

Table of Contents

Preliminary remarks and acknowledgements	i
List of Tables	1
List of Figures and Boxes	1
1 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Research topic	2
1.2 Starting point and personal research interest	5
1.3 Research approach	7
1.4 Relevance to research and practice.....	8
1.5 Structure.....	10
2 Steps towards a theoretical framework	13
2.1 Convergence: an elusive concept.....	13
2.1.1 <i>Defining convergence</i>	14
2.1.2 <i>Convergence of what?</i>	15
2.1.3 <i>Conflicting forces</i>	16
2.1.4 <i>Implications for this study</i>	17
2.2 Implementation theory: lessons from experience	18
2.2.1 <i>No implementation in the classical sense</i>	18
2.2.2 <i>National policy formulation as research focus</i>	22
2.3 Governance theory: multi-level, multi-actor governance	24
2.3.1 <i>An overall framework of governance</i>	25
2.3.2 <i>The nature of national policy formulation</i>	27
2.3.3 <i>Interaction of national and the European levels</i>	29
2.4 New institutionalism: integrating actor and structural perspectives .	31
2.4.1 <i>Economic/rational choice institutionalism</i>	34
2.4.2 <i>Sociological institutionalism</i>	34
2.4.3 <i>Historical institutionalism</i>	35
2.4.4 <i>Location of my approach</i>	37
2.5 Path dependence: two strands and a proposed synthesis.....	39
2.5.1 <i>Continuity, persistence and inertia</i>	40
2.5.2 <i>Critical junctures, feedback loops, and lock-in</i>	43
2.5.3 <i>The missing link: a theory of institutional change</i>	45
3 Theoretical framework.....	49
3.1 North's model of institutional change	50
3.1.1 <i>The basic model</i>	50
3.1.2 <i>Gradual change</i>	54

3.1.3	<i>Non-gradual change</i>	55
3.1.4	<i>Application to national HE systems</i>	57
3.1.5	<i>Focus on policy change</i>	60
3.1.6	<i>Integration of the international context</i>	61
3.1.7	<i>Lessons so far</i>	63
3.2	Actor-centred institutionalism	64
3.2.1	<i>A framework for the study of actor interaction in policy formulation</i>	65
3.2.2	<i>Treating organisations as actors</i>	66
3.2.3	<i>Bounded rationality</i>	67
3.2.4	<i>Actor characteristics: capabilities, perceptions and preferences</i>	67
3.2.5	<i>Actor constellations and modes of interaction</i>	71
3.2.6	<i>Lessons so far</i>	75
3.3	The institutional fabric of national HE systems	77
3.3.1	<i>Institutional types</i>	81
3.3.2	<i>Degree structure</i>	82
3.3.3	<i>Curricular governance</i>	84
3.3.4	<i>Curricula</i>	85
3.3.5	<i>Access</i>	87
3.3.6	<i>Transition to employment</i>	88
3.3.7	<i>Funding</i>	90
3.4	Full framework and hypotheses	92
4	Methodology and operationalisation	97
4.1	<i>Research design</i>	97
4.2	<i>Case selection</i>	103
4.3	<i>Period studied</i>	106
4.4	<i>Operationalisation</i>	107
4.4.1	<i>Institution-related concepts</i>	107
4.4.2	<i>Actor-related concepts</i>	115
4.5	<i>Data collection</i>	119
5	Europe	123
5.1	<i>Introduction</i>	123
5.2	<i>Sorbonne declaration (1998)</i>	124
5.3	<i>From Sorbonne to Bologna (1998-1999)</i>	129
5.4	<i>Bologna declaration (1999)</i>	131
5.5	<i>From Bologna to Prague (1999-2001)</i>	133
5.6	<i>Prague communiqué (2001)</i>	136
5.7	<i>From Prague to Berlin (2001-2003)</i>	137
5.8	<i>Berlin communiqué (2003)</i>	139

5.9	Since Berlin	141
5.10	Summary	143
6	Germany.....	149
6.1	Actors and their capabilities	149
6.2	Institutional setting in early 1998.....	153
6.2.1	<i>Institutional types</i>	154
6.2.2	<i>Degree structure</i>	155
6.2.3	<i>Curricular governance</i>	157
6.2.4	<i>Curricula</i>	157
6.2.5	<i>Access</i>	159
6.2.6	<i>Transition to employment</i>	161
6.2.7	<i>Funding</i>	161
6.3	Policy formulation	163
6.3.1	<i>Early beginnings: preparing the Fourth HRG Amendment</i>	163
6.3.2	<i>A headstart: the Fourth HRG Amendment in 1998</i>	166
6.3.3	<i>Concomitant change: constitution of an accreditation system</i>	169
6.3.4	<i>The Länder take over: KMK 'Structural Guidelines' in 1999</i>	172
6.3.5	<i>Years of pondering: from the 'Structural Guidelines' to the '10 Theses'</i>	174
6.3.6	<i>Gaining momentum: Amendment of the Structural Guidelines in 2003</i>	185
6.3.7	<i>Incremental change continued</i>	191
6.4	Policy change until 2004.....	195
6.4.1	<i>Institutional types</i>	195
6.4.2	<i>Degree structure</i>	196
6.4.3	<i>Curricular governance</i>	199
6.4.4	<i>Curricula</i>	201
6.4.5	<i>Access</i>	202
6.4.6	<i>Transition to employment</i>	203
6.4.7	<i>Funding</i>	204
7	The Netherlands	207
7.1	Actors and their capabilities	207
7.2	Institutional setting in early 1998.....	209
7.2.1	<i>Institutional types</i>	209
7.2.2	<i>Degree structure</i>	210
7.2.3	<i>Curricular governance</i>	211
7.2.4	<i>Curricula</i>	212
7.2.5	<i>Access</i>	213
7.2.6	<i>Transition to employment</i>	213

7.2.7	<i>Funding</i>	214
7.3	Policy formulation	215
7.3.1	<i>Prelude: initiatives before the Bologna declaration</i>	215
7.3.2	<i>Building a shared agenda: Towards an Amendment of the HE Act</i>	219
7.3.3	<i>Debating and passing the 2002 Amendment of the HE Act</i>	235
7.3.4	<i>After the Amendment: immediate transition to the new degree structure</i>	241
7.3.5	<i>Establishment of the Accreditation Organisation</i>	242
7.3.6	<i>The loose ends revisited: ongoing policy formulation</i>	244
7.4	Policy change until autumn 2004	247
7.4.1	<i>Institutional types</i>	247
7.4.2	<i>Degree structure</i>	248
7.4.3	<i>Curricular governance</i>	250
7.4.4	<i>Curricula</i>	251
7.4.5	<i>Access</i>	252
7.4.6	<i>Transition to employment</i>	253
7.4.7	<i>Funding</i>	253
8	France	255
8.1	Actors and their capabilities	255
8.2	Institutional setting in early 1998	257
8.2.1	<i>Institutional types</i>	257
8.2.2	<i>Degree structure</i>	260
8.2.3	<i>Curricular governance</i>	262
8.2.4	<i>Curricula</i>	264
8.2.5	<i>Access</i>	266
8.2.6	<i>Transition to employment</i>	268
8.2.7	<i>Funding</i>	269
8.3	Policy formulation	270
8.3.1	<i>Minister Allègre's policy agenda</i>	271
8.3.2	<i>Initial moves: Attali report and Sorbonne declaration in 1998</i>	273
8.3.3	<i>First wave of regulation: the 'light-touch' decrees of 1999</i>	275
8.3.4	<i>Second wave of regulation: the decree framework of 2002</i>	280
8.3.5	<i>Ongoing policy formulation during transition and some difficulties</i>	289
8.3.6	<i>Calming the waters and continuing reform</i>	299
8.4	Policy change until autumn 2004	302
8.4.1	<i>Institutional types</i>	302
8.4.2	<i>Degree structure</i>	304
8.4.3	<i>Curricular governance</i>	305

8.4.4	<i>Curricula</i>	307
8.4.5	<i>Access</i>	308
8.4.6	<i>Transition to employment</i>	308
8.4.7	<i>Funding</i>	309
9	England	311
9.1	Actors and their capabilities	311
9.2	Institutional setting in early 1998.....	314
9.2.1	<i>Institutional types</i>	314
9.2.2	<i>Degree structure</i>	316
9.2.3	<i>Curricular governance</i>	318
9.2.4	<i>Curricula</i>	319
9.2.5	<i>Access</i>	321
9.2.6	<i>Transition to employment</i>	323
9.2.7	<i>Funding</i>	324
9.3	Policy formulation	326
9.3.1	<i>Government's response to Dearing and Teaching and HE Act 1998</i>	327
9.3.2	<i>Blackstone's lonely signature on the Sorbonne Declaration in 1999</i>	329
9.3.3	<i>Foundation degree, changes in the QAA and in secondary education</i>	331
9.3.4	<i>The 1993 White Paper and the Higher Education Act 2004</i>	338
9.3.5	<i>Debate on fair admissions, secondary education, and curricular issues</i>	342
9.3.6	<i>Waking up to Bologna: High Level Policy Forum and Europe Unit</i>	344
9.4	Policy change until autumn 2004.....	354
9.4.1	<i>Institutional types</i>	355
9.4.2	<i>Degree structure</i>	356
9.4.3	<i>Curricular governance</i>	357
9.4.4	<i>Curricula</i>	358
9.4.5	<i>Access</i>	359
9.4.6	<i>Transition to employment</i>	360
9.4.7	<i>Funding</i>	361
10	Comparative analysis	363
10.1	Actors and their capabilities	364
10.2	Analysis by dimension of the institutional setting	369
10.2.1	<i>Institutional types</i>	369
10.2.2	<i>Degree structure</i>	381
10.2.3	<i>Curricular governance</i>	397

10.2.4	<i>Curricula</i>	409
10.2.5	<i>Access</i>	423
10.2.6	<i>Transition to employment</i>	434
10.2.7	<i>Funding</i>	445
10.3	Overall analysis and conclusions	456
10.3.1	<i>Policy change and convergence</i>	456
10.3.2	<i>Causal reconstruction</i>	465
10.3.3	<i>Conclusions</i>	481
11	Review of hypotheses	483
11.1	Empirical assessment of the hypotheses.....	484
11.2	Discussion of results.....	487
11.2.1	<i>Interplay of the explanatory factors by HE system</i>	488
11.2.2	<i>Two lessons</i>	491
12	Concluding reflections	495
12.1	Contributions of this study	495
12.1.1	<i>Theoretical contributions</i>	495
12.1.2	<i>Empirical contributions</i>	496
12.2	Reflection of theory and methodology	496
12.2.1	<i>Integrating the frameworks of North and Scharpf/Mayntz</i>	497
12.2.2	<i>Focus on organisational actors</i>	498
12.2.3	<i>Thematic focus and country choice</i>	500
12.2.4	<i>Timing of the study</i>	500
12.3	Avenues for further research.....	502
12.4	Policy implications.....	503
12.4.1	<i>Deepening international understanding of national context-specificity</i>	503
12.4.2	<i>Intensifying international policy dialogue</i>	505
12.5	Outlook	508
	English summary	511
	Korte Nederlandstalige samenvatting	533
	Appendix	549
A	Abbreviations	549
B	Timelines	555
B1	<i>Europe</i>	555
B2	<i>EU Presidencies 1998-2005</i>	557
B3	<i>Germany</i>	557
B4	<i>The Netherlands</i>	560

B5	<i>France</i>	562
B6	<i>England</i>	566
C	Interviewees	571
C1	<i>Europe</i>	571
C2	<i>Germany</i>	572
C3	<i>The Netherlands</i>	574
C4	<i>France</i>	575
C5	<i>England</i>	577
D	Interview guideline	580
References		583