

## **Higher Education Buffer Institutions in Sweden: from central planning to evaluation and control**

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Compared with other European countries the Swedish governmental offices are quite small and in all areas government have created buffer institutions or agencies in order to support the government and to implement the decisions by the parliament and government. Sweden has also a long tradition with buffer institutions within the higher education system. The role of these institutions has however changed as the higher education system has changed. In my short presentation I will outline the changing role of The National Agency for Higher Education. In the strong centralised system that characterised higher education before 1993 the role of the agency was to have the responsibility for central planning for both curricula, number of students and budget. When the system changed in 1993 and gave independence for higher education institutions when it came to curricula, courses, appointment of teachers and degree awarding the role of the agency changed to be responsible for evaluation, accreditation, legal inspection, statistics and follow up studies.