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**Abstract**

The article analyses how steering and organisation of German and Norwegian universities have developed after both countries with Humboldtian university traditions introduced New Public Management-inspired governance reforms during the first decade of the 21st century. The article outlines different organisation ideals and values involved in university governance. It suggests a perspective that focuses on the ambiguous and gradual nature of change in governance arrangements towards corporate enterprise ideals. It describes governance reform and changes in central government regulation, system characteristics, and organisation and governance of higher education institutions. Despite similar ideological, political and social pressures German universities resisted change for a longer period of time than Norwegian ones. As for all over change towards a corporate enterprise ideal Germany has moved towards hybrid arrangements, whereas Norway has experienced a reconfiguration of state steering. However, long-standing tradition rather than reform capacity

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seems to explain the differences. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)