

# Structural Reform in European Higher Education: An Introduction

*Harry de Boer, Jon File, Jeroen Huisman, Marco Seeber,  
Martina Vukasovic and Don F. Westerheijden*

## SYSTEM-LEVEL CHANGE IN EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION

In higher education, we live in an age of reform. All over Europe, state authorities frequently adapt their policies and introduce new ones to encourage public higher education institutions to deliver high-quality services in an effective and efficient way. They take forceful initiatives and introduce

---

H. de Boer (✉) · J. File · D.F. Westerheijden  
Center for Hr Education Policy Studies, University of Twente, Enschede,  
The Netherlands  
e-mail: h.f.deboer@utwente.nl; j.m.file@utwente.nl;  
d.f.westerheijden@utwente.nl

J. Huisman · M. Seeber · M. Vukasovic  
Centre for Hr Education Governance Ghent, Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium  
e-mail: jeroen.huisman@ugent.be; marco.seeber@ugent.be;  
martina.vukasovic@ugent.be

© The Author(s) 2017

H. de Boer et al., *Policy Analysis of Structural Reforms in Higher Education*, Palgrave Studies in Global Higher Education,  
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-42237-4\_1

reforms to change the higher education landscape. Many such reforms are driven by the belief that higher education institutions play a pivotal role in the knowledge economy (e.g. European Commission, 2003; Kogan et al., 2006; Kogan and Hanney, 2000; Marginson, 2010; Maassen and Stensaker, 2011; Shattock, 2005). Studies on the effectiveness of reform, however, show that goal achievement as the result of the reform initiatives is not to be taken for granted. Therefore, with the intention to contribute to the body of knowledge on 'how reform policies work', in this book we will analyse a number of reforms that have been induced by governments to restructure their higher education systems.

In higher education studies, understanding reform is one of the major challenges. Apart from understanding and explaining reform itself, the unique nature of higher education and its institutions contributes to this challenge (Fairweather and Blalock, 2015). The uniqueness of higher education relates among other things to its multifaceted purpose, its fragmented structure in domains (education, research, innovation, R&D) and disciplines as well as the typical features of higher education institutions as professional organisations (e.g. Clark, 1983; Becher, 1994; van Vught, 1995; Musselin, 2005). The characteristics of the objects governments want to steer, control and change – the higher education institutions – and the nature of the goods and services they deliver influence the course of reform action and its successfulness (van Vught and de Boer, 2015).

System-level reforms in higher education, often initiated and supported by governments, are often part and parcel of general public sector reforms, which in the European context are related to the changing role of the state (e.g. Neave, 1998, 2012) and changes in views on public sector governance and steering, inspired by either New Public Management (NPM) or post-NPM reform waves (Christensen and Lægreid, 2011; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011; Paradeise et al., 2009). When developing higher education policies, governments often take inspiration from experiences abroad, using ideas, ideologies and concepts ('soft' transfer) as well as instruments and programmes ('hard transfer') used in other countries for national policy reforms (Benson and Jordan, 2011). While this may lead to convergence of higher education policies with regard to goals and objectives (Dobbins and Knill, 2009; Heinze and Knill, 2008; Kim, 2009; Musselin, 2005), persistent diversity with regard to implementation and outcomes remains (EACEA, 2012; Vaira, 2004; Westerheijden et al., 2010; Witte, 2006). Despite the common global pressures (Frank and Meyer, 2007; Krücken and Droni, 2009), domestic actors of necessity translate these pressures into the domestic context

(Bleiklie and Michelsen, 2013). Reforms are affected by distinct national, path-dependent flavours (Dobbins and Knill, 2009; Gornitzka and Maassen, 2011; Musselin, 2009; Witte, 2006). Even if 'exactly' the same policy or instrument were transferred, it might have a different impact due to the different national or local contexts into which it gets inserted (de Boer, 2003).

In summary then, the point of departure in this book, which addresses 11 reform processes in higher education, is that these reforms are both driven and supported by the central governments, of which many face similar external pressures for change and are exposed to similar policy ideas, models and templates. Policymakers, however, need to take into account the uniqueness of the sector and its institutions as well as domestic specificities and existing policies. Evidently, system-level reform processes are complex due to multitudes of actors, interests, overlapping and potentially conflicting policy initiatives, path dependencies and 'local' situations. This certainly holds true for one specific type of reform in higher education: structural reforms.

### STRUCTURAL REFORMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

In this book, we define structural reforms as *government-initiated or supported reforms aimed at affecting a significant part of the higher education system and its structure*. In this definition, structure refers to the number of elements in the system (i.e. higher education institutions) and their relative positions and functions. Structural reforms aim to change the higher education landscape. Incremental changes unfolding over longer periods of time and reforms targeting other aspects of higher education (e.g. student access and selection, the academic profession, funding or internal governance of higher education institutions) are not part of this book. Such a structural reform definition is of course ambiguous and debatable. To further clarify its meaning, we distinguish three types of structural reforms:

1. Structural reforms aiming at *horizontal differentiation*, that is, transformations of the functions of different types of higher education institutions. These reforms directed towards establishing horizontal (or functional) differentiation within a given higher education system include reforms focusing on the strengthening or weakening of binary divides (or more generally a division of labour between different types of institutions or different institutions of a particular type) and profiling policies driven by functionalistic considerations (Bleiklie, 2003; Taylor et al., 2008; Teichler, 1988).

2. Structural reforms aiming at *vertical differentiation*, that is, increasing or decreasing performance differences between higher education institutions. Through vertical differentiation reforms, governments aim to bring about quality or prestige differences between higher education institutions. 'Excellence initiatives' fit this category (Marginson and van der Wende, 2007; Salmi, 2009; Cremonini et al., 2014).
3. Structural reforms aiming at affecting *interrelationships* between higher education institutions. This third type of landscape reforms relate to the *interrelations* between higher education institutions and revolve around supporting cooperation, forming alliances and establishing mergers. The latter have been popular over the last decades and referred to as 'merger mania' (e.g. Pruvot et al., 2015; Pinheiro et al., 2015).

This threefold distinction further specifies structural reforms but does not provide a watertight typology. A structural reform could focus on more than one dimension. For instance, if a merger process intends to affect the power balance between the subsector in which the merger takes place and other subsectors, then this merger process does not only fit the interrelationship type, but the system's vertical differentiation as well. The Aalto University merger in Finland serves as an example. To complicate matters, there may be differences between policy objectives and policy outcomes. A structural reform may aim to establish horizontal differentiation, but may affect interrelationships as a side effect.

The number of structural reforms in Europe is impressive – we live indeed in an age of reform. Based on our definition of structural reform, since the 1990s in Europe alone over 30 structural reforms have been implemented. Moreover, in some countries more than one structural reform took place since 1990. In the next section, we will briefly present the 11 structural reform processes that are described and analysed in this book.

## STRUCTURAL REFORMS IN 11 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

### *Horizontal Differentiation Reform Processes*

In 1994, the Austrian government established a new sector of universities of applied sciences (Fachhochschulen), in an attempt to regionalise higher education. The chapter by Pausits presents this case of horizontal

differentiation reform as one aimed at the diversification and expansion of vocational education, the development of programmes geared towards the needs of the labour market, the promotion of permeability of the educational system and flexibility of graduate career paths. The key policy instruments were a new 'Fachhochschulen' act (FHStG) and funding mechanisms. Important stakeholders were involved in the design of the policy, and there was considerable scope for local and regional initiatives, also involving private partner, in the implementation phase.

As presented in the chapter by Brankovic and Vukasovic, the structural reform in Croatia focuses on the establishment of non-university higher education institutions since the mid-1990s, and the government's attempts to gradually make these institutions the sole providers of professional study programmes, which implies gradually abolishing such programmes in universities. These reforms aimed at ensuring a contribution of higher education to the regionally balanced development of Croatia as a knowledge society by increasing the quality, efficiency and accessibility of higher education. The reform comprised changes in system-level legislation and the introduction of procedures and criteria for accreditation of institutions and programmes, with no changes in the funding mechanisms.

At the turn of the millennium, in the Netherlands the establishment and institutionalisation of a research function as the second core task of the Dutch universities of applied sciences (hogescholen) was introduced to contribute to the strengthening of the innovative capacity of the Netherlands by the optimal use of the sector in delivering highly skilled modern graduates and services needed by regional industry and the public sector. For these purposes, the research base of hogescholen had to be strengthened. Several policy instruments have been introduced to strengthen this research function by means of the introduction of new staff positions, grants for practice-oriented research and grants for the establishment of centres of expertise. In the Dutch case study, De Boer describes and analyses what has happened in the last 15 years since the first steps were taken to strengthen the research function of Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) in the Netherlands and evaluates to what extent it has obtained a structural and indispensable position in Dutch higher education. Do the UAS really have a stronger research orientation than they used to have?

The structural reform project in Norway, analysed by Elken and Frølich, was part of the broader 'Quality Reform', and pertained to the

profiling and changing status of higher education institutions (horizontal differentiation). The main overall goal of the reform was to increase efficiency and quality. At the practical level, this was translated into giving higher education institutions more autonomy and allowing them to profile and position themselves more strategically. One of the options offered to university colleges was to 'upgrade' to university status. The key policy instrument for the structural changes, starting in 2000, was regulation, with funding provided for the establishment of the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) and other aspects of the reform.

The reform process in Poland, analysed by Antonowicz, Kwiek and Westerheijden, concerned assuring and strengthening of the quality of (private) higher education. The Polish case explains why and how the market failed to regulate the provision of higher education. A few attempts to change the situation failed, until the government set up an accreditation agency to remediate the 'mushrooming' of the private sector after 1989 and low-quality provision in general. The accreditation agency became operational in 2002.

#### *Vertical Differentiation Structural Reform Processes*

Aiming to strengthen the strategic capacity of Danish universities – strengthening research priority setting and creating distinctive research profiles – by offering competitive funding, the Danish government launched the 5-year Investment Capital for University Research (UNIK) initiative (2009–2013), as part of the comprehensive Globalisation Strategy of 2007. Universities could submit proposals for long-term, large-scale research, which were assessed by an independent international expert panel. Out of 28 proposals, 4 have been awarded for funding. In the Danish case study, Aagaard and de Boer evaluate the UNIK initiative and argue that paradoxically it can be seen both as a success and a failure.

Concerning the French case, Boudard and Westerheijden point out that after the shock of not seeing French universities prominently in the first global rankings, two strands of policies were deployed since around 2006 aiming to improve the competitiveness of French higher education and research at a global scale, large investments in facilities and in world-class research, and merger operations. In both strands, two 'generations' of policy initiatives were taken, the second ones, with increased funding to respond to the 2008 crisis, strengthening and continuing the first ones up to the present. Investments to increase vertical differentiation were

concentrated in a few, already strong universities (or strengthened through mergers). The mergers also started selectively. Higher education institutions competed voluntarily for funding.

The Spanish case study, by Seeber, focuses on the International Campus of Excellence initiative, in the period 2008–2014, which aimed to reduce the fragmentation of the higher education system, to open up universities to society, and to increase their specialisation and excellence. Universities had to develop strategic partnerships and aggregations among them and with other private and public institutions around a common project and campus. During the implementation phase, vertical differentiation (excellence) has blurred towards a more comprehensive approach by also including small and peripheral regions and universities.

#### *Institutional Relationships as Structural Reforms*

To maintain Finland's prominent position in global economic competition, mergers to form stronger units, with one 'world-class university', were envisaged, as described by Nokkala and Välimaa. Three groups of universities responded to the Ministry's invitation to merge, including the desired special case in the capital. Regulation was changed to grant additional programme funding (including private funding tax cuts). The three mergers took place (2007–2010) in the shadow of a large University Act reform increasing autonomy of higher education institutions.

The Flemish case study, by Huisman and Mampaey, analyses the introduction of associations – formal collaborations between one university and at least one university college – in Flemish higher education. As such, the reform, starting in 2003, was a case of (changing the) interrelationships between the higher education institutions. The overall aim was to make the higher education system 'Bologna proof', which entailed that the associations were to transform the two-cycle university college programmes into full master programmes equivalent to those of the universities. The key policy instruments were regulation (2003 Decree) and (some) funding.

At the turn of the millennium, the small Welsh institutions were too vulnerable in a UK system characterised by increasing marketisation. The reduction of the overall number of universities in Wales from 13 to 8 through mergers in the period 2002–2014 is part of efforts to increase the overall competitiveness of Welsh higher education in the wider UK higher education system. Since the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) launched the merger policy in 2002 with direct financial

support of the Welsh Government, a fund was established to meet the one-off costs which institutions would incur in merging, bringing the support systems together and rationalising the real estate. In the chapter on mergers in Wales, Bennenworth and Zeeman analyse this structural to see if it was successful. Has the overall competitiveness and attractiveness of Welsh higher education in the context of the wider UK system been improved?

#### A PUBLIC POLICY ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK FOR STUDYING STRUCTURAL REFORMS

The structural reforms addressed in this book will be studied from a public policy perspective, aiming to understand how the machinery of interacting actors in a public domain works in producing public actions and outcomes (John, 1998). From the many definitions of what a public policy is, we see a public policy as 'a set of interrelated decisions taken by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them' (Jenkins, 1978). It concerns a purposive course of action in response to a perceived problem of a constituency, formulated through a specific political process. A public policy is often the result of multiple decisions taken by multiple decision-makers, often scattered throughout complex government organisations (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995, p. 6).

Policy analysts should address the following questions: What is the nature of the problem? Which courses of action have been chosen to solve the problem? What are the outcomes of choosing a particular course of action? and Does achieving the outcomes contribute to solving the problem? (Dunn 2004, p. 3). Thus, policy analysts should look into (1) problem structuring (definition – information about the problem to solve), (2) monitoring (description – information about the observed outcomes of policies), (3) evaluation (appraisal – information about the value of expected and observed outcomes) and (4) recommendation (prescription – information about the preferred policies).

Insights from sociology, organisational studies, management sciences, political science, economics and psychology as well as sector-specific knowledge can be used for analysing public policies (John, 1998). Over the last 50 years, this multidisciplinary perspective has led to the development and promotion of a substantial number of policy models (e.g. Easton, 1965; Howlett and Ramesh, 1995; John, 1998; Kingdon, 1984; Sabatier, 1988,

1991; Teisman, 2000; Wu and Knoke, 2013). John (1998) categorises the plethora of theories and models into five: institutional approaches, group and network approaches, socio-economic approaches, rational choice theory and ideational approaches.

As we do not want to force a single approach onto our 11 case analyses by independent researchers, we employ a neutral, procedural approach to structure the case studies in the following chapters. Therefore, in this book, we will take the policy stage model as our point of departure to structure the analysis of structural reforms. Public policies are complex, comprehensive and dynamic; hence, there is need for ordering and simplification. Although we are well aware that the policy stage model does not fully reflect the complexities of policy processes in reality (e.g. Howlett and Ramesh, 1995; Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1993), it is a helpful heuristic to study policy processes analytically, and to compare the goals, processes and outcomes of the different case studies. This approach implies that policy processes can be divided into a number of interrelated stages: agenda setting and problem definition, policy preparation and design, policy formulation and decision, policy implementation, and policy evaluation and feedback. John (1998, p. 185) underlines this interrelatedness when he argues, 'just as policy proposals are part of the soup, so too are implementation strategies. (...) The activities are completely intertwined. The only difference is that some actors are exclusive to agenda-setting (...) and others are just policy implementors (...)'.<sup>1</sup>

The presumption that each policy stage has its own logic, and that different actors can be involved in different stages (or the same actors but in different roles) paves the way to introduce elements of some of the other policy analysis models into the stage model. Examples are Kingdon's policy streams model, Baumgartner et al.'s (2014) punctuated equilibrium model and John's (1998) evolutionary model of public policy – three models which explain how various actors interact with and respond to each other to produce policy action in the different stages.

In fact, we argue that each stage of the policy process can be regarded as an action arena, framed by exogenous factors and institutional arrangements (cf. Ostrom's actor-centred institutional analysis and development framework; Ostrom, 2005), with its own logics and participants ('actor constellation', Scharpf, 1997). The outcomes of the interrelated policy arenas are the result of at least three actor-related aspects: (1) the preferences of an actor (goals, ideas, beliefs and interests), (2) the actor's capabilities (action potential, resources available) and (3) the interaction of actors, partially set by

institutional rules and context-specific circumstances. The result of the interaction among the actors determines the courses of action taken in each arena (John, 1998; McConnell, 2010).

The underlying analytical framework for this book is presented in the next, simplified figure (Fig. 1; especially the number of feedback arrows has been reduced). The various action arenas will be addressed below.

#### *Agenda Setting and Policy Design*

In every modern society, there are hundreds of issues that are potentially a matter of government concern, but a limited number actually appear on the policy agenda. Ideas and issues that do not reach the policy agenda will not cause any policy action. Research on agenda setting tells us that this initial stage is a highly competitive game, and because it frames the next stages of the policy process, it is a very important stage (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962, 1970; Cobb et al., (1976). Quite often, reforms are prompted by signals in society, for example, from salient stakeholders or policy entrepreneurs (Kingdon, 1984), that there is a 'problem' with the current system. Thus, the first policy questions addressed are: What is the problem? Who addresses the problem? The description and analysis of this policy arena includes an exploration of the rationale for the structural reform and the extent to which the rationale and problem analysis are supported by different stakeholders.

Once an issue is on the agenda, policymakers need to decide on a course of action. Various alternatives that might solve the issue need to be explored and finally a decision on a set of actions (a policy) has to be determined. Governing means using policy instruments; without them public policies would be no more than abstract ideals or fantasies (Hood and Margetts, 2007). Instruments concern action to shape or change behaviour to pursue the set policy objectives. As regards structural reforms in higher education, in choosing how to achieve its goals, governments have many instruments to select from. Mergers for example can be imposed on the higher education sector by legislation, but the government can also decide to encourage mergers through financial incentives. Or it may try to settle agreements with some parties, or use a dialogue-based approach to convince the higher education sector that mergers are desirable.

Typologies of policy instruments abound (e.g. Hood, 2007; Hood and Margetts, 2007; Howlett, 2004, 2009; van Vught and de Boer, 2015; Voss, 2007). In this book, we take the point of view that characteristics of instruments matter and therefore opt for using a generic approach.

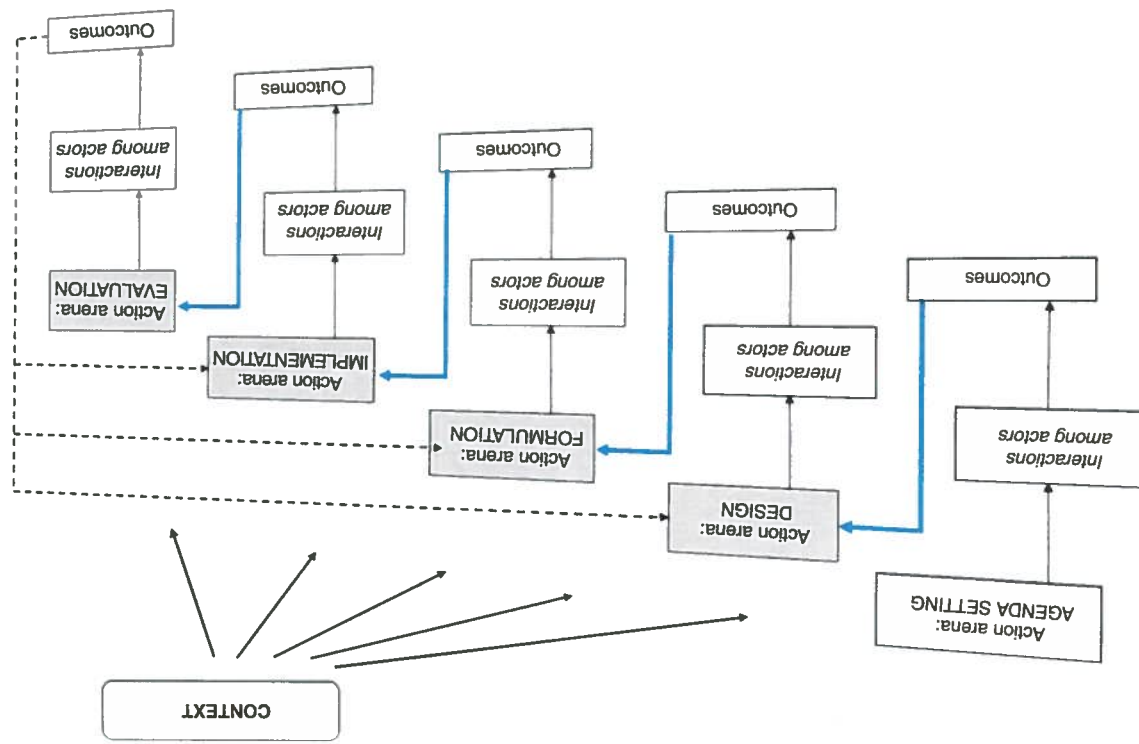


Fig. 1 Analytical framework of structural reforms

A well-known typology within the generic approach is Veding's distinction between 'carrots', 'sticks' and 'sermons' (Bemelmans-Vidéc et al., 1998). Elmore (1987) sees government instruments as variants of four intervention strategies – namely, comprising mandates, inducements, capacity-building and system-changing. Schneider and Ingram (1990, 1997) distinguish comprising authority tools, incentive tools, capacity tools, symbolic tools and learning tools.

In this book, we will stay close to (an adapted version of) the probably most well-known typology: Hood's NATO scheme, based on the resources a government has: 'nodality', 'authority', 'treasure' and 'organisation' (see also Hood, 1983; Hood and Margetts, 2007; Howlett, 2000, 2009; van Vught and de Boer, 2015). In general terms, nodality refers to the use of information and communication. It concerns advice and training to get messages across, trying to affect the cognitive base of the recipients and as the result of that changing their behaviours. Authority tools are intended to command and to forbid, to commend and to permit. Certificates, licences, contracts, quotas, permits and code of conducts are examples of authority instruments. Treasure enables governments to buy favours. It can exchange money for a good or service, or it can transfer payments without requiring any *quid pro quo*. Grants, loans, bounties and tax expenditures are examples of treasury instruments. Finally, organisation tools, sometimes referred as 'architecture', refer to the government's capacity to establish (institutional) structures such as bureaucracies, agencies, networks or partnerships and the like.

The selection of tools is a delicate process, since tools are not neutral. Aspects that deserve attention in this stage are political feasibility (it is as much a political as a technical process), resource availability and the behavioural assumptions about the targeted populations. 'The choice of the policy tool is a function of the assumed behaviour of the policy target' (Birkland, 2001, p. 176).

In the agenda-setting and policy design arena, the power of the views and ideas of the involved actors, their resources and their position in policy subsystems determine the outcomes. Who are these key actors, how do they interact and what is the effect of this interaction on policy design, policy instruments and formulation? (Jordan and Schubert, 1992). With respect to these questions, five dimensions must be taken into account (Forester, 1984): the number of actors in the decision-making (single versus multiple), the organisational setting (closed versus open), the definition of the problem (well-defined versus vague), type of available information (perfect versus contested) and the time available (infinite versus manipulated).

### *Policy Implementation*

How are the selected means (policy instruments) applied to achieve the formulated goals of a structural reform? Over the years, public policy and higher education implementation studies have convincingly demonstrated that a policy is not necessarily implemented 'according to plan'. During implementation, reform plans can take their own course. Moreover, policies may deliberately not be specific on their implementation; acknowledging implementers may be in the best position to take decisions during the implementation.

In the policy implementation literature, three perspectives prevail: top-down, bottom-up and synthesis perspectives. The top-down approach is based on a set of assumptions such as policies having clearly defined goals and instruments and policymakers having a good knowledge of the capacity and commitment of the implementers (Birkland, 2001). The focus is on creating structures and controls to acquire compliance with the goals set at the top. Early implementation studies in the 1970s revealed that these assumptions frequently are not met (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973; Lipsky, 1980). They pointed among other things to the impact implementers (street-level bureaucrats) can have on the actual process and outcome of a reform. Because those that implement the reform always have some discretionary power, they are ultimately decisive for the reform implementation. In general, higher education research suggests that this applies strongly to higher education because of the characteristics of its institutions (e.g. van Vught, 1995).

The assumptions of the bottom-up approaches are in sharp contrast with the top-down assumptions. Goals are considered ambiguous, and compliance can be problematic when values and interests of programme designers and implementers differ (Torenvlied, 1996; John, 1998).

An example of a synthesis approach is Sabatier's (1988) Advocacy Coalition Framework. While starting with a bottom-up approach, Sabatier also incorporates top-down elements in his framework. He explicitly recognises that implementation does not take place in a one-to-one relationship between designers, implementers and targets, but is rather contained within a political (sub)system.

The implementation process and its outcomes are dependent on a large number of factors and conditions such as the availability of time and sufficient resources, the assumptions of the policy itself, its clarity, and credibility, the interests, views, expertise, resources, capacities and

support of the implementers, risk management, ownership, leadership and securing buy-in from those affected (e.g. Hogwood and Gunn, 1984; Goggin et al., 1990; Birkland, 2001).

Higher education studies on policy implementation also point to the distance between the policy plan and those at the shop-floor level that are expected to make the reforms work (e.g. Cerych and Sabatier, 1986; van Vught, 1989; Gornitzka et al., 2007). Higher education institutions are autonomous institutions rather than hierarchically subordinate bureaucrats, and as the result policies may not meet their initial objectives, as a number of studies convincingly show (e.g. Kogan et al. 2006; Kohoutek and Westerheijden, 2014; Westerheijden et al., 2007; Musselin, 2005; Trowler, 2002). In short, the particular nature of higher education institutions, generally known for their fragmented, bottom-heavy decision-making authority and loosely coupled structures, as well as the nature of the goods and services they are supposed to deliver, is likely to affect the implementation of structural policy reform.

Furthermore, these higher education studies indicate that compatibility, relative advantage (profitability), complexity, observability and organisational capacity explain the adoption of a reform (van Vught, 1989; Bartelse, 1999). Compatibility refers to the degree to which the policy 'fits' the existing institutional context. Profitability depends on the advantages of compliance for those affected by the reform; this concerns buy-in and agreement on objectives. It denotes whether those involved think they will reap (sufficient) benefits from the reform. Complexity of reforms denotes the numbers of goals pursued and their interdependence; increasing complexity makes them less likely to succeed as more things can go wrong in implementation (Sanderson, 2000). Observability has to do with the existence of (formal or informal) indicators of the reform. In recent years, much attention has been given to the development of indicators to assess reform success. It could be questioned whether this led to reforms focusing on achieving what is measurable rather than on aiming for what is relevant (Hood, 2006; King et al., 2008). Finally, organisational capacity is a measure of the ability of those affected to change their structure, behaviour and culture to comply with the reform goals and aims.

### *Policy Evaluation*

The reform policy evaluation concerns the assessments of the content, process and particularly the effects of the reform policy. Various criteria

can be used and may relate to the different stages of the policy process. Obviously goal achievement is the key focus of attention in the evaluation process (Fischer, 1995; Patton, 1978; Pawson and Tilly, 1997). Assessing goal achievement however is not without problems (Kraft and Furlong, 2007; Dunn, 2004). First, policy objectives are not always clearly stated, making it difficult to assess their achievement. Second, policymakers may anticipate responses to reform policies, for instance, resistance and scepticism, and therefore adapt their ambitions in advance. Also, goals on paper and the real goals can differ. Rhetoric or consciously under- or overstating the goals complicates the policy analyst's work. Third, structural reforms may have more than one goal, possibly with some degree of conflict among the goals, which complicates judgements on effectiveness. Fourth, various groups of actors may hold different goals, which affect one or more of the policy stages to different extents: Which are then the goals against which the policy should be evaluated?

Also, many other criteria than goal achievement can be part of evaluation (Yeh, 2010; Bryk, 1983; DeGroff and Cargo, 2009; Linder and Peters, 1989; Salamon, 2002; Birkland, 2001; Kraft and Furlong, 2007; Dunn, 2004). We list these criteria in Table 1.

**Table 1** Evaluation criteria in public policy analyses

Goal achievement (effectiveness)	Certainty (administrative capacity and agent compliance)	Equity (fairness or justice in the distribution of benefits, costs and risks among actors)
Administrative intensiveness (administrative costs, operational simplicity, flexibility)	Timeliness (extent to which instruments work quickly)	Social and political acceptability and support
Political risk (nature of support and resistance, public visibility, chances of failure)	Costs (of developing, implementing and monitoring)	Technical feasibility (availability and reliability of technology needed)
Constraints on state activity (difficulty with coerciveness and ideological principles)	Efficiency (outputs related to inputs; goal achievement in relation to costs)	Targeting (precision and selectivity among actors)
Choice and agent autonomy (degree of choice and restrictions offered by the policy)	Accountability (extent to which implementers account for their actions)	Responsiveness (extent to which outcomes satisfy needs and preferences of particular groups)

The aims of the evaluation can also vary. On the one hand, evaluations may be carried out to take stock (summative). On the other hand, they may serve to draw lessons from and to improve the reform process (formative) (van der Knaap, 2004). Through feedback (information on content, process and effects), part of the reform policies can be readjusted, ultimately resulting in a fully effective structural reform (as shown already in Fig. 1). Therefore, a careful analysis of how reform processes are evaluated is needed, particularly because the final outcome of such an evaluation is supposed to feed back into the reform process.

Associated with evaluation of goal achievement is the question how important it is for the policy to be successful whether implementation is 'high fidelity', or whether there is tolerance for 'low-fidelity' implementation (Land and Gordon, 2013). A 'low-fidelity' policy would allow for a large degree of local variation in the ways in which actors might wish to approach the policy and finally achieve specific elements of its goals, and yet achieve the originally intended aims of central policymakers. Low-fidelity policies leave room for adaptation to context and require policymakers to trust shop-floor implementers of policy.

Time is a crucial factor in evaluating content, process and effects of a structural reform. A structural reform means that actors have to learn new rules and abandon old ones. Apart from the fact that based on their interests or capabilities some actors may be unwilling to do so, time is needed for such learning processes. Structural reforms have a time lag – only after a while lasting effects are likely to sink in. It may also take some time for emotions to ebb away and to make a 'fair judgement' possible. Finally, dissatisfaction during or just after the reform may shift to satisfaction when for instance the effects are more positive or less disruptive than initially thought.

#### EFFECTS AND OUTCOMES OF STRUCTURAL REFORMS

Describing, analysing and assessing the effects of structural reforms is far from problem-free. It depends on the yardstick (see the various evaluation criteria), the time frame (short-term (outcomes) versus long-term achievements (impact) or the type of goals (operational, tactical or strategic goals). For a reform to be successful, at least two conditions must be met. First, we have to determine to what extent the reform has been implemented as intended by the actor(s) taken as central to the analysis. Second, we must

investigate to what extent different kinds of goals have been accomplished as a result of the reform. If these conditions are not met, the reform should be regarded as not successful, even when goals are achieved. Goal achievement in such cases could for example result from unforeseen events or changing circumstances. Instead of, or next to, intended effects, unintended or side effects may occur (e.g. Bovens et al., 2001).

There are many reasons why reforms may not be successful. Flaws in design or implementation are among them. Choosing ineffective policy instruments or poor implementation, for whatever reason (see section on policy design and policy implementation), can equally prevent goal achievement. Below we list a number of factors that may thwart structural reforms (Ingram and Mann, 1980; Birkland, 2001). All of these factors may equally apply to the policy instruments.

As structural reforms do not happen overnight, circumstances may change after a reform policy has been designed. What seemed reasonable to assume at the time can become obsolete through later, disruptive events.

Policies are interrelated and structural reforms may benefit from either higher education or public sector policies, or other policies may hinder the implementation of a structural reform. The multiplicity of policies can cause complex dynamics, and incompatible policies may not lead to the intended effects, or not to the extent desired.

A structural reform's success also depends on the level of ambition. Excessive or unrealistic expectations and demands easily contribute to feelings of disappointment, indifference or resistance, preventing reforms from becoming successful. Politicians sometimes promise too much to please their constituency, or stated policy goals are not the actual goals, as policy-makers just want to trigger change (symbolic instead of realistic goals).

For several reasons, the set of assumptions about cause and effect (policy beliefs or policy theory) may appear to be incorrect in practice. These unintended effects may be positive or negative, and need careful attention (but cannot be known in advance) as it may affect the overall judgement about the reform. Finally, stakeholders usually have their own perceptions and thoughts about goals and means (and the relationships between them), depending on their position, resources and beliefs (as we will argue in more detail below), and may react to policies in unexpected ways (Bovens and Hart, 2016).

Although we cannot take such tensions away, the result of the awareness of the ambiguity in goal achievement assessment is that we will present as much as possible a balanced view in which the opinions

of various stakeholders are being heard. Moreover, we will also take into account the context in which the specific structural reforms unfolded.

### STRUCTURAL REFORMS IN CONTEXT

Structural reform processes affect and are affected by the social, cultural, economic and political contexts in which they are embedded. General as well as sector-specific institutional settings, interconnectedness of policy domains and path dependency frame the space in which structural reforms emerge and develop.

This is, on the one hand, an important conceptual and theoretical point. Individual reform projects do not come into a vacuum, but are interacting with the outcomes of prior reform projects as well as the overall governance context. This is in particular important when assessing goal achievement and exploring the antecedents thereof. Here, a distinction between failures of a specific policy – for example, due to inappropriate policy instruments – and more generic governance failures – concerning the overall coordination in a specific sector and the state's capacity to provide effective governance in general – is important (Peters, 2015). In this respect, it is important to focus on (1) the policy content of the reform itself and (2) the institutional arrangements and actor constellations which may affect in a more general way the policy process, in particular implementation (May, 2015). The action arena approach we outlined above allows us to do this, without assuming a priori that institutional arrangements and actor constellations remain the same in all stages of the policy process.

There is also a methodological aspect to this. The 11 cases are diverse in terms of general context characteristics such as population size, global competitiveness, quality of governance and economic growth, as well as in terms of higher education context characteristics, including higher education sector structure, student enrolments, tertiary education attainment and higher education expenditure.

The 11 European higher education systems in this volume developed through different histories, traditions and backgrounds. More than half of the systems have a Humboldtian legacy in terms of widely held views on higher education. One system has an Anglo-Saxon tradition (Wales) and two have a Napoleonic history (France and Spain). The steering modes in higher education show both similarities and differences across the selected countries. While many higher education systems traditionally operated

within a state steering governance model (state control, strong hierarchy, centralised decision-making and limited autonomy of institutions), almost all have moved away from this model in the last two decades, although the direction and timing of these changes in steering approaches have been different. Currently, more institutional autonomy, strengthened university self-regulation capacities, greater stakeholder involvement and a state role 'limited' to setting market rules are more common. Only in the UK, an opposite movement seems to have taken place, where the government – although in NPM steering-at-a-distance mode, has taken more of a steering attitude to the higher education system since around 1980.

Unforeseen events such as an economic, social or political crisis can evoke or block change. Major events such as the global financial crisis or a radical political change in a country while the structural reform is being designed or implemented may affect the outcome. Also, 'radical' reforms in other parts of the higher education sector or adjoining domains may leave their imprint on the structural reforms. The Bologna process could serve as such an example: the focus was largely on degree reforms, but many other impacts on national events at the system level have been noted (Westerheijden et al., 2010).

Each country study presented in this book starts with a short description of the background and context of the structural reform. Apart from this contextualisation, in each case study, it has been investigated if there have been external or disruptive events that have affected the reform process or its outcomes.

### BRIEF NOTE ON THE METHODOLOGY OF THE COUNTRY STUDIES

Case study is the research design of choice whenever the linkages between phenomena are too complex for surveys or experimental set-ups (Yin 2014). Structural reform policies are made up of such complex interdependencies. Accordingly, this volume follows the logic of comparative case studies. For the cases to be as comparable as possible, we made the case study structure as similar as possible, allowing for 'lateral reading' to analyse whether and how particular action arenas are related to their counterparts. 'Lateral reading' is what we will do in the final chapter of this volume.

In this first chapter, we have detailed the conceptual frameworks that provide the 'lenses' through which we look at the 11 structural reforms without constraining the analyses into a single theoretical straitjacket. In each country study, we wanted to reconstruct the steps taken in the policy processes: from initial plans and decisions detailing general aims, through

the political processes needed to gain sufficient support, put proposals on public agendas, and up to the main decision(s) defining the policy. Furthermore, we wanted to reconstruct the implementation process and find out the outcomes and impacts of the policy as it had been implemented. This implies we needed not only to look at the main policy documents, but also to gain insight into various stakeholders' views on the process elements and how goals as well as instruments chosen were influenced by various points of views. Moreover, to gain insight into the sometimes only partly explicit contexts and goals, and especially to gain independent assessments of outcomes and impacts, we resorted to existing evaluation studies or evaluation reports wherever possible. In other words, our main research methods were (policy) document analysis and expert interviews, complemented with secondary use of existing academic or policy-related evaluation studies.

The basis of our studies on structural reforms was a systematic, critical summary of existing documents, which range from policy papers and legislation to descriptive and evaluative studies. These documents formed a robust starting point, for they offer primary written data. Descriptive and evaluative studies were weighed according to the strengths of the evidence provided: in-depth thick and analytical descriptions by knowledgeable independent observers lead to better information and stronger evidence, respectively, than personal reflections and unstructured single-case studies. Studies by independent researchers provide more trustworthy evidence than studies by parties in the policy process. Our pre-structuring of the case studies intended to avoid researchers' subjectivity in reading primary and secondary sources.

Written materials, however, do not suffice to describe situations before and after the reform, to inform about the actors' points of view and about their interactions (i.e. the actual policy process). Also to gain different actors' views on the policies and goal attainment, expert interviews were needed. The choice of experts depended on the availability of trustworthiness and completeness of evaluation studies in each case. The general rule we used is that different points of view must be sought in the multiactor and multilevel arenas of higher education systems. Semi-structured approaches were used to answer the research questions emanating from the conceptual frameworks while leaving room for additional fact-finding and fine-tuning to the local and individual situations. By means of triangulation of interview results against other interviewees' points of view and, where possible, against written sources, we minimised the risks attached to the limitations of expert interviews (Berry 2002; Westerheijden 1987).

A further consequence of this research methodology was that we could work with colleagues, who know the local languages in each of the 11 cases, who could gain access to the experts to be interviewed and who had research-based insight to evaluate the literature. We feel privileged that we could bring together the set of researchers who fulfilled all these requirements and who were willing to make the analyses collected in this volume.

## REFERENCES

- Bachrach, P., & Baratz, M. S. (1962). Two faces of power. *American Political Science Review*, 56(04), 947-952.
- Bachrach, P., & Baratz, M. S. (1970). *Power and poverty: Theory and practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bartelse, J. (1999). *Concentrating the minds. The institutionalisation of the graduate school innovation in Dutch and German higher education*. Utrecht: Lemma.
- Baumgartner, F. R., Jones, B. D., & Mortensen, P. B. (2014). Punctuated equilibrium theory: Explaining stability and change in public policymaking. In P. A. Sabatier & C. M. Weible (Eds.), *Theories of the policy process*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press (3rd edition), 59-103.
- Becher, T. (1994). The significance of disciplinary differences. *Studies in Higher Education*, 19(2), 151-161.
- Bemelmans-Vides, M. L., Rist, R. C., & Vedung, E. (Eds.). (1998). *Carrots, sticks and sermons: Policy instruments and their evaluation*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.
- Benson, D., & Jordan, A. (2011). What have we learned from policy transfer research? Dolowitz and Marsh revisited. *Political Studies Review*, 9(3), 366-378.
- Berry, J. M. (2002). Validity and reliability issues in elite interviewing. *Political Science and Politics*, 35(4), 679-682.
- Birkland, T. A. (2001). *An introduction to the policy process. Theories, concepts, and models of public policy making*. Armonk: M.E. Sharpe.
- Bleiklie, I. (2003). Hierarchy and specialisation: On the institutional integration of higher education systems. *European Journal of Education*, 38(4), 341-355.
- Bleiklie, I., & Michelsen, S. (2013). Comparing HE policies in Europe. *Higher Education*, 65(1), 113-133.
- Bovens, M., Hart, P. t., & Peters, B. G. (2001). *Success and failure in public governance. A comparative analysis*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Bovens, M., & Hart, P. t. (2016). Revisiting the study of policy failures. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 23(5), 653-666.
- Bryk, A. S. (1983). *Stakeholder-based evaluation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Cerych, L., & Sabatier, P. A. (1986). *Great expectations and mixed performance: The implementation of higher education reforms in Europe*. Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books.

- Christensen, T., & Lægread, P. (2011). Democracy and administrative policy: Contrasting elements of New Public Management (NPM) and post-NPM. *European Political Science Review*, 3(01), 125–146.
- Clark, B. R. (1983). *The higher education system. Academic organization in cross-national perspective*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cobb, R., Ross, J. K., & Ross, M. H. (1976). Agenda building as a comparative political process. *American Political Science Review*, 70(01), 126–138.
- Cremonini, L., Westerheijden, D. F., Benneworth, P., & Dauncey, H. (2014). In the shadow of celebrity? World-Class University policies and public value in higher education. *Higher Education Policy*, 27, 341–361.
- de Boer, H. (2003). Who's afraid of red, yellow and blue? The colourful world of management reforms. In A. Amaral, V. L. Meek, & I. M. Larsen (Eds.), *The higher education managerial revolution?* (pp. 89–108). Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- DeGroff, A., & Cargo, M. (2009). Policy implementation: Implications for evaluation. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 124, 47–60.
- Dobbins, M., & Knill, C. (2009). Higher education policies in central and eastern Europe: Convergence toward a common model? *Governance*, 22(3), 397–430.
- Dunn, W. N. (2004). *Public policy analysis. An introduction* (3rd edn.). Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- EACEA. (2012). *The European higher education area in 2012. Bologna process implementation report*. Brussels: Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency.
- Easton, D. (1965). *A framework for political analysis*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.
- Elmore, R. F. (1987). Instruments and strategy in public policy. *Policy Studies Review*, 7(1), 174–186.
- European Commission. (2003). *Communication on the role of the universities in the Europe of knowledge (58 final)*. Brussels: European Commission.
- Fairweather, J. S., & Blalock, E. (2015). Higher education: The nature of the beast. In Huisman, J., Boer, H. de, Dill, D. D. & Souto-Otero, M. (eds.), *The Palgrave international handbook of higher education policy and governance* (pp. 3–19). Houndmills/Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Fischer, F. (1995). *Evaluating public policy*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall.
- Forester, J. (1984). Bounded rationality and the politics of muddling through. *Public Administration Review*, 44(1), 23–31.
- Frank, D. J., & Meyer, J. W. (2007). University expansion and the knowledge society. *Theory and Society*, 36(4), 287–311.
- Goggin, M. L., Bowman, A. O. M., Lester, J. P., & O'Toole Jr., L. J. (1990). *Implementation theory and practice. Toward a third generation*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Gornitzka, A., Kogan, M., & Amaral, A. (2007). *Reform and change in higher education. Analysing policy implementation*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Gornitzka, A., & Maassen, P. (2011). University governance reforms, global scripts and the “Nordic Model”. Accounting for policy change? In J. Schmidt, K. Amos, J. Schrader, & A. Thiel (Eds.), *Welten der Bildung? Vergleichende Analysen von Bildungspolitik und Bildungssystemen* (pp. 149–177). Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft.
- Heinze, T., & Knill, C. (2008). Analysing the differential impact of the Bologna process: Theoretical considerations on national conditions for international policy convergence. *Higher Education*, 56(4), 493–510.
- Hogwood, B. W., & Gunn, L. A. (1984). *Policy analysis for the real world*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hood, C. (2006). Gaming in the target world: The targets approach to managing British public services. *Public Administration Review*, 66(4), 515–521.
- Hood, C. (2007). Intellectual obsolescence and intellectual makeovers: Reflections on the tools of government after two decades. *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions*, 20(1), 127–144.
- Hood, C. C. (1983). *The tools of government*. London: Macmillan.
- Hood, C. C., & Margetts, H. (2007). *The tools of government in the digital age*. Houndmills Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Howlett, M. (2000). Managing the “hollow state”: Procedural policy instruments and modern governance. *Canadian Public Administration*, 43(4), 412–431.
- Howlett, M. (2004). Beyond good and evil in policy implementation: Instrument mixes, implementation styles, and second generation theories of policy instrument choice. *Policy and Society*, 23(2), 1–17.
- Howlett, M. (2009). Governance modes, policy regimes and operational plans: A multi-level nested model of policy instrument choice and policy design. *Policy Science*, 42, 73–89.
- Howlett, M., & Ramesh, M. (1995). *Studying public policy: Policy cycles and policy subsystems*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- Ingram, H., & Mann, D. (1980). Policy failure. An issue deserving attention. In H. Ingram & D. Mann (Eds.), *Why policies succeed or fail*. Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Jenkins, W. I. (1978). *Policy analysis: A political and organizational perspective*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- John, P. (1998). *Analysing public policy*. London: Routledge.
- Jordan, G., & Schubert, K. (1992). A preliminary ordering of policy network labels. *European Journal of Political Research*, 21(1–2), 7–27.
- Kim, Y. M. (2009). Convergence of tertiary education policies in Europe and implications for the United States of America. *Higher Education in Europe*, 34(1), 65–76.
- King, R., Locke, W., Puncher, M., Richardson, J., & Verbik, L. (2008). *Counting what is measured or measuring what counts? League tables and their impact on higher education institutions in England*. Bristol: Higher Education Funding Council for England.

- Kingdon, J. W. (1984). *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Kogan, M., Bauer, M., Bleiklie, I., & Henkel, M. (2006). *Transforming higher education: A comparative study*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Kogan, M., & Hanney, S. (2000). *Reforming higher education*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Kohoutek, J., & Westerheijden, D. F. (2014). Opening up the black box: Drivers and barriers in institutional implementation of the European standards and guidelines. In H. Eggins (Ed.), *Drivers and barriers to achieving quality in higher education* (pp. 167–175). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2007). *Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives*. Washington, DC: CQ press/Sage.
- Krücken, G., & Droji, G. S. (2009). *World society: The writings of John W. Meyer*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Land, R., & Gordon, G. (2013). Enhancing the future: Context and fidelity. In R. Land & G. Gordon (Eds.), *Enhancing quality in higher education: International perspectives* (pp. 259–274). London: Routledge.
- Linder, S. H., & Peters, B. G. (1989). Instruments of government: Perceptions and contexts. *Journal of Public Policy*, 9(01), 35–58.
- Lipsky, M. (1980). *Street-level bureaucracy. Dilemmas of the individual in public services*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Maassen, P., & Stensaker, B. (2011). The knowledge triangle, European higher education policy logics and policy implications. *Higher Education*, 61(6), 757–769.
- Marginson, S. (2010). Higher education in the global knowledge economy. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2(5), 6962–6980.
- Marginson, S., & van der Wende, M. (2007). To rank or to be ranked: The impact of global rankings in higher education. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 11(3–4), 306–329.
- May, P. J. (2015). Implementation failures revisited: Policy regime perspectives. *Public Policy and Administration*, 30(3–4), 277–299. doi:10.1177/0952076714561505.
- McConnell, A. (2010). *Understanding policy success: Rethinking public policy*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Musselin, C. (2005). Change or continuity in higher education governance? In I. Bleiklie & M. Henkel (Eds.), *Governing knowledge: A study of continuity and change in higher education* (pp. 65–79). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.
- Musselin, C. (2009). The Side Effects of the Bologna process on national institutional settings: The case of France. In A. Amaral, G. Neave, C. Musselin, & P. Maassen (Eds.), *European integration and the governance of higher education and research* (pp. 181–205). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Neave, G. (1998). The evaluative state reconsidered. *European Journal of Education*, 33(3), 265–284.
- Neave, G. (2012). *The evaluative state, institutional autonomy and re-engineering higher education in Western Europe. The prince and his pleasure*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ostrom, E. (2005). *Understanding institutional diversity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Paradise, C., Reale, E., Bleiklie, I., & Ferlie, E. (2009). *University governance: Western European comparative perspectives*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Patton, M. Q. (1978). *Utilization-focused evaluation*. Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Pawson, R., & Tilly, N. (1997). *Realistic evaluation*. London: Sage.
- Peters, B. G. (2015). State failure, governance failure and policy failure: Exploring the linkages. *Public Policy and Administration*, 30(3–4), 261–276.
- Pinheiro, R., Geschwind, L., & Aarvevaara, T. (Eds.). (2015). *Mergers in higher education: The experience from Northern Europe*. Heidelberg/New York/Dordrecht/London: Springer.
- Pollitt, C., & Bouckaert, G. (2011). *Public management reform: A comparative analysis: New public management, governance, and the neo-Weberian state*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pressman, J. L., & Wildavsky, A. (1973). *Implementation: How great expectations in Washington are dashed in Oakland*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Pruvot, E. B., Estermann, T., & Mason, P. (2015). *DEFINE thematic report: University mergers in Europe*. Brussels: European University Association.
- Sabatier, P. A. (1988). An advocacy coalition model of policy change and the role of policy-oriented learning therein. *Policy Sciences*, 21, 129–168.
- Sabatier, P. A. (1991). Toward better theories of the policy process. *Political Science and Politics*, 24(2), 147–156.
- Sabatier, P. A., & Jenkins-Smith, H. C. (1993). *Policy change and learning. An advocacy coalition approach*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Salamon, L. M. (Ed). (2002). *The tools of government: A guide to the new governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Salmi, J. (2009). *The challenge of establishing World-Class Universities*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Sanderson, I. (2000). Evaluation in complex policy systems. *Evaluation*, 6(4), 433–454.
- Scharpf, F. W. (1997). *Games real actors play. Actor-centered institutionalism in policy research*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Schneider, A., & Ingram, H. (1990). Behavioral assumptions of policy tools. *Journal of Politics*, 52(2), 510–530.
- Schneider, A. L., & Ingram, H. M. (1997). *Policy design for democracy*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.
- Shattock, M. (2005). European universities for entrepreneurship: Their role in the Europe of knowledge the theoretical context. *Higher Education Management and Policy*, 17(3), 13.

- Taylor, J. S., Ferreira, J. B., Machado, M. D. L., & Santiago, R. (2008). *Non-university higher education in Europe*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Teichler, U. (1988). *Changing patterns of the higher education system*. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Teisman, G. (2000). Models for research into decision-making processes: On phases, streams and decision-making rounds. *Public Administration*, 78(4), 937–956.
- Torenvlied, R. (1996). Political control of implementation agencies. *Policy Sciences*, 8(1), 25–57.
- Trowler, P. R. (2002). *Higher education policy and institutional change: Intentions and outcomes in turbulent environments*. Buckingham: SRHE and Open University Press.
- Vaira, M. (2004). Globalization and higher education organizational change: A framework for analysis. *Higher Education*, 48(4), 483–510.
- van der Knaap, P. (2004). Theory-based evaluation and learning: Possibilities and challenges. *Evaluation*, 10(1), 16–34.
- van Vught, F., & de Boer, H. (2015). Governance models and policy instruments. In J. Huisman, H. de Boer, D. D. Dill, & M. Souto-Otero (Eds.), *The Palgrave international handbook of higher education policy and governance* (pp. 38–56). Houndmills/Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- van Vught, F. A. (1989). *Governmental strategies and innovation in higher education*. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- van Vught, F. A. (1995). Policy models and policy instruments in higher education. The effects of governmental policy-making on the innovative behaviour of higher education institutions. IHS Political Science Series 26 October 1995.
- Voss, J. P. (2007). *Designs on governance. Development of policy instruments and dynamics in governance*. Enschede: University of Twente.
- Westerheijden, D. F. (1987). The substance of a shadow: A critique of power-measurement methods. *Acta Politica*, XXII(1), 39–59.
- Westerheijden, D. F., Stensaker, B., & Rosa, M. J. (2007). *Quality assurance in higher education: Trends in regulation, translation and transformation*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Westerheijden, D. F., Beerkens, E., Cremonini, L., Huisman, J., Kehm, B., Kovač, A., ... Yagci, Y. (2010). *The first decade of working on the European higher education area. Bologna process independent assessment volume I: Main report*. Enschede: CHEPS.
- Witte, J. (2006). *Change of degrees and degrees of change: Comparing adaptations of European higher education systems in the context of the Bologna process*. Enschede: CHEPS/University of Twente.
- Wu, C.-Y., & Knoke, D. (2013). Policy network models. In E. Araral Jr., S. Fritzen, M. Howlett, M. Ramesh, & X. Wu (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of public policy*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Yeh, S. S. (2010). The Cost effectiveness of 22 approaches for raising student achievement. *Journal of Education Finance*, 36(1), 38–75.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* Los Angeles: Sage.
- Harry de Boer is Senior Research Associate at CHEPS, University of Twente. Within the field of higher education studies, he specialises in government–university relationships, steering models, policy analysis, institutional governance, leadership and management, and strategic planning. In his field of expertise, he participated over the years in many national and international research and research-based consultancy projects and has published many edited books, book chapters, journal articles and reports on the above-mentioned topics. He has been lecturing several higher education and public administration courses at the University of Twente as well as in international programmes. He is on the editorial board of *Higher Education Quarterly*. In 2015, he was one of the editors of and contributors to *The Palgrave International Handbook of Higher Education Policy and Governance*.
- Jon File has been Director of Development and Consultancy at CHEPS at the University of Twente since 1997. He is an expert in higher education system dynamics, planning and policy; university management and planning; and leadership and management development in higher education and has particular interests in these fields in developing and transitional economies. His career at the University of Cape Town, South Africa before joining CHEPS was primarily in university planning and management, having been Academic Secretary of the University from 1987 to 1997. He was also a member of the 13-person National Commission on Higher Education appointed by President Mandela to make proposals for the transformation of higher education in South Africa (1995–1996).
- Jeroen Huisman is Professor of Higher Education at the CHEGG, Department of Sociology, Ghent University, Belgium. He holds a Master's degree in Educational Studies, University of Groningen, the Netherlands (1991) and a PhD in Public Administration of the University of Twente (1995). In 2005, he was appointed professor of Higher Education Management at the University of Bath. In 2013, he took up his current position at Ghent University. His research interests are system and institutional governance. He is editor of the journal *Higher Education Policy*, co-editor of the SRHE/Routledge book series and co-editor of the Emerald series *Theory and Method in Higher Education Research*. He is furthermore member of editorial boards of several higher education journals. He is also member of the Executive Committee of EAIR (European Association for Institutional Research), a European society for linking policy, research and practice in higher education.

**Marco Seeber** is Postdoctoral Researcher at the CHEGG, Department of Sociology, Ghent University, Belgium. He holds a Master's degree in Business Economics from the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy (2003), and an interdisciplinary PhD from the University of Chieti-Pescara, Italy (2009). In 2010, he became postdoc researcher at the Center on Organizational Research at the University of Lugano, Switzerland. In 2013, he became postdoc at Ghent University. His research interests are higher education and research management, organisation and policies.

**Martina Vukasovic** has been a postdoctoral researcher in CHEGG since December 2013. She holds a joint MPhil degree in Higher Education from the universities of Aveiro, Tampere and Oslo (2007) as well as a PhD in Educational Sciences from the University of Oslo (2014). Martina is a member of the Consortium of Higher Education Researchers (CHER); the network of Early Career Higher Education Researchers (ECHER); the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR); Standing Group on Politics of Higher Education, Research and Innovation; the Governing Board of the Centre for Education Policy (CEP) at Belgrade; and the Editorial Board of the *European Journal of Higher Education*. Her main interests are (1) European-level politics and policy dynamics in higher education, in particular concerning stakeholder organizations (interest groups) and (2) interaction between European-, national- and organisational-level processes in higher education, specifically policy coordination and policy convergence.

**Don F. Westerheijden** is Senior Research Associate at CHEPS, University of Twente, where he coordinates research on quality management and is involved in the coordination and supervision of PhD students. He holds a PhD in Public Administration from the University of Twente. Don mostly studies quality assurance and accreditation in higher education in the Netherlands and Europe, its impacts as well as university rankings. Policy evaluation is another area of research interest. Since 1993 he codeveloped the CRE (Conference of European Rectors)/EUA (European University Association) Institutional Evaluation Programme. He led the independent assessment of the Bologna Process in 2009/2010. He was a member of the team that developed U-Multirank, the online, multidimensional worldwide university ranking. He is a member of the editorial board of the journal *Quality in Higher Education* and serves on international boards of quality assurance agencies in Portugal and Hong Kong.