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**Abstract**

This article reflects upon three seminal articles published in Higher Education Policy (HEP) on academic freedom and university autonomy. The reflections indicate that HEP research contributes to a sophisticated and systematic understanding of the complexity of academic freedom, addressing both the original theoretical issues and burning current issues in policy and practice, as well as in legislation. In particular, HEP has gone beyond academic circles and reached a broad readership, making a real difference to policy development to safeguard academic freedom. For broader comparative reflection, an epistemological dimension has been added to the HEP understanding and analysis of the concept of academic freedom. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)