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Deconstructing power in higher education governance structures : an analysis of representation and roles in governing bodies / Paulo Charles Pimentel Botas and Jeroen Huisman

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Abstract

This article explores how power relations are constructed in the governance of higher education institutions. It examines and deconstructs, from a Foucauldian perspective, power relations and mechanisms in the relationship between the state and higher education institutions, and between academic and management staff. This research article originates from a benchmarking project. The data was collected by a structured questionnaire that was developed to allow the research team to map the governance structures and processes on four main governance areas: internal and external stakeholders; decision-making bodies and actors; quality of governance; and key performance indicators. The surprising finding is that governments have used their authority to influence and shape the governance structures of their higher education institutions, but also their decision-making processes. We suggest that, as the external and internal environments of higher education institutions are not the same, there is no 'one-size-fits-all' model of 'good governance' for higher education.

(HRK / Abstract übernommen)