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Abstract

The 1988 University Autonomy Act conferred Portuguese universities with a considerable degree of autonomy and designed a governance system based on collegiality. Strong participation of academic and non-academic staffs and students in decisions became the rule and democratic elections of all individual or collective governance bodies were the basis for legitimacy. More recently, a new reform has changed the legal framework. This reform was publicly presented as the implementation of New Public Management (NPM) in the Portuguese higher education system. In this paper, we analyse the new legal framework to understand how far it can be seen as an application of NPM and compare the Portuguese reform with those taking place in several European countries to determine how far there is convergence with the European modernisation agenda. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)