

Chapter 1

Introduction

Christine Musselin and Pedro N. Teixeira

Higher education and research have reached the top of governmental agendas, since they are expected to play a crucial role in knowledge societies. In all countries, they have been for many years at the centre of reforms aimed at deeply transforming university practices and governance that are considered poorly adapted to contemporary settings and to the new missions that universities and research institutions are expected to fulfill (Weisbrod et al. 2008; Newman et al. 2004). This stimulated a wave of policy reforms at the national and, in the case of Europe, even at the transnational level. Many higher education systems have presented multiple changes in areas such as funding, governance, quality assurance, organization of the sector and human resources' management (Gornitzka et al. 2005).

The rationales underlying those changes have been the subject of significant debates. In order to explain the reforms in higher education and research, many authors have mentioned the influence of New Public Management (NPM) (Braun and Merrien 1999; Amaral et al. 2003; Meek et al. 2010). This doctrine is said to be responsible for the introduction of managerial techniques borrowed from the private sector, for the systematic recourse to benchmark practices, the constitution of quasi-markets leading to increased competition between higher education institutions, the creation of new agencies (for evaluation, allocation of funding, etc.), the search for performance and efficiency, strengthened university executive leadership and less collegial governance (Ferlie et al. 2008). These interpretations are convincing at an aggregated level but they hardly resist empirical data and more precise analysis.

C. Musselin (✉)

Centre de Sociologie des Organisations, Sciences Po and CNRS,
19, rue Amélie, 75007 Paris, France
e-mail: christine.musselin@sciencespo.fr

P.N. Teixeira

CIPES and Faculty of Economics, University of Porto, Portugal
e-mail: pedrotx@fep.up.pt

The developments in higher education at the institutional level also suggest that we need to go beyond those general statements and trends. In recent decades, there has been a significant strengthening of institutional autonomy in many higher education systems, notably in Europe (Neave 2009; Neave and van Vught 1991). By reference to the paper of Nils Brunsson and Kerstin Sahlin-Andersson (2000), some authors described this as the “construction of universities into organizations” (Krücken and Meier 2006; Musselin 2006; De Boer et al. 2007; Whitley 2008). The more this trend has developed, the less likely it is that the implementation of policy reforms will be a straightforward and reactive sequence. On the other hand, this growing institutional autonomy has been accompanied by a growing institutional differentiation in many higher education systems (Taylor et al. 2008). This differentiation has had multiple sources, from legal changes to different financial treatment by governments, though it has certainly contributed to making the institutional landscape increasingly more diverse across and within higher education systems (Kehm and Stensaker 2009). Thus, although many higher education systems have shared commonalities in this reform trend, the way they have responded may present significant differences at the national and institutional levels and this will likely have an impact on the way policies are designed and implemented.

The aim of this book is to cover this diversity by looking more precisely at the very content of the reforms, at the reasons that led to them, at the theories, doctrines, ideologies that informed them, but also at their evolution. In this introductory chapter, we will start by setting the context of change that has characterized European higher education over the last three decades. Then, we will reflect upon the extent to which the analysis of policy design and policy reform may be affected by those aforementioned changes. In order to achieve this, the book suggests three different but complementary ways of looking at reforms. Finally, we will present the contents of the volume, organized in three parts, each corresponding to one of these ways and highlighting what can be learnt about specific cases by adopting a specific perspective.

Changing Times, Changed Policies in European Higher Education

In recent decades we have seen a wave of policy reforms in European higher education that have often departed from the traditional public ethos that has historically prevailed in many European higher education systems. Many observers have pointed to the broad reforms in Europe in the 1980s and 1990s and the acceleration in the rate of change and reform since the late 1990s and into the first decade of the twentieth century (Neave 2009; Middlehurst and Teixeira 2012). At the national level, one can identify major policy changes over the last decades in areas as important to the fabric of higher education as the rise of quality assessment and accreditation (Schwarz and Westerheijden 2004; Westerheijden et al. 2007), the transformations in the structure and modes of funding, and significant reforms in the governance and management at the system and institutional levels (Amaral et al. 2002; Meek et al. 2010).

The pace of policy change has been enhanced by the acceleration of developments at the transnational level. In the specific case of Europe, recent decades have been characterized by important policy developments, notably with the development of the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy (nowadays called Europe 2020), which both aimed at the construction of the European Areas of Higher Education and of Research. These two different policy processes, though increasingly intertwined, have had an important impact in higher education, influencing national policies and institutional strategies. Underlying those political processes there was recognition that higher education institutions and systems were central to the achievement of Europe's economic and social goals.

Many of the recent policy initiatives are the result of the tremendous changes that European higher education underwent over the last decades and the need to deal with massification (Scott 1995; Trow 2010). One of the major features of recent decades has been the persistent expansion of higher education, translated in the growth of enrolments, number and type of institutions, and number and type of programs. Moreover, this expansion has been increasingly linked to economic motivations and purposes, with both governments and individuals explicating an instrumental view that regards higher education as a tool for socio-economic change. These changes in the individual and social motivations regarding higher education have had a major impact on the external and internal regulation of higher education institutions, notably by stressing the economic dimension of higher education and its potential contribution to individual and social economic goals (Weisbrod et al. 2008; Slaughter and Leslie 1997).

As higher education has continued to expand, there have also been structural changes at the system level, with new higher education sectors being established or developed further, including the private sector and universities of applied science (Taylor et al. 2008). The boundaries between sectors have become more blurred and in some countries the divides between university and non-university sectors have even been abolished or at least blurred. In those where they have been maintained, they are reportedly under pressure, especially due to the pressures associated with massification of increasing institutional differentiation. This significant differentiation has often been a motivation for introducing additional changes in the systemic and institutional regulation of higher education (Palfreyman and Tapper 2009).

Higher education institutions in Europe and elsewhere have seen significant change in their social and economic missions and, consequently, in their organization and structures (Meek et al. 2010). These changes have been driven by a multitude of complex forces, albeit sharing in general an emphasis on adopting a greater economic and managerial focus in the internal decision-making process of higher education institutions. This changed view about institutions has led to a growing policy concern in rethinking and adapting the contextual framework in which those institutions operate. Hence, we have seen a reconfiguration of the sector alongside market rules, often through policy initiatives (Teixeira et al. 2004; Regini 2011). Important examples of this trend can be found in funding mechanisms (funding students directly instead of institutions; promoting competition among institutions, etc.), but also in the various stimuli towards closer interaction between universities

and industry (favoring the commercialization of research and knowledge). This has been particularly identifiable in countries with a mature higher education sector (Bok 2003; Geiger 2004).

The trend towards expansion has raised significant challenges both for institutions and governments alike. The fact that the number of students enrolled in higher education has multiplied several times in a few decades has translated into growing staff costs and greater investment not only in instructional and research facilities, but also in administrative and student services (Clotfelter 1996; Geiger 2004). The cost of the higher education system has become a significant issue in almost every single country and governments have been struggling to find additional funds to sustain (and often pursue further) the process of expansion. The financial challenge has been further complicated by an adverse financial tendency that characterized the public sector during most of the last two decades (Barr 2004). The so-called crisis of the welfare state has challenged the sustainability of the traditional financial reliance of higher education on public funding (Barr and Crawford 2004) and has launched a series of policy changes and conditioned others not necessarily focused on financial issues.

The policy context of higher education in Europe can also be understood as a move from an expanding sector to a mature industry. In the expansion phase, growth was seen as a major purpose in itself and absorbed the attention of policymakers and institutional leaders. To a large extent, at the time of expansion, the main concern for higher education institutions and policymakers, in order to keep public and social actors satisfied, was how to manage and accommodate larger numbers and a more diverse pool of students. In recent decades, as higher education has moved to a mature phase, external stakeholders have become more demanding and governments have internalized this and will not be satisfied just by adding more activities or expanding existing ones. A more costly higher education attracted increased political and social scrutiny, thus the political environment has given increasing attention to the level of external and internal efficiency of the higher education system (Cave et al. 1997; Teixeira and Dill 2011). This has fostered many policies aiming to strengthen the external efficiency of the higher education system and the promotion of more responsive higher education institutions, which has had important consequences in the organization and structure of higher education.

The landscape of European higher education has also changed significantly over the last three decades, spearheaded by a reform agenda centered on the dual axis of autonomy and accountability (Neave 2009). Since the 1980s, and from a system perspective, we have seen a move from a “state control model” to a “state supervising model” (Neave and Van Vught 1991) in which the state designs a framework of rules and policy objectives for the system as a whole and institutions have increasing freedom and responsibility to set and pursue their own missions and priorities. Even if in many countries this new model coexists with more traditional forms of governance based on rules and controls, a shift from substantive policies (precisely setting what should be done and how) to more procedural policies (setting principles and aims) has been observed. Nonetheless,

this increase in institutional autonomy has been deepened in a context of growing accountability from governmental and autonomous agencies, with the state emphasizing a more evaluative role rather than one of direct control. With this shifting of authority and direct control from the state to the institutional level, the governance of higher education systems has become more complex and diffused and this has had important implications for the design and implementation of higher education policies.

Moreover, as institutions have received more autonomy and authority, they have become one of the main stages in the unfolding of policy developments. Although internal governance structures may often be largely shaped through national legislation, the strengthening of institutional autonomy has given a greater role to internal and external stakeholders, and thus the definition and pursuit of institutional priorities has become, at least in part, determined through internal negotiation. However, the exercise of institutional autonomy has also been significantly conditioned by the pervasive influence of managerial and economic concerns (Shattock 2006, 2008) which made the internal life of higher education become denser and more conflictive. The increasing influence of the administrative estate (Le Galès and Scott 2010) has challenged the traditional sovereignty of intellectual and professional expertise as a legitimate foundation for institutional decisions (Meek et al. 2010), and other criteria emerge in order to assess higher education institutions' effectiveness in responding to social and economic needs.

Policy Design and Policy Effects in Higher Education – A Broader Approach

As we have seen, the European higher education landscape has been significantly transformed over the last three decades and this has important impacts for the analysis of policy design and policy reforms in this sector. The traditional approaches to higher education policy analysis tend to emphasize that change in higher education is mostly stimulated through government policy initiatives and reforms. In recent years, this has been strengthened by the development of a growing supranational level that, through convergence and conflict, has influenced national agendas of policymaking in higher education. Policies designed at European and national levels have been shaping higher education's purposes, norms and values, and structures and organizations. Nevertheless, there are other forces influencing higher education and promoting change in universities across Europe and elsewhere (Clotfelter 2010). As shown by David Dill in this book, one should not neglect the transformation drawn by market forces, but also by the academic profession. Therefore, one could argue that in recent decades, an important part of policy initiatives should also be understood as an attempt to internalize societal, economic and technological forces of change into the higher education system. In fact, higher education institutions today face a demanding and complex context because they are asked to fulfill

multiple roles and be accountable, through multiple ways of formal and informal assessment, for the extent to which they fully embrace those roles (Stensaker and Harvey 2011; Neave 2009).

The political environment has given increasing attention to the level of external and internal efficiency of the higher education system. As regards the latter, as in many other public services, in recent years it became a rather common statement that higher education institutions should be more efficient in their use of taxpayers' resources (Pollitt 1990). The claim for more accountable institutions suggests that societies have become less confident in their internal working and that institutions do not spend available resources in an efficient way (Bok 2003). The concerns about efficiency refer as well to the degree of external efficiency and the effectiveness of higher education institutions to fulfill relevant social and economic needs. Many governments have been devising policies trying to strengthen the external efficiency of the higher education system and the promotion of more responsive higher education institutions. These developments have already been analyzed by several studies and publications that described those policies and looked at their impacts on higher education institutions (Braun and Merrien 1999; Amaral et al. 2002; Deem et al. 2007), on academics and on academic work (Henkel 2000; Barrier 2010; Leisyte 2011; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004).

Nonetheless, the aim of this book is slightly different, by presenting a collection of chapters looking at these reforms from a rather different perspective, focusing more on the reasons that led to them, on the theories, doctrines, ideologies that inform them, and also their evolution, rather than looking at the very content of the reforms. In other words, this book is interested in policy design. This notion was first introduced by Robert Dahl and Charles Lindblom (1953) and further developed by Helen Ingram and Anne Schneider (see Schneider and Ingram 1997, among many others). In a recent paper, Anne Schneider and Mara Sidney (2009: 105) wrote: "The choice of design elements reflects political and social values, historical precedent, national trends in ideas about 'good' policy, as well as a host of 'local' knowledge that leads to enormous variability in policy designs across time and space." As stressed by these authors, longitudinal perspectives as well national settings are important to analyze policy design.

Adopting a policy design perspective also means being more attentive to the variations in the implementation of these policies and to the reasons explaining these variations (in different countries, in different sectors or on different publics), as well as being aware of the contradictions and redefinitions they raise because of their direct or side effects. This again means focusing more on their dynamic rather than on their immediate effects and looking at the interactive effects between policy implementation and policy design. As highlighted by Giandomenico Majone and Aaron Wildavsky (1984), the theory incorporated in the design of a policy impacts on its implementation, but, reciprocally, the way it is implemented affects and redefines the theory. To achieve these goals, the book suggests three different but complementary ways of looking at reforms. The three parts of the book each correspond to one of these ways and highlight what can be learnt about specific cases by adopting a specific perspective.

Designing Policies in Higher Education: The Importance of a Longitudinal Perspective

One first way to better understand the ongoing reforms is to be attentive to their evolution, to identify their internal contradictions, as well as the redefinitions and reorientations they experience. Building on the study of public policies that take ideas, representations, ideologies and theories seriously (Muller and Jobert 1987; Sabatier 1988; Hall 1989), this approach recognizes that similar conceptions informed and justified most of the reforms led in European countries and that these narratives (Stone 1988) lead to coercive (when imposed by the state or a supranational level) or mimetic isomorphism (when successful countries are imitated), but at the same time it is thought that more attention should be paid to how these ideas, theories or representations are appropriated, translated, received and therefore lead to different policies in different settings. Continuities and ruptures that could characterize these reforms and their more or less erratic development are therefore central. Moreover, more attention is devoted to the mechanisms of diffusion, appropriation and redefinition of the changes, in order to better understand the various influences that intervene, but also challenge, the (often) too rapid conclusions on the existence of increasing convergences among the different countries. It is therefore necessary to look at the ongoing reforms in the light of their trajectories. The politicians developing these reforms naturally put forward their originality and the radical ruptures they introduce between a “problematic before” and a “promising after”, but do such arguments resist longitudinal analysis? Different levels of reflection are needed to answer this question. There is a need to compare the content of the ongoing reforms and the arguments that accompany them with those of the previous reforms. It is not sufficient to write that most countries introduced NPM in higher education if one does not ask at the same time: how far do these reforms follow a different orientation to that of the past? Are the current debates new? How do they evolve over time? To what extent are they similar to the reforms led under the same motto elsewhere?

Changes in higher education are shaped by national contexts and debates, and even though on the surface one can identify a common vocabulary and common apparent purposes, the design of higher education policies, like many other areas of public policy, is embedded in national cultural, societal and political contexts. Moreover, and although there has been significant convergence in European higher education systems, one can find a persistence of national difference and peculiarities (Musselin 2005), notably in the distribution of power and level of authority granted to the three main levels within higher education’s systems (system, institutional and individual) (see Amaral et al. 2009). These differences in the combination of authority or in the distribution of power among these levels shape policy initiatives and the pace and the forms of their effects, especially in institutional change. Hence, one should bear in mind these differences and the weight of the institutional past when analyzing the design and application of policy reforms in higher education.

The first section of this volume contains chapters that aim to tackle these issues by reflecting on policy design in higher education at the system level. They reflect

on traditional narratives surrounding policy reforms and the pace and the focus of change in higher education and the complexities to steer universities in an increasingly integrated and more competitive global environment. The chapters also stress the relevance of issues such as the delegation of power and institutional interests in molding the capacity of governments to specify the outcomes of universities and to monitor their performance. David Dill's chapter provides a conceptual perspective on this issue, while the other three illustrate different issues linked to policy design.

In his chapter, Dill points out perceptively that a generalization of contemporary studies of higher education is that significant changes within universities are being caused primarily by government policy reforms reflecting NPM. Following this framework, national reforms of higher education often seek to make the nature and distribution of information on academic behavior much more explicit, though new institutional economics also perceives organizational change to be a result of the complex interactions among the regulations of the state, the forces of the market, and social norms. Therefore in his chapter, Dill reviews the impact of contemporary government reforms, changing market forces and alterations in the academic professions on the process of change within universities, exploring what can be learned about the role of information in the functioning of higher education. In his analysis, Dill points out that the observable complexity of university missions contributes substantial uncertainty to current efforts by governments to specify the outcomes of higher education and to monitor institutional performance. For these reasons, Dill advocates that the most effective institutional framework for the university appears to be one designed to help improve the collegial mechanisms by which universities monitor and regulate their own behavior.

In the following chapter, Emanuela Reale and Emilia Primeri analyze university reforms in Italy. Recent policy changes have aimed at introducing deep modifications to the Italian universities' internal governance, downsizing the centralized national decision level and modifying academic institutional settings, boosting the academic institutions to overcome the traditional national paradigm. Their work aims to understand the underlying rationales, motivations and justifications which characterize the actual reforms and to highlight in what respect they act on the set of ideas, principles, values and beliefs, thus cultural and cognitive frameworks, which shape the national academic system. The analysis is supported by historical neo-institutionalism and literature about models of governance and develops a longitudinal analysis of the reform's text from its initial presentation until the final approval, following the several modifications proposed and approved by the various actors. This will highlight the extent to which the supposed innovative character of the reform has been changed since its initial proposal and how traditional features of the national policymaking context shaped and hindered changes in the governance of academic institutions. Their chapter points out how underlying policy designs in the reform process seem to have a major relevance for the evolution of practices and tools that shape higher education's inner life and intended policy changes.

In the following chapter, John Brennan and Sofia Sousa analyze the UK Research Excellence Framework and its impacts for the transformation of research production. The Research Excellence Framework has been introduced by the Higher Education

Funding Council for England as a new system for assessing the quality of research in the UK's higher education. The aim of their chapter is to discuss whether research evaluation systems of this sort lead to the transformation of processes of research production within higher education institutions or whether they are more likely to reinforce existing practices and traditions. They show how the new design of this evaluation system (centered on outputs, impact and environment) explicitly follows multiple goals (correcting some aspects of the former RAE, providing support for research funding from public opinion at large, rewarding the contribution of research to the society and the economy) but might have further implications that policymakers might not be aware of. In order to develop this argument they discuss how discourses promoted by evaluation systems are capable of transforming (or not) research production in higher education and whether the new system can be seen as a truly "new" discourse. The analysis also focuses on whether such influences and developments can constitute a coherent framework for research or whether they rather constitute a field of tensions that will create new contradictions concerning the kinds of research which *should* be privileged by higher education institutions.

The chapters in this section share several commonalities. They all address the following issues: How are policies in higher education conceived? What narratives play a role and how? What theories and ideas influence them? How are they transformed into policy instruments aimed at transforming behaviors and practices? How independent is policy design in this sector autonomous from the environment and the society in which it takes place? What actors, stakeholders and interest groups are involved in this process and how do they transform it? The chapters therefore all stress the role of the three main factors identified by the huge literature on the construction of public policies – institutions, interests and ideas (or paradigms) – and look at how they combine in higher education policies in different settings and different countries. In their analysis they reflect on critical factors that may hinder deeper changes within academic institutions and the capacity of higher education institutions and groups of internal stakeholders to appropriate externally led policy initiatives and to adjust them to their interests, values and objectives. Several of the chapters in this part also point out that the effectiveness of policy reforms is not only influenced by the distribution of power in higher education systems and institutions, but is also affected by the fact that universities are politically and socially embedded institutions. Their analysis is, moreover, concerned with evolution as they do not look at reforms at a specific moment but take on board a longitudinal perspective in order to understand how policy design evolved over time.

The Complexities of Policy Design in Higher Education – Some Lessons from Comparative Research

A second way to improve our understanding of the ongoing reforms is to look at their implementation in a more comparative way. This, of course, includes comparison between countries, but also other comparative perspectives such as looking at

how one reform will be developed in different regions of the same country, as well as how a specific policy might affect the targeted publics differently, or how comparable reforms will be implemented in different sectors (such as higher education and health, or higher education and the legal sector, etc.). It is useful to question the meaning and the forms of the reforms led in higher education and research in relation to the reforms experienced by other public sectors and to the ongoing reconfiguration of state intervention.

This is all the more useful as NPM and Managerialism have been popular objects of study in recent decades in social sciences in general and in higher education policy research in particular and are considered as having a major influence on reforms. Nevertheless, these have been used in interchangeable ways and often with different meanings (Hood 1991, and see Bleiklie et al. 2011, for the higher education sector). In a way, the notion of NPM is a victim of its own success. There are so many definitions and redefinitions that it becomes more and more difficult to operationalize this notion. If one compares the reforms led in different countries under the motto of NPM, it is easy to observe how this notion is not sufficient in order to understand the concrete changes that were introduced, how they were implemented, or the arguments that justified them. Moreover, the same questions and ambiguities appear as soon as one tries to retrace all the reforms undertaken in a specific country over the last 30 years: viewing all and everything as a product of NPM leads to ignoring the nuances, contradictions and inflexions involved in these processes. Not only have the reforms varied, but also the opinions held by public management scholars about the central elements of NPM have differed (Amaral et al. 2003). Besides the large recognition of the managerial paradigm inspiring the desired changes, not all the European countries implemented the reforms in the same way and at the same time (Pollitt and Bourckaert 2011). There is therefore a need to look at these reforms more comparatively. The variable influence of NPM in different countries has also to be considered and understood. Some recent research (Paradeise et al. 2009), for instance, stressed that most European countries simultaneously led NPM-driven reforms as well as “network governance”-driven reforms, but with different intensity. Such a policy mix should also be considered as well as its impacts.

The second part of the volume therefore focuses on the complexities of policy design in higher education and tries to draw some lessons from comparative research. The chapters of this section all compare the implementation of similar policies in different settings, countries, regions or sectors and reflect on what explains the differences in their results. By so doing they provide new insights into the complexities and nuances of policy implementation in higher education. One of the obvious ways to approach a comparative analysis of policy reforms in higher education is to take two or more countries experiencing similar policy initiatives and/or purposes. However, as is suggested by contributions to this part of the volume, this comparative approach to analyzing policy reforms in higher education cannot be restricted to nationality, and has to pay attention to a multiplicity of variables such as the differences between federal and centralized political systems and the size, breadth and disciplinary profile of higher education institutions. The wider

breadth provides important insights to help identify the institutional conditions influencing the implementation of these reforms and shows how and to what extent they facilitate or hinder their efficiency.

The first chapter in this section by Teresa Carvalho and Sofia Bruckmann analyzes changes from comparative “inter-country” perspective. Taking Portugal as a case study, they aim to understand the similarities and differences between the higher education and health sectors. In their analysis, they point out that these changes involved transformations at the organizational level and for professionals, notably by replacing the traditional organizational and professional order, based on professionals’ self-regulation, with a new one based on market assumptions. Their empirical analysis suggests that the traditional bureaucratic way of organizing public institutions is giving way to a rational one, though the effects may be different since deregulation is not similar for professionals in health and in higher education.

In the following chapter, Donald Fisher and Kjell Rubenson reflect on how the analysis of academic capitalism, marketization and accountability leads into a discussion of the restructuring of the state. In their chapter they reflect on the effects on higher education of the relation between globalization theory and state theory, notably by discussing whether globalization leads to convergence or divergence when it comes to the formulation of internal policies. Their analysis compares three case studies of the evolution of higher education policy in three Canadian provinces between 1980 and 2008, and by using both documentary analysis and interviews they argue that as higher education has become more central to the legitimization and accumulation functions served by the state, so higher education policy has been more closely tied to economic and social development.

Finally, in the last chapter, Lukas Baschung elaborates a new analytical framework for university governance which helps to understand differences in the implementation of higher education policies. The framework is constituted, on the one hand, by a number of central NPM and Network Governance elements, and, on the other hand, by four variables, namely the political system, the type and size of higher education institutions, and the type of scientific disciplines. In his chapter he applies the framework to doctoral education’s reforms in Switzerland and Norway and examines to what extent elements of the one or the other public management narratives appear according to the four variables.

The chapters in this part provide important insights into the complexities of policy reform in the multilevel structure of government observed in many countries where responsibilities regarding higher education are shared between central and regional governments. The chapters in this part also enable the identification of what makes the higher education specific by looking at the differences in the implementation of rather similar policies. The analysis compares changes in the higher education sector regarding transformations at the organizational level and the attempts to replace the traditional organizational and professional order based on professionals’ self-regulation with a new one based on market assumptions, a process similar to those that took place in other sectors inspired by NPM in a comparable sector like health.

Policy Effects at the Meso Level

Another major issue when analyzing policy reforms in higher education refers to the frequent contrast between expected and actual results. Higher education is particularly well known for being a traditionally complex field to be reformed, and higher education institutions have a reputation for resistance to change and subversion of policy initiatives, mainly due to the strong devolution of power to lower levels of the institution (Clark 1983; Becher and Kogan 1991). Many authors have argued that the long history of higher education institutions has nurtured an internal stability that is sustained by certain specific characteristics and features that make it more difficult to promote rapid, sustained and exogenously led change. These perceptions have nurtured the views of policymakers and hence one should pay attention to the extent to which the design of policy reforms in higher education in Europe has increasingly integrated a more careful or even skeptical view of the effectiveness of certain instruments for reforming higher education.

The analysis of policy design and policy reforms in higher education has to take into account the effects of the changes that have taken place in higher education and the way they have affected higher education institutions. Some of the main changes have involved transformations at the organizational level, notably through the decentralization and deregulation of internal processes. The change that has been promoted in higher education in recent decades from a governance model based on the so-called bureaucratic and oligarchic principles to one rationalized according to NPM and corporate principles is likely to affect the internal pursuit of higher education's traditional missions of knowledge discovery, application and transmission. Hence, it is relevant to examine to what extent recent policy initiatives have been integrating these changes into the development of policy tools and road maps.

Therefore the third and last part of the book finally addresses the impact of the reforms. Many of them consist in new acts and new legislative regulations. What do we know about the effectiveness of such instruments on higher education systems? What are the most efficient leverages for change? Reciprocally, which domains, mechanisms, actors, practices, representations and values better resist reforms, or even are reinforced by the attempts aimed at modifying them. It is therefore important to look at how reforms are perceived, the resistance and adhesion to which they give rise and the reconfiguration in power relationships they generate. Most studies led on the implementation of the reforms in countries that began in the 1980s concluded that academics were adapting their practices to the new requirements but only marginally transformed them and remained very much attached to the traditional academic norms and values. Is this still the case now? Are there differences among disciplines in their capacity to individually and collectively adapt? Are there differences within the same discipline according to the seniority and socialization of the staff?

The set of chapters included in the third part of this volume looks at the impact of reforms on the meso level, with particular attention to the level of institutions and

of the academic profession. In the first chapter, Dietmar Braun provides an analytical view on reforms and the transformation of academic fields and institutions by dealing with the impact of governance reforms on the cognitive development of science at the level of universities. His chapter links theoretical insights into the diffusion of new scientific fields in universities with an assessment of recent changes in their management structures. In his chapter he argues that opportunities for new scientific fields to be included depend on the kind of governance regimes ruling universities and compares the bureaucratic-oligarchic governance model with the NPM governance model. The analysis points out that the propensity of universities to include new scientific fields is conditioned by changes in modes of governance and that certain fields may have a greater chance of being integrated within existing institutional structures.

The other three chapters look at similar issues by drawing on empirical research about several European countries that have experienced significant governance and organizational reforms in recent years. The chapter by Maria Nedeva, Kate Barker and Sally Ali Osman starts from the steady and rapid growth of academic literature (and policy debate) on the wide-ranging changes in the universities in the Western world and the fact that these are mostly founded on two problematic assumptions. First, there is the assumption of “unity of object” whereby “the university” has undergone an institutional dislocation and “fragmented” into a plethora of quite different organizations. Interestingly, these organizations vary not only across national landscapes but also within the same funding landscape. The second problematic assumption is the one about the universality of the pressures for change. They consider that this reflects a failure to distinguish between “policies” and “policy instruments” on the one hand, and “pressures for change” on the other. In their chapter, these assumptions are questioned by using information from a study of university change in the United Kingdom at two universities (a research-intensive university and a teaching-intensive university). Their analysis indicates that the pressures for change, as well as the manifestations of this change, are quite different in both cases and that this has led to specific changes in the nature of research and research practices.

The chapter by Gaële Goastellec and Nicolas Pekari analyzes the Swiss higher education system which, during the last few decades, has faced important reforms concerning its structure and governance. As in other European countries, one of the most important changes consists in the strengthening of the research mission of universities in order to increase the competitiveness of both Swiss academic institutions and researchers on the national and international academic markets. Their chapter investigates the effects of such policy reforms at a meso-institutional level (academic career and profession) and their analysis indicates that the introduction and use by academics of the policy instruments have led to different career models.

Finally, the chapter by Patricia Schulz uses an empirical study of the introduction of performance-based funding in German medical departments to argue that, contrary to theoretical claims that recent NPM-inspired university reforms have taken autonomy from academics and given it to university administrations,

some academics have in fact retained their autonomy within the institutional structure of the departments. Senior members of the departments have often even been able to increase their autonomy relative to more recently tenured academics. This points to a similarity between the German and the Swiss case, where, as Goastellec and Pekari argue in this section, the chair structure still influences the universities' internal power relationships. At the same time, university administrators have gained some autonomy and authority, as Braun's theoretical chapter in this section argues. The findings suggest that the distribution of autonomy through governance reforms at universities is not a zero-sum game and certain win-win situations are possible.

One of the main contributions of these chapters is to focus on power redistribution. They look at the concrete effects of reforms on norms, funding processes, scientific tasks, doctoral training programs etc. and how they affect the academic institutions and profession. The comprehensive perspective they use is not only focused on the losers but also on those able to develop strategies in order to benefit from the reforms and acquire a stronger position. They show that some academics/institutions are able to reshape the focus of policy reforms and that others use the reforms to their benefit. Reforms therefore provoke new power games and reconfigure power relations. As in the first part of the book, temporal dynamics are also taken into account in order to explain the different paces and degrees of impact of reforms in higher education.

Concluding Remarks

Higher education has experienced significant change over the last three decades. By focusing on policy design in higher education, this book challenges the common view that higher education systems are submitted to a rather standard process of reforms that affect the academic profession and higher education institutions in a similar way. By adopting a policy design perspective, it emphasizes variations.

There are several dimensions that can be explored in the theme of variations. One is that of variations between countries because of the social constructive process experienced by the ideologies and ideas that diffuse from one country to another – and among them principally the NPM doctrine – but are each time differently appropriated, translated and implemented, and also mixed with other conceptions and theories. A second dimension is that of variations within the same country over time because of the redefinitions provoked by the adaptation to the national settings, the contradictions arising from the implementation processes, and the resistance to or (on the contrary) the influence of some specific actors pushing their own specific interests. A third dimension is that of variations also within the same country and between different sectors of public intervention, acknowledging the importance of specific sectorial institutional settings in policy design. Finally, there are variations in the implementation itself as specific groups of actors, specific institutions or specific publics might react differently according to the gains or losses they can expect from the reforms.

We believe this approach can be quite fruitful and make several relevant contributions to the study of higher education and its policies. On the one hand, it strengthens the comparative approach to higher education policy analysis and adopts a longer-term perspective that can help us to develop a more robust and complete analysis of how higher education policies are designed. We hope this effort may stimulate greater interest in the study of policy design and policy effects in higher education and establish possible links in these regards with the larger background of social and European policies. Although higher education has critical peculiarities and ample motives that justify its study, the analysis of higher education policies can benefit from taking into account the development of policies at a broader level. On the other hand, the study of higher education policies can provide important contributions to the study of policy design and policy reforms at large. We hope this volume may be a small but meaningful contribution to both purposes.

References

- Amaral, A., Jones, G., & Karseth, B. (Eds.). (2002). *Governing higher education: National perspectives on institutional governance*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Amaral, A., Meek, V. L., & Larsen, I. M. (Eds.). (2003). *The higher education managerial revolution? Dordrecht: Kluwer*.
- Amaral, A., Musselin, C., Neave, G., & Maassen, P. (Eds.). (2009). *European integration and the governance of higher education and research*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Barr, N. (2004). *Economics of the welfare state* (4th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Barr, N., & Crawford, I. (2004). *Financing higher education – Answers from the UK*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Barrier, J. (2010). *La Science en Projets. Régimes de Financement et Reconfigurations du Travail des Chercheurs Académiques. Le Cas des Sciences et Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication en France (1982–2006)*. PhD in Sociology, Sciences Po, Paris.
- Becher, T., & Kogan, M. (1991). *Process and structure in higher education*. New York: Routledge.
- Bleiklie, I., Enders, J., Lepori, B., & Musselin, C. (2011). NPM, network governance and the university as a changing professional organization. In T. Christensen & P. Laegreid (Eds.), *The Ashgate research companion to new public management* (pp. 161–176). Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Bok, D. (2003). *Universities in the marketplace – The commercialization of higher education*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Braun, D., & Merrien, F.-X. (Eds.). (1999). *Governance of universities in a comparative perspective*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publisher.
- Brunsson, N., & Sahlin-Andersonn, K. (2000). Constructing organizations: The example of public sector reform. *Organization Studies*, 21(4), 721–746.
- Cave, M., Hanney, S., Henkel, M., & Kogan, M. (1997). *The use of performance indicators in higher education – The challenge of the quality movement* (Higher education policy series 34). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Clark, B. R. (1983). *The higher education system*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Clotfelter, C. (1996). *Buying the best – Cost escalation in higher education*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Clotfelter, C. (Ed.). (2010). *American universities in a global market*. Chicago: NBER and Chicago University Press.

- Dahl, R., & Lindblom, C. (1953). *Politics, economics, and welfare*. New York: Harper.
- De Boer, H., Enders, J., & Leisyte, L. (2007). Public sector reform in Dutch higher education: The organizational transformation of the university. *Public Administration*, 85(1), 27–46.
- Deem, R., Hillyard, S., & Reed, M. (2007). *Knowledge, higher education, and the new managerialism: The changing management of UK universities*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ferlie, E., Musselin, C., & Andresani, G. (2008). The steering of higher education systems: A public management perspective. *Higher Education*, 56, 325–348.
- Geiger, R. L. (2004). *Knowledge and money: American research universities and the paradox of the marketplace*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
- Gornitzka, A., Kogan, M., & Amaral, A. (Eds.). (2005). *Reform and change in higher education: Analysing policy implementation*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Hall, P. (Ed.). (1989). *The political power of economic ideas: Keynesianism across nations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Henkel, M. (2000). *Academic identities. Policy change in higher education*. London/Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Hood, C. (1991). A public management for all seasons? *Public Administration*, 69(1), 3–19.
- Kehm, B., & Stensaker, B. (Eds.). (2009). *University rankings, diversity, and the new landscape of higher education*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Krücken, G., & Meier, J. (2006). Turning the university into an organizational actor. In G. S. Drori, J. W. Meyer, & H. Hwang (Eds.), *Globalization and organization: World society and organizational change* (pp. 241–257). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Le Galès, P., & Scott, A. (2010). A British bureaucratic revolution? Autonomy without control or “Freer actors more rules”. *English Annual selection of the Revue Française de Sociologie*, 51(1), 119–146.
- Leisyte, L. (2011). Research commercialization policies and their implementation in the Netherlands and in the US. *Science and Public Policy*, 38(6), 437–448.
- Majone, G., & Wildavsky, A. (1984). Implementation as evolution. In J. L. Pressman & A. Wildavsky (Eds.), *Implementation* (3rd ed., pp. 163–180). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Meek, V. L., Goedegebuure, L., Santiago, R., & Carvalho, T. (Eds.). (2010). *The changing dynamics of higher education middle management*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Middlehurst, R., & Teixeira, P. (2012). Governance within the EHEA: Dynamic trends, common challenges, and national particularities. In P. Scott, A. Curaj, L. Vlasceanu, & L. Wilson (Eds.), *European higher education at the crossroads: Between the Bologna process and national reforms* (Vol. 2, pp. 527–551). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Muller, P., & Jobert, B. (1987). *L'état en action. Politiques publiques et corporatismes*. Paris: PUF.
- Musselin, C. (2005). Change and continuity in higher education governance? Lessons drawn from twenty years of national reforms in European countries. In I. Bleiklie & M. Henkel (Eds.), *Governing knowledge. A study of continuity and change in higher education; a festschrift in honour of Maurice Kogan* (pp. 65–80). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Musselin, C. (2006). Are universities specific organizations? In G. Krücken, A. Kosmützky, & M. Torca (Eds.), *Towards a multiversity? Universities between global trends and national traditions* (pp. 63–84). Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.
- Neave, G. (2009). Institutional Autonomy 2010–2020. A tale of Elan – Two steps back to make one very large leap forward. In B. Kehm, J. Huisman, & B. Stensaker (Eds.), *Mapping the future of the European higher education area: Perspectives on a moving target* (pp. 3–22). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Neave, G., & Van Vught, F. (Eds.). (1991). *Prometheus bound: The changing relationship between government and higher education in Western Europe*. London: Pergamon Press.
- Newman, F., Couturier, L., & Scurry, J. (2004). *The future of higher education – Rhetoric, reality, and the risks of the market*. Baltimore: Jossey-Bass.
- Palfreyman, D., & Tapper, T. (Eds.). (2009). *Structuring mass higher education – The role of elite institutions*. London/New York: Routledge.

- Paradeise, C., Reale, E., Bleiklie, I., & Ferlie, E. (2009). *University governance. Western European comparative perspectives*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Pollitt, C. (1990). *Managerialism and the public services: The Anglo-American experience*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Pollitt, C., & Bourckaert, G. (2011). *Public management reform: A comparative analysis* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Regini, M. (2011). *European universities and the challenge of the market: A comparative analysis*. Aldershot: Edward Elgar.
- Sabatier, P. (1988). An advocacy coalition framework of policy change and the role of policy-oriented learning therein. *Policy Sciences*, 21(2–3), 129–168.
- Schneider, A. L., & Ingram, H. (1997). *Policy design for democracy*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.
- Schneider, A. L., & Sidney, M. (2009). What is next for policy design and social construction theory? *The Policy Studies Journal*, 37(1), 103–119.
- Schwarz, S., & Westerheijden, D. F. (Eds.). (2004). *Accreditation and evaluation in the European higher education area*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Scott, P. (1995). *The meanings of mass higher education*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Shattock, M. (2006). *Managing good governance in higher education*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Shattock, M. (Ed.). (2008). *Entrepreneurialism in universities and the knowledge economy: Diversification and organizational change in European higher education*. London: Open University Press.
- Slaughter, S., & Leslie, L. (1997). *Academic capitalism – Politics, policies, and the entrepreneurial university*. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press.
- Slaughter, S., & Rhoades, G. (2004). *Academic capitalism and the new economy: Markets, state, and higher education*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Stensaker, B., & Harvey, L. (Eds.). (2011). *Accountability in higher education: Global perspectives on trust and power*. London: Routledge.
- Stone, D. (1988). *Policy paradox. The art of political decision making*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Taylor, J., Ferreira, J. B., Machado, M. L., & Santiago, R. (2008). *Non-university higher education in Europe*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Teixeira, P., & Dill, D. (2011). *Public vices, private interests? Assessing the effects of marketization in higher education*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Teixeira, P., Dill, D., Jongbloed, B., & Amaral, A. (Eds.). (2004). *Markets in higher education: Reality or rhetoric?* Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic.
- Trow, M. (2010). *Twentieth-century higher education – Elite to mass to universal*. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press.
- Weisbrod, B., Pallou, J., & Asch, E. (2008). *Mission and money – Understanding the university*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Westerheijden, D., Stensaker, B., & Rosa, M. J. (Eds.). (2007). *Quality assurance in higher education – Trends in regulation, translation and transformation*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Whitley, R. (2008). Universities as strategic actors: Limitations and variations. In L. Engwall & D. Weaire (Eds.), *The university in the market* (pp. 23–37). London: Portland Press.