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Abstract

One of the unintended consequences of the New Public Management (NPM) in universities is often feared to be a division between elite institutions focused on research and large institutions with teaching missions. However, institutional isomorphisms provide counter-incentives. For example, university rankings focus on certain output parameters such as publications, but not on others (e.g., patents). In this study, we apply Gini coefficients to university rankings in order to assess whether universities are becoming more unequal, at the level of both the world and individual nations. Our results do not support the thesis that universities are becoming more unequal. If anything, we predominantly find homogenisation, both at the level of the global comparisons and nationally. In a more restricted dataset (using only publications in the natural and life sciences), we find increasing inequality for those countries, which used NPM during the 1990s, but not during the 2000s. Our findings suggest that increased output steering from the policy side leads to a global conformation to performance standards. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)