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**Abstract**

How higher education institutions are managed is one of the most decisive factors in achieving institutional goals. The key role that university governance plays in the improvement of education quality has been the focus of attention in MENA economies since 2009. In this article, the authors present the findings of a screening tool developed as a benchmarking exercise that assesses the extent to which universities in the MENA region are following governance practices aligned with their institutional goals and international trends, and monitors their progress over time. They present the results of testing the methodology of the screening tool in a sample of universities in Egypt, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority and Tunisia comparing them across five dimensions: 1) context, mission and goals; 2) management orientation; 3) autonomy; 4) accountability; and 5) participation. The findings highlight vivid differences, especially notable in between private and public institutions. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)