

# The TRUE Perspective

## Transformation of Universities in Europe

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# TRUE: Eight Country CRP

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## Six IPs

- Germany
- Netherlands
- Norway (2)
- Portugal
- Switzerland

## Three APs

- France
  - Italy
  - United Kingdom
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# Aim

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Clarify:

- How steering and governance affect essential organisational characteristics of HEIs
  - In turn how this affects the differentiation of the European HE landscape
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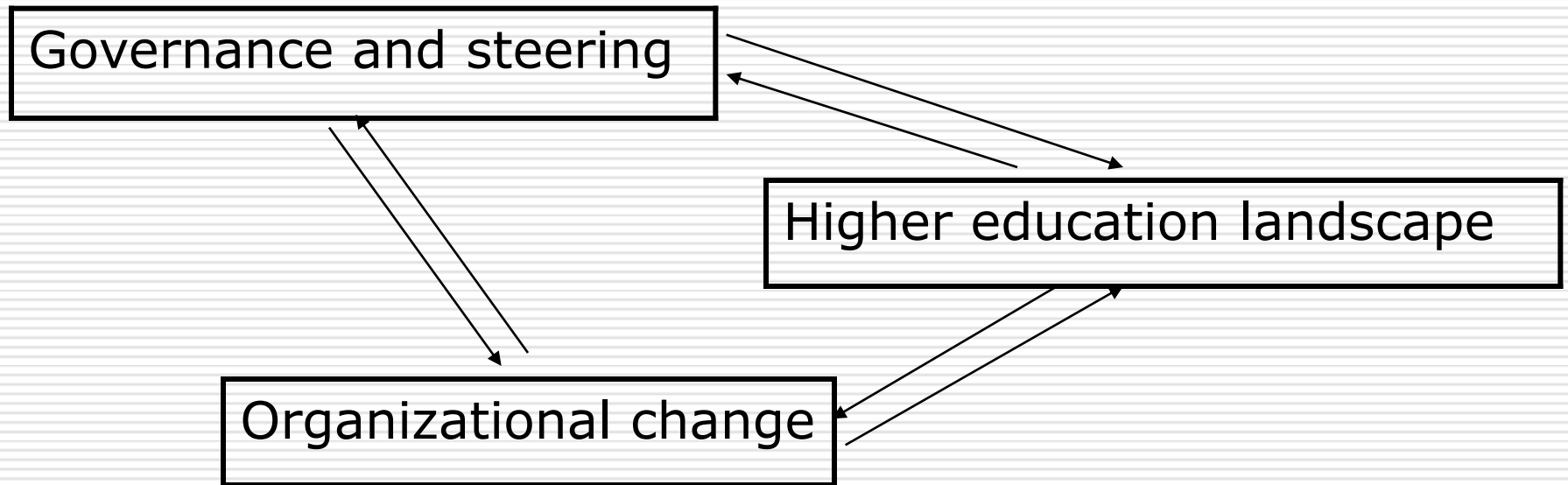
# Research Questions

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1. Universities – from loosely coupled, organized anarchies to more tightly coupled, vertically integrated organizations?
  2. To what extent may the degree and type of change be understood in the light of higher education policy?
  3. What are the implications of the changes observed on the higher education landscape?
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# Main themes and linkages

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# Three movements

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- Rationalization
  - Intra-organizational hierarchization
  - Inter-organizational networking
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# Reconfiguration of academic power

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- ❑ Changing power distribution – not just vertical (hierarchical) but also horizontal (network)
  - ❑ Penetration of hierarchies by network decisions on funding, evaluation and publication
  - ❑ Research should focus not just on power within academic institutions, but also on other arenas that influence the institutions
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# Academic institutions – from corporate groups to penetrated hierarchies

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- Universities: more integrated hierarchically
  - Penetration of universities by networks is likely source of anarchy & loose couplings
  - New elite within academic profession
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# Reformulated research questions about university organization

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1. To what extent have universities become more tightly managed and integrated than before?
  2. To what extent has a new academic elite emerged, strengthening the vertical dimension in the academic collegium?
  3. To what extent has academic power reasserted itself through external decisions affecting institutional policies?
  4. To what extent do actors within academic institutions perceive clear division between academic and administrative, strategic and political considerations?
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# Higher education systems – from institutional aggregates to standardized institutional orders

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- Formalization of higher education systems relatively recent
- Different formal orders – binary, hierarchic, fragmented
- Governance and market forces
- Intra-system effects
- Reciprocal effects, systems, markets, governance

# Research questions on landscape

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1. What are the reciprocal effects of governance, market forces and emerging higher education systems, at the national, at the supranational level?
  2. To what extent are institutional strategies responses to institutions' formal or perceived positions within the system?
  3. How are perceptions and practices of academic autonomy and freedom shaped when integrated in increasingly ordered national and supranational spaces?
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# The politicization of higher education and research

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## **Tendencies towards increased political control:**

- ❑ Higher education and research more important for policy makers
- ❑ National policy centers more forceful

## **Tendencies weakening political control:**

- ❑ Institutional autonomy
  - ❑ Supra-national influence
  - ❑ Network power
  - ❑ More diversified political center with semi-autonomous intermediate bodies
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# Research questions on policy

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1. What are the implications of the horizontal dimension in terms of how policy bodies enter into different national and international networks?
  2. What is the effect of the politicization of higher education?
    - a) policy cleavages along party lines concerning reform aims and strategies?
    - b) relative consensus while policy squabbles are limited to budget size and reform pace?
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# Some assumptions about higher education and change

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## **Two conventional assumptions:**

1. Actor groups in academic institutions have stable interests and values
2. Policy change therefore perceived as shocks brought about by external stakeholders (policy makers, business interests etc.)

## **Three alternative assumptions:**

1. Core values and needs in academic institutions are dynamic
  2. Fundamental changes: increased size, diversity and steady process of standardization
  3. Network structures may change patterns of interaction among and identities within major actor groups, making it more difficult to distinguish clearly between groups
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# National cases studies

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Common design, realised by national teams, analysis of policy documents, available studies, selected interviews.

Will cover especially:

- policy design and governance arrangements
  - steering tools including allocation of funding, rule systems and evaluation practices at national level
  - a basic characterization of the HEI landscape and the different institutional types
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# Institutional case studies

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- ❑ Individual HEIs
  - ❑ Three different institutions in each country (24 institutions overall)
  - ❑ Include analysis of available documents and websites, collection of data, site visits and interviews with rectors, administrators, representatives of the academic community
  - ❑ Format and guidelines for site visits and interviews will be jointly prepared by four IPs focusing on organizational change
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# Survey of all HEIs

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- ❑ The survey shall be delivered nationally with the adaptations necessary
  - ❑ Developed jointly in the whole CRP to identify a number of critical questions to complement the case studies
  - ❑ May include different sections to be delivered to different people in the institution (for example rector vs. main administrator). Nation specific questions may be added
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# Collection of a set of data for a basic characterization of HEI

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- Including some basic information on funding, personnel, students, curricula, disciplinary orientation, extent and orientation of research activities
  - This study will be coordinated by IP7 (Fröhlich) with the support of national teams for data collection
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# In-depth comparative analysis of national policies and instruments

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- Semi-structured interviews of policy makers, civil servants, academic and administrative decision makers and academics.
  - *Analysis of policy documents and public debates* the aim of which is to get an overview of major reform and reform trends.
  - Further specification of design and organisation of the comparative analysis will be undertaken jointly by IPs.
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