

This doctoral thesis takes up the theme of policy implementation in higher education. More specifically, the thesis aims to analyse the implementation of Czech system-level policy on higher education quality assurance in the period from 1990 until 2010. This policy is analysed through the implementation instruments: accreditation, the Higher Education Development Fund, the Development Programmes, and the platform for dissemination of examples of good practice. The conceptual framework guiding the enquiry combines insights from the policyaction continuum concept, the instrumental approach to policy implementation, including Vedung's typology of policy instruments, and Actor-Centred Institutionalism. The enquiry undertaken in the thesis attests to the theoretical and empirical obsolescence of the Cerych and Sabatier framework, traditionally used in analysing higher education policy implementation. Furthermore, the enquiry identifies the stick-carrot-sermon instrument set-up as a distinct implementation style. As a result of the enquiry, several shortcomings are identified that limit the utilisation of the four implementation instruments, and recommendations are formulated on how to ameliorate them in policy practice.