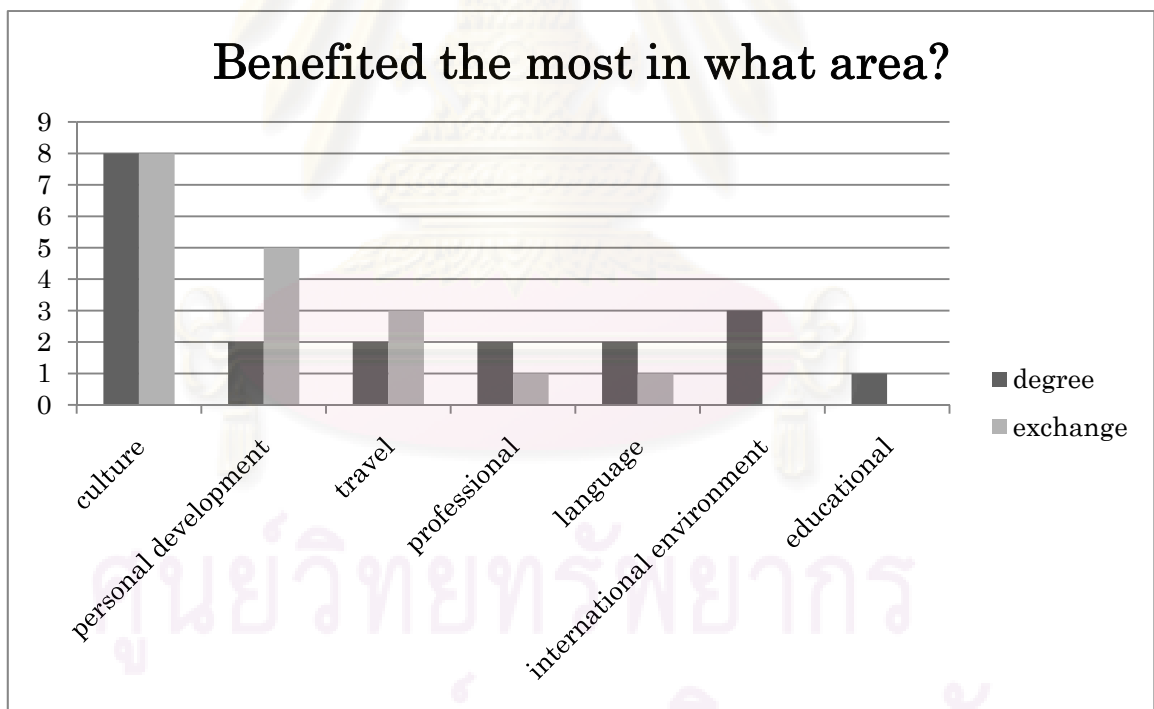


**Figure 50: Areas where Students Benefited the Most**[232]

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[232] Own Source.

The results are clear and students overwhelmingly report that they have benefited the most in a cultural way. By cultural they mean that the insight into a different culture Thailand has given them has benefited them personally. A similar thought precedes the people who answered "personal development". These respondents mostly thought that the stay in Thailand broadened their horizons and gave them a different outlook in life. Some respondents even said that they have benefited spiritually and have personally grown during their stay in Thailand. Other students have benefited from their stay in a professional way, by learning a new language or have enjoyed the international environment of the studies. Educational benefits have hardly been mentioned, again re-emphasising that the students have in general not been very positive about the educational value of studying in Thailand.

The final personal assessment of their stay in Thailand is done by asking the students on their future plans involving Thailand. The students were asked firstly on whether they plan to return to Thailand. If yes, the students could specify whether this is going to be for "further study", for "business/job", for "travel" or "permanently".
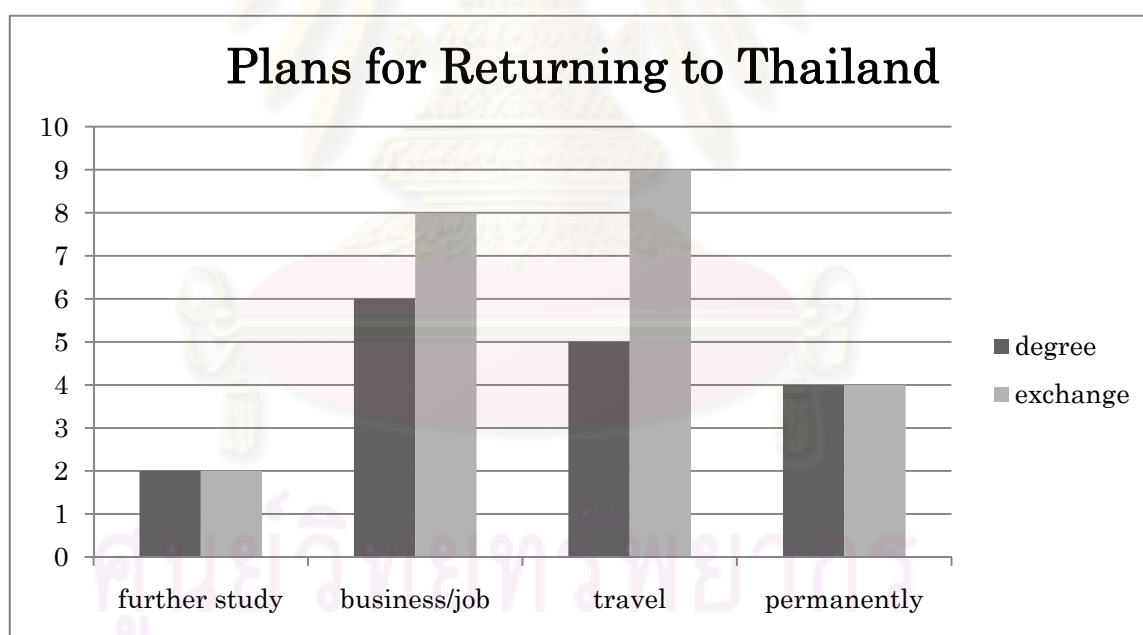


**Figure 51: Plans for Returning to Thailand**[233]

Astonishingly, all but one student wanted to come back to Thailand at some point. There are however differences between the degree and the exchange students. Exchange and degree

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[233] Own source.

students both said they wanted to come back for Thailand mainly for travel and business, with the degree students rather envisioning a future job in Thailand and the exchange students preferring to travel. Furthermore, a total of eight students also planned to live permanently in Thailand in the future. Further education however does not feature very highly on the wish list of Europeans for future plans involving Thailand. Only a total of four students are thinking about continuing their studies in Thailand.

This last question reflects a crucial conclusion for the thesis. European students in general have been greatly enjoying their time In Thailand. They enjoyed the social contacts, the urban and active lifestyle, and the food and travel possibilities from Bangkok. The students' academic experiences on the other hand have been much more mixed. Generally, it was mentioned that the level of study is relatively low, that the quality of teaching and the quality of the fellow students is mixed, and that academic support is sometimes insufficient. This experience however greatly varies depending on the host university but also depending on the European students' expectations before moving to Thailand for their studies. Especially degree students who already have some experience with Thailand are previously informed about the advantages and disadvantages of studying in Thailand. Exchange students in general have more of a "traveller's image" of Thailand, mainly because either they have previously travelled there or because of the international image of Thailand as a travel destination. The motivations and push- and pull factors for studying in Thailand have been mostly in the environmental and social area and the most popular push- and pull factors include mostly include the experience of a different culture and lifestyle, the warm climate and the possibilities of travel as well as the low cost of education in Thailand. Therefore, most students strive for a "different" experience from home and are keen to experience an exotic "other". The primary motivations of European students moving to Thailand for studying are therefore not too different from the assessment of the push-and pull factors of Asian students moving to Australia for studies researched in the study by Mazzarol and Soutar.[234] In this study, especially Chinese and Taiwanese students frequently listed "experiencing the West" as a very important factor why they want to study in a Western country, Therefore, the desire by European students to experience Thailand as a "different" destination in the Far East indeed shows a similar thought of wanting to explore the "other" and combining this exploration with studying. If then, the desire for experiencing the West for Asian students might be fuelled by popular Western culture and the mass media, which communicate so-called Western ideals of freedom, wealth and liberal democracy, European students might be equally tempted by Eastern images of exoticism and spiritualism. Perhaps, the image of Thailand is

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[234] Mazzarol, T, and Soutar, GN. Push-Pull' Factors Influencing International Student Destination Choice., 87.

predominantly moulded by its international (and especially in Europe) popularity as a travel destination, which stands for warm weather, beaches, an easy-going lifestyle and the promise of enjoyment. Evidently, these are factors, which have hardly anything to do with the respective destinations for international students. Yet, as previous research, as well as this thesis demonstrates, such non-academic images can be decisive in the choice of a destination for studying abroad. Nevertheless, in the case of this survey, factors that are directly tied to the studies as such (educational pull factors) can play a major rule, especially for students already residing in Thailand previous to their studies. For such students, a Thai degree can improve their chances in the local labour market and thus significantly benefit them. Once in Thailand, exchange students are positively surprised by the life in Thailand, but struggle with some environmental factors such as the traffic and pollution and the different food customs, as well as with social factors, such as feeling discriminated as a foreigner, not being able to communicate with the local people. Even though academia is not widely enjoyed by exchange students, they are still positively surprised by the campus life and by some professors. They are however negatively surprised at the level of studies, which for most European students is not challenging enough, the lacking skills in critical thinking and the English language in general. Despite many students' ambiguities about studying in Thailand, most students could recommend a friend to study in Thailand. Not only do they feel confident to recommend other people to study in Thailand, but most students are also planning to return to Thailand at least for travel. Most degree and exchange students are even considering moving to Thailand for business or even want to stay permanently. This result can be explained by the fact that students most probably value academic experiences not very highly and rather focus on other, more general issues when assessing their own stay in Thailand. These findings regarding the students' subjective assessment of the importance of the different factors are critical because an objective assessment would fail to detect the students' own valuation of the different factors. Thus, as figure 51 shows, almost all students, exchange and degree students have been bound to Thailand in some way. Nearly all students have plans involving Thailand and a surprising amount of these students do not just plan to travel back to Thailand but envision a more lasting engagement. Yet, the future engagement is not the only factor demonstrating the long-lasting effects studying abroad can have. On the contrary, thanks to frequent people-to-people interactions, be it with local students, local people in daily life or even romantic partners, a mutual understanding and learning of each other's cultural and societal values can be fostered. As seen in the reasoning of the students on why they would return to Thailand, such people-to-people relationships are ultimately the main responsible factors for students to enjoy their time in a foreign country and to even be bound to the country in a more long-lasting way. Despite the clear evidence, benefits for the host country are difficult to measure. The financial benefits for Thailand as a host country are apparent and could even be estimated

with a simple calculation. Other cultural, diplomatic, social and business benefits through the attachment of the foreign students to Thailand, as well as the human resource benefit for Thailand through the internationalisation of domestic students are evident too but are difficult to calculate.

# CHAPTER V

# DISCUSSION

**Research Question:**

*What are the prevalent push- and pull-factors for European tertiary students studying in Thailand?*

**Sub-question 1:**

*How do these prevalent push- and pull-factors of European tertiary students studying in Thailand compare to the existing models and theories of the push- and pull-factors in the cross-border movement of the tertiary students?*

**Sub-question 2:**

*What benefits can Thailand draw from foreign students, in particular from European foreign students?*

This thesis is a study of European students in Thailand. As the research question of the thesis indicates, the main goal of this study was to shed light on the motivations and the push- and pull factors for European students to study in Thailand. Furthermore, in order to give this study a more purposeful and practical meaning, it also aimed to determine and estimate benefits for the host nation, Thailand, from attracting European exchange and degree students.

This study of motivations of international students and the benefits they can bring to the host nation is situated within the theoretical and academic framework of the internationalisation of higher education. The internationalisation of higher education is a relatively recent, yet rapidly developing academic and theoretical field, where large amounts of research are undertaken. The internationalisation of higher education has begun parallel to the rapid growth of globalisation. Globalisation processes, which lead to a higher geographical, economic and cultural interconnectedness, have influenced higher education and the various actors in this field strongly. Universities began to offer more internationalised curricula and partnered with other universities in different countries. Students increasingly

moved abroad for study reasons as the demand for a more internationalised education increased. The institutional actors, mostly nation-states but also regional organisations such as the European Union and ASEAN have also become increasingly active in this field by using higher education as a tool for economic growth, national (or regional) identity building and public diplomacy. Due to the increased global competition in these fields, the nation-states have increased their efforts in attracting students from abroad.

Parallel to this development, the academic field of the internationalisation of higher education has emerged. At the beginning, this field has primarily concerned itself with the institutes of higher education and their activities in internationalising higher education. Increasingly however, a more holistic view of the internationalisation of higher education is clearly emerging, which sees the internationalisation as a process being integrated into the entire functioning and management of a higher education institution. Furthermore, other actors such as the nation-states were also increasingly included in the research efforts, which focused on the increased regulatory activities of states as well as the economic importance of the internationalisation higher education.

Another recurring theme in the academic contributions in the area of the internationalisation of higher education has been the research on the *rationales* of different actors in internationalising higher education. Such rationales for nation states can be divided into two different groups (as in table 2), economic rationales and political and social rationales. Economic rationales mostly include arguments of increased economic growth and competitiveness of a country due to better-educated human resources. Political and social rationales are less tangible and more difficult to calculate, but in the long run at least as important. Political and social rationales for internationalising higher education are mostly connected to the formation of strategic alliances with other countries, the promotion of public diplomacy as well as increased mutual understanding. The economic, political and social rationales for a state to engage in the internationalisation of higher education mostly involve the expectation of later economic and political gains. Therefore, the benefits of internationalisation of higher education are very similar to the rationales for nation states to internationalise higher education.

In order to answer sub-question 2 regarding the benefits for Thailand, this thesis went beyond copying the common rationales found in the academic research of the internationalisation of higher education and equating these to the benefits a host nation can enjoy from incoming international students. Thus, additional research into the area of human resource transfer, which is a crucial rationale for internationalisation for governments, has been conducted. In the area of research on the movement of the highly skilled, which

according to various definitions also includes students, it is established that human resources are to a large part tied to the person by their skills, but also by their knowledge (which is however transferable in the long run). Since skills and knowledge are economically beneficial to countries, countries and their governments are interested in their residents to acquire a high level of human resources. In order to achieve this goal of a maximised human resource level, two possible ways are available to governments: either the domestic production of human resources or the import of human resources through immigration of foreigners. Importantly, due to the immigration and therefore increased concentration of human resources, clusters of knowledge and skills, which can create an economic multiplication effect, can develop in certain economic areas. Essentially, the attraction of international students to a host country is mostly following this argumentation. It is in this context, where the very popular discussions about "brain drain", "brain gain" and "brain exchange" take place. These terms are descriptions for the respective cross-border movements of highly qualified. Brain drains are mostly associated with the movement of skilled human resources from developing countries to developed countries. In the area of students, the prevalent cross-border movements take place from the mostly developing countries in the Asia-Pacific (but also Latin America and Africa) to the developed English speaking countries.[235] Typically, such movements feature in most academic studies the topic of cross-border higher education movements. Increasingly however, other movements, such as within developed countries (North-North) movements or between developing countries (South-South) movements are becoming more numerous and also more researched.[236]

Contrary to the main cross-border movements in higher education, which have been detailed in Chapter 3.1., this thesis has researched movements from Europe to Thailand, which fall into the "North-South" movement category. For Thailand, inwards movements of students from developed countries make up for less than 15% of the total inward flows.[237] Europe only accounts for 4.8% of the total inflow of foreign students to Thailand.[238] Even though this may seem like a very small number, these students can be important for Thailand because of various reasons. Firstly, through the people-to-people interactions of the European students with local students, a transfer of human resources can take place, benefiting the local students with a more rounded and internationalised view, better English skills and the possibility to grasp events and issues from different points of view. Political and social benefits for Thailand can be achieved through the infusion of the European students with Thai

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[235] See figure 2.
[236] See the example of Thailand as a host for international students in figure 23.
[237] See figure 25; Source: Commission on Higher Education. **International Students in Thai Higher Education Institutions**.
[238] Ibd.

culture, the language and the country itself. If students are interested, fascinated and enjoy the host country, they are very likely to become a long-term "ambassador" for the host country wherever they are. These ambassadors are likely to yield benefits for Thailand in areas of business, official levels, diplomacy or just result in an improved overall reputation of Thailand in the world. The most obvious benefits however are the immediate, tangible financial benefits from students paying study fees to their respective host university, and from their spending in every day life, in their free time and on holidays.

In order to find out how likely and how important these benefits are for Thailand in the case of European foreign students an extensive survey of 26 European students in Thailand has been undertaken. This survey, which documented the students' decision-making process, level of satisfaction with their stay in Thailand and future engagement with Thailand, has yielded important information regarding benefits from the European students for the host nation, Thailand. The most obvious benefit for Thailand as a host nation is the immediate financial expenses of a student during the stay in Thailand. In the case of the European students in Thailand, it was established that the 26 students part-taking the survey spend an average of 28,962 THB per month. Taking this sum as an average, an extrapolation to all 787 European students in Thailand will result in annual expenses of 273.9 million THB. This figure is only a rough estimation and there are factors, which could further increase or also decrease the total financial benefits. On the one hand, not all students spend a full 12 months in Thailand, and not all expenses during their stay will directly flow into the Thai economy (travels abroad among others). On the other hand however the study fees are not included in this estimate. Thus, even though the number of 273.9 million THB is a rough estimate, it is a considerable sum of money.

Immediate monetary gains may be the only directly traceable and tangible benefit but other benefits mentioned above are likely to be at least equally important. Answers to several questions in the survey contain important messages as to how the students enjoyed their stay in Thailand and what their perception of living and studying in Thailand is. European students have generally enjoyed living in Thailand very much, mainly because of environmental and social factors such as the lifestyle, social contacts, the low cost of living, travel opportunities, the weather and the cultural diversity and differences. Less enjoyed were other environmental factors such as the traffic and pollution, unfair treatment as foreigners, the difficulties of cultural differences and the hot climate. Some respondents also mentioned political and governance issues. Furthermore, the students were asked specifically about their experience of studying in Thailand. Here, the answer was more balanced, with especially exchange students complaining that the classes were not challenging enough and that some of the co-students' academic levels insufficient. Overall however, educational factors have not proven to be

among the major positives or negative factors of the European students' stay in Thailand. Thus, despite some reservations about the academic benefits from studying in Thailand, nearly all students could recommend another friend to study in Thailand. Thus, it was shown that even though objective factors would prompt the students to be more balanced in their assessment of studying in Thailand, the subjective weight of the different factors ultimately shape the experience. Perhaps the most important finding of this survey is that all but one student have plans to return to Thailand. Importantly, most students are not simply planning to go back to Thailand for travel but rather for business/job, further study or even to live permanently. This result demonstrates the soft power of attracting international students to a destination. All the students, which are planning to return to Thailand have developed an affinity to the host country, in this case Thailand. Not only are they likely to return to Thailand, but they are also very likely to act as ambassadors for Thailand, recommending other people to visit Thailand, do business with Thailand or just simply informing other people about Thailand and therefore improving and shaping the image of Thailand abroad. In the comparison between exchange and degree students, this phenomenon of subjective judgement could also be observed. Even though exchange students have shown lower levels of satisfaction regarding their academic experience in Thailand, have less Thai acquaintances and spend less time with them, are in less romantic relationships with Thai people, have a lower knowledge of the Thai language, they are overall more enthusiastic about recommending a friend to study in Thailand.

Despite this generally very positive conclusion regarding the benefits for Thailand, there is still ample room for improvement. Firstly, the satisfaction level of European students with their academic experience in Thailand is only average. The very diverging quality of professors and students, both frequently lacking English skills can be improved. Additionally, European students struggle to adapt to the learning environment in Thailand with a more traditional, teacher-focused style of education. Europeans on the other hand are used to more constructive contributions from students. The shyness of their Thai classmates to interact is also reflected in the fact that European students generally only make some Thai friends and spend most their time with other foreign students. Additional people-to-people interactions could improve the Thai students' English skills and, to use a more technical term, increase the transfer of human knowledge and skills between the foreign and the Thai students. Another perhaps more practical point concerns the academic support for degree students at universities. This support has been criticised by several people regarding their abilities to deal with foreign students. It is crucial that academic support aides the student in the considerable bureaucratic and immigration procedures and a failure to do so can have a detrimental effect on the student's experience in a host country. Even though academic factors have not proven

crucial in determining a students' overall experience, improved quality in Thai universities would increase the level of satisfaction for international students.

The main part of this thesis however, reflected in the research question and the sub-question 1 deal with the question of what factors are crucial in determining the destination of international students. Or in other words, what are the push- and pull factors, the motivations for a student to study in a specific destination. The first part of the survey conducted for this thesis was tailored to determine the push- and pull factors of specifically European students moving to Thailand. The figures 36 and 37 display the findings, which point to primarily social and environmental factors as push- and pull factors. The factors mentioned most frequently by the surveyed students included lifestyle and culture, trying something new, the climate and travel possibilities, the low cost of studying and getting away from home. Clearly, Thailand was seen as an antagonism to their home country in Europe in many cases, just like Asian students going abroad see Western countries as antagonisms. Especially for exchange students, the desire to escape the home country and experience something different in a faraway, culturally and climatically different country was one of the main draw cards for Thailand. Degree students showed more diversity in their push- and pull factors. Whereas most of these students had some previous knowledge or experience in Thailand either as a traveller or already living here, study-related factors, as well as lifestyle and cultural factors, combined with the perceived low cost of studying in Thailand have been the dominant pull factors. Thus, educational and economic factors also do play a role in some cases.

Answering sub-question 1, regarding the comparison between the prevalent push- and pull factors in previous research and the factors, which were found to be the most important in the case of the survey, indeed reveals some differences. In previous studies, social and environmental factors have, perhaps surprisingly played an important role. Especially Chinese and Taiwanese students in the Mazzarol and Soutar survey have shown an exceptional eagerness to better understand the West by moving to Australia for tertiary education.[239] A similar interest in the "other", in this case the "East", was shown by European students who decided to study in Thailand. Part cultural interest and part personal interest, paired with previous knowledge or experience in Thailand, European students are mainly interested in the lifestyle, culture and the climate in Thailand. A comparison of the possible alternative host countries, which showed other Asian countries such as Singapore, Korea, Japan and China as

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[239] Compare figure 7.

the main competitors can somewhat confirm the assumption that European students coming to Thailand are indeed interested in experiencing an Asian country.[240]

The most poignant differences between the previously researched push- and pull factors in South-North movements are clearly to be found in the virtual absence of educational and economic factors. The fact that social and environmental factors are dominating in the case of European students in Thailand is not surprising. Thailand, as a developing country naturally struggles to attract students from developed countries. This is because in a worldwide segmentation of universities, institutions from developing countries can only operate in either Segment 5 or Segment 4, and therefore achieve a much lesser reputation as institutions of higher education. Regardless of whether this lower "ranking" or "reputation" is deserved, the problems of being a university in a developing country are apparent in the survey, where several degree students voiced concerns over the global value of their degree. Difficulties for Thai universities in attracting foreign students from developed countries are however not only due to this global "ranking" of countries and universities into segments. Japan, a highly developed country and major exporter of higher education with excellent universities can only attract slightly more students from developed, Western countries than Thailand. Another explanation for the difficulties of Asian universities in attracting Western students could lie in the globalisation theories, explained above in the theory chapter. Globalisation sceptics believe, in contrast to hyperglobalists that there is no general trend towards globalistion as such but rather towards an integration of regions. Taking this argument, it can be said that the comparatively small cross-border movements of Western students to Asia can be explained by this increased regionalisation, which is especially apparent in Europe. The issues facing Asian countries and higher education institutes in attracting for example students from Europe are also likely to have something to do with the low interest and knowledge of Asian countries as destinations for higher education in general. Additional support for this assumption is provided by Marginson and McBurnie's survey on the units of decision-making for students crossing borders for education. More than half of the students decide to study in a particular place on the basis of the country of destination. Therefore, the reputation of a country, not just as an education destination but also in general is a crucial factor in attracting foreign students. More research in this area of decision making of students regarding their destination of studying is essential. Especially cross-country studies, surveying students from particular sending regions could advance the general

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[240] See figure 39. However, other, non-Asian countries were also mentioned frequently as options apart from Thailand. Some of these countries were other developing countries, signalling an interest for studies in developing countries.

knowledge about student movements from Western developed countries, especially Europe to Asian countries.

This thesis is a valuable and relevant contribution to the study of the cross-border movement of tertiary students. Due to processes of globalisation, an increasing amount of students are becoming internationally mobile and competition between the different host countries is also increasing. Globalisation transformationalists would agree with this conclusion and point to the increased and increasingly diversified cross-border movements of students as an example for the increasing global interconnectedness. The tangible and also intangible benefits from hosting international students are long lasting and are not just of economic nature. As shown in the survey on the European students in Thailand, studying abroad can create an allegiance and a strong bond to the host country. In order to achieve such a strong bond between the international student and the host nation, people-to-people contacts are crucial. In such contacts, the values of a country, the culture and customs as well as the key instrument for communication, the language of a country, can be conveyed. In the case of Thailand, the bonds between Euroepan students and Thailand have developed to such an extent that most students are planning to go back to Thailand for touristic purposes but also in order to find a job and start a career or even to live there permanently. This strong bond to Thailand developed even though the educational experience of the students was not overly positive. Therefore, it is highly likely that educational factors might only play a small role in determining the future benefits for a country from hosting international students.

Due to the above-mentioned benefits and the surprisingly strong power of people-to-people relationships, which can create strong bonds between the international student and the host country, it is crucial for countries wishing to attract international students and become a hub for higher education to know what factors are important in order to attract foreign students. By combining the numerous previous research efforts in the field of push- and pull factors for cross-border tertiary education movements and the survey on the European students in Thailand, it has been demonstrated that the motivations of South-North and North-South movements are partly dissimilar. Importantly, it has also been demonstrated that a country's reputation is crucial for the attraction of international students. However, contrary to the popular belief and previous academic models, the level of wealth in the host country is not necessarily a decisive factor in estimating the number of incoming students. Thus, Japan and Korea, two developed countries with reputable universities attract a far smaller share of European students than Thailand. This divergence is a clear indication that simplified models of push- and pull factors only manage to explain a part of the cross-border movements of tertiary students. More research into the role of the reputation of countries and universities in attracting foreign students are desired and would contribute to a better understanding of the

decision-making process of international students in regards to their future destination of study. Since the evidence points towards increased global interconnectedness of students, longitudinal studies could become increasingly interesting. Such studies could focus simply on the distribution of cross-border movements, but ideally would research more qualitative factors. It would also be possible to create highly qualitative longitudinal studies and follow students, which have studied in a particular country over several years. Thus, the benefits of international students for a host country could be assessed much more accurately. Since evidence points to a correlation of the wealth of nation-states and the nation-state's status as an education exporter, studies could compare the amount of incoming students and their motivations to study in rapidly developing economies. In general, research on developing countries as hosts of international students is very thin. As several countries, especially India and China are developing rapidly, Western companies and governments are becoming more interested in these countries. Thus, it can be expected that their status as education exporters will rise.

If the hypothesis that a country's reputation is crucial for attracting foreign students is confirmed, it would have effects on strategies of promotion for higher education exporting countries and institutions. For Thailand, which already enjoys a good reputation in Europe as a travel destination, efforts into promoting itself as an education destination could prove to be very beneficial. Whereas on a theoretical basis, the level of the country is more decisive in attracting foreign students, in practice, it is important for universities to conduct Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with foreign universities, and subsequently promote themselves to the potential students. In order to create a national image as an education destination, such promotion of universities could be coordinated nation-wide and supported with information material and online-resources. Research on MOU's between the Thai universities and their counterparts abroad would be a welcome expansion to this body of research. Studies could research the effectiveness of the different MOU's and create statistics on the popularity of the different MOU's. With regards to the promotion of Thailand as an education destination, research could focus on the promotion efforts of different Thai universities or course programmes. Keeping in mind that the main deciding factor for studying in a specific country abroad is this country's reputation, more research should be done into feasibility studies of national campaigns and efforts to promote Thailand abroad.

This thesis has been a pioneering work in the study of North-South migration of tertiary students and their motivations for doing so. Interestingly, it has been shown by comparing previous models and studies on push- and pull factors for international students with the case of European students in Thailand that the motivations only differ partially. Perhaps surprisingly, many similarities, especially the interest in the culturally different

"other" can be found. Predictably, educational factors have not played a major role for European students in Thailand. Additionally to the push- and pull factors, this study has also researched the potential benefits for the host country, Thailand, from the incoming European students. It is in this area, where the study has demonstrated that, despite a mixed level of satisfaction regarding the academic experience, very strong bonds between the host country and the international student can develop. As in the history of the Siamese court at the turn of the 20th century, where the Siamese royals developed a strong affinity for Europe due to their personal relationships with teachers and their educational environment in general, European students in Thailand develop strong ties to Thailand. These ties are not only beneficial for Thailand as such but can also contribute immensely to the mutual understanding of Thailand and Europe on a personal, economic and official level, thus benefiting Thailand in the long run.
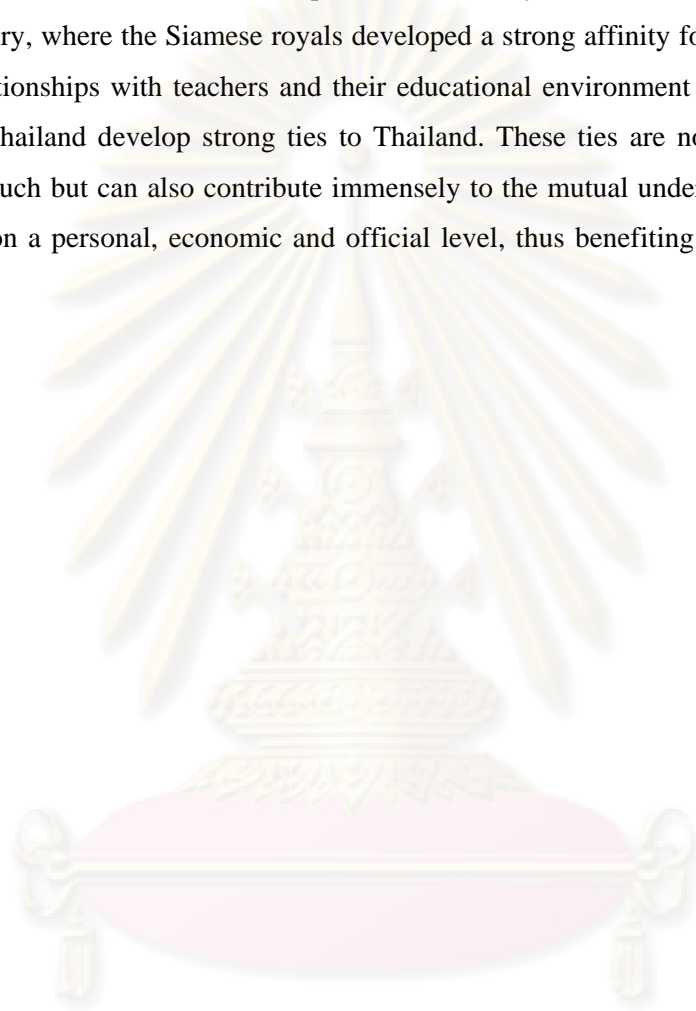
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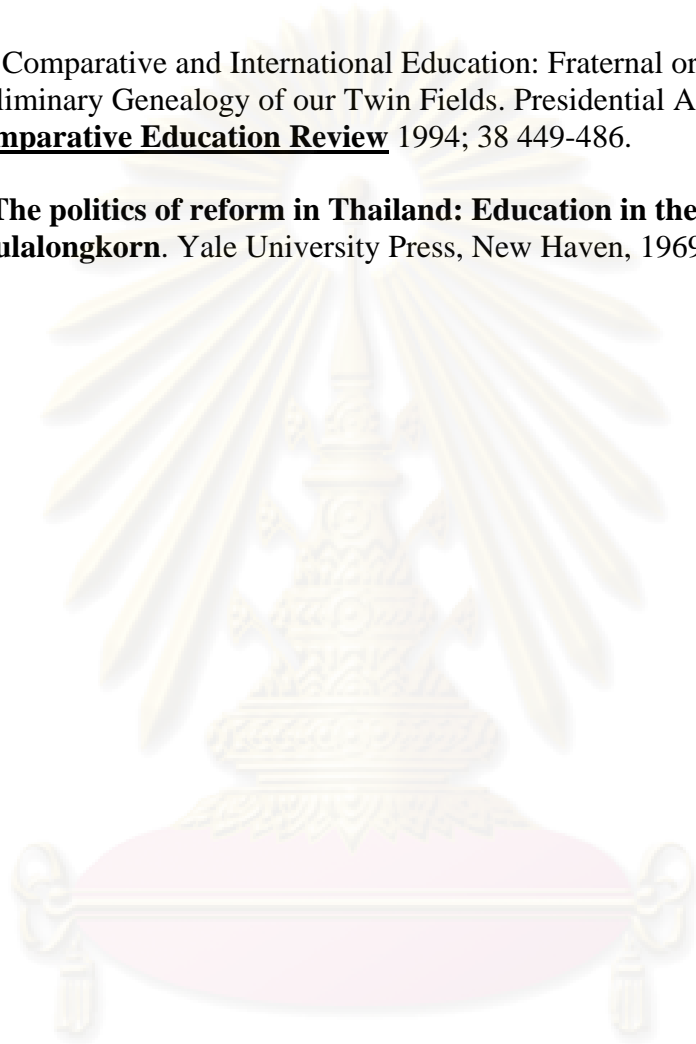
**Appendices**

# Appendix A: Distribution of European Students in Thailand

| | Total | Business | Medicine and Health | Communication | Hospitality/Tourism | Arts | English | Thai specific | Science and Engineering | IT | Environment/Resources | Economics | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Germany | 158 | 46 | 15 | 24 | 20 | 8 | 4 | 12 | 9 | 3 | 1 | | 16 |
| United Kingdom | 134 | 34 | 12 | 9 | 4 | 9 | 19 | 10 | 9 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 14 |
| Finland | 110 | 49 | 1 | 8 | 17 | 2 | 5 | | 8 | | 1 | | 19 |
| France | 77 | 33 | 6 | 1 | | 10 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 10 |
| Sweden | 72 | 32 | 8 | 3 | 4 | 2 | | 2 | 1 | | | 2 | 18 |
| Austria | 44 | 4 | 20 | 1 | 4 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | 2 | 10 |
| Netherlands | 39 | 19 | | 3 | | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | | | 6 |
| Denmark | 32 | 3 | 16 | 2 | | 4 | 1 | | 1 | 3 | | 1 | 1 |
| Norway | 27 | 15 | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | | | | | 2 |
| Switzerland | 23 | 6 | 3 | 1 | | | 2 | 1 | | 2 | | 1 | 7 |
| Italy | 13 | 4 | | | 2 | | 2 | 3 | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Belgium | 11 | 4 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 2 | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Poland | 10 | 6 | 2 | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Ireland | 7 | | 3 | 1 | | | 2 | | | | | | 1 |
| Spain | 5 | | | 1 | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | 2 |
| Ukraine | 4 | 2 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Iceland | 3 | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Serbia | 3 | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | |
| Croatia | 2 | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Czech Rep | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Estonia | 2 | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Latvia | 2 | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | |
| Portugal | 2 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Romania | 2 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Belarus | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Cyprus | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hungary | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| TOTAL EUROPE | 787 | 263 | 90 | 57 | 55 | 46 | 44 | 38 | 36 | 19 | 16 | 10 | 113 |

## Appendix B: Questionnaire

# QUESTIONNAIRE

Please read the following privacy policy **before** filling out this questionnaire. If you agree with the terms, please sign below on the dotted line.

This Master thesis aims to suggest policies how Thailand could improve its position as a destination for tertiary students from Europe. In order to find out more about the "pull-factors", e.g. why European students come to Thailand and how they like it, I am aiming to interview 60 European students from the 6 most popular Thai universities for European students.[241]

Your data/information/answers will be treated with the highest confidentiality, only used for the academic purposes of this thesis and will not be given to any third party.

Signature: (online surveys: **mark this spot with an "x"**).............................................................

## The Interviewee

Age: ...........................Gender:....................Nationality: .............................................................

Previous education (University and pre-university) ......................................................................

.......................................................................................................................................................

Current degree and university (in home-country):.......................................................................

## The Way to Thailand

**1.    What made you come to Thailand to study?**

.......................................................................................................................................................

.......................................................................................................................................................

.......................................................................................................................................................

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[241] Assumption, Bangkok University, Chulalongkorn University, Mahidol University, Thammasat University and Ramkhamhaeng University

2. **How did you find out about the Thai university/programme you are attending?**

   .............................................................................................................................................

3. **Were there options of other countries you considered before deciding to come to Thailand? Which ones?**

   .............................................................................................................................................

4. **When taking the decision to study in Thailand, what positives and negatives did you have in mind?**

   + ..........................................................................................................................................

   .............................................................................................................................................

   - ...........................................................................................................................................

   .............................................................................................................................................

5. **Did you have an interest in Thailand before making your decision to come to Thailand?**

   .............................................................................................................................................

   .............................................................................................................................................

6. **What did you imagine of Thailand before you came to study here?**

   .............................................................................................................................................

   .............................................................................................................................................

   .............................................................................................................................................

7. **Is this your first experience (studying, travelling) in Asia? Where else have you been?**

   .............................................................................................................................................

8. **Have you taken part in any intra-European mobility programme? Which one? Which exchange university/country?**

   .............................................................................................................................................

**In Thailand**

### Basics

1. Exchange student or degree student?................................................................................

2. What courses/degree/university in Thailand? ...............................................................

3.Who pays for your university fees? If scholarship, specify. ..........................................

4. Approximately how much money do you spend per month? (in THB).......................................

### Country

1. **What is your impression of Thailand? How do you like living here?**

   ........................................................................................................................................

   ........................................................................................................................................

   ........................................................................................................................................

   ........................................................................................................................................

2. **What are the five things you like most about living here? (you may list less than 5)**

   1. ....................................................................................................................................

   2. ....................................................................................................................................

   3. ....................................................................................................................................

   4. ....................................................................................................................................

   5. ....................................................................................................................................

3. **What are the five things you like least about living here? (you may list less than 5)**

   1. ....................................................................................................................................
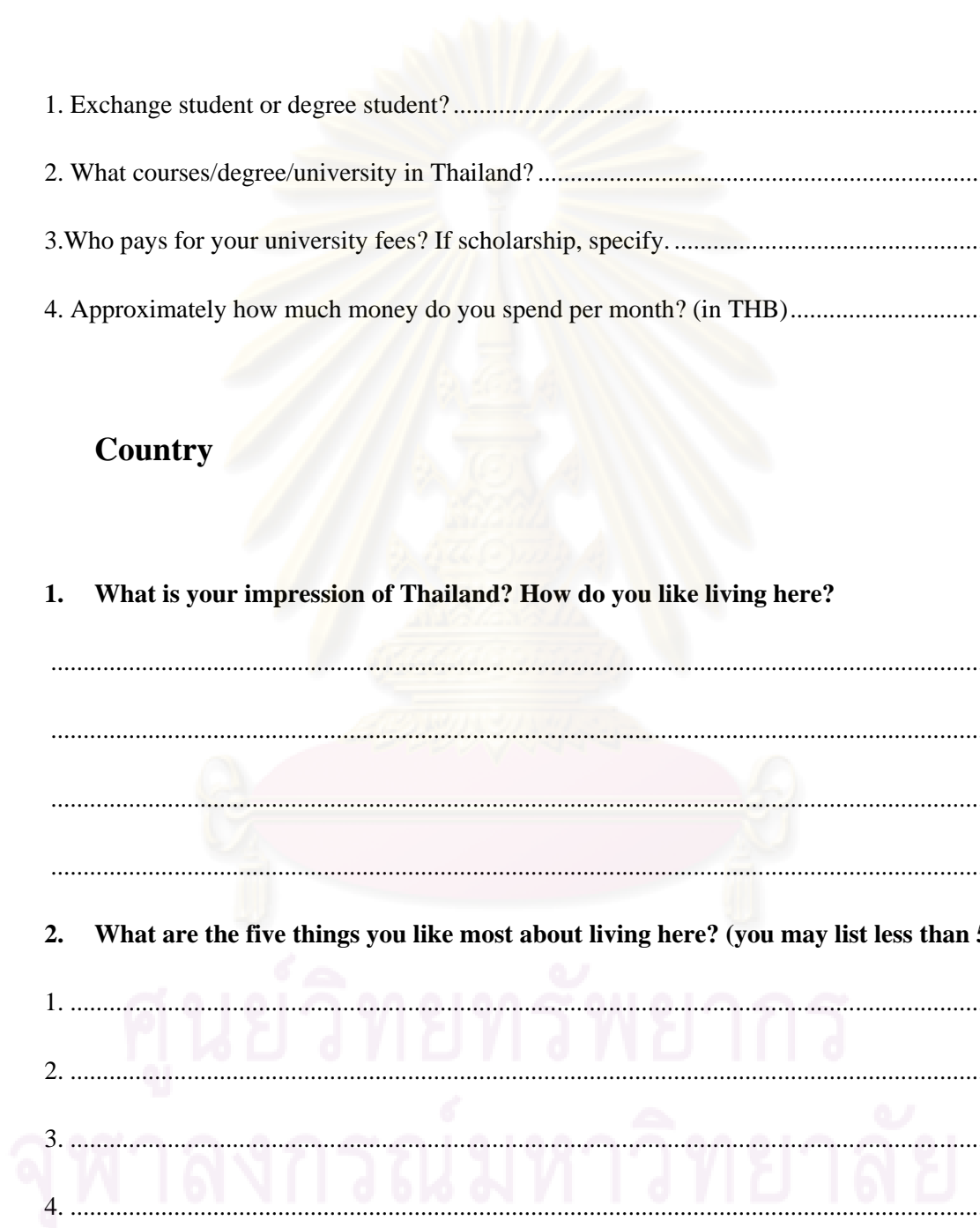
2. ...................................................................................................................................

3. ...................................................................................................................................

4. ...................................................................................................................................

5. ...................................................................................................................................

## Academia

1. **What was your experience of studying here like?**

...................................................................................................................................

...................................................................................................................................

...................................................................................................................................

...................................................................................................................................

2. How would you rate the **quality of professors**? 1-10 (1 being the worst, 10 the best)

Comment:.....................................................................................................................

Have your expectations in the above area been (mark the answer that applies for you **bold**)(Ctrl+B)

   1) clearly not met
   2) not quite met
   3) met
   4) exceeded
   5) exceeded by far

3. How would you rate the **quality of your fellow students**? 1-10 (1 being the worst, 10 the best) ..................................................................................................................

Comment:.....................................................................................................................

Have your expectations in the above area been (mark the answer that applies for you **bold**)(Ctrl+B)

   1) clearly not met

2) not quite met

3) met

4) exceeded

5) exceeded by far

4. How would you rate the **quality of the facilities/campus** at your Thai university? 1-10 (1 being the worst, 10 the best) ................................................................................................

Comment:..........................................................................................................................................

Have your expectations in the above area been (mark the answer that applies for you **bold**)(Ctrl+B)

1) clearly not met

2) not quite met

3) met

4) exceeded

5) exceeded by far

5. How would you rate the **quality of academic support from staff**? 1-10 (1 being the worst, 10 the best) ................................................................................................................

Comment:..........................................................................................................................................

Have your expectation in the above area been (mark the answer that applies for you **bold**)(Ctrl+B)

1) clearly not met

2) not quite met

3) met

4) exceeded

5) exceeded by far

6. How would you rate the **performance of the University in relation to what you paid**? 1-10 (1 being the worst, 10 the best)................................................................................

Comment:..........................................................................................................................................

Have your expectation in the above area been (mark the answer that applies for you **bold**)(Ctrl+B)

1) clearly not met

2) not quite met

3) met

4) exceeded

5) exceeded by far

## Social Life

**7. a) Acquaintances with Thai people during the stay in Thailand:**

During my stay in Thailand, I have made (mark the answer that applies for you **bold**)(Ctrl+B)

1) no

2) a few

3) some

4) many

5) only

...**Thai** friends.

Comment:........................................................................................................................................

**7. b) I spend time: (mark the answer that applies for you bold) (Ctrl+B)**

1) never with my Thai friends

2) rarely with my Thai friends

3) frequently with my Thai friends

4) nearly always with my Thai friends

5) always with my Thai friends

**8. Relationships**

Are you, or have you been in a romantic relationship with a Thai person during or before your stay here in Thailand?

..............................................................................................................................................

**9. Language**

Can you speak Thai?

1) no

2) very little

3) a bit

4) quite well

5) fluently

Can you read/write Thai?.................................................................................................................

Where did you learn it?.................................................................................................................

## After Thailand

1. **Would you recommend a European friend to study in Thailand?**

   1) no
   2) probably not
   3) depends (on?)
   4) probably
   5) yes

Why? Comment: ............................................................................................................................

.......................................................................................................................................................

2. **In what area do you think you are benefitting most from your stay in Thailand?**

.......................................................................................................................................................

.......................................................................................................................................................

.......................................................................................................................................................

3. **Do you plan to return to Thailand?** (mark the answer that applies for you **bold**)(Ctrl+B)

   No
   Yes

   1) for further study
   2) for business/job

3) for travel

4) permanently

Comment:........................................................................................................................................

# Biography

Christian Elias Schneider was born on December 17 1982 in Aarau, Switzerland. In 2002, he finished High School at the Alte Kantonsschule Aarau in Aarau, Switzerland, with a degree in the Economics/Business stream. He then attended the University of St.Gallen (HSG) in St.Gallen, Switzerland, where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Affairs in July 2006. After moving to New Zealand, Christian Elias Schneider achieved a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in European Studies (First Class) in December 2007 from the University of Canterbury in Christchurch. At the end of 2009, he was conferred a Master degree in European Studies from the University of Canterbury (with distinction) and from Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand.

Throughout his time at the University of Canterbury, Christian Elias Schneider was also active as an academic researcher and played an important role in the Asia Pacific Perceptions Project (APPP), which determined the perceptions of the European Union in several Asia-Pacific countries. From this engagement as an academic researcher, Christian Elias Schneider published an article in a reputable journal (Chaban, Natalia, Schneider, Christian Elias, and Malthus, Richard. "Visibility, Framing and Importance: Images of the EU in Japan and South Korea." *Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies* 27, no. 1 88-125.) and in a book (Chaban, Natalia, Martin Holland, and Christian Elias Schneider. "International News and Local Contexts: Framing of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy in New Zealand Newspapers (2004-2005)." In *The European Union and Asia. Reflections and Re-Orientations*, edited by Peter Anderson, and Georg Wiessala, Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2007.)

For his studies at Chulalongkorn University, Christian Elias Schneider has been awarded a course fee scholarship. In March 2010, he will start an internship for the Swiss Embassy in Canberra.