Interdisciplinarity as a Tool of Policy Transfer: The Case of Greek Master's Programs

Georgios Stamelos[*], Georgios Aggelopoulos

Department of Education, University of Patras, Greece
Email: **gstam@otenet.gr**

Abstract. This paper negotiates interdisciplinarity as a tool of European policy transfer. As a case study, it focuses on the master programs in the Greek University. Policy transfer theory is used as an analytical tool for exploring the results of research on interdisciplinary master programs funded by the European support framework for Greece. We try to focus on the role of policy makers on a national level and on the key actors on the local level (university). We argue that the policy makers create the necessary conditions by modifications to the legislative framework. The University and its key-actors have adopted interdisciplinarity as a supplementary institutional funding and with care so as not to disturb the internal institutional structure and its power relations. So, as Dolowitz & Marsh argue we observe hybrid construction for interdisciplinary master programs. This point is converse with Bomberg and Peterson's reasoning that «policy transfer does not occur by chance, but often produces unintended results».

Keywords：University, masters, interdisciplinarity, policy transfer, Greece.

1 Introduction

In this paper interdisciplinarity is seen as a policy issue. As such it was funded from European funds. The aim was its implementation in the institutions of higher education in order to modify the manner of knowledge production and knowledge transfer/diffusion (what Kuhn called 'paradigm change'). In the present text we focus on the means of implementation of the policy of promotion of interdisciplinarity. In other words, we are interested in analysing the institutional and individual factors involved in how policies are interpreted and implemented in the organizational context (Canary, 2010: 25).

Interest here lies in the fact that this is not exactly about implementation 'from above' (Sabatier 2005,19) nor the formation of classical legal requirements or the exercise of control (Ryan, 1995: 67) to the extent that the source of the policy is to be found at the supranational level. Indeed, given that during implementation the decision making centres involved increase (from supranational to national and from there to the regional and the local), the problems in implementation can be expected to multiply (Sabatier, 2005: 21-22, Ryan, 1995: 67-68, Sabatier, 1986: 30-32).

On the other hand, it is interesting to chart the interactions of the actors in the field in order to document what Sabatier called 'policy network' (Sabatier, 2005: 23). In any case, however, they are restricted and depend on the objectives and rules of the funding of a specific policy (here the promotion of interdisciplinarity) as well as on the organizational restrictions and limitations (legislative framework, institution) (Rhodes, 1986: 17). Consequently, it is crucial that one sees who the main actors in the creation of the interdisciplinary Master's programs are, and in what way they handled the institutional reforms and restrictions.

The manner of development of the interdisciplinary study programs in Greece, as much at undergraduate as at postgraduate level, depends on European funding within the framework of support programs for the country and consequently brings with it all those features of a policy transfer. In this particular paper we will focus only on postgraduate study programs. According to Dolowitz & March policy transfer refers "to a process in which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions etc. in one time and/or place is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements and institutions in another time and/or place"(Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996: 344). Later, examining policy transfer anew they defined it as a process during which "knowledge about policies,

administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political system (past or present) is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political system". (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000: 5). In addition, in our case, it is not about, initially, the dilemma between voluntary or obligatory (enforced) policy but more about the issue of whether the policy transfer is successful or not since participation, or not, in the funded programs is optional. Our analysis will reveal whether, ultimately, the actuality was exactly like this. To do this we will rely on Dolowitz and Marsh's (2000: 13, 16) continuum scheme, which helps researchers understand that policy transfer is not an 'all or nothing' process, as well as to focus on the motives behind a policy transfer. Different motives lead to different policies, a fact which means that the recognition of the key-actors in the process is extremely significant. On the other hand, it is recognized that the 'transfers' are not always successful (Dolowitz & Marsh 2000: 17) and it is claimed that "the more complex a policy or program is, the harder it will be to transfer" (Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996: 353). They also mention cases which demonstrate which policies or programs are easier to transfer. For example the transfer of a policy or a program is easier when the objectives are few and not complex, the problem to be solved is simple, the relationship problem – solution is direct and clear, the side effects of the solution are few, the policy makers have all the information they need about the policy to be transferred and finally when the results can be easily foreseen (Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996: 353).

Of course, for the subject matter of this particular paper, given that the policy transfer concerns the EU, the policy transfer process is special, since initially policy transfer was related almost exclusively to transfer from country to country. According to Benson and Jordan (2011, 366) the concept of policy transfer has by now matured and is used for the study and analysis of wider phenomena such as Europeanisation, globalisation and policy innovations (not just for the analysis of the process of transfer from country to country). An example of this is the uploading – downloading of policies from and to the EU, in which the member states participate actively. These new research avenues demonstrate that the activity of policy transfer has now shifted from 'from state to state' transfer and reveals new fields of research interest and new actors (Benson & Jordan 2011: 371-372). As far as the European Union is concerned, on one hand the Member States are obliged to follow its rules and guidelines and on the other they participate voluntarily in the European construction and participate (or are able to participate) in the formation of these policies within the European Union, such as a policy innovation approved initially by the Council of Ministers (Benson & Jordan 2011: 370). Following this line of logic, Dolowitz and Marsh characterise policy transfer within the Union as obligated and to some extent transfer as negotiated. From their point of view, Bulmer and Padgett (2004) recognise three distinct types of European governance, which can produce a plethora of types of policy transfers. The third type is described as the dependence, which is created in a member state when the adoption of a policy or administrative arrangement is set as a prerequisite for the granting of community funding. This pressure is applied more for the solving of procedural issues and not so much for policy content (Bulmer & Padgett, 2004: 108-109). The latter seems significant for our subject matter, taking into consideration Bomberg and Peterson's (2000) reasoning, according to which: «policy transfer does not occur by chance, but often produces unintended results».

Dolowitz and Marsh propose six questions aimed at the transforming of the concept of 'policy transfer' to an analytical scheme in the study of policy transfer. These questions are:

- Why do the actors become involved in policy transfer?
- Who are the key actors involved in the process of policy transfer?
- What is transferred?
- Where does the lesson drawing that is used come from?
- What are the different types (degrees) of policy transfer?
- What facilitates or obstructs the process of policy transfer?

With the exception of the question concerning lesson drawing, which by its nature is general and goes beyond the scope of this paper, the other five questions will help us in the analysis of our findings.

2   The Research

The research was carried out in three stages, from late 2011 to early 2014.

During the first stage, all the Master's programs at Greek universities were gathered with the aim of substantiating that we really had a dynamic entrance of interdisciplinary Master's programs, and so consequently establishing that there was a point to the object of our research.

Then, the regulative development framework of these programs was sought. This framework is made up as much of legislative texts as of texts of program agreements between Greece and the European Union. The data provided us with an answer to our first question and a base for analysis for our second question.

Finally, in the third stage, we first of all clarified our focus, which revolves around two axes: 1) the internal procedures in the institution for the introduction of interdisciplinarity (institutional level); 2) the formation of disciplines in structured groups of social relationships, which may or may not facilitate the integration of interdisciplinarity (social development of the disciplines). Based on this focusing, we carried out field research using semi-structured interviews with actors who were carrying out interdisciplinary programs, with the objective of investigating the conditions for the introduction and application of interdisciplinarity.

In order to select the institutions we rejected those with a very small number of interdisciplinary Master's (<3) since they did not offer us serious guarantees concerning the balanced and organized adoption of interdisciplinarity. Based on this criterion, there were eight (8) universities with an adequate number of masters' (more than three). In those institutions, in the academic year 2010-2011, a total of 75 interdepartmental Masters' were offered. The majority of them (64) were co-operations between the Departments of Sciences and the Departments of Health Sciences. Nine were (9) interdepartmental with participation from representatives of the Social and Human Sciences, while just two (2) were a partnership between Departments of Sciences, Health Sciences and Social and Human Sciences.

From those eight (8) universities, four (4) were chosen: the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUT), the National Technical University of Athens (NTUA), the University of Patras and the University of Ioannina. The choice was made based on the following criteria:

1. The year of establishment, so that amongst those chosen there are older and newer institutions
2. To be located in the centre as well as the regions of the country
3. To present a variety of programs on offer
4. To offer innovative programs and, where possible, the research to be applied research.

A total of two (2) Masters' programs were chosen from each institution, in other words a total of eight (8) programs. From those, seven (7) were partnerships between Departments of Sciences and Departments of Health and one (1) a collaboration between Departments of Human Sciences. The proportion has to do with the proportion in the total number of interdepartmental Masters' programs offered.

In each program, four (4) interviews were held in total, one with the director of the program and the others with members of the teaching and research staff who teach on the program. In total, 32 interviews were held. Prior to the interviews, the study guides, web pages for the programs and any evaluations that happened to exist, were studied. This data collection constitutes a form of triangulation for the investigation of the same phenomenon (Denzin, 1994: 511). The interviews were semi-structured.

3   The Coordination Between European and National Level: Aspects of Policy, Politics and Legislation

The relevant legislative framework for Master programs was created in Greece during the first half of the 1990s (L.2083/1992 and 2327/1995). Masters or Postgraduate study programs (PSP) can develop within the context of a Department, or they can also take place as collaboration between two or more Departments and/or Institutions. They can also take place in cooperation with a foreign institution. In this case they may be carried out in a foreign language. Here, it is important for one to bear in mind that the Department plays a central role. The Department was defined as the basic structure for the development of a science, according to the framework law for higher education in effect at the time (1268/82).

The interesting point is that the legislative establishment of interdisciplinary Master's programs became disconnected from public funding. In fact, the commitment of funding from the state budget for the PSP is not provided for. Consequently, they must be capable of finding other sources of funding.

The latter is an important criterion for the approval of a PSP by the Ministry and it is called the "viability indicator". Non-public funding of the Master's programs was a radical change in a higher education system, which was entirely public, according to constitutional mandate, and without fees.

One would expect this choice within the specific context to lead to a marginal growth in Master's programs. However, the reality is surprising. Despite this criterion, the wider decade 1993-2005 was a period when PSP flourished since in total 354 PSP were established (ELIAMEP (Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy) 2006). As a result, we are talking about a cycle of studies in high demand by society and with great development institutionally.

The explanation has to do with the parallel development of European support programs. Greek governments of the time appear to systematically transfer sections of public funding from the public fund to the European convergence programs, investing the actions with a discourse that is in tune with European priorities. Besides, the danger of losing funding allocation usually acts in this direction (Battony & Lindstrom 2011: 316)

Let's take for example the European support framework ("Operational program for Education and Initial Vocational Training (OPEIVT I and ll), priority axis "*Promotion and Improvement of Education and Vocational Training within the Framework of Lifelong learning*". The basic aim of the axis was, on the one hand, the reformation of tertiary education study programs, and on the other the linking of the PSP with the labour market and the promotion of the professionalization of studies (http://www.epeaek.gr/epeaek/el/a_2_1_2_2_2_3.html).

Among the choice criteria one can find the following: in cases of collaboration, "*the ultimate point of ensuring cooperation between Departments within the same educational institution, just as between Tertiary Education Institutions, will be the more economical use of resources and coordinated efforts for the improvement of the quality of PSP and the establishment of a system of commonly accepted and applied performance indicators. No PSP will be considered interuniversity or interdepartmental while the interuniversitality or interdepartmentalism is not demonstrated meaningfully in practice with criteria such as: real participation of teaching staff and postgraduate students, significant participation in the provision of lessons and real use of laboratory and other facilities, etc*".

What we should notice is the use of the term "interdepartmental". The Greek policy maker is here trying to couple the mandates of the Greek legislative framework, which has the "Department" at its centre, with the European priorities for the promotion of interdisciplinarity. So, a filter is constructed through which interdisciplinarity is transformed into interdepartmentalism as it enters the Greek context.

Not everywhere, however. Where there is no legislative problem, interdisciplinarity is not filtered. In fact, parallel to funding for the master's programs, funding for research programs is announced within the same European framework (e.g. Irakleitos, Pythagoras, Archimedes), creating a package of actions with marked synergies. Indeed, in these calls clear reference was made to the need to strengthen interdisciplinary research (OPEIVT ll, 2004). Interdisciplinarity, as a choice criterion, is also evident in the support program entitled National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) which concerns funding from the fourth European Support Framework (2007-2013) in the field "Education and Lifelong learning". For example, the title of the invitation for the submission of proposals for the Thalis program is interesting. More specifically it says: "*Thalis – Strengthening of Interdisciplinary or interinstitutional research and innovation with the potential for attracting high level researchers from abroad through the carrying out of basic and applied research excellence*"[i].

Based on the aforementioned, in July 2011, the response of the Greek institutions of higher education to the policy of promoting interdisciplinary PSP was investigated. The picture which emerged is presented in the next table.

Consequently, through the European convergence programs, on the one hand the EU pushes its priorities and on the other, the interested countries, here Greece, try to take advantage of the funding through their own filters of understanding and implementation. The Greek side, firstly finds an opportunity to withdraw from state funding of postgraduate study programs and secondly adapts the relevant national legislation. The first has two benefits for the Greek side. On the one hand, state funding is saved for other uses. Secondly it creates pressure on the institutions of higher education which are indirectly obliged to put forward proposals for funding from the European mechanism even when they don't agree with the idea of interdisciplinarity, since there wouldn't be any state funding. As far as the second is concerned, there where Greek legislation isn't linked well with European texts (study

programs) coordination filters are to be found. Hence, interdisciplinarity is transformed into interdepartmentalism. Here it should be noted that this filtering soothes the universities since interdisciplinarity as interdepartmentalism doesn't upset either the basic pillar in the formation of the university (the Department) or, by extension the complex of power relations which exist within the institution. On the other hand, where there is no problem of coordination (research), interdisciplinarity remains as it is. A positive framework of co-working is created since this provides the opportunity for additional funding through interdisciplinary research. In this way the supranational and the national contexts are joined and the necessary prerequisites for the success of the program are created.

Table 1. Master programs (2010-2011)

Universities	Total number of PSP	Departmental	Interdepartmental	Interuniversity	Interstate
PATRAS	42	22	8	9	3
IOANNINA	40	15	4	19	2
THRACE	24	16		8	
AEGEAN	27	22	1	2	2
ATHENS SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS	2	2			
PELOPONNESE	15	10		2	3
IONION	10	8		1	1
HAROKOPIO	4	4			
WEST MACEDONIA	6	4		2	
THESSALY	31	22	1	4	4
AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS	10	8	2		
ATHENS UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS	20	10	6	3	1
PIRAEUS	17	14		2	1
CRETE	40	27	8	3	2
PANTEION	14	12	1	1	
TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF CRETE	7	6	1		
MACEDONIA UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES	13	7	4	2	
NATIONAL AND KAPODISTRIAN UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS	96	53	15	24	4
NATIONAL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS	28		19	9	
ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI	65	48	11	4	2
TOTAL	511	310	81	95	25

4 From National to Local Level: Aspects of Application

4.1 The Message Reaches the Universities

It is obvious that the message reaches the universities in its pure form. Indeed, the universities saw the programs for the promotion of interdisciplinarity as an opportunity for funding. Indicatively, our interviewees said:

- "*We received good funding which allowed us to organize the program, to create new laboratories, to strengthen the infrastructure of the teams and to take on postdocs*" (I 23)
- "*With the OPEIVT ll which lasted for a while we were quite comfortably able to buy equipment, expendable supplies and to invite external partners*" (I 15)
- "*(…) we received money and we put the infrastructure in place. You know, at that time we were all trying to get in, to pump money. If some didn't make proper use of it, they paid for it later*" (I2)
- "*we relied on OPEIVT for funding. We got apparatus, held conferences, organized libraries and funded student travel*" (I 4).

4.2   The National Legislative Framework and Its Significance: Developing the New Inter-departmental Structure Through the Protection of the Department

The legislative provisions created a common organizational structure. More specifically:

The main body is the Special Interdepartmental Committee (SIC) which is composed following a decision of the participating Departments and two (2) representatives of the postgraduate students. The SIC is responsible for the drawing up and recommendation of proposals for the study program, the formation of committees for the choice or examination of candidates for places on the program, the establishing of advisory committees, examination committees, and so on. At the same time, there is the Plenum (with all the teachers who participate in the program) (N.3685/2008, ar. 2). The SIC has one director.

Based on the aforementioned, it emerges that the interdisciplinary masters' enter the operation of the university institution having a unified institutional framework with significant decentralized duties (eg. choice of students). Despite this, they are integrated into the university operation as an interdepartmental partnership, so maintaining intact the basic university unit of operation, the Department. Hence the verbal shift from interdisciplinary to interdepartmental. Characteristically:

-   *"Interdepartmentality is characteristic of the institution. Interdisciplinarity is a collaboration of theoretical approaches"* (I 13).

The relationship between the two bodies mentioned is depicted in the following extracts:

-   *"There is the SIC which is formed and renewed through the Departmental meetings, and decides on all issues"* (I 21).
-   *"I think that this body [SIC] is that which undertakes all the administration, it decides when the masters' presentations will take place, which students will be taken on, how the lessons will be"* (I 25).
-   *"The Plenum convenes once a year, but the SIC is the body that takes the main decisions"* (I 17).

Consequently, there appear to be two main characteristics of the administrative organization in question. Firstly, the existence of a small body that decides on all the fundamental matters regarding the Master's. Secondly, this body draws is legitimization from its prominence in the basic administrative body (General Assembly) of each partner Department.

Consequently, the entrance of interdisciplinarity creates its own structures, but these are integrated into the operation of the Department.

4.3   The Role of the Key Actors: Maintaining the Existing Power Relations

We have already ascertained that the SIC is a small as well as decisive body.

Now it is interesting for one to see the role of the director of the SIC. The director is elected for a two-year term of office by the members of SIC and must be a permanent professor or associate professor.

Despite the first impression, given that the director is elected from a small body, the responses we received from 6 of the 8 Masters' we researched are interesting:

-   *"The director is one of us and coordinates. He doesn't play any other role. Each of us is autonomous"* (I 11)
-   *"Since I'm a director too I'd say unfortunately that my role is even less than that of coordinator. Many times it ends up being purely a formality. You simply sign things, nothing else"* (I 18).

As a consequence, the crucial point seems to be the participation in SIC and not the position of director. Indeed, in these 6 programs each professor ensured his own "autonomy" while the role of the director was merely a formality. Consequently, the members of SIC chose as much the students as the topics of their theses, based on their interests. At the same time, they determined the study programs and the other teachers. For instance:

-   *"We're not talking about partnership. The two Departments that operate the program are independent. The projects do not need to be from both of them. The program is interdepartmental in name only. Contact takes place between them when it is judged necessary. But for someone to take on a project with 30% from here and 70% from there (…) those things just don't happen"* (I 11).
-   *"Look, the professor is unchecked (…) of course when we give a syllabus, that has been approved. From then on, everyone does his own thing"* (I 22).

On the other hand, we have to consider the two Masters' where the personality of one professor dominates. In those it appears that the position of director is catalytic and absolute with both positive and negative comments:

- *"Mr X is a clever person. He established this postgraduate course and made it well-known"* (I 13).
- *"Let me explain, since I created it and so I know. The program is innovative, even for Europe. We hold conferences, we organized a summer school and we have been given distinctions and awards"* (I 32).
- *"The good feeling everyone had has been lost. Some teachers changed, others were unhappy, they left and others came. There are reasons but I won't go into them. It didn't function democratically, some tried to gain control of it. It's a question of director"* (I 24).
- *The director phoned me one day and told me to teach a lesson. I considered it an honour"* (I 7).

So, it appears that the interdisciplinary/interdepartmental Masters' were either collaborations between a few professors from different Departments who decided to create them, while at the same time respecting each other's autonomy through the way the SIC is organized and the operation of the Master's, or the initiative of one professor only who had the ability to create "his own" postgraduate study program.

4.4   Giving Meaning to Interdisciplinarity: Study Program and Research

The main interest here lies in how those involved in the interdisciplinary Master's programs perceive the epistemological dimension of interdisciplinarity. What predominates are the different approaches.

- Interdisciplinarity as "contribution":
- *"It is the contribution of each science to knowledge"* (I 10).
- Interdisciplinarity as "working together":
- *"Interdisciplinary is a more general concept that concerns cooperation between different sciences in order to investigate a natural phenomenon from all angles, as completely as possible"* (I 23).
- *"It is the cooperation with teams that function to complete each other"* (I 10).
- Interdisciplinarity as "partnership":
- *"The collaboration of different cognitive areas"* (I 8).
- Interdisciplinarity as "combination":
- *"I understand the term interdisciplinarity as if you have different objects which converge on a common object which is bigger or wider than its cognitive object"* (I31).
- *"Interdisciplinarity is when you see the same thing from different angles"* (I 21).

Whichever the key-word is for the definition of interdisciplinarity, what appears is that it is understood more as multidisciplinarity in the way Klein defines it (1990), in other words as an additive and not as an integrated process (which should characterize interdisciplinarity). This view shouldn't surprise us since these Master's programs emerged as collaborations between particular Departments, which in addition are differentiated in the internal university hierarchy. Characteristically: *"Discourse is interdisciplinary, but it degenerates perhaps at the level of multiculturality. In Greece the process is more marked due to the dominance of certain scientific fields (…) the civil engineer dominates the works, while the land planner should also have a say"* (I 12).

As a consequence of the above, we focussed on how the interviewees see the manner of formation of the study program. Characteristically they said:

- *"The program is shaped through the contribution of both participating Departments. On this particular postgraduate course we have four courses in administration taken by Information Technology students. In the second semester they make their choices. It is very successful"* (I 16).
- *"The courses are often designed by a professor from one field with the result that interdisciplinarity may not infiltrate the same lesson"* (I 4).
- *"In the first semester we have courses from Chemistry and Biology and from Pharmaceutics and Medicine. In this way the students acquire a grounding in the cognitive subject areas"* (I 15).
- *"Each teacher teaches the cognitive subject area that he is familiar with. I was asked to teach Pharmacology. I told them that I couldn't"* (I 18).

- "*Teaching isn't a bit of everything, it isn't a hotchpotch! Let's go and get a theologian, a doctor, a literature teacher and throw them in there. Anyone who comes has to be an interdisciplinarian!*" (I 22).

The way in which the study programs are put together, then, seems to stem from the scientific fields from which the teachers come, and is more related to the familiarity of the students with areas that they did not have any contact with during their undergraduate studies. In essence, this is where the statement of interest for the development of new skills lies.

The application of interdisciplinarity to determining the subject matter of theses is important in the sense that it determines research activity within the context of an interdisciplinary Master's.

Some responses help us to understand this better:

- "*The student is integrated into a laboratory (…) and takes on a topic suited to the research projects that are current*" (I 23).
- "*I believe that in practice the determining of the topic takes place based on the professor's interests, it needs to be a subject area that coincides with the research he is doing*" (I 23).
- "*Each laboratory is autonomous and has its own obligations. We do work with each other however. If the need arises, we will send a student to use the equipment in another laboratory*" (I14).
- "*We work together when it is necessary. Regarding the thesis, the student is allocated to the laboratory he chooses, as long as he does what the laboratory is researching, of course*" (I 12).
- "In the program, research is bibliographical. Through reading, the student will understand the interrelation. I am doing a subject, Ethics and Knowledge. Knowledge can be subject to ethics. An assignment in my lesson has an interdisciplinary stamp (…) the program is interdisciplinary, not the assignments!" (I 25).

From these extracts it appears that the determining of the topic of the thesis is posed by the operation of the laboratories involved which, belonging to a Department, specialize in one scientific area. So, the "interdisciplinarity" of the research is limited to laboratories helping each other out. The next extract is indicative: "*once we have set the courses with the SIC, what we do in our laboratories is our business! Of course the students go to other laboratories – they undergo a kind of rotation (!) – but no one comes to see what's going on or to check me*" (I 10).

Of course, it should be noted that in the case of a Master's at the Polytechnic, due to the nature of the subject matter, it seems that interdisciplinarity is more in evidence: "*we have for the thesis the topic of the design of a riverside park. The engineer will find a technical solution. The architect will provide the plan. The economist will take it and give the cost and the value of the park based on the money that people would pay. The lawyer would deal with the legal parts*" (I 26).

4.5 Beyond European Funding

The termination of Community subsidization created intense funding problems:

- "*Now funding is scant. There is some misery surrounding this issue. Better not to talk about it*" (I 31).

The participants in the programs we examined depicted various problems, which can be summarized in three axes: fees, research programs, elationship with the job market (industries and public services).

4.5.1 Tuition Fees

Some preferred to set fees and others didn't. Some extracts demonstrate the dilemma:

- "*The expenses are covered by the fee and not by the tuition fees. Don't call them tuition fees. The university forbids that*" (I 9).
- "*I have no objection to our setting tuition fees. But will the students be able to pay them? Like this demand for the master's will drop*" (I 17).
- "*Don't ask me about money. I haven't been paid for other activities. That's how we used to work in the past, now what the young do, I have no idea. We were used to doing everything on our salary, academic research and everything*" (I 10).
- "*It's not taboo for students to pay. There are many expenses. Student transportation costs. We sometimes take money from them to cover the expenses, but we haven't made it official. We don't call them tuition fees because they are not of a permanent nature. Isn't it better to know you'll have that amount from there, so as to plan your work? Finding money is a constant battle*" (I 28).

The matter of fees reveals the different approaches that the interviewees adopt regarding the funding of postgraduate programmes. According to the first approach, the legislation that forbids fees is sidestepped in the following way: another name is chosen for the fees and so this taboo word is avoided. The second approach shows that for some interviewees, fees are welcome while the third approach depicts the view of those who are opposed to the imposition of fees, citing the moral dimension of the teacher's role, since he should offer his services selflessly. Thus three strategies, which govern the structure and the culture of the university regarding the fees it imposes (or doesn't impose) on postgraduate students are revealed.

4.5.2 Research Projects

Funding from research projects seems to constitute an important alternative source of funding for the Masters'.

- "*In reality, funding is limited (…) those we take on in our lab are part of some projects. They are part of a broader project, a European one (FP7) or a Greek one (Thalis), a project from America and so on*" (I 2).
- "*Part of the expenses that concern mainly expendable goods for the support of postgraduate experimental programs are covered or are expected to be covered by funding from the participating laboratories, which comes from competitive research projects or from donations, benefits, subsidies from agents in either the public or private sector*" (I 15).
- "*Now funding has been cut we are forced to replace it with projects that the laboratories have. There is no other way*" (I 22).
- "*Our laboratory has quite a few projects, both European and other. To cover its needs we can transfer some money from those to the PSP. However this is not a solution*" (I 27).

The interdisciplinary programmes are integrated into current research programmes and thus their funding and operation are ensured. In this way the formal structure of the postgraduate programmes which the non-imposition of fees demands is maintained, the actual organizational behaviour however reveals the flexibility of the actors to create informal funding mechanisms. The disconnection of the formal structure of an organization from its actual organizational behaviour is selected in order to avoid conflicts, which would undermine an organization's structure (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

4.5.2 Public and Private Sector

Another source of funding seems to come from partnership with the public or private sector.

- "*Until now we received funding from the Ministry of Culture, and the Polytechnic. Now this has been cut. We had minimal funding from the Polytechnic for transport and we managed. As we don't have tuition fees, if we are in real difficulty we ask the students for a contribution, if we don't find somewhere to stay from the council, the church or anywhere else. In Agiaso the church offered us somewhere to stay*" (I 16).
- "*I know that some colleagues have projects from companies, from town councils, they "contribute" in this way to the PSP*" (I 13).
- "*The private individual will come to me, I will set up the project team (…) From this funding we always divert a little something to the PSP. Everyone does it*" (I 15).
- "*the issue of the production and management of solid and liquid industrial waste is a heated issue (…) Town councils as well as industries have approached me and through the Research Committee we have received a lot of studies. We do studies with the students. It's only reasonable that there will be a payment for them*" (I 18).

Since the state withdraws from postgraduate funding, the universities turn to the private sector in order to ensure their viability. This is a strategic choice, which has consequences for the structure and the culture of the university. Kees Mouwen calls the universities – which draw a significant part of their income from the market – hybrid, making the prediction that the university of the 21st century will have this form (K. Mouwen, 2000:47).

5   Conclusions

Using five of the six questions of Dolowitz & Marsh (2000:8), and based on the results of our research it appears that

1. The actors involved as much at the level of central government as at the level of the institutions take action for economic reasons. European funding with the simultaneous lack of public support make participation in the announcement of the action a one way street.
2. The key actors are, on the one hand, at a central level, the policy makers who can modify and prepare the ground, modifying the legislative environment, and on the other hand those who occupy positions of power within the institution (Department heads, laboratory directors, etc).
3. What seems to be transferred initially, is the desired discourse on interdisciplinarity which was an adequate and essential prerequisite for the approval of a proposal.
4. To use one of Dolowitz & Marsh's proposed degrees, it seems that what takes place is the creation of a hybrid construct which while it may appear weak, ultimately stands the test of time.
5. As far as what facilitates and what hinders policy transfer is concerned, we have the following. Firstly, European funding. Secondly, the national conditions as defined by the legislative framework. In the specific case of our example, it was, on the one hand, the state's withdrawal of funding, and on the other, the assuring of the institutions that the introduction of interdisciplinarity wouldn't affect their internal power arrangements. On the other hand, what seems to have impeded the effective implementation of interdisciplinarity was the vagueness of the term and the absence of a clear outline for its implementation. Despite this, after the termination of European funding and despite the difficulties, alternative sources of funding were sought in order to ensure the continuation of these programs.

The Greek universities are changing. However this change is not linear. They are responding to the challenges from their environment while at the same time being careful not to upset the internal structure and operation of the organization and in particular the internal hierarchies. Like this however, the final product of the change isn't clear. Hence, given that the source of funding is external the final product that we described and analysed is neither the old, but nor is it that which funding from the external source (European Union) was targeting. Consequently, we have to do with a hybrid product, which is of interest for further study.

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[i] In 2008, a new legislative framework for the Master's programs explicitly gives priority to the interdisciplinary study programs and interdisciplinary research. At the same time, a list with acceptable alternative sources of funding is created: donations, grants, legacies from the public or private sector generally, Legal or Natural persons, research programs, community programs, subsidies from the state budget and fees.