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**Abstract**

This chapter focuses on the implementation of HE policies in European universities and how it varies across countries. Two aspects of policy implementation are focused. One is the substantive policies that are put in place in terms of policy instruments such as legislation, financial incentives and organizational arrangements. The second aspect is the process of implementation understood as patterns of participation and trust among the actors involved. The aim is to explain cross-national variation focusing on the relationship between political-administrative structures, implementation processes, policy instruments and substantive outcomes. By analyzing variation in the use of policy instruments as well as characteristics of the implementation processes, the approach goes beyond simplistic generalizations, categorizing countries globally as respectively high or low implementation

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**Signature**

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