

25.4.2025

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**Title**

Universities' Third Mission : Global Discourses and National Imperatives / Romulo Pinheiro ...

**Publication year**

2017

**Source/Footnote**

In: Higher education policy. - 30 (2017) 4, S. 425 - 442

**Inventory number**

46740

**Keywords**

Hochschule : Idee und Aufgabe ; Ausland : Norwegen : Hochschulwesen allgemein ; Ausland : Tschechien : Hochschulwesen allgemein

**Abstract**

Universities are increasingly pressurized to contribute to the socio-economic development of their societies. This has led to increasing calls for stronger societal engagement around the third mission (TM). In this paper, we contextualize developments surrounding TM by comparing policy approaches in Norway and the Czech Republic. Our analysis shows similarities as well as differences and points to the importance of assessing TM developments in the light of wider policy dynamics and priorities. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)