
**European Educational
Research (Re)Constructed**
institutional change in Germany, the United
Kingdom, Norway, and the European Union

**Mike Zapp, Marcelo Marques
& Justin J.W. Powell**

with contributions by
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(Re)Constructing Institutional Change in European Educational Research

**JUSTIN J.W. POWELL, MIKE ZAPP,
MARCELO MARQUES & GERT BIESTA**

SUMMARY This introduction presents an overview of major contemporary phenomena impacting educational research and governance in Europe. Over the past two decades, education has received considerable and increasing policy attention, in the case study countries analyzed here and globally. Political interests have not only substantially altered education systems and their governance, but also profoundly transformed the perceived goals and functions of educational research and the kinds of research to be promoted. This book analyzes the substantial changes in educational research governance on multiple analytical levels – organizational, national, and supranational – as well as interactions between levels. Organizationally, the reactions of university departments to governance modes and instruments underscore the legitimacy of government interventions in research planning and programming. At national level, in both larger and dominant research systems in Europe (Germany, the United Kingdom) and smaller systems (Norway), international organizations and national policymakers have influenced the reshaping of educational research, affecting these contrasting educational research traditions and organizational fields. Supranationally, the European Union's Framework Programme represents the most important driver in the Europeanization of research policy in terms of direct funding instruments, affirming its influence as a supranational regulatory body through setting research agendas and creating the conditions for the establishment of networks of scholars producing European educational research.

What impact have specific institutional pressures had on the shape and approaches of educational research (ER) and scholarship in different national

contexts and political settings in Germany, the United Kingdom (UK), Norway and the European Union (EU)? The overall aim of this book is to enhance our understanding of the developments over the past several decades and the explicit comparison of institutional change processes at different levels of analysis – from the organizational to the supranational – in these contexts. This volume covers a range of contemporary key questions in educational governance and educational research scholarship, addressing them in a multidisciplinary theoretical framework and with original data. With this summary of findings from a multi-year comparative research project – EDRESGOV – *The New Governance of Educational Research: comparing trajectories, turns and transformations* (conducted from 2014 to 2018 at the University of Luxembourg) – we explore and explain important changes in the governance of educational research as well as in the contents of scholarship in education and related disciplines across Europe since the 1990s.

We analyze the extent to which and the ways in which such educational research policies have reached their goals, altering the direction of existing research traditions and trajectories – and indeed establishing new ones. These policies have utilized certain mechanisms, from the ideational and normative to the explicitly regulative with their corresponding pressures, mimetic, normative and coercive. What are the main drivers of institutional change brought about by such policy initiatives and broader regional and global developments? How and to what extent have these mechanisms unfolded their impact on educational research? At which levels – local, regional, national or supranational and global – have such changes taken place? Contrasting the differential dynamics of educational research policy in this sample of large and small European countries and across the member countries of the EU, we map converging and diverging patterns and developments. We chart changes in the particular academic, language and educational configurations in these contexts, positioned differently with regard to the EU and the wider, increasingly international educational discourse. Finally, we draw lessons with regard to educational research and scholarship, as well as in relation to organizational infrastructure and research policy and governance as these have evolved over the past quarter century in different regions of Europe.

This book provides a comprehensive synopsis of the common contemporary challenges educational researchers and policymakers face in fostering educational research increasingly required to be of high (inter)national quality, relevance and impact. These fields have become intertwined in the more recent period, bringing new challenges of authority and the necessity to attend to the complexities of a dynamic relationship in which boundary-spanning managers gain influence as they translate between these ‘two cultures’ reigning in science and policymaking (Husén & Kogan, 1984; see also Saunders, 2007). Building upon the in-depth empirical case studies of three distinct national educational research and policymaking

traditions and structures – in Germany, in the UK and in Norway – we compare different conceptualizations of educational research and its planned development in these countries in different regions of Europe, and their distinct legacies.

Further, we examine the producers of European educational research and the distinct and expanding role of the EU in constructing a European (Educational) Research Area, in establishing cross-border networks, and in shaping (educational) research agendas. Through our empirical analysis of education policymakers’ and researchers’ relationships in scientific networks, we provide insights into (supra)national dynamics in education-related scholarship. The empirical analysis extends to a theory-guided content analysis of projects submitted to the most highly developed transnational research funding mechanism in the world – namely, the EU Framework Programme. This allows us to embed our findings from Germany, the UK and Norway in a broader European perspective. Finally, the cross-national comparisons enable us to chart convergence and divergence of educational research across these country cases and in Europe over time.

Bringing together in-depth accounts of educational research’s institutional changes, challenges, pressures and dilemmas, this book provides fresh insights at the nexus of educational sciences, comparative and international education, and sociologies of education and science. Our multidisciplinary theoretical framework integrates analysis of educational contents with sociological accounts of institutional change of higher education (HE) and research systems, governance approaches from political science, and concepts of novel modes in science and innovation systems from the social studies of science. We explore and explain the changing conditions of educational knowledge production within national cases and across them within a region that produces vast quantities of educational research.

In (re)conceptualizing institutional change in educational research, we understand science in general and educational research in particular as *cultural* institutions. We view the shift to the ‘knowledge society’ as a project driven by the global triumph of the research university (Baker, 2014; Powell et al, 2017; see also Frank & Meyer, 2007). While we propose such an institutional view of science in general, the case of *educational* research is a particular one.

Educational Research as an Institution

The particular status of educational research in institutional analysis, the focus here, can be explained by the extraordinary importance accorded to education in contemporary societies. It is common to view education as a key factor, if not the crucial condition, for the transition to the realized or future knowledge society. This implies the rising significance of the cultural-cognitive dimension and entails a conception of knowledge – extending beyond formal science to include cultural models – that includes widened

access to the means of production and global diffusion of what knowledge is produced (see Delanty, 2001). Here, we reverse somewhat this perspective and view particular types of legitimated scientific knowledge as constitutive of education and the guidance of education systems and teaching and learning processes through increased and targeted investments in legitimated authoritative educational research. Indeed, institutional research has shown the trend of worldwide isomorphic expansion of educational policy, structure and contents to the point of global culture reflecting the 'schooled society' – with the knowledge-producing research university as its paragon organizational form (Frank & Meyer 2007; Baker, 2014). Similarly, a growing body of findings suggests the same pattern of worldwide scientization (Drori et al, 2003; Powell et al, 2017). In such studies, the particular fate of educational research is surprisingly under-researched, especially in comparison with the natural sciences. We write 'surprisingly' because we recognize crucial analytical thrust in studying the pervasiveness of global rationalization, expansion and isomorphism in the very institution and its attendant organizational fields and forms that are the basis for such a schooled society – that is, education and educational research (Baker & Wiseman, 2006; Wiseman et al, 2014). Simultaneously, we find important national differences in institutional dimensions influenced to varying extents by such exogenous and endogenous pressures as those found for education systems (Baker & LeTendre, 2005; Graf, 2013; Bernhard, 2017).

Taking into account the prominent roles of science and education in contemporary societies worldwide, we assume a heightened interest in educational research reflects the scientific attempt to improve education systems and interactions within them, which contribute to individual and social development. In this model, educational research may be considered as a primarily applied form of research, directly serving society and policymaking. Such a view helps to explain the prominence of certain key ideas and concepts that have propelled much institutional change in the four cases examined here. These ideas include an explicit mandate for *internationalization*, a strong premium on *quality* and *excellence*, and the overriding priority of *relevance* or *impact*. We will show that these ideas cut across all levels of the contemporary ER discourse. They can be found in international organizations' recommendations, in national policy documents and in funding agencies' eligibility decisions. These ideas also figure prominently in research organizations' mission statements and individual researchers' self-portrayals.

Our research goals are less ambitious in breadth than in depth. While the education and science for development model helps to paint the bigger picture of global change, the challenge consists in analytically zooming in on the actual processes and mechanisms of institutional change at the level of the organizational field of educational research. These fields are increasingly nested in multiple national, European and global environments hosting a growing number of relevant influential actors, from state agencies to

professional associations, international organizations and supranational authorities.

Obviously, the ideas of *internationalization*, *quality* and *relevance* emanating from these environments encounter extant structures reflecting complex dynamics of national history and education and science system institutionalization. Thus, the timing, pace, degree and patterns – as well as outcomes – of institutional change vary across the four cases. Balancing this view of the idiosyncratic rhythms of institutional change with a focus on potential common impact on the four (supra)national contexts will be facilitated by a comparative and historical approach to the analysis of educational research and its governance.

We argue that despite the specific case logics, it is an appropriate moment for all four cases to be subjected to contemporary analysis as significant changes have altered the status quo of educational research, we argue, to a degree unseen before. Over the past two decades, we have witnessed the emergence of new discourses, actors, funding rationales and research agendas that are worth studying in more detail as they mark paradigm shifts from national traditions and path departures from policies that evolved up to the 1990s.

Next, we situate the book primarily in the research literatures of educational sciences, sociology of higher education and organizations, particularly meso and macro strands of institutional theory, and scholarship on higher education and research governance. This approach, elaborated below, enables the parallel analysis of ideas, standards and policies that have considerably altered the conditions and consequences of educational research across Europe.

Situating this Book in the Research Literature of Educational Sciences

Over the past several decades, the development of education as an academic field has followed a number of different trajectories, resulting in a range of distinctively different configurations (Lagemann, 2000; Hofstetter & Schneuwly, 2002a; Biesta, 2011; Hofstetter, 2012). In many English-speaking countries, education has established itself as a *multi-* or *interdisciplinary* field, focusing on the study of educational processes and practices through a number of disciplinary lenses (McCulloch, 2002, 2017; Lawn & Furlong, 2007). This often happened in the context of the incorporation of teacher education into the university – a continuous source of controversy and contention (Tibble, 1966; Simon, 1994; Hofstetter & Schneuwly, 2000; see contributions in Whitty & Furlong, 2017). In many German-speaking countries, but also in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Spain, education established itself not as an interdisciplinary field, but rather as an academic *discipline* with its own forms of theory and theorizing (Thiersch et al, 1978; Brezinka, 1995). Here, the academic study of

education emerged from a much older and more general interest in forming human beings through education (*paideia*; *Bildung*) (Biesta, 2011). A third pattern, in French-speaking contexts and in Portugal, is a more empirically oriented '*sciences de l'éducation*', beginning with Emile Durkheim (1961), that evolved from an interest in the empirical study of children and their individual and social development (Depaepe, 1993; Estrela, 1999; Hofstetter, 2010; Hofstetter & Schneuwly, 2010).

Although more detailed studies reveal that the different trajectories interact and overlap (see especially Hofstetter & Schneuwly, 2002a,b,c), the general pattern emerging from existing research is that of a highly *contextual* and *contextualized* development of different configurations of the academic study of education. These configurations differ not only on the disciplinary-interdisciplinarity spectrum, but also with regard to their research orientation (more theoretical or more empirical), their objects of interest and investigation (e.g. school education or wider processes of formation, such as continuing education or lifelong learning), and their preferred methodological approaches and commonly used methods (Hofstetter & Schneuwly, 2002c, pp. 15-19; Biesta et al, 2011). That the academic study of education has developed differently within different contexts may not in itself be surprising. Educational research is, after all, strongly connected to the dynamics of its wider professional, social and political environment, both *reflecting* such dynamics and *responding* to them (Biesta, 2007a). However, to gain scientific legitimacy, the academic study of education must orient itself towards academic expectations and standards – national, regional and global. Many analyses thus emphasize that the academic study of education echoes the *tension* between contrasting expectations from the field of practice (the 'profession') and from the academic field (the 'discipline') (Keiner, 2002; Hofstetter & Schneuwly, 2002a; Biesta, 2007b).

In our cases, it is possible to trace distinctive foundational patterns that had shaped contemporary educational research. While Germany features a strong disciplinary model, the UK is marked by a strong connection with practice and shows a high level of multidisciplinary in the study of education. Somewhere in the middle stands Norway with a genesis as a professional field of knowledge accompanied by development of *Pedagogikk* as a disciplinary basis. Such contrasting trajectories constitute one of the main criteria for the selection of cases in our study.

For the larger part of the twentieth century, the development of the academic study of education can indeed be adequately characterized, understood and explained by focusing on its *relationships* with educational practice and its interactions with the academic world. Much of the existing research has made major contributions to understanding these dynamics. What is less visible, however, is the particular impact of *research policy* and *governance*, as articulated and enacted both by politicians and policymakers at various levels of government, especially in federal systems, and by decision makers in universities and other organizations in higher education

themselves. Although higher education has never developed completely free from the influence of policymakers and politicians, research on higher education policy more generally shows that in recent decades the nature and impact of such policy has changed – indeed, intensified (on Germany, see Teichler, 2005; on the UK, see Shattock, 2012; on Norway, see Bleiklie et al, 2000; on the EU, see Lawn & Normand, 2015). Perhaps especially with large-scale assessments and the evidence-based paradigm, educational (policy) research is conducted in a wide variety of organizational forms, from universities and research institutes to think tanks and consultancies, which brings to the fore broader debates about the primacy of the university in the production of (educational) knowledge (see Zapp & Powell, 2016, 2017, on ER in Germany).

Over the past two decades, a substantial body of work has emerged that traces the impact of such policymaking on the shape of higher education. There is growing attention to the Europeanization and globalization of higher education policy (e.g. Nóvoa & Lawn, 2002; Trondal, 2002; Dale & Robertson, 2009; King et al, 2011; Lawn & Grek, 2012; Powell et al, 2012; Normand & Derouet, 2017). These developments – amplified by the rise of a culture of 'continuous comparison' via mechanisms such as benchmarking, league tables and rankings (Grek, 2009; Steiner-Khamsi, 2010; Lawn & Grek, 2012) – seem to *decontextualize* higher education policy from its national settings. International organizations, in addition to the supranational European project, propel such dynamics of global standardization (Zapp, 2017b,c).

Simultaneously, however, there is an increased emphasis in higher education policy on competitiveness in global education 'markets', placing greater pressure on national higher education systems to develop modes of operation that are distinctively different from (and ideally better than) what is happening in other countries (Robertson, 2009). This raises important questions about processes of harmonization and convergence, on the one hand, and processes of competition and divergence on the other (Krücken, 2003; Powell & Solga, 2010; Powell et al, 2012; Hasse & Krücken, 2013). There is a growing body of research that focuses on the impact of these developments on the shape and approaches of higher education more generally, and work on the particular impact on the (development of the) academic study of education has emerged (e.g. Keiner, 2003, 2006; Gretler, 2007; Biesta et al, 2011; Viseu, 2012).

It is at this very intersection that this book contributes new insights by focusing on one particularly significant recent development – namely, that of the emergence of specific ideas of *internationalization*, *quality* and *relevance* and the related policies and policy initiatives. These are not only but also *explicitly* aimed at the field of educational research and at the resulting scholarship itself – through the implementation of a range of different mechanisms, including agenda-setting, research evaluation systems, research programming and selection of projects, and funding criteria and incentives –

each evident in these chosen cases, some particularly so. These more or less explicit and direct interventions in the shape and approaches of educational research and scholarship stem from a range of different concerns and come with a range of different rationales, although the age-old theme that educational research should be more *relevant* for educational practice and have *impact* surfaces again and again, most recently in the explicit addition of this dimension in the most recent research assessment in the UK (see Chapter 3 of this book and Marques et al, 2017).

Often the developments are set into motion by reviews of the 'current state' of educational research. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), for example, has conducted a number of national reviews of educational research and development. Reviews have been conducted in New Zealand, Mexico, Denmark, Switzerland and England (for a critical discussion of the English review, see Wolter et al, 2004). In parallel, state educational reports within countries are increasingly prevalent, produced by more states (*Länder*), localities or districts, thus increasing the available knowledge on educational developments (see Busemeyer & Vossiek, 2015). Influence also derives from agenda-setting documents and position papers, such as the ones initiated by the European Science Foundation (ESF, 2009) and diverse national agencies, such as Germany's Science Council (WR) or Norway's Research Council (RCN). Economic considerations are also significant, partly stemming from concerns about the effectiveness and efficiency of educational research itself, and partly by expecting that such research can play a role in improving the contribution of educational institutions and practices to economic development and competitiveness, both regionally and globally. Finally, solutions to social concerns, such as persistent inequalities and challenged sustainability, more than ever posit education as a panacea (Leemann et al, 2016).

Situating this Book in the Research Literature on Sociologies of (Higher) Education, Organizations, Science and Evaluation

Globally, educational expansion may seem beyond dispute, yet it is beneficial to reflect what is often taken for granted. As education is increasingly considered the ultimate means for individual and social progress, innumerable stakeholders seek to reap the benefits of improved educational research for their planning of education system development, policy reforms and active governance (Meyer et al, 1997; Schofer & Meyer, 2005). Never before has educational research received as much attention as it has in the past two decades from international organizations, policymakers and public stakeholders, including teachers, families and students, and scholars from a range of disciplines across the sciences (Baker, 2014). In order to capture this complexity, we combine the focus on cultural-cognitive, normative and regulative pillars of institutions (see Scott, 2013) and the corresponding

mechanisms of change: mimetic, normative and coercive (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Suárez & Bromley, 2016).

Institutional analyses have explored the construction and evolution of various organizational fields. The types, stages and effects of institutional change generally have been studied extensively (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, 1991; Dacin et al, 2002; Mahoney & Thelen, 2010) along with diverse applications like international human development and education (Chabbott, 2003) or academic research (Cruz-Castro & Sanz-Menéndez, 2007). In education, recent applications of such institutional analysis chart the emergence of a European model of skill formation (Powell et al, 2012; Powell & Finger, 2013), while others trace the creation of a new organizational field in German ER with a strongly quantitative, applied and international character (Zapp & Powell, 2016).

A focus on organizations, nested in multiple local, national and international environments and on neighboring fields of research-producing organizations (public/for-profit/not-for-profit; intramural/extramural), allows us to pay attention to these various change mechanisms and counter the focus on organizations as crude strategic actors so common in mainstream organizational and governance scholarship. We pay attention to issues of organizational reconstruction and of identity-seeking, boundary-drawing and branding as reflecting both strategic behavior and adherence to strongly legitimated organizational design blueprints and templates circulating in the contemporary HE landscape (Sahlin-Andersson, 1996, 2001).

Neo-institutional theory, once scaling up the organizational focus to a more macroscopic range, also sensitizes us to questions about the general role of science, and in our case, educational research, in modern societies – bringing us closer to the sociology of science. Here, a new science-society contract has been diagnosed, labelled 'the new production of knowledge' or 'Mode 2 science' (Gibbons et al, 1994; Nowotny et al, 2001). This framework assumes a shift from an academic, disciplinary and autonomous university-based organization of primarily fundamental, basic or pure knowledge – described as 'Mode 1' – to a more diverse, transdisciplinary, applied and reflexive kind ('Mode 2'). Sociological theories of 'reflexive modernity' (Beck et al, 1994) are echoed in later work (Nowotny et al, 2001). By contrast, we find renewed strength of university-based research, despite the importance accorded to 'relevant' research and 'impact' (see Zapp & Powell, 2017).

We also use the analytical lens of the emerging sociology of evaluation, in particular the process of commensuration (see Espeland & Stevens, 2008; Espeland & Sauder, 2016). While the sociologies of organizations and science direct our attention to the increasing legitimacy of a more 'relevant' notion of educational research, the sociology of evaluation and quantification helps to specify this. Here, we focus on the 'metrological mood' in the more recent period that has transformed organizations and a wide variety of social domains, including educational research (Power, 2004, p. 766; see also

Bowker & Star, 2000; Brunsson & Jacobsson, 2002; Espeland & Stevens, 2008; Lawn & Grek, 2012; Gorur, 2014).

What is sometimes missing in these more sociological analyses, is, however, the necessary sensitivity for the role of the state and regulatory agencies in reshaping research. Here, governance scholarship may provide valuable analytical tools.

Situating the Book in the Research Literature on Research Policy and Higher Education Governance

Scholars of higher education and of research policy are oddly disconnected. We say oddly since both fields share the same levels of analysis (researchers, universities as the main locus of research production, funding agencies, and policymakers or governments) and the same object of analysis inasmuch as knowledge production is the core mission of research universities – and, with academic drift, this becomes more important for all higher education organizations. Yet these two bodies of scholarship come to different conclusions about the changing relationship between the state and the research infrastructure, including the role of researchers therein. While analysts of HE governance observe increasing autonomy, entrepreneurialism, managerialism and ‘organizational actorhood’ implying the retreat of public control (Clark, 1998; Deem, 2001; Krücken & Meier, 2006; Paradeise et al, 2009), scholarship on research governance has made convincing claims of the ongoing presence of (an albeit shifting) public intervention in the structural and cognitive development of science and innovation systems. Here, two main research governance instruments have been identified as central for the analysis of the contemporary research-state nexus and they have proven to be fruitful heuristics in our own study: *research evaluation systems* and national and supranational *thematic programs* (Lepori, van den Besselaar, Dinges, Poti et al, 2007; Lepori, 2011).

Although *research evaluation systems* (Whitley & Gläser, 2007) and performance-based research funding systems (Roberts, 2006; Hicks, 2012) are relatively recent developments, they are transforming research and scientific production around the world. Whitley (2007, p. 6) defines such systems as ‘organized sets of procedures for assessing the merits of research undertaken in publicly funded organizations that are implemented on a regular basis, usually by state or state-delegated agencies’. Often such evaluations include reviews by peers of aspects of research performance according to inter/national standards of excellence. These systems all seek to evaluate the quality of research through national *ex post* assessment of outputs and allocate government funding for research based on these evaluation results. Fourteen countries around the world have implemented some form of research evaluation system (RES), although with different goals, mechanisms and effects (Hicks, 2012). Across Europe, following in the footsteps of the UK, numerous countries have implemented research

evaluation systems. A growing body of literature examines contemporary shifts in the governance of higher education and science systems, including research evaluation (see Geuna & Martin, 2003; Oancea, 2008; Besley & Peters, 2009; Martin & Whitley, 2010; Hicks, 2012; Marques et al., 2017). Our case study of the UK’s Research Excellence Framework (REF) provides fresh and detailed analysis of the genesis of this system, shedding light on the intended and unintended consequences for educational research from 1986 to 2014.

Thematic programs appear as tightly coupled to political priorities, aiming to find solutions to specific, often politically defined, problems and to inform policymaking more generally. At the national level, several countries have adopted the structure of *thematic programs* in the governance of ER. The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBWF), previously a hesitant actor in educational (research) governance due to German federalism, launched the major *Framework Programme for the Promotion of Empirical Educational Research* (Zapp & Powell, 2016). In British educational research policy, programs such as *The Learning Society* (1996-2000) and the *Teaching and Learning Research Programme* (TLRP) (2000-2011) attracted considerable attention from other countries due to the volume of funding, ambitious goals and substantive coverage. In Norway, the program for *udanningsforskning* (PUF), from 1989, funded more than 70 research projects (Lauglo, 1994), and since the beginning of the twenty-first century, a large number of programs had been funded under a thematic rationale (see Chapter 4). At the supranational level, the EU has funded multiple rounds of the EU’s *Framework Programme* (EUFP) since 1984, with educational research, within other fields of social sciences, explicitly funded since 1994. Such *programmification*, as we will define and explicate it in the next chapter, is not entirely new in research policy. Large state-commissioned funding pools had in an earlier period been used to boost research in health, information technology, and, of course, military technology. To see such hefty and sudden intervention in education, however, not only shows the paramount importance attached to education in contemporary societies, it should also prompt us to analyze the consequences in store for educational researchers.

Unprecedented investments or significant redirections have led to a massive expansion of educational research infrastructures in various countries – and at the supranational level. Yet, such blessings come at a price. Funding, channeled through thematic programs, is often of short duration, leading to young scholar generations whose educational research careers are often more dependent on specific programs and projects and the data(sets) funded by them, and sometimes less on their own original questions. Moreover, such programs not only boost educational research infrastructure in concrete organizational terms, but also set the research agenda by incentivizing certain rationales, methodologies, objects and themes of research on education (Zapp et al, 2017). This has tremendous impact on

the cognitive development of the individuals, research groups and disciplines involved.

In this book, we seek to understand better the impact of higher education policy and more specifically educational research policy on the shape and approaches of educational research and scholarship in a number of different national contexts and settings. To what extent and in which ways have such newer policies managed to alter the direction of existing research traditions and configurations, especially of theoretical and methodological approaches in a multidisciplinary field?

Examining the main drivers for such particular policies reveals the extent to which these are local, national or regional – and how they reflect global developments. With our selection of case studies, we map processes of convergence and of divergence as we analyze the underlying dynamics of the relationship of research policy with the educational sciences in the case-study countries and the EU. Concretely, in the concluding section of the book, we compare the differential dynamics in our theoretically guided sample of countries of different size and with different educational research traditions that have, furthermore, chosen different strategies to reform the governance of educational research. Our explicit ambition is to draw lessons for research policymaking in the field of educational research and scholarship, as we uncover and compare both intended and unintended consequences of contrasting policy directives in our cases over the past several decades.

The far-reaching trends analyzed in the following chapters rely on in-depth country case studies of educational research landscapes in three highly distinct, yet prophetic countries. Explicit comparisons of the shifts in contents of educational research as well as its governance in these 'three worlds' of educational research are then embedded in a broader analysis of the specific social and policy contexts, providing an important contextualization of the country results. We complement the within-case national perspectives with an investigation of the emergence of a supranational, European research area in education that has received too little attention. We dedicate an in-depth analysis to this novel, increasingly important level of research governance, portraying one of the most important European research governance instruments: the EU's Framework Programme. Moreover, similar to our country case studies, we ask to what extent these international and highly symbolic projects funded through EU schemes have shaped the cognitive or epistemic development of educational research over the past several decades. In examining the new governance of educational research, we combine and compare multiple cases, levels and disciplines in a comprehensive analysis.

Overview of the Book

This book contributes to our understanding of the causes, processes and consequences of the changing science-society and science policy contracts in educational research in different national and supranational contexts. We account for such variation through an institutionalist approach that stresses dynamic and complex processes of change. The first chapter introduces our theoretical framework and presents our research design, engaging multiple methods and types of data. As briefly reviewed above, various scholarly fields have addressed issues of institutional change in higher education and research, including the sociology of science and knowledge as well as scholarship on governance and public administration. Our own approach is mainly informed by several variants of neo-institutionalism, stressing the institutional character of education and educational research, while enriching it with more governance-related accounts. This approach enables us to pay attention to actors and power necessary to explain the governance of educational systems and research and direct attention also to developments of various cultural-cognitive and normative mechanisms that reshape organizational forms and subunits.

We also explain the complexity of the transformations through a careful selection of cases in which we as a multicultural, multilingual team of scholars could conduct in-depth research. We believe that, to varying degrees, most of the conditions described above are at play in all of the four cases, yet we focus on those changes that are most salient and insightful in the specific settings.

Thus, the empirical chapters analyze the transformation of ER in four distinct cases, and stress in particular one mechanism for each case – cognitive, normative or regulative. That choice relies on the attempt to diminish the complexity of certain phenomena and to allow a deeper understanding of the process analyzed. Nevertheless, in the comparison chapter (Chapter 6) we delve into the discussion of the three mechanisms in a comparative perspective among the case studies, including the supranational case of the EU Framework Programme.

In Chapter 2, we trace the emergence and consolidation of a new generation of educational researchers in Germany back to the TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) and PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) 'shock'. The rise of this new empirical-analytical scholarship in education has marked a paradigm, in our institutional terms, a *cultural-cognitive* shift in Germany, aided by much political support, professional mobilization, and a favorable and inspiring international environment emphasizing relevance, evidence and metrics. Side effects of such a high dose of 'empirical' research remedy can be felt everywhere: in politics, where unrealistic expectations about the benefit of promoting research for evidence could only lead to an unpleasant sobering up. In the context of traditional humanities-based, hermeneutics-oriented pedagogy as in Germany, ambivalence and critiques against the new

empirical educational 'service science' abound; and in the empirical educational research community itself, where the inflation of the 2000s has now ebbed, a slimmer, yet more consolidated infrastructure is left behind.

Chapter 3 focuses on the UK and on the *normative* pressures on educational research emanating from the institutionalization of the Research Excellence Framework (REF). Here, the reactions from departments of education and researchers are our main concern, as well as questions about how such normative pressures are transformed into new logics of legitimacy in the British educational research landscape. Our claim that the UK has taken a pioneering role in reforming higher education to be more aligned with markets, seen in rising tuition fees and evaluation of research, takes little convincing. Prominently, the UK's research evaluation system is one of the earliest and most thoroughly institutionalized systems of its kind in the world. Now in its seventh round, the REF has been repeatedly extended and modified. Policymakers, in their ongoing quest to boost excellence, accountability and internationalization, have continued to make use of this instrument to attempt to enhance transparency, ratings and rankings, and, most importantly, use these peer-review evaluations as the basis for the allocation of funding. The intended and unintended consequences of REF are far-reaching, ranging from selective faculty recruitment and publishing behavior to the accumulation of funding, and stratification within the British higher education system.

In contrast to these large and more prominent European country cases, Chapter 4 directs attention to Norway, a country with a complex relationship to Europe, but one with the resources to invest heavily in the expansion of university structures and the creation of knowledge. Norwegian (educational) research and development has experienced unprecedented structural expansion over the past two decades. The Norwegian government, via the Ministry of Education and Research and the Research Council of Norway (RCN), tightly coupled to it, has been highly active in both funding and large-scale, long-term planning of ER, including thematic choices. In particular, we shed light on the role of the *regulative* mechanisms in such forms as successive thematic programs or the comprehensive publication database rating all Norwegian research.

Our fourth case is, in many respects, unique (Chapter 5). Much scholarship has treated the supranational EU government as an increasingly relevant actor in shaping national policymaking and discourse. In such accounts of multi-level or pluriscalar governance, the EU is conceptualized as a driver of change advancing an agenda often in opposition to national priorities, although it relies heavily on national representatives to establish and carry out its principles. Here, we approach the EU as an educational research area or field in its own right. We sketch the structures and networks of the educational section of the emerging European Research Area, looking at the European Commission's Framework Programmes and their

consequences for the social network structure and cognitive development of European educational research.

The final part (Chapters 6-8) of the book brings together these cases on different levels and from different regions of Europe to compare and discover common trends and contextual specificities, especially relating to the development of different modes of governance and the impacts of the chosen mechanisms. If in the individual chapters we privilege the fine-tuned analysis of the consequences, intended or not, of a singular instrument, stressing one mechanism, we then aim to analyze comparatively the effects of diverse governance instruments (large-scale assessments, research evaluation, thematic programs) and mechanisms (cognitive, normative and regulative) that are intrinsically connected with them among the four case studies (Chapter 6).

Given the lack of studies that focus analysis on the contents of research itself (but see e.g. Tight, 2013; Zierer et al, 2013; Ertl et al, 2015), we investigate projects from thematic research programs in the four cases and shed some light on the convergence or divergence of educational research agendas across levels (Chapter 7).

We conclude with an outlook on the future of ER in Germany, the UK, Norway and across Europe, building upon the findings gathered from these contrasting cases and the in-depth analysis of the increasingly significant European level. We point to future research directions and questions to address the challenges of mapping the reshaped field of educational research.