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**Abstract**

Many of the same ideas seem to crop up repeatedly in the higher education governance reform wave in recent decades, with accountability, flexibility, and strategic capacity being a few of the common concepts. Several studies have shown, however, that national higher education systems receive these inputs very differently, leading to dissimilar implementation and interpretations of the same ideas, indicating that national contexts deserve particular attention when investigating the influence and impact of new concepts. The present paper presents results from a study of how central ideas about management and governance of higher education institutions have shaped and reshaped Danish national higher education policy since the 1970s. This study demonstrates the dynamics of how powerful ideas "travel" over time, and adds to our knowledge about how "global" ideas become "local". (HRK / Abstract übernommen)