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**Abstract**

This is a preliminary survey of the laws and statutes that determine governance arrangements for higher education systems as well as individual institutions in 24 countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. Following an overview of recent higher education governance trends within Africa, it describes the current range of practice and most common approaches set forth in foundation legal documents for national higher education with regard to autonomy, accountability, government control and stakeholder representation. Particular attention is given to the membership of governing boards, how board members are appointed, the selection of chairpersons, the nomination of chief officers in the universities, and the degree of institutional autonomy implied in the definition of these processes. Various mechanisms for insuring institutional accountability are also identified, including strategic plans, governing board composition, annual reporting requirements, financial and quality audits, and performance-based funding. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)