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**Abstract**

This paper discusses the relationship between the themes of quality, management and governance of higher education institutions in Europe. It is based on a comparative analysis of seven national studies (CZ, LV, NL, PL, PT, SK, and UK) derived from 28 institutional case studies of the countries participating in the IBAR ? Identifying barriers in promoting European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance at institutional level project. It concludes that appropriate balanced governance arrangements are needed to cope with and manage tensions in higher education institutions, and may be a necessary requirement to producing favourable outcomes regarding quality improvement and enhancement. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)