

toho, zda tento přístup lze použít i pro vyhodnocení klimatu vysokoškolské výuky, je základní otázkou této kapitoly. Na ni autorka odpovídá záporně, protože tak, jak je evaluace nastavená, zdaleka nepostihuje některá základní témata a problematický je rovněž způsob distribuce formulářů, neinformovanost studentů i celková netransparentnost evaluace.

Na závěr mám jednu obecnou poznámku k recenzovaným publikacím. V dnešní době existuje velký tlak na publikační činnost akademiků,

kteří jsou podle ní hodnoceni – tento fakt zmiňují na mnoha místech opakovaně také autoři obou knih. Nepochybně i oni se s ním musí vyrovnávat a reagovat na něj. Přestože je tento tlak velký, každá publikace by měla projít kritickým editorským či redakčním posouzením z hlediska soudržnosti textu, struktury i jazyka. I v tomto případě by podobná korekce velmi prospěla.

Michaela Šmídová

Jan Kohoutek

A Long Night's Journey into the Day.

Implementation of Czech Policy on Higher Education Quality Assurance

Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2011.

The recent publication “A Long Night's Journey into the Day – Implementation of Czech Policy on Higher Education Quality Assurance”, by Jan Kohoutek, takes an implementation analysis approach to understanding the role of the State in shaping higher education policies – specifically quality assurance in the Czech Republic. It is a data-rich publication, where Kohoutek questions the traditional top-down vs. bottom-up dichotomy, particularly Cerych and Sabatier's stages which he contends “is best confined to heuristic purposes”.

Quality assurance in Central and Eastern Europe is one of the author's main areas of expertise and the Czech case is a good case to apply an implementation analysis and improve our understanding of the role played by different actors because of the dramatic changes these systems witnessed after the fall of communism (e.g. increased demand, privatization and the shift towards Western European models, also in the context of the Bologna process). This is a highly readable and well-structured publication, which uses a variety of theoretical and conceptual underpinnings to make its point.

First, the book provides a methodical overview of system-level instruments for higher education policy on quality assurance in the Czech Republic. The Author uses

Vedung's typology of regulatory, economic/funding, and informational policy instruments to analyze four key instruments, including accreditation, the Higher Education Development Fund (HEDF), the Development Programmes (DP), and the platform for disseminating good practice. Vedung's typology allows these instruments to be clearly categorized both hierarchically (where accreditation can be seen as a pre-condition for HEDF and DP funding eligibility) and chronologically. By covering this variety of system-level policies and applying Vedung's typology, Kohoutek addresses the often-mentioned criticism of evaluating different policy instruments as unrelated to each other. The four instruments are systematically analyzed according to five dimensions, namely (a) reasons, (b) functioning (c) actors involved, (d) effects and (e) achievements and limitations.

Second, the interpretation of the policy implementation process is innovative because it takes into account its multi-dimensionality, and is grounded in different theoretical approaches such as the Advocacy Coalition and policy action continuum concepts. This approach helps overcome the traditional policy design vs. implementation divide, and produces a very exhaustive analysis.

Third, the choice of using the "instrument-context approach" (i.e. examining individual policy

instruments in their contexts) is useful to understand the question at hand (implementation of quality assurance policies). Moreover, in combination with the theoretical and conceptual points mentioned above, it produces an implementation framework that is generalizable to other areas of policy.

These features, amongst others, lead to clear and useful conclusions and options for successful policy implementation and for understanding policy implementation in changing times. Although he focuses on quality assurance in higher education – indeed his stated (and accomplished) proposition is to “enhance the theory development of higher education implementation research” – it is not only higher education scholars who can benefit from Kohoutek's work. His book is a timely publication that can be of relevance for researchers and practitioners interested in policy implementation generally and quality assurance specifically.

The book includes eight chapters (plus references, list of abbreviations, conceptual framework (chart), and annexes). It is a very dense and complex story. Yet, it remains clearly elaborated and highly readable. The first chapters detail the research questions and the theoretical propositions. Then, there follows a description of the four policy implementation instruments, an analysis of the same, leading to concluding reflections and recommendations for

policy options. In Chapter 6 a number of tables are presented, which provide useful summaries of the instruments (their achievements and limitations), a comparison across the instruments, and a synthesis of the role of different actors in the quality assurance implementation processes. Again, these are valuable and content-rich examples which can be of use for studies on policy implementation more generally – although here they apply to the case of quality assurance.

The volume then turns to look in some detail at the well-known question of accountability and trust in policy implementation. In line with the theoretical approach taken all along, it breaks with the conventional top-down vs. bottom-up interpretation to favour the view that “[...] accountability and trust are contextually important for the design and implementation of higher education policies on quality”.

This contributes to the conclusion where a set of three practical policy options for higher education quality assurance in the Czech Republic are presented. These options, founded on the theoretical underpinnings mentioned earlier (and particularly on the “instrument-context approach”), propose different potential “mixes” of the four implementation instruments described

throughout the book, and differ in the extent of accountability and trust in the actors. They include (a) the so-called “accountability land”, with a key role for the Accreditation Commission, (b) the “moderate instrumentation”, where the other instruments are more prominent, and (c) the “trustworthy partnerships”, where accreditation is considered an instrument to be handled fully by the academic community. The options are then assessed based on the Delphi method.

Overall, this is a valuable and well-written contribution where the author manages to give structure to a very complex topic. As earlier publications by Jan Kohoutek, this one, too, should find its place on the shelf of scholars and practitioners interested in Quality Assurance developments in Europe. But moreover, it should not be neglected by those who, without specific expertise on in quality assurance – or indeed in developments in the Czech Republic – wish to deepen their knowledge on and acquire tools to understand policy implementation. This is, perhaps, one of the key added values of this publication, i.e. its generalizability for those interested in policy implementation at large, during times of change.

Leon Cremonini