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**Abstract**

Higher education systems in Europe are currently undergoing profound transformations. At the macro-level, there is an increase in the number of students enrolled, subjects of study offered, and university missions that have gained legitimacy over time. At the second level changes are evident at the level of university governance. New Public Management reforms have put into question the traditional mode of governance that was based on the interplay of strong state regulation and academic self-governance. Under the current regime, new actors like accreditation and evaluation

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bodies or boards of trustees are emerging. At a third institutional level, profound changes can be observed at the university level itself. The university as an organization is transforming into an organizational actor, i.e. an integrated, goal-oriented, and competitive entity in which management and leadership play an ever more important role. In the following paper empirical evidence for social inclusion, new modes of governance and the organizational actorhood of universities will be presented. Furthermore, I will outline an agenda for comparative research. Although the United States is in all three respects a forerunner of what we are observing in Europe, the label ?Americanization? is misleading. Instead, a global frame of reference as well as national path-dependencies need to be taken into account. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)

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