

Knowledge for Growth Conference
European strategies in the global economy
Toulouse 7-9 July 2008

**Evolution of Universities: the rise of
managerial approach and the diversity of
change in western European countries**

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Aim of the paper

- Presenting results of the PRIME NoE – SUN Project, which explored changes in the steering of Universities in 7 countries: France, Germany, Italy, Norway, The Netherlands, Switzerland and UK. SUN addressed two tracers: changes in funding and doctoral schools
- The project intended to understand how the reform processes at national level pursued the evolution toward the university of the 21st century: from collegial professional institution to strategic organization
- Focus on implementation: how diversity affect the changes, how reforms have been put in place (implementation is evolution)

Questions addressed

- Where did reform process in each country come from?
- How far and based on which tools do HE reforms occur?
- How far has managerial rationale actually gone in each country?
- Do national policies converged toward a common European pattern in steering? How much do they remain on national path?
- How does the organizational turn of universities reposition State power in steering?

How to analyse changes in organization and governance (what literature told us)

- Shifts in ideologies, beliefs and values do not necessarily lead to new practices
- Shared policy rationales do not always end in a convergence of universities toward a common type of organisational structure
- In order to understand the implementation process, it is important to analyse to what extent changes occurred, how they are uniform across countries, how radical they are, if there is a convergence toward a similar organizational model

Theoretical background

- We adopted 2 different government theories:
 - NPM helps to explore vertical governance perspectives
 - NG useful framework in order to figure out the horizontal governance perspectives
- Both theories are supposed to be able to modify trajectories of implementation of reforms
- They are not alternative options but rather functionally interdependent dimensions appearing as the two faces of the same phenomenon

Where did reform process in each country come from?

- **Common justifications for reform and mobilisation of resources in all countries:**
 - Bologna process
 - EU initiatives (Lisbon strategy - ERA rationales)
 - Knowledge based economy concepts
 - Modernisation of different national public sectors
 - Efficiency/Effectiveness
 - Autonomy/accountability
- **Emerging concepts as basis for seeking reform:**
 - Shortage of public financial resources *vis a vis* with massification
 - Decreasing quality of students
 - Inefficiency of bureaucracy
 - Effectiveness in competition

How far and based on which tools do HE reforms occur?

- Stronger role of central authority and emerging of macro-steering mechanisms (funding formula, evaluation, accreditation)
- Powerful management infrastructures pairing or replacing academic structures
- Government bodies dominated by academics go with (or are replaced by) boards or trustees incorporating stakeholders
- Stronger leadership of rectors

How far has managerial rationale actually gone in each country?

	FR	IT	NL	NOR	SW	UK	GE
a) Market-based actions							
Stimulation of competition for students funding between HEIs			X			X	
Competitive research funding (private and public)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
b) Hardening of soft budgetary constraints							
Stress on financial control in state/governmental policy	X	X	X			X	X
Efficiency	X	X	X			X	
Value for money			X			X	
c) Stress on performance							
Explicit monitoring of performance in research and teaching	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Audit and checking system	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
d) Concentration of funds in the highest performance HEIs							
	X					X	X
e) The Ministry and its agencies attempt to steer the system vertically, setting explicit targets and performance contracts							
	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
f) HEI Governance							
Development of 'strong rectorates' and members drawn from business	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Move to appointed rather than elected senior post			X	X	X	X	
Reduction in the representation of faculty and trade unions			X	X		X	
g) Managerial roles							
Stronger overt managerial roles of rectors, deans, heads of department	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Development of "management must manage" doctrines	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
h) Growth of performance related pay for faculty and private sector style Human Resource Management							
			X	X		X	
TOTAL	10	9	15	10	8	15	9

Are other rationales in place in each country?

- Networks play a significant role in governance of higher education system:
 - Top-down networks including several layers of governments (EU, regions)
 - Bottom-up organised network organisation with some governance functions (firms, civil society, association of universities, professional managers)
 - Intermediary bodies with specialised functions (research councils, quality assessment agencies)
- In some cases the State assume a position of facilitator of networking among different actors, acting only in order to save the public interest
- Emphasis on distributed leadership and team based approaches, rather than highly individualised management
- Human resource management system reward high performing teams instead of individuals
- Limited salary differentiation for individuals in order to preserve collective purpose

**Do national policies converged toward a common European pattern in steering?
How much do they remain on national path?**

- A common repertoire of changes is shared by almost all the countries examined. Nevertheless this result does not always mean that shared rationales come from the diffusion of good practices among countries
- Changes do not derive from linear implementation of a previous plan (except for UK) but remain path dependent and most often incremental
- There are no evidences that national reforms will end in a converging model at European level, although similarities in political discourses

How does the organizational turn of universities reposition State power in steering?

- Different positioning of national systems along three main trends: stronger multilevel steering, hollowing out of the State, democratic revitalisation
- The rise of management in universities is recent and far from being completed. It does not exclude collegiality and influence of academics upon management
- Implementing the organizational turn of universities not necessarily leads to implementing managerialism. More likely, it will result in a mix of these models, with varying emphasis across countries

Lessons learned

- Similar targeted institutional functions and norms led to different implementation approaches and processes:
 - Although implementation is strongly path dependent and most often incremental, radical changes can occur. It depends on the effect produced when reform programs or instruments meet national and local administrative orders
 - Convergence of policy designs does not imply uniformity of implementation: European universities transformation should not target convergence but compatibility

Lessons learned

- Implementation matter: evolution of universities grounds more on processes and results than on policy aims and reform designs
 - HE institutions may be persuaded that change is needed (but it does not guarantee efficiency)
 - Actors interpret change requirements and incentives by reference to their values and the positions they have inside a (national) configuration of meanings, power and roles
 - Policy makers should favor approaches inducing organizational learning processes at the meso-micro level, although this organizational turn not necessarily leads to implement managerialism
 - As far as different types of regulations can coexist with various weight (substantive rules, markets or quasi-markets, institutionalization of collective action), the State shall play different roles with different emphasis: write the rules, warrant the markets, supply institutional and legal devices

Forthcoming book

Paradeise C., Reale E., Bleiklie I., Ferlie E., eds.

**With contributions by Don F. Westerheijden , Uwe Schimark, E. Reale ,
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M. Benninghoff, L. Baschung, J G. Andresani**

**UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE
WESTERN EUROPEAN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES
Springer Dordrecht**