New Public Management, Network Governance and the University as a Changing Professional Organization

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Introduction

For most authors, the numerous higher education reforms that have been implemented during the last decades in most EU countries (Eurydice 2000 and 2008), are the consequence of the dissemination of New Public Management (NPM) rhetoric and narratives. These reform processes were accelerated by the central role knowledge and innovation were expected to play for economic development in contemporary societies. As a result higher education and research systems progressively reached the top of the governmental agendas at the national, regional and European levels in the mid 1990s. In a time of budgetary restrictions, solutions aiming at increasing the productivity, efficiency and relevance of academic activities have been launched, and progressively implemented in European higher education institutions.

Ferlie et al. (2008) identified five main NPM reforms that have been commonly implemented in Europe. First, market-based reforms have flourished. This first of all concerns reforms aimed at increasing the level of competition among institutions, staff, students and territories. In many cases, increasing competition comes with economic valuation and exchanges of goods and services that previously were not considered to be of economic value, thus leading to the constitution of markets or quasi-markets (Musselin 2010). Second, budgetary constraints have been tightened through reduced funding or by the introduction of new budgetary instruments based on indicators and output rather than on inputs. Third, budgetary reforms

often implied heavier emphasis on performance and explicit performance measurement, assessment and monitoring in research and teaching. Fourth, there is a concentration of funds in the best performing higher education institutions and a broader vertical differentiation among higher education institutions. Finally, institutional governance has become a crucial issue. University leaders are expected to play managerial roles. Executive leadership has been strengthened at the expense of collegial power in deliberative, representative bodies, while the academic community has been transformed into staff and submitted to human resource management.

Nevertheless, if one sticks to a delimited definition of NPM, one will observe that other conceptions influenced higher education reforms over the same period of time (Ferlie et al. 2008). In particular the vertical form of steering inspired by NPM has been challenged or complemented by reforms aiming at developing forms of network governance. First, some policies encouraged the inclusion of stakeholders in academic affairs and thus widened the networks of actors involved in decision-making as well as the introduction of non-academic criteria, principles and preferences in such processes. Second, centralized ways of steering have been challenged by the participation of inter- and supra-national actors in higher education. As a result, most teaching or research projects mobilize a combination of resources from different sources and rely on multiple levels and actors. This has been conceptualized as multi-level governance. As shown in the book edited by Paradeise et al. (2009), in order to understand recent higher education and research reforms in one country, one has to look at the relative influence of NPM and network governance, their interplay and sometimes conflicting influence.

This chapter compares four countries coming from different traditions, of different size, built on national or federal political systems and more or less infused by NPM. It concentrates on how NPM and network governance reforms aim at affecting the academic profession, and on their effects on academic activities, the management of faculty members, and academic power. The first part presents the main reforms in the four countries in a comparative perspective. Their impact on academics is considered in the second part.

Reforms Aiming at Transforming Academic Work and the Academic Profession

This section starts by presenting the four cases in a sequence beginning with the country usually considered an NPM forerunner, the Netherlands, followed by France, Norway and finally Switzerland, the NPM laggard. It ends with a comparison of the four countries' reform histories.

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Netherlands

The Dutch experience of higher education reform can be identified as a mixture of elements of NPM and network governance. The two are not seen as alternatives, but rather as complementary models or narratives. Reform was increasingly inspired by an NPM narrative, while the 'Dutch polder model' of network governance had a role to play, though partly with different parties at the table. At the same time, *Rechtsstaat* principles have been maintained, coupled more closely with stakeholder guidance. Thus the path dependency of the *Rechtsstaat* and neo-corporatist traditions in the Netherlands deflected and constricted a change toward hard NPM (Westerheijden et al. 2009). Since the 1970s, major waves of higher education reform were, however, partly inspired by NPM and most of them had direct or indirect effects on academic work and the academic profession. Three broad policy areas will be emphasized: funding and market oriented reforms, government steering and institutional governance.

Retrenchment, reallocation and reorganization

Until the end of the 1970s coordination of Dutch higher education and research was a mixture of state- and academic self-regulation, a closed system, in which outsiders or society at large, hardly had a voice. From the mid 1970s, belief in strong and detailed top-down regulation weakened, leading to disappointment with 'central steering'. Moreover, problems could no longer be concealed behind a veil of growing budgets. Dutch higher education and research were faced with increasing demands to contribute to the recovery and restructuring of the economy. In the early 1980s the government promulgated a range of unilateral reforms. 'Remedial' or 'corrective' policies, as they euphemistically were called, included cutbacks and dominated the higher education and research scenes. They included 'conditional research funding' to enhance the size, efficiency and quality of research. This can be regarded as the first large-scale market-inspired reform as institutions had to compete for research grants. Further corrective policies were the introduction of a two-tier university degree structure (1981), reallocation of programmes and departments (1981), college mergers (1983), personnel structure reform (1981) and a second reallocation and retrenchment operation (1986). The mid 1980s brought fundamental changes promised in the preceding years, and they had lasting effects on the coordination of the university sector.

Steering from a distance

In 1985 the government introduced the concept of 'steering from a distance', in which firm beliefs in the virtues of detailed regulation, planning and government coordination was replaced by the idea that government's role ought to be confined to setting boundary conditions while leaving higher education institutions room to manoeuvre as they see fit. This may be seen as a shift from a 'regulatory' to a 'facilitatory' state (Neave and Van Vught 1991) inspired by a network governance

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philosophy, but also as a move towards an 'evaluative state' (Neave 1998) inspired by NPM. The new policies consisted of a mixture of:

- reduced direct control of administration and use of financial resources;
- development of semi-structured interventionist policies, where a relatively tight frame exists, within which institutions enjoy freedom to make decisions;
- establishment of a system of positive and negative sanctions based on criteria and procedures whereby goals are partly defined by the government, partly left to academics, institutional policies, or to the market; and
- detailed input control was replaced by checking afterwards whether self-regulation of higher education institutions led to satisfactory outputs. If they lived up to expectations, institutions were given more autonomy.

The new governmental steering philosophy thus opened the door to more pronounced competition. Universities were expected to display more competitive and managerial behaviour including the introduction of full cost thinking in all university affairs. They should establish distinct profiles. Mission statements and strategic planning became common, universities were stimulated to create their own niches, and were 'invited' to intensify their efforts to increase private funding. In sum, the rules of the game, which used to be determined by government and academics, were increasingly affected by a completely different regime, that is, competition and performance and the logic of looking at the bottom line of results.

Control at home

One of the most profound effects of the governance shift has been the increased importance of the university as an organization in system coordination (de Boer et al. 2007) and of hierarchical leadership and management within the universities. Already in the 1980s, the Minister stated that institutional management had to be strengthened if universities were to succeed in a competitive world. Moreover, the introduction of institutional strategic plans justified more active central management. The formal authority distribution within the university, however, did not change substantially. The real tilting of the power balance within universities would not happen until 1997.

The Act 'Modernising University Governance' (*MUB*) introduced the new governing system that concentrated executive and legislative powers. All members of crucial governing bodies – the supervisory body, the central executive board, and the dean – are appointed by the body at the superior level. Appointments replaced elected representatives; the previously powerful departments were abolished. The 1997 Act was characterized by integration, coherence, hierarchy and centralization of powers. This was at odds with traditional academic self-governance, and a further turn towards NPM. The MUB also means enhanced institutional autonomy, since universities have more discretion to design their own structure, within the limits of the government legal framework.

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Since the 1980s, certain financial and staffing matters have been devolved to the universities, 'creating' opportunities for university central management to increase their influence in strategic decision-making and budget allocations. In addition, internal monitoring has increasingly been used as a steering device for university managers. Overall, actors and mechanisms of supervision and management are getting closer and closer to the shop floor level of academic work in order to increase the quality and efficiency of the primary processes in universities.

France

In most comparative analyses of NPM, France is considered a latecomer and a rather reluctant disciple of NPM reforms. As shown by Bezes (2009), the influence of NPM as a coherent doctrine associated with specific tools and solutions started to develop after 1995 and did not spread across the French public system before the 2000s.

If one looks at the specific sector of higher education and reforms, four main reforms reflecting the diffusion of NPM can be identified in the 2000s. All of them are of interest to this comparison as they aim (explicitly or not) at transforming the organization and regulation of the academic community, the management of academic careers, the way research is led and funded, and the organizational settings in which academic activities develop. They thus impacted academic life directly. These reforms and what they intend to change will be described first, before other transformations related to other influences that took place at about the same time are addressed.

LOLF (2002 Act) – increasing budget and performance constraints

The LOLF (Loi Organique relative aux Lois de Finance) does not specifically apply to higher education, but to French public administration as a whole. It aims at transforming public budget procedures, and translates public policies into programmes for which annual objectives must be set. The following year programmes have to report and explain what has been achieved with the budget received. Universities were initially exempted from the provisions of LOLF, but in 2008, the Ministry (MESR) developed a new software and algorithm (Sympa) for the allocation of university budgets that partly introduced performance-based allocations. Another step in the same direction was the introduction of global budgets in 2007, requiring universities to formulate targets and report on performance one year later. Since performance budgeting is just starting, it still does not weigh directly on the individual academic, but this will soon change as the new budgeting mode progressively diffuses within higher education institutions.

AERES (2006 Act) – more evaluation and publicity about performance

A second important transformation consists in the creation of AERES (Agence d'Evaluation de la Recherche et de l'Enseignement Supérieur). This new agency concentrates all evaluation processes that previously were dispersed among

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different actors: the independent agency for institutional evaluation, the CNE; the Ministry and national research institutions. More importantly, AERES transformed the nature of evaluation by making it publicly available and simpler to read. It also transformed the use of evaluation by providing the Ministry with information for decision making and strategy development. The link between evaluation and university budgets could then develop and may be used by the Ministry to determine the size of university budgets, and by universities for internal budget allocation. Thus more transparency and publicity are trained on the activities of the academic profession.

More competition and concentration: the ANR, the Grand Emprunt and others …

The emphasis on performance comes with increased competition for funds. A first major step was the creation of the national research council ANR (Agence Nationale de la Recherche) in 2007. The novelty of the ANR lies in increased formalization of application procedures and project execution. Although still far from the bureaucratic form of EU research projects, applications have to follow a rather formalized structure. Furthermore, the ANR transforms French research by the amount of money it manages, and the increasing competition for funding. This reinforces concentration of resources to a limited set of units. The trend towards competition and concentration also characterize recent calls launched by the MESR and one being prepared by the Prime Minister's office. Through this highly selective call, up to ten university campuses shall be labelled 'excellent' and receive a significant amount of money. Institutional differentiation is therefore expected to increase, but also the difference between the academics employed by institutions of 'excellence' and the rest.

The LRU Act (2007) strengthening governance of higher education institutions

A last important transformation concerns the empowerment of universities as institutional actors. The main objective of the LRU Act is to strengthen executive university leadership. Presidents are provided with more internal power and more autonomy. They now manage a global budget, including operating and payroll budgets, of which the latter was previously managed by the Ministry.

Many decisions previously made by the Ministry are now transferred to the university level. The allocation and size of bonuses for academic excellence are now devolved to each university. Research funds previously allocated directly to research units are now given as a global amount to the university which allocates funds to the labs. In a near future, the CNU (Conseil national des universités) will evaluate individual academics every four years, enabling presidents to negotiate a redefinition of duties with individual academics. Thus the university level is gaining importance in many decisions directly affecting academic life.

Other reforms

Without contesting the recent impact of NPM on French higher education, it is necessary to mention some limitations to this global trend.

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First, some aspects of NPM have clearly been avoided in higher education as in other sectors. The proposal to create a higher education budget allocation agency was rejected in June 2008 by an inter-ministerial committee. In this and other cases, it seems that the Ministry was strongly against establishing intermediate agencies and was afraid to lose power if they were created.

Second, the dispersion of the higher education system into many institutions has been seen as a weakness rather than a strength, and the 2006 Act provided the opportunity to create meta-structures, comprising different institutions, which in some cases led to mergers.

Third, recent NPM-based reforms did not question what is called the 'territorialization' of higher education and research policies, that is, the increasing role of local actors in this sector. Although the reforms described above aim at a re-verticalization of the system as a whole, forms of multi-level governance are at the same time sustained and encouraged.

Norway

Internationally Norway has often been presented as a reluctant reformer whether we speak of public policy in general (Olsen 1996, Christensen and Lægreid 2007a) or higher education reform in particular (Kogan et al. 2006). Reformers have been careful not to infringe on academic territory and inflict unwanted changes. Reforms have tended to be piecemeal, granting individual institutions considerable freedom to interpret and implement reforms as they see fit (Bleiklie et al. 2000, Bleiklie 2009), and characterized by insignificant moves towards competition (Hood et al. 2004). Some rather mild efforts were made during the 1990s to introduce management by objectives, and strengthen institutional autonomy and leadership (Bleiklie et al. 2000). However, the introduction of the Quality reform in 2003 heralded more drastic changes combined with a stronger determination to implement them forcefully (Bleiklie 2009).

The Quality reform – complex reform, mixed record

Most changes in Norwegian higher education in the last decade have been introduced in connection with the Quality reform. The main justification for the reform was that students were neglected, that they had a right to succeed and that higher education institutions had an obligation to ascertain that this right was fulfilled. The government proposal that introduced the reform in 2001, made these concerns part of a more general political agenda. Norway was to become 'a leading nation of knowledge', and higher education was to be generously funded and fundamentally transformed through radical changes of teaching programmes, funding and steering patterns, organizational structure, institutional autonomy and institutional strategies. The following will look at different elements of the reform with a particular view to the way in which they relate to New Public Management and network governance.

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Study programme reform The study reform introduced the Bologna two-cycle degree system and course-credit-based study programmes throughout the higher education system in 2003. The main goal was to make degree studies more efficient by shortening time to degree and increasing compliance with programme schedules and completion rates. Several tools were supposed to help achieve these aims, such as contracts between student and institution, more coherent study programmes, better use of the entire, enlarged academic year, more varied and better adapted teaching methods and more teacher–student contact. While this reform as such has little to do with NPM, its goals of efficiency and student mobility are easily associated with NPM.

New funding system

The reform was sustained by a new funding system that was clearly consistent with NPM policies. The funding system had a considerable incentive-based and output-oriented component (about 40 per cent), two thirds of which was based on teaching load and efficiency, and one third on research related activity. In the following years the incentive-based component increased, underscoring the importance of this NPM tool to the overall goal of the Quality reform.

New system for accreditation and quality assurance

A third element, clearly consistent with the NPM idea of 'steering from a distance', was the establishment in 2003 of a new system of accreditation and quality assurance. The reform requires all higher education institutions to have an internal quality assurance system. A national agency, NOKUT, was established simultaneously with two main tasks: to evaluate institutional systems of quality assurance and the accreditation of institutions and study programmes in cases where ministerial approval is required. Furthermore, criteria were established that any institution aspiring to obtain university status must fulfil. Thus institutions were enabled to devise relatively predictable strategies in order to achieve university status. The establishment of NOKUT represented a new buffer between ministerial oversight and the institutions, in principle enhancing the autonomy of the latter.

New system for leadership and institutional steering

As part of the Quality reform a new system of institutional governance was proposed whereby higher education institutions would change status from 'special civil service institutions' to 'public enterprises'. The traditional system of elected leaders at all levels of higher education institutions would be replaced by a system of appointed leaders, and representative deliberative bodies would have their role transformed from decision making to advisory functions The goal was to create more autonomous institutions with stronger strategic capabilities. At the institutional level the rector would be subordinated rather than heading the university board much like a CEO in a business enterprise. Half the board would be external representatives appointed by the Ministry after proposals from the university and the other half elected internal representatives.

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The question of the formal status of institutions and their internal organization turned out to be the most contested aspect of the Quality reform and the reform proposal was rejected by a majority of Norwegian professors (Bleiklie 2009). The parliament finally introduced the new legislation in 2005. Institutions were to keep their status as special civil service institutions. It was left to the institutions to decide whether and to what extent they would keep their traditional internal organization or introduce the new system. The only mandatory change was the size of external representation on institutional boards. Most institutions chose mixed solutions. A clear majority kept elected rectors at the institutional level and introduced appointed leadership at faculty and department levels. However, all theoretically possible combinations of elected and appointed leaders are represented among Norwegian higher education institutions. The ambition to standardize the internal organization of higher education institutions resulted in the opposite: more diverse internal organizational patterns, mainly due to opposition from academics.

Switzerland

In the context of higher education reform, the Swiss case stands out as specific, raising questions about widely held beliefs about the impact of new policy rationales, like NPM. Rather wide-ranging reforms have taken place since the late 1990s, but they led mostly to a weakening of state steering and stronger delegation of authority to the institutions, as well as to a renewal of academic values and practices rather than their replacement by more managerial approaches (Lepori and Fumasoli 2010). Switzerland stands out in our context as a very successful case of implementation of network governance.

Despite some attempts at integration, authority over higher education institutions is still divided between the Confederation and the cantons, with corresponding variation as to how state–institution relationships are managed. French-speaking cantons still partly hold on to traditional bureaucratic control, while the Confederation and many of the German-speaking cantons devolved more autonomy to institutions (Fumasoli 2008). Moreover, with the creation of the Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) in the late 1990s, the Swiss system became binary with a strong divide between the university and non-university sectors in terms of missions, activities, governance setting and management culture. The UAS sector displays more bureaucratic and hierarchical steering than the university sector (Lepori 2008).

In the context of public management it is useful to keep in mind that Swiss higher education is composed of three types of institutions:

1. two university level Federal Institutes of Technology (FIT);
2. ten cantonal universities under direct authority of their home cantons (Fumasoli 2008); and
3. seven public and two private UASs with a mandate of professional, mostly bachelor-level education and applied research (Lepori 2008).

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The following presents NPM reforms in Switzerland from 1995 to 2010, since some of the most important reforms took place in the late 1990s.

Funding policies and modest market-based reforms

In the last two decades some incentives for institutional competition have been introduced especially through funding reforms. Since 2000 federal subsidies to cantonal universities are calculated on a formula based on student numbers and third-party grants, while they receive flat federal subsidies for out-of-canton students. These incentives and the introduction of the Bologna system pushed the smallest cantonal universities and to some extent UASs, to a more active student acquisition. Three other factors limit the scope of market-based competition: the generous funding level, the negligible role of private providers, and the fact that existing institutions do not risk being closed down.

The current Swiss situation has two relevant characteristics. First, there is a soft state pressure for some competition, moderated by a high share of non-competitive institutional funding and an emphasis on cooperation among institutions. Second, there is a strong component of cooperative behaviour among institutions, which tend to agree on some division of tasks and specific focus of their activities without direct state intervention.

The political discourse on higher education has been dominated by the need for maintaining or increasing the quality rather than the efficiency of the system. This was the basis for a rapid increase of funding to institutions from 2000. The overall political preference was to provide additional money in exchange for self-managed internal reforms. In the most recent federal university plan (2008–2011) the combination of increasing resources and soft pressures still applies. However, one specific performance-related mechanism was introduced in the University Act, whereby 30 per cent of federal subsidies to cantonal universities are distributed on the basis of third-party funds.

Soft emphasis on performance: development of audit and quality assurance systems

Quality assessment has essentially taken place inside higher education institutions aiming at improving their operations. Most institutions now have a well-developed system of internal quality assurance mainly based on peer review. At the federal level, a quality assurance agency was created at the end of the 1990s (Perellon 2001). Its main task is auditing internal quality procedures in institutions and accreditation of new ones. Overall, this seems a relatively soft approach to evaluation, essentially in the hands of academics and the institutions themselves. The situation is different in the UAS sector, where both institutional accreditation and accreditation of study programmes are performed systematically and used as a steering tool by the responsible federal authority.

Higher education institutional governance and management

Internal governance has changed, but does not necessarily reduce the role of academics and academic autonomy. While the traditional governance mode combined bureaucratic state control of the administration and wide autonomy of

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individual chairs in academic matters, the tendency has been to transfer management authority from the state towards rectorates and to some strengthening of their position internally. In most universities management practices have certainly become tighter, including detailed strategic plans, budgeting and facilities management (Fumasoli and Lepori 2010). The trend is also reflected in rapid expansion of central administration in most universities, although the degree of delegation is very different from university to university. Nevertheless, the influence of academics in institutional governance remains substantial, and the main institutional positions – rectors and deans – are still strong symbols of academic identity and filled by university professors. Although positions of presidents and rectors certainly include a stronger management component, such skills are still learnt on the job rather than being initial job qualification requirements. The situation is quite different at the UAS, owing to their more hierarchical organization and stronger bureaucratic culture. Management processes are clearly tighter and organized more top-down. The positions of UAS directors and department directors have mostly a managerial function and are filled by people who tend to come from public administration and private companies.

Changes in employment and human resource management

Overall, human resource management in Swiss institutions is traditionally characterized by a two-tier policy. A rather strong public regulation of permanent positions is combined with a much more liberal policy for non-permanent staff such as post-doctoral and Ph.D. students. The main recent changes have affected the intermediary level after the doctorate, where a number of universities have moved towards a model based on temporary positions and access to the professorial level through assistant professor appointments. To our knowledge, most salaries are still based on fixed scales depending on academic degree, even if universities have somewhat larger space for negotiation than in the past. The situation is partially different in UAS, which were originally subject to much tighter public sector requirements. There has been a strong tendency towards deregulation of employment conditions and private sector practices have been introduced to some extent, especially for hiring a large number of part-time teachers with their own professional activities.

Four Reform Histories Compared

Comparing the role of NPM in higher education governance in countries with public higher education systems serves to illustrate how new reform ideas tend to blend with nationally distinct higher education and civil service traditions. Higher education reformers have often adapted modern NPM ideas in nationally specific ways to historically established practices, balancing values of academic autonomy and quality against those of efficiency and government control. In other cases, for example competitive research funding, NPM brought little new in practical terms and reformers have dealt with familiar problems and solutions under new names

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provided by the jargon of a new reform ideology. Network governance had an impact in our cases in two ways. First, network governance affected the design and implementation of higher education reforms as we argue in the cases of the Netherlands and Switzerland. Second, network governance may be part of the outcome of change processes justified in terms of NPM policies, illustrating some of the ambiguities and tensions within the NMP doctrine.

In very broad terms all four countries introduced NPM reforms that fall under the five categories presented in the introduction: mechanisms that shall increase competition between institutions and budgetary constraints are represented by budget formulas designed to make institutions compete for students and research funds, formulas that gradually have become tougher as performance-based budget elements increase over time. Budget reforms are also important instruments that train and amplify public attention and scrutiny on performance. Crucial additional instruments in this connection are the development of systems for assessment and monitoring of teaching and research performance. One implication is the establishment of intermediate agencies for evaluation and accreditation and internal units for evaluation and quality assurance in institutions. The various measures taken in order to concentrate resources among the best institutions or research groups and institutional governance have been crucial issues, with mixed results in terms of implementation and outcomes. However, the question remains about what changes the reforms have brought about on the 'shop floor' of academic institutions. This is the question addressed in the last part of the chapter.

Effects on Academic Work and the Academic Profession

Although the timing and specific form of NPM governance reforms varied, we found major structural changes that potentially affect academic work and the academic profession in all four countries. The following will look in particular at how these changes have played out in the following areas: professional self-regulation, academic work, careers, tasks and the configuration of academic power.

Academic Self-Regulation

Traditionally professional self-regulation has been considered a necessary condition for the quality of academic work and for universities to operate properly. If by self-regulation we understand the degree of control academics have over their work conditions, it depends on conditions such as: the position and influence of academics within the organization in which they work, the freedom they enjoy in formulating their research and teaching agendas, reward systems, and influence over operating conditions that affect research and teaching inside and outside their institution.

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The organizational changes reported in the four countries clearly demonstrate that conditions have changed, but in a far from uniform way. New governance arrangements have clearly reduced the collective influence of academics over decision making in academic institutions, but apparently more so in the Netherlands than in France, Norway and particularly Switzerland. It is still an open question whether the reforms need more time to penetrate academic organizations properly or whether they are unlikely to amount to more than symbolic structural changes that are easily absorbed by existing informal routines and established practices. However, it is striking that the effect on NPM policies that have been in place since the 1980s seem to have penetrated Dutch universities more thoroughly than in the other three countries where similar changes occurred the last 10–15 years. The loss of power and self-regulating ability should also be considered in connection with the reconfiguration of academic power which is taking place within higher education. This will be discussed further below.

Academic Work

The changes that seem to affect academic work the most have to do with changes in funding, quality assurance and evaluation practices. In all four countries we have seen changes in institutional funding and external research funding where incentive-based, competitive funding make up a substantial part of institutional budgets, particularly for research activities. These new funding and evaluation practices affect academics in all four countries. They are expected to and do spend more time on funding acquisition, writing research proposals according to specified formulas including work packages, deliverables and deadlines. They also spend more time reporting on their activities as part of internal reporting, quality assurance and budgeting procedures at their own institutions where the activities and productivity of every individual academic now affect the funding available for their own research group, or their own department or unit within it. These reporting procedures are making the contributions of academic units, but also of individual academics publicly available and visible. Since they tend to present the outcome of the activities of universities and the departments within them in easily accessible tabular form, it is possible for administrators, politicians and the public at large to evaluate and compare the quantity and quality of academic work.

One may hypothesize that these pressures make academics more dependent on their institutions as subordinate workers under constant pressure to produce and bring in fresh funding. External funding acquisition may on the other hand have the opposite effect for academics that are members of inter-institutional, international research groups and make them more independent of their own institution. As shown by Barrier (2010) the traditional institution-based hierarchical division of work by which academic mandarins looked for funding and allocated work to their group of assistants, has been replaced by teams of academics who each participate in the race for funding and are all involved in various partnerships allowing development of the research programme of their group. While the

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relationships among permanent staff become more horizontal, relationships with doctoral and post-doctoral students are transformed and become more hierarchical. Ph.D. candidates are no longer disciples but knowledge workers engaged in the production of specific results that form the basis of their Ph.D. but are also individual elements of the research programme of their supervisor. Similar trends are likely to affect research universities in all the four countries.

Academic Careers

The tension between teaching and research is a characteristic of academic work. The distribution between teaching and research obligations for permanent positions used to be part of the formal definition of the academic position or decided informally as academics within a department agreed on the distribution of a given set of teaching obligations (Bleiklie and Michelsen 2008, Musselin and Becquet 2008). The increased visibility of individual performance will probably make the difference between research active and non-active staff more visible, intensifying traditional tensions within the teaching–research nexus in academic work (Leišytė 2007), and create a pressure to solve this at the institutional level. Furthermore, the increase in external research funding has led to an increase in non-permanent staff. This is likely to increase competition for permanent positions and status differences among academics on different types of employment contracts.

New Tasks and Academic Roles

The idea that core activities, traditionally considered to be teaching and examining students, undertaking and disseminating research in academic publications, is clearly challenged. The ability to raise money and manage research teams based on external grants has become a core criterion in system-wide evaluations as well as in performance monitoring and hiring policies of institutions. Activities around teaching have evolved and represent a larger scope. For example, market research for teaching, advertising schools and programmes, attracting and selecting students, designing e-learning tools and programmes, building partnerships for joint programmes, finding financial support for curriculum development, and student exchange and internships also belong to the diversifying work portfolio of modern academics. Finally, new tasks emerge because of the 'third mission' of universities. Technology and knowledge transfer of all kinds, patenting and licensing, community service and regional development, policy advice and business consultancy are examples of a long list of activities that academics are expected to undertake. This multiplication of tasks and expectations is one driver towards a further division of work within the academic profession (de Weert 2004).

Changing expectations and new structures also imply the rise of new and more varied managerial roles for academics and other staff. Such staff include the academic manager and other professionals now employed to meet university

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needs in areas such as external and internal funding, information systems, human resource management, marketing and public relations, knowledge transfer and public–private partnerships.

Reconfiguration of Academic Power

At a more aggregated level, the increasing role of research in terms of publications, grants and evaluation increase the role of academic gatekeepers: academics sitting on review and selection committees, reviewing papers, selecting projects, and making authoritative judgements on the quality of institutions or disciplines. The impact of their decisions will increase and they are likely to constitute a new academic elite. The same holds true for the university leaders who progressively constitute a specific professional group within the academic profession, with their own trajectories and rewards, as predicted by Freidson in his analysis of the future of professions (Freidson 1984). The position of the members of this new elite is based not just on full professorship and similar academic top-positions, but on network position gained through participation on academic peer review panels of all sorts, research funding panels, evaluation bodies, hiring committees, editorial boards and so on. Although many of the decision arenas in question consist of academic review panels, others, such as research funding bodies, often draw their members from a wider set of backgrounds, including politicians, civil servants, business representatives and so forth. In such cases the decisions are based on criteria that represent compromises between more diverse sets of considerations and decision premises than purely academic ones. Individual members would usually acquire the positions that make them elite members based on research reputation. Within individual universities such elites may be highly influential, at the same time as rank and file academics find themselves in a politically gradually weaker position.

Conclusion

The four cases analysed in this chapter are usually considered quite different in terms of adoption and implementation of NPM policies. Traditionally the Netherlands has been considered an early starter and relatively forceful implementer in a continental European context (Paradeise et al. 2009). Yet it is shown here that characteristics of traditional Dutch consensus-oriented 'polder' politics, manifesting itself in the modern shape of network governance, nevertheless have limited the impact of NPM. Both France and Norway have been reluctant reformers, slowly adopting and partially implementing NPM elements in higher education governance during the 1990s. However, in the 2000s both countries implemented reforms introducing NPM features that are reshaping higher education governance in more fundamental ways. Network governance and a federal political structure in which cantons

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play a prominent role in higher education policy making and governance are an important explanation behind the Swiss position as the latecomer to NPM policies in this four country group. Thus the early starter and the latecomer interestingly share network governance characteristics that limit and mitigate the impact of NPM policies, although in different ways. In spite of the path dependencies that seem to characterize the various national NPM reform movements it nevertheless appears that all four countries now have changed their systems' funding, evaluation and institutional management in ways that potentially at least fundamentally alter how academic institutions and their activities operate.

In addition to limiting and modifying the extent of NPM-policies, network governance enters the analysis in another interesting way. Whereas one may safely assume that informal networks have previously played an important role in higher education policy making in earlier days, NPM policies have contributed to formalizing new kinds of policy networks related to external research funding mechanisms, evaluation and accreditation agencies, and institutional governance. This may illustrate one of the ambiguities of NPM policies. Thus the usual assumption that NPM reduces the influence of academics in higher education governance overlooks the fact that this reduced influence within academic institutions may have been paralleled by the opening up of new arenas of academic influence. Thus it may be more correct to say that NPM policies have contributed to a reconfiguration of academic power. Where academic power in the 1970s and 1980s was confined to increasingly egalitarian power structures within academic institutions, it has become more limited within increasingly hierarchical institutions and is increasingly based in more elitist arenas of research funding councils, evaluation panels and institutional boards.

Thus all four nations analysed here are cases where NPM policies never represented the radical and rapid break with the past that we know from the UK in the 1980s, yet it seems that governance patterns nevertheless have changed in fundamental ways that have had significant effects on academic work and the position of the academic profession over the last 30 years.

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