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**Abstract**

Governments continuously design and redesign higher education policies, and governmental capacities are the pillars for undertaking these tasks during the formulation stage. This paper considers the assumption that different governmental political and technical capacities shape different spaces for action and thus different types of policy design. The usefulness of this theoretical perspective is tested by comparing the dynamics of the policy designs that have been pursued in higher education in Italy and the Netherlands over the past 25 years.(HRK / Abstract übernommen)

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