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**Abstract**

The paper enquires into the institutional impact of European policies, as embodied by the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). Theoretically, the work departs from the ‘worlds of compliance’ framework in relation to EU law implementation to study EU initiatives under the Open Method of Coordination. Empirically, it presents how ESG are taken up by higher education institutions in Portugal and the Czech Republic. The study finds a substantial misfit between the modes of governance traditionally ascribed to Portugal and the Czech Republic and the identified patterns of ESG translations in those countries. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)