

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND PUBLIC POLICY DEGREE PROGRAMMES IN EUROPE: THE ROAD FROM BOLOGNA

Edited by
György Jenei
Károly Mike

The logo for NISPAcee, consisting of three stylized, overlapping wavy lines in white and blue.

NISPAcee

THE NETWORK OF INSTITUTES AND
SCHOOLS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Public Administration and Public Policy Degree Programmes in Europe:
The Road from Bologna

NISPAcee
The Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration
in Central and Eastern Europe

**PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND
PUBLIC POLICY DEGREE PROGRAMMES
IN EUROPE:
THE ROAD FROM BOLOGNA**

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July 2008

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Published by
NISPAcee Press

Polianky 5
841 01 Bratislava 42
Slovak Republic
tel/fax: 421 2 6428 5557
e-mail: nispa@nispa.sk
<http://www.nispa.sk>

Printed in Slovakia

ISBN 978-80-89013-37-1

This publication was funded by LGI/OSI (The Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative, Open Society Institute), Budapest, Hungary.

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Introduction

The work leading up to the publication of this book began when a NISPAcee proposal to establish a *Working Group on Degree Programs of Public Administration/ Public Policy Education in the Post-Socialist Countries* was accepted by the Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative Open Society Institute.

The new Working Group aimed at contributing to the fulfillment of one of NISPAcee's key missions: improving educational programs by assisting human capacity building and institutional development *through learning from each other*.

Teachers, instructors and persons responsible for (modules of) educational programmes at institutions of higher education offering degree programmes in public administration / public policy were invited to join. The instrument of sharing institutional and personal successes and failures was to be utilised in order to promote professional development. It was not the success or failure in itself that was significant from this perspective, but the route that had been taken, the obstacles that had to be overcome, and the factors that have been helpful or damaging.

Four types of paper were invited under the main theme "Looking back and looking ahead: past and present priorities in developing quality programs within CEE institutes of higher education":

- Papers that cover key issues of past and future development of degree programmes of PA / PP education.
- Papers that review the problems emerging during the implementation of the Bologna process in the field of PA / PP first and second cycle education.
- Papers that cover the development of a specialisation or a module or a subject (course) of a PA / PP programme.
- Papers that review experiences of present or past international support projects (Tempus, Tacis, USAID, etc.)

In 2006, based on the evaluation of the first research results, the organisers came to the conclusion that this topic necessitated a broad European approach because the core value of the working group's efforts was the comparison of similarities and differences among European countries, regardless of their geopolitical position. This implied that, for the research project truly to succeed, scholars from

Western Europe had to be invited to join. NISPAcee therefore initiated collaboration with the European Group of Public Administration (EGPA), which also received the financial support of the Local Governmental Initiative. The second phase of the research thus began.

As a result, the present book is the fruit of co-operation between EGPA and NISPAcee. The leadership of EGPA and NISPAcee came to an agreement in February 2008 on a general co-operation between the two organisations. In fact, the first joint action was a conference, held from January 31 to February 1 in Tallinn. It was the jointly organised Trans-European Dialogue on the concept of the Neo-Weberian state. Our book is a further step in this co-operation.

It seeks to follow the 'spirit' of both organisations. EGPA's main goals include the development of public administration, contingent on the European environment, fostering comparative studies and the development of administrative theory within a European perspective, and creating networks related to common research interests amongst European professionals. In short, EGPA stands for a distinctly *European* perspective. NISPAcee is an active association in the European Administrative Space, and an open partner interested in further close co-operation and project-oriented collaboration with other European PA organisations and institutes such as EIPA, EGPA, EPAN, EAPAA, SIGMA, etc. Based on the accumulated experiences and prestige, NISPAcee is a bridge between Western, Central and Eastern countries in Europe. In a „wider Europe“, NISPAcee has a special capacity to link the Balkan, East and Caucasus regions. It serves as a bridge, not only for the transfer of information, but also as regards projects, how to serve, how to use experiences, how to launch new ideas.

The objective of this book is to analyse and evaluate recent reforms of public policy and management programs in different parts of Europe, with special emphasis on the difficulties faced by countries in Eastern Central and Eastern Europe. It is thus based on the conviction that European countries face some common challenges and can learn from one another. At the same time, it seeks to highlight differences both between and within different regions on the Continent. The volume also follows the tradition of openness to the global academic and professional community that has been characteristic to both organisations. American scholars have made valuable contributions to the book. Moreover, a chapter looks beyond Europe and discusses the experience of non-European countries around the Mediterranean.

The main conclusion of the chapters is that in the domain of Public Administration – similarly to other fields of European Higher Education – the *Bologna Declaration* resulted in substantial changes. It is well-known that the Bologna Process aims to establish a European Area of Higher Education by 2010. According to the Declaration, the following objectives have to be attained by 2010, in order to establish a European area of higher education and to promote the European system of higher education world-wide:

- **Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees;**
- **Adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate:** Access to the second cycle shall require successful completion of first cycle studies, lasting a minimum of three years. The degree awarded after the first cycle shall also be relevant to the European labour market as an appropriate level of qualification. The second cycle should lead to the master and/or doctorate degree;
- **Establishment of a system of credits** – such as in the ECTS system – as a proper means of promoting the most widespread student mobility. Credits could also be acquired in non-higher education contexts, including lifelong learning, provided they are recognised by the receiving universities concerned;
- **Promotion of mobility** by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement. Students should gain easier access to study and training opportunities outside their home country. Teachers, researchers and administrative staff should receive recognition and valorisation of periods spent in a European context researching, teaching and training, without prejudicing their statutory rights;
- **Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance** with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies;
- **Promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education**, particularly with regard to curricular development, inter-institutional co-operation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research.

The first part of the book provides an overview of some of the most important changes in the aftermath of Bologna. Particular emphasis is placed on the functions of international scholarly co-operation, issues of accreditation and doctoral programs. The second part of the book contains country reports of PA education in EU member states. The third part extends the analysis beyond the European Union to Eastern Europe. The book contains an analysis of a European Education Network consisting of various Universities from Western and Eastern Europe. The final chapter discusses non-European countries in the Mediterranean.

The chapters of the book contain different approaches to the evaluation of past efforts, the overview of the current situation, and the analysis of the avenues of future developments. With this diversity, the book itself represents a European value. Only this diversity can provide opportunities for an efficient and effective co-operation.

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On the Way to Bologna: Developments in Public Policy Programs in Europe

Jak Jabes

1. Introduction

As part of establishing a Europe-wide higher education policy, member countries produced the Bologna Declaration in 1999, built on the Sorbonne Declaration of the previous year, to stress the role universities would play in creating the European higher education area. The EHEA is on its way to becoming a reality. Behind the launch of the Bologna process are two main considerations: employability and mobility. These two dimensions require that across the higher learning institutions, some degree of coherence is found to make systems of education comparable and compatible.

In order to be made operational, the process has to rely on quality assurance and the promotion of necessary European dimensions in higher education. Included are institutional co-operation, curricular development, and the establishment of a system of credits, among others.

Reaching targets to bring about the EHEA requires inter-university co-operation, as well as reliance on non-governmental European organisations with competence on higher education. It necessitates intergovernmental co-operation as well as reliance on existing networks of professionals with a say on quality of education.¹

The Bologna process is strictly a European endeavour attempting to put some harmony into higher education on the continent. However, globalisation will now start forcing a similar process across the globe. The Internet has facilitated cross-institution learning, as not only course syllabi, but whole course contents from reputable institutions are found on the web. Informed and inspired from this knowledge, institutions around the globe and academics teaching in them can now design cutting edge courses with more ease. Global rapprochement will force Bologna-like processes on all educational institutions of the world.

¹ See the Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999.

This paper argues that networks of professionals are important tools that can enhance the achievement of EHEA and in the process, help attain the Bologna process. It builds a case around networks of academic professionals, as well as providing examples from networks of public administration specialists. We develop the case for Europe, but also provide an example of a viable and useful such network from Asia.

While we do not claim to be inclusive of all educational disciplines, we think that the examples of tasks undertaken by European networks of public administration education which we discuss in this paper have some degree of portability and universality, especially for a more universal process of accreditation. Thus, it can become a model that can be diffused to other fields and/or more global endeavors. Finally, the paper draws some conclusions on how realistic it is to attain the Bologna process or similar universalistic attempts.

2. Public Administration Networks in Europe

The field of public administration studies in Europe is vast. Along with the traditional name of the discipline, which is public administration, many variants have sprung up. They include: Public Management, Public Policy, Public Affairs, Governance and so on. While such titles all differentiate the main discipline slightly, at the end of the day if a Bologna Process is to dominate, one needs to establish a dialogue among such schools and work towards some degree of compatibility and comparability of degrees. One place to start is by looking at how professionals in this field have co-operated. A number of professional networks of public administration academics exist in Europe as described below.

2.1 European Group of Public Administration

The European Group of Public Administration (EGPA) has been in existence since 1974 as a regional group of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS).² It was slow in getting off the ground in its early days, and was basically managed more like a guild of friends. EGPA has seen a renaissance, starting towards the end of the last century and has become a serious professional organisation whose objectives include:

- to organise and encourage the exchange of information on developments in the theory and practice of public administration;
- to foster comparative studies and the development of public administrative theory within a European perspective;

² The IIAS has also within it the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA). It is interesting to note that IASIA, while the only global network of its kind, does not include accreditation as an activity it undertakes.

- to facilitate the application of innovative ideas, methods, and techniques in public administration; and
- to include young teachers, researchers, as also civil servants in its activities.³

From its modest beginnings, EGPA has grown into an organisation which has quickly incorporated members from new countries of Europe, and has included them in its steering committee. The Bologna declaration has led EGPA to consider taking on the accreditation process but in the end, it delegated to another network to undertake this task.

2.2 Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe

NISPACEE was established in 1994 as a response to growing requirements of the then so-called transition countries' need to find ways of sharing their common past and exciting future with each other. Against a *zeitgeist* that wanted to cooperate only with the western European countries, NISPACEE was founded to reinforce the view that transition countries had much more to share among each other, and borrow from each other than from the West to advance educational initiatives in the public administration field.

When the so-called 'iron curtain' fell in Europe, the former countries under Soviet dominance began a process of transition to market economy and democracy. This process was, from its outset, supported by the European Union, and the U.S. In the field of public administration, a number of donors, led by the European Union provided funds for the launch of the SIGMA programme within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Working through OECD member countries, this programme collaborated with the central government ministries in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEECs). One of the working methods it utilised has been the annual or bi-annual gatherings of networks of professionals, which is very similar to the use of committees in the OECD parlance.

The SIGMA program ensured that auditors of the CEECs met together with representative auditors from the rest of Europe. It held meetings of budget directors, heads of civil services, and heads of prime ministers' offices from the CEE region. The aim of these networks was to ensure dialogue on the pressing issues the countries faced and exchange developments with their European or OECD counterparts. In these very important years prior to membership in the European Union, when laws, systems, as well as attitudes and behaviours had to be aligned to European Union requirements, these meetings proved very useful to participants. Not only did they learn from each other and their European counterparts, but they also advised each other on how to advance reforms and bring about changes.

³ <http://www.iiasiisa.be/egpa/agquest.htm>

Strong in its belief in the usefulness of Networks of professionals, the SIGMA program influenced the unofficial meetings of some schools of public administration that were being brought together under the auspices of the Austrian government to coalesce into an official network. Thus, in January 1994, the seeds of NISPACEE were sown in Bratislava. The basic premise behind the NISPACEE Network was the dictum that the CEECs would best learn from each other in the field of public administration. It would be a while before cases written in western schools could resonate in the CEECs. Instead, material developed in these countries, which often reflected a similar political culture and public administration system could easily be transposed from one country to another.

From its inception, NISPACEE lent importance to a number of activities which aimed to generate a common experience for the CEECs. These included:

- Summer schools where young and old faculty would be trained in teaching and research of key areas of a public administration education. Emphasis was put on IT, Public Management, Public Policy among others;
- Workshops such as a case writing one to produce pedagogic material;
- Exchanges of faculty and students to show that countries were not peculiar and different. In a sense, of course each country is different; but, they also shared similarities due to their communist past and exchanges highlighted both aspects.

During its first years, NISPACEE received donor support. With donor fatigue settling in for CEECs, the network shifted its energies to undertaking programmes and projects for which it bid for services. This approach has been quite productive for NISPACEE, which has grown over the years in membership and scope of work. The growth and interest of the academic community of public administration of the CEE region for an organisation such as NISPACEE is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1
Membership in NISPACee⁴

Year	Institutional	Associate	Observers/ Individual
1994	20	5	12
1995	34	9	23
1996	57/17 countries	13/11 countries	54/26 countries
1997	70/17 countries	19/11 countries	79/26 countries
1998	83/20 countries	21/13 countries	115/27 countries
1999	93/20 countries	23/14 countries	140/27 countries
2000	113/21 countries	31/13 countries	197/27 countries

⁴ Data for all tables have been supplied by the Secretariats of respective Networks.

2001	113/21 countries	31/13 countries	220/35 countries
2002	121/23 countries	31/13 countries	222/35 countries
2003	121/23 countries	32/14 countries	224/36 countries
2004	126/23 countries	32/14 countries	231/36 countries
2005	126/23 countries	32/14 countries	231/36 countries
2006	126/23 countries	32/14 countries	4/4 countries*
2007	128/24 countries	32/14 countries	7/5 countries

* In 2006, NISPACEE changed the Observer status, which was free, to a paying one, which may explain the drop in that type of membership.

Institutional members in NISPACEE come from the CEE region (as opposed to associate members, which come from outside the region). Membership is open to appropriately designated academic units within universities, to larger educational and training institutions, to independent non-profit research institutions (e.g. think-tanks), or to governmental institutions and agencies.

Table 2
Attendance at NISPACEE Conferences

Conference	Country	Date	# of participants
1 st NISPACEE Annual Meeting*	Vienna	January, 1993	12
2 nd NISPACEE Annual Meeting	Bratislava	January, 1994	35
3 rd NISPACEE Annual Conference	Bled, Slovenia	March 23-25, 1995	75
4 th NISPACEE Annual Conference	Tirana, Albania	March 28-30, 1996	50
5 th NISPACEE Annual Conference	Tallinn, Estonia	April 23-26, 1997	105
6 th NISPACEE Annual Conference	Prague, Czech Republic	March 18-20, 1998	150
7 th NISPACEE Annual Conference	Sofia, Bulgaria	March 25-27, 1999	120
8 th NISPACEE Annual Conference	Budapest, Hungary	April 13-15, 2000	203
9 th NISPACEE Annual Conference	Riga, Latvia	May 10-12, 2001	230
10 th NISPACEE Annual Conference	Cracow, Poland	April 25-27, 2002	250
11 th NISPACEE Annual Conference	Bucharest, Romania	April 10-12, 2003	207
12 th NISPACEE Annual Conference	Vilnius, Lithuania	May 13-15, 2004	257
13 th NISPACEE Annual Conference	Moscow, Russia	May 19-21, 2005	243
14 th NISPACEE Annual Conference	Ljubljana, Slovenia	May 11 - 13, 2006	224
15 th NISPACEE Annual Conference	Kyiv, Ukraine	May 17 - 19, 2007	242

* The first two annual gatherings were called meetings, as the Network was not officially constituted yet.

Tables 1 and 2 show that since its inception, NISPACEE has grown tremendously. Attendance at conferences now hovers around 200 to 250 participants, and membership is over 125 institutions from 24 countries of an extended CEE region. These are extremely healthy growth figures, when one compares them with an institution such as IASIA or EGPA. IASIA has been in existence since 1971, and is a global network whose membership consists of 170 institutions in 70 countries. EGPA has 65 member institutions which are called corporate members. Compared with that, the NISPACEE numbers show that as a network, it has devised programmes responding to needs of institutions in the region, which have joined in membership in quite large numbers. Interestingly, NISPACEE executive discussed accreditation of Public Administration programs as a task it thought the Network should undertake much before the Bologna Process was launched; however, resource constraints and lack of experience of members stood in the way of accomplishment.

2.3 European Public Administration Network

The European Public Administration Network (EPAN) was founded with the objective of stimulating and promoting Europeanisation in teaching Public Administration. According to their website, “EPAN provides a platform for exchange of information concerning Europeanisation and facilitates dialogue between Public Administration teaching institutions in Europe. EPAN is concerned with facilitating and coordinating activities with the Europeanisation of Public Administration (PA) as their main objective.”⁵ EPAN was formed in 1997 and currently has 99 members from 27 countries.

When it comes to the accreditation process, EPAN has decided to defer to the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA), with which it shares principles and approaches. It reinforces the work of EAPAA by helping with funding as well as with a discussion of ideas related to the accreditation process.

2.4 European Association for Public Administration Accreditation

The European Association for Public Administration Accreditation has the objective of implementing and maintaining a European system for the Accreditation of Academic Public Administration Programs. The Association was established with the primary goal of meeting the objectives of the Bologna Process. The EAPAA publicity documents say that, “EAPAA was founded in 1999 and the first General Meeting was held in May 2000. During this meeting, criteria and procedures for accreditation were decided upon. The first accreditation process was performed in 2001. Up to 2005, 22 programmes of 12 members were accredited. The Accredita-

5 <http://bl.ul.ie/epan/generalinformation/about/>

tion Committee, an independent body of recognised Public Administration professors from all over Europe, decides upon accreditation.”⁶

The current membership of the EAPAA comes from established members and management of EGPA EPAN, and NISPACEE. Why a new network was needed when both EGPA and EPAN exist to look after the interests of countries which are European members, is not clear. Nevertheless, since 2000, EAPAA has continued accreditation activities in line with the Bologna Process. It has used members of NISPACEE to help in the process, and has mandated that those serving on an accreditation committee be trained prior to undertaking their tasks.

2.5 Observations on European Networks

If we count NISPACEE as a European network, there are now four networks of public administration professionals which focus on teaching, training, accreditation and research in public administration and governance. EPAN, EAPAA and EGPA are focused mostly on European member countries, while NISPACEE has a wider geographic stretch that includes transition countries in the former Soviet republics of Asia, candidate countries to the European Union as well as recent member countries. It is reasonable to question whether Europe has a need for all these networks, and the degree to which the work, objectives and mission overlap. Specifically, when it comes to accreditation and the Bologna process, was it necessary to put in place yet another network especially when most of the membership of these four networks are the same? This overlap in membership also leads to some problematic issues which we shall discuss at the end of this paper.

The immediate needs which seem to have given rise to EPAN, which puts emphasis on pedagogic concerns is probably the fact that EGPA was specifically research focused. However, it is not clear why and how this second network was necessary given the overlap of membership in both organizations. To that add EAPAA which has come into existence only after the Bologna declaration, and one needs to ask why Europe should tolerate these three different networks with similar objectives. Given a significant overlap of institutional membership and more importantly of the same names that often come up in the administrative instances of these networks, could it not have been simpler to merge them and create one strong network?

3. Network of Asia Pacific Schools and Institutes of Public Administration and Governance

Networks have to be dynamic entities, but also need to have the motivation and funding necessary to undertake their work. Asia did not really have an equivalent of the European networks. A network called Eastern Regional Organisation for Pub-

6 <http://www.eapaa.org/OffDocs/EAPAAFlyerZw0708.pdf>

lic Administration (EROPA)⁷ exists, but it has always been strapped for cash, did not unite institutions but rather is a loose federation of a dozen countries. In other words, countries are members, and it is not clear how institutions within countries join in activities. Conferences are not systematically held.

In 2003, the Asian Development Bank committed technical assistance funds in order to launch a Network of Public Administration Schools and Institutes in Asia and the Pacific. Given the number of countries and institutions in these continents, the task was daunting. It involved over 30 countries and potentially over a thousand organisations. More importantly, if such a network saw the light of day its sustainability would be in question, given the paucity of funds available for this endeavour and the well-known resource constraints of most educational organisations in this region.

The NISPACEE experience pointed to the fact that most of the institutions coming out of the so-called transition countries shared similarities. They had all lived under a Soviet-influenced communist regime, and constructed academic institutions which were highly controlled by the state. In most of these institutions, public administration was closely tied to teachings of Marxism-Leninism. Beside this past similarity which they shared, institutions from the central and eastern European area had another similarity. Their countries aspired to become members of the European Union, and therefore as institutions they became part of this aspiration. They had to weed out remnants from the past, send their young and promising faculty quickly to European or US institutions for further training, and dispose of the old guard unwilling to change. In a sense there was some degree of homogeneity.

The situation in Asia and the Pacific is hardly similar. There are transition countries, but not in the same sense of Europe; large countries such as India and China, which, while economically successful, are quiet different from each other. Also, there are established democracies. Against this backdrop of heterogeneity, it was clear that a significant intellectual and financial investment would be required for a Network to take off.

The Network of Asia Pacific Schools and Institutes of Public Administration and Governance (NAPSIPAG) was launched in 2004 at a conference attended by 232 persons representing 92 institutions from 26 countries. Clearly, for a network getting off the ground, this was quite an accomplishment. However, without ADB's financial support, it would not have been possible to bring together such a number of people, and attempt to ensure, to the extent possible, representation from as many countries as possible, if not from all major institutions.

⁷ <http://www.eropa.org.ph/>

Table 3
Growth of NAPSIPAG

	2004	2005	2006	2007
Number of schools from the region who are members			37	34
Number of individuals who are members			31	39
Number of people attending conferences	232	159	110	159
Number of institutions attending conference	92	108	53	106
Number of countries represented in each conference	26	26	18	18
Number of papers presented in each conference	97	134	64	56
Number of publications (books)/year	1	1		
Number of Journal			1	1
Number of E-newsletters			1	1

NAPSIPAG has held conferences every year since its inception. While the attendance never reached the levels of the 2004 launching conference in Kuala Lumpur, there has been a steady and healthy interest. A Secretariat is housed in Malaysia's National Institute of Public Administration (INTAN), and has been receiving support from the Malaysian government. An active Steering Committee provides direction to the Secretariat. Very quickly, using modern technology, an electronic newsletter was put in place and INTAN publishes it with regularity. A website was started early in the process. An electronic journal, *Journal of Administration and Governance* was launched in 2006. Growth of this network is evident in the data presented in Table 3.

4. Usefulness of Public Administration Networks

Even if they are not set up directly for accreditation of academic programmes, or working on processes which concern the Bologna Declaration, public administration networks of the kind we described above can be useful in accomplishing a number of tasks. Among these we can list the following⁸:

- 1) Enhancing national capacity to promote good governance: Effective, transparent, and responsive governance is a key factor in promoting the economic and political well-being of countries and regions throughout the world. Pro-

⁸ For a discussion see Jabes, J. and Saldanha, C. Building Capacity for Sustainable Development in Asia: A Proposal to Network Public Administration Schools and Institutes. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration, June 2002, in Istanbul, Turkey; Jabes, J. The Importance of Professional Networks in Building Leadership for Modernisation and Shared Governance, Invited Keynote Address to the IASIA Annual Conference with the theme, "Building Leadership for Modernisation and Shared Governance," 12-18 July 2004, Seoul, Korea; Jabes, J (ed.), *The Role of Public Administration in Alleviating Poverty and Improving Governance*, Kuala Lumpur: INTAN, 2005.

professional networks can disseminate information about improving the effectiveness, transparency, and responsiveness of governments by enhancing the capacity of member organisations to provide the most effective education and training activities.

- 2) Strengthening member institutions: member institutions have, in almost all cases as their mission, the enhancement of the governance and administration capabilities of many of the individuals who will ultimately bear the responsibility for leading their respective nations. In a given region, however, the strength and quality of member institutions vary. Within a professional network, various activities can be sponsored to enhance the capacity of member organisations to both train people for and promote the highest standards of effective, transparent, and responsive governance.
- 3) Encouragement of improved professional competence: Through providing a forum for thoughtful and continuing communication, such networks help to encourage enhanced professional competence. However, such organisations do this in a variety of other ways. They often can significantly impact the standards of education occurring within training and educational programmes (both directly and indirectly) through encouraging the development of cutting-edge curriculum and by providing advanced training for those currently in the field.
- 4) Promoting knowledge about good governance: The field of public administration and public affairs generally, is one that generates knowledge that can have a very important impact on governmental policy and, as such, can be instrumental in the building of a democratic and prosperous society. By bringing together, under a broad umbrella, individuals concerned with educating current and future generations of students who will be responsible for managing the governments, such networks have the potential to impact on the well-being of the peoples of the region.
- 5) Creation of a professional identity and community: Certainly one of the most important purposes of establishing academic and professional networks of this type is to encourage the creation of a self-conscious professional community that brings together relevant individuals from throughout a country or a region and in so doing, enhances their ability to achieve the principal goals and objectives of their profession. In essence, such organisations help to create a sense of group identity and, in so doing, create critical intellectual networks.
- 6) Promoting of professional standards and ethics: Just as an individual's institution or country has an obligation to respect his or her rights to pursue teaching and research in an independent and objective fashion, individual professional educators also have a responsibility to each other, their students and their discipline as well as their institution and country to carry out such research in a responsible and ethical fashion. Professional networks can establish canons of ethical behaviour to guide individuals in a field, whether academic faculty or practitioner, and encourage the highest of standards and help define the respon-

sibilities incumbent upon an individual looked upon as possessing expertise in areas of great public importance.

- 7) Promotion of professional communication about good governance: Historically, one of the areas in which organizations of this type have always played an important role is by providing the means by which individuals in the field communicate new information and knowledge to each other and the general public, as well. This is done most frequently through the organization of annual conferences that bring individuals together and/or through the publication of professional journals and other forms of professional publications (books, occasional papers, etc).
- 8) Promoting the discipline of public administration: Professional networks of this type carry out many activities designed to encourage and support the disciplines which they represent. In some cases, this involves carrying out campaigns to encourage individuals to enter that particular field. In other cases, it may mean publicising the activities of those already in it.
- 9) Promoting and advancing teaching of public administration: Academics collaborate with each other, not only to advance research, but also to improve teaching methods. More and more syllabi are shared, teaching conferences are held, and the professional associations celebrate good teaching through significant recognition.
- 10) Promoting Accreditation: Individual members trained in the discipline of public administration, teaching and researching this field are most apt to judge other institutions in light of established common standards. This judgment can cover undergraduate as well as graduate education. In a fast globalising world, this can help with the transferability of educational credits obtained studying public administration, and help students not to lose time when they decide to pursue their education in more than one institution.
- 11) Promoting academic freedom: Issues of academic freedom are very important to the intellectual and practitioner community in every country and every discipline. However, in countries that have had experience with oppressive governance and in which democratic government currently remains relatively fragile - and especially in disciplines that are frequently the focus of governments that might wish to engage in oppressive behaviour - trans-national networks of academic institutions can provide some measure of assistance to individual faculty members by supporting their freedom to teach and conduct research in a manner consistent with the highest standards of professional integrity and independence. This can be very important both in terms of protecting the individual scholar's relationship to government officials as well as to the officials of his or her own university and department.

Clearly then, professional networks of public administration academics can put their weight behind an accreditation process because their members are highly

knowledgeable, care about advancing the discipline and improving teaching and research.

5. Some impediments to an Accreditation process using Professional Networks

The situation to which we alluded in Europe, of having four networks with significantly overlapping membership draws our attention to the fact that, even with the best of intentions, with well-rounded standards, it may still be difficult to maintain objectivity in the accreditation process as members are accrediting institutions of other member colleagues with whom they have worked together and exchanged in conferences, work groups and learned meetings over the years. This caution is one to bear in mind, especially in the early stages of the process.

One could argue that in the U.S.A. where the accreditation process is well in place for business and public affairs schools, the same problem exists. However, that accreditation process is about the quality of the degree programmes offered where institutions have to pass a threshold rather than a judgment which will influence mobility and employability of students as is the case in Europe. Accreditation in the U.S.A. means that institutions have submitted themselves to a rigorous voluntary process, which seems to be the case as well in Europe. In both continents, necessary precautions are taken in the configuration of site visit committees to avoid collusion.

Many public administration departments tend to be embedded in a larger university system, and thus may have their hands tied by this larger organisation whose tutelage they are under. This is all the more important because public administration schools are professional schools and as such, within a university system that tends to standardise, they may lose out in the tenure process or research grant figures. Many institutions have found a *modus operandi*, instituting non tenure tracks, or accepting less research revenue against consultancy income arrangements. An accreditation process examines a school or department often embedded in the larger university, and as such, some constraints might arise due to the university. These constraints might be more visible and felt within the Asian context.

The European educational landscape is very heterogeneous. This heterogeneity in both undergraduate and graduate education, to a large extent was responsible for the Bologna process. Independent schools such as the French ENA exist side by side in France with university programs. France is not the only country to have such an elite graduate school of public administration. Other European countries have emulated this model. So have some countries in Asia (e.g. India is one such example). By 2005, six years after its inception EAPAA had accredited only 22 programs. Of course, accreditation is done only if an institution requests it. The Bologna process clearly will result with more and more demands. It will be interesting to note,

however, the role and weight that the more established elite institutions will play in the process. It may well be that such institutions, while adhering to the accreditation process in order not to penalize their own students may opt out of key activities by forging other more global relationships such as the Global Public Policy Network (GPPN).⁹ After all, an elitist educational system is based on differences rather than similarities.

The heterogeneity that is present in Europe is also present even more strongly in Asia. The varied landscape of Asian political regimes has given rise to schools, institutes and universities which vastly differ in outlook, making accreditation even more problematic. Asia, like Europe or the USA also has its more elite institutions. They can differentiate themselves by forging links with institutions as prestigious as themselves.¹⁰ Unfortunately for Asia, the lever that has led to the Bologna Process is absent. The European Union, while a top heavy bureaucracy, holds strong swaying power over its member countries. The upshot is the Bologna Process, and for those interested in public administration, this means a focus on accreditation of degrees, courses and education facilitating students' mobility. This type of lever is absent in Asia. However, we have argued that globalisation will probably force all institutions to undertake Bologna type processes. In the case of Asia, NAPSIPAG can provide some standards, although in order to meet the exacting standards of the West, Asian schools will have to align themselves with each other, improve programme design and quality of delivery.

6. Conclusions

The Bologna Process is a significant reform of higher education in Europe. This reform will enable educational institutions in member countries and in the larger European space to a host of new possibilities in advancing education. Also, students will be able to change their educational institutions, sample programmes and courses in other European countries and will not be penalised for it. Mobility in higher education in Europe will be achieved.

The question of interest is whether such educational mobility, without penalising students will also be achieved in Asia and the rest of the world. We think that a more universal Bologna Process is possible, subject to quality standards imposed by joint cross-network co-operation. It should be feasible for key networks from different continents to co-operate in this process and design the standards necessary, as well as undertake the process. As yet, this may not be realistic, but there is persistent pressure for the graduates of universities to be able to pursue graduate

9 GPPN is a global public policy educational network bringing together SIPA (Columbia), Sciences Po (Paris), LKYSPP (Singapore) and LSE (London).

10 For example the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy is one of four members of the GPPN which is a closed network.

education with their credits recognised. It will be a few more years before Bologna takes shape and is diffused to all the major public administration education providers in Europe. Putting their experience to work in establishing the Bologna Process in public administration education, the European networks collaborating with their U.S. equivalents (NASPAA and APPAM) can help their Asian counterparts in paving the way for a universal accreditation process.

Four Functions of International Accreditation: The case of EAPAA and Public Administration in the Netherlands

Harry Daemen and Theo van der Krogt

Introduction

Maintaining the quality of education programmes requires exposure to discussion, external supervision and critique. National accreditations and other forms of external supervision can contribute to that purpose. But in the Dutch national context and in a relatively small discipline such as Public Administration (P.A.), most academics playing leading roles in academic programmes tend to know each other and each other's programmes. This probably applies to many other countries too. It can explain the tendency in the Netherlands to invite international academics to play the leading role in accreditation processes.

But still, as long as accreditation is carried out on a national basis, the chances of finding relevant differences between the various programmes are rather low. In The Netherlands the variations in quality and content between schools of Public Administration are minor. It is easy to understand how in this homogeneous world of Dutch academic P.A. programmes, national accreditations seldom come to surprising conclusions. It can even lead to exaggeration of small differences in programme or vision. Only by mirroring with the more varied international community of P.A. programmes, an adequate assessment of Dutch programmes is possible. International scrutiny can widen the perspective, point to new roads and, not unimportantly, contribute to a realistic self-appraisal.

Against this backdrop, the P.A. programme of the Erasmus University, Rotterdam and the University of Twente Enschede, each acting on its own, strived for international accreditation. The Erasmus University attempted to get accreditation from the strongest existing accreditation organisation, active in the domain of Public Administration: the NASPAA¹, active in the United States. In this process

1 NASPAA: National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration.

NASPAA did send, in 1998, a site visit team to Rotterdam, which came to very favourable conclusions about the Rotterdam P.A. programme. Nevertheless, accreditation by NASPAA turned out to be impossible: the rules of NASPAA were too strongly bound to the American legal and institutional context.

At the same time, the P.A. programme of the University of Twente translated its wish for a more international form of accreditation into an initiative to form a European accreditation system. It was only natural that the Rotterdam group joined in on this initiative. So, in co-operation with a small group of European P.A. programmes, the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation, EA-PAA, was founded (1999).

Why were these programmes so eager to organise an international accreditation system? In our view, this can be explained by looking at the functions which international accreditation can have. In this article we will discuss these. In our view, four functions deserve to be mentioned:

1. The *accountability function*, especially for those national educational systems where academic programmes are (for the large part) publicly funded. This accountability function also encompasses the obligation to inform possible clients (for example students) about the content and quality of the programmes.
2. The *quality assurance function* of accreditation, which focuses on stimulating and maintaining the quality of programmes.
3. The *disciplinary function*, safeguarding the identity and integrity of the discipline;
4. The *emancipatory function* focusing on the development of Public Administration as an independent, empirical social science.

In this article, these functions will be discussed on the basis of the experience of the authors with organising an international accreditation system, carrying out site visits, and with the management of the system².

Public Accountability

In many European countries, certainly in The Netherlands, the universities are predominantly financed by public means from the national government's budget. It is normal that the universities will have to be accountable for the use of these funds. This sounds obvious, but systematic public accountability of the Dutch universities has a relatively short history. Prior to the 1970s the dominant culture of *Academic Freedom* was unchallenged. This culture did not permit strong and systematic inspections of the performances of these free academic institutions. Government was expected to leave universities to their task and pay the bills.

² For reasons of privacy no recognisable references to specific programmes will be made.

Of course, some institutions for public accountability did exist. The Inspection of Education, a governmental agency, had a division focusing on universities. But the influence of the Inspection of Education was very limited, since systematic scrutiny of the universities was not the practice. And the so-called Academic Council, an institution set up by the Dutch universities themselves, also contributed to the maintenance of quality and academic standards. But it was not a governmental institution – rather a council of university professors.

Systematic efforts to hold universities accountable for their performance began in the 1970s, when the Dutch government tried to make part of its funds for academic research dependent on the quality of research programmes: “conditional financing”. At least, that was what conditional financing was supposed to be. However, in our view, this had little success. It had to cope with the strong existing culture of “academic freedom”. In addition, some output criteria were also gradually introduced in the national government’s financial support for the educational programmes.

A few decades and quite some reforms of the legal and financial statutes of universities later, systematic accountability is an accepted process. “Visitations”, site visits, are used to assess the quality of academic research and academic teaching and function as a basis for the public financing of universities.

Visitation and Accreditation

Since the eighties, the quality of research and education in universities is subject to a system of periodic “visitations”. Site visit teams assess the educational and research programmes of universities and report publicly on their findings. Poor performance is sanctioned, in the first instance, by negative publicity; secondly by official warnings and finally by withdrawal of public financing. However, it did not have to go this far. Negative publicity and an official warning are strong enough incentives.

This system had a strong link with the national administration: its assessments were the basis for public recognition and, as a consequence, for the continuation of public financing. Nevertheless, it was not run by a public agency, but rather by the VSNU, the “Association of Universities in The Netherlands”. Recently this system has been taken over by a public agency (the NVAO, the Dutch Flemish Accreditation Organisation) and since then, the word “visitation” has been replaced by the internationally more familiar term ‘accreditation’.

Although this new *national* accreditation system is of the utmost importance for the existence and financing of university programmes, most of the Dutch programmes of Public Administration joined, within a period of a few years, the *European* Association for Public Administration Accreditation (see above). This can be seen as a consequence of the belief that a relatively small discipline such as Public Administration is better served by Europe-wide comparisons with many pro-

grammes, than with comparisons with the few programmes in the own national context. So, we see how two systems now co-exist: the NVAO-system of national accreditations, with public recognition and public financing as their most important consequence, and the EAPAA system of European accreditation, with the seemingly less important consequence of recognition by European peers. In Germany and The Netherlands efforts are made to formalise the co-operation between the two systems. EAPAA since January 2008 is recognised by the Dutch accreditation authority as an assessment agency and for this reason is also entitled to perform the accreditation process for the Dutch accreditation.

Publicity

One of the obviously intended effects of public assessments through the system of visitation and accreditation is that the “client” – the student – can form a reliable image of the quality of the programmes from which he can choose. This sounds simple but is, in fact, quite complicated. How does one measure and express the quality of a programme? Probably not one single measure can do this, so multiple measures are needed. But what, then, is the weight of these various measures: quality of the programme, pedagogical quality, infrastructure, qualifications of the professors, and so on? Nevertheless, we can observe how this kind of assessment and especially the publicity about them, nowadays play an increasingly important role in the process of selecting a university, especially in the student counselling in pre-university programmes in schools for secondary education.

Not everyone is satisfied with how this works. Often the differences in quality between programmes are very small, and statistically insignificant. And even though it is sometimes possible to observe some nuances between programmes, the differences between Dutch Public Administration programmes are too small to be expressed in the simplified language of the mass media. But, it happens.

Conclusion

Whatever the conclusion about the way they function, it is clear that with the introduction of the system of (first visitations and later) accreditation, the public supervision of the performance of universities has become substantially stronger than in the first half of the last century. Autonomy and Academic Freedom have become less absolute values, which have to be balanced against responsible use of public means and public accountability. A second conclusion can be that the new supervisory structures are just beginning to contribute to the discussions about the performance of universities: “just beginning”, because the quality of this contribution offers room for improvement.

Quality Assurance

The essence of accreditation is recognition on the basis of realised quality. This implies that an accreditation system should be organised to assess quality in a reliable and valid way. Simple as this may sound, this implies some fundamental questions. On what aspects of quality should accreditation focus? The following are a few dimensions of quality, which play a role in the present discussion on the role and organisation of accreditation:

- a) The content of what is taught. Does the programme cover the appropriate subjects? Is the discipline correctly represented?
- b) The balance between academic and applied knowledge;
- c) The pedagogical structure (coherence, consistency, modes of teaching), the educational infrastructure, and the educational effectiveness (the “yield”) of the programme;
- d) The structure and culture of quality maintenance.

People working in academic programmes will easily recognise the impact of the growing system of accreditation on educational behaviour. For example, writing the so-called “self study”, formulating the programme’s vision and its educational goals and the evaluation of this – all these activities oblige the programmes to take into account all four dimensions of quality. By demanding explicit attention for this, the system of accreditation can contribute to quality maintenance.

In site visit teams, as we know them now, all four dimensions are represented. Such a team usually consists of some (associate) professors, some practitioners with an established working experience in public administration, some students, and an expert in pedagogy. Whether this composition will be the normal format in the future remains to be seen. Two developments can have an important impact on this.

First, there is the discussion on accreditation of *complete universities* rather than individual programmes. Such a university-wide accreditation would result in recognition and public financing of all programmes of the university – an attractive proposition from the perspective of university administrators. In one fell swoop they can “get rid of all bureaucracy and uncertainty” of all the individual programme accreditations. And it is probably less expensive too.

The second development is a tendency to “*professionalisation*” of accreditation. With the emergence of a stable national organisation for accreditation, working with only a few bureaux that are accepted to perform site visits, the problem of forming site visit teams seems to be solved. No longer is the accrediting organisation dependent on the relatively small pool of disciplinary professionals to form such a team. No longer is there the need to skim the international market for professors of Public Administration with an adequate knowledge of the Dutch context. No longer

is the accrediting organisation dependent on “judgements by peers”, sometimes described by its critics as a system of “friends evaluating friends”.

Loss of Quality by Professionalisation?

These two developments (towards university-wide accreditation and towards professionalisation of accreditors) have an influence on the balance between the four dimensions of quality, previously mentioned. University-wide accreditation takes place at a level where detailed analysis of educational programmes (required for the first two dimensions of quality) is not really possible. As a consequence, the focus will shift to aspects of quality that lend themselves for easy “objectivity” and quantitative measurement, such as productivity and yield, structure of programmes and the quality assurance system within the university. This means more attention to the educational process and less for the content.

A similar shift from attention to content to attention to process can be expected of the so-called “professionalisation” of accreditation. If judgement by peers is to be avoided, it will be difficult to involve persons directly active in the practice of teaching and research. This will lead to the emergence of a new class of professional assessors, able to assess varying programmes. It will probably be impossible for these assessors to be substantially competent – competent on the content of research and teaching. These new assessors will tend to fall back on what they can judge: the quality of the process.

Process or Content

This issue of “process versus content” requires some clarification. As indicated above, one can classify the objects of assessment in two categories:

- a) aspects of process, such as the quality assurance system, the management of the programme, the student guidance system, and facilities such as library and availability of computers;
- b) the content of the programme and the quality of the professors in relation to this content.

It is our conviction that especially in academic programmes, content is the dominant quality to be realised. Assessments that do not focus strongly on this tend to become meaningless. Yet, the tendency in present-day accreditation is towards more emphasis on process.

This problem is complicated by the fact that it is precisely the content that distinguishes the best between various programmes. The other aspects of quality are not always specific to a programme. Often, we can observe that these aspects

(infrastructure, quality assurance, management etcetera) are organised and decided at a higher level than the programme, for example at the level of the university.

In the past, the existence of a one to one relationship between organisations and programmes was common. Presently, a specific programme is often the product of a wider organisation. If various programmes in an organisation do have so much in common, why not assess them at this higher level? It saves the organisation the bureaucratic and financial burden of a complete series of individual programme accreditations. Complaints about the costs of accreditation are often heard among university administrators. And, in a recent newsletter of the Dutch Flemish Accreditation Organisation, the possibilities of reducing the costs of accreditation by university-wide accreditations are openly discussed. Also some form of clustering of related programmes is suggested.³

Examples of this kind of accreditation at a higher level than the programme do exist. For example, the accreditation according to the EQUIS system, organised by the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD). In this accreditation complete business schools are assessed – not individual programmes.⁴ From personal communication with German colleagues, we know that universities try to make package deals with accrediting organisations, in order to assess simultaneously a large number of programmes. This leads sometimes to the composition of site visit teams with only one person who is an expert on the content of a specific programme. We have serious doubts whether in such a set-up much attention will be paid to the content of the programmes.

The formal rules do not guarantee substantial attention to the content of programmes. In the Dutch accreditation criteria we can read: “The final qualifications of the degree course correspond to the requirements made to a degree course in the relevant domain (field of study/discipline and/or professional practice) by colleagues in The Netherlands and abroad and the professional practice” (NVAO 2003: p.4). This leaves much room for interpretation. The organisations which perform the site visits and the assessments have the task to operationalise these “demands”. One of the bigger organisations active in assessing Dutch university programmes is “Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities” (QANU). In its guide for external quality assessment, it says: “For each (group of) programmes, within a specific academic domain a domain-specific frame of reference is developed, which the external committee will use as basis for its assessment.” (QANU, 2004: p. 42. *Translation HD/TK*). The EAPAA criteria for Public Administration are actually used as an example. And if such a set of criteria is not available, QANU will develop such a set and submit it for validation to “international external experts in the relevant

3 It is stated, though, that verification of each individual programme is necessary.

4 Fairness obliges us to report that since a few years the EFMD also runs system of accreditation for ‘international degree programmes in business management’ that accredits at the level of programmes. See www.efmd.org.

discipline”. All of this sounds reassuring, but what happens in practice? Who will assess, for example, whether a Public Administration programme is in conformity with the EAPAA criteria? It is the task of the site visit team, but what happens if no expert on Public Administration is a member of this team?

Conclusion

In assessing the quality of academic programmes, the critical issue is the maintenance of a sound balance between process and content; between, on the one hand evaluations of the content of the programme and the academic quality and reputation of the faculty and, on the other hand, evaluations of all other (process) aspects not specifically related to the content.

Maybe a division of tasks can be the answer to this problem. National accreditation systems can, following the trend, focus on aspects of *process*. This can very well be done at a higher level than the programme, for example at the level of a university. For reasons of *content and specificity*, the assessments of these national accreditations should, then be complemented by the assessment by international organisations such as EAPAA. These organisations can concentrate on a more detailed assessment of, on the one hand, the mission and content of the programme and its modules and, on the other hand, on how the content, pedagogy, quality of the faculty etc. are related to each other in the concrete context of the mission of the programme. The national setting is often too small, with too little variation between programmes, to make this kind of detailed assessments of substantial quality fruitful. At the European level this can be done, since the variation in quality is much wider, and (best) practices more varied and thus more challenging.

The Disciplinary Function of Accreditation

In addition to quality assurance, the issue of the integrity of the discipline deserves our attention. As is often the case with young academic disciplines, Public Administration runs the risk of instability. As long as there is no clear and accepted definition of the content of the discipline, many interpretations are possible. This applies a fortiori for a discipline with a multi or interdisciplinary character. The danger of this is that the variety of programmes, which call themselves “Public Administration”, “Public Management”, and the like, is very extensive, so intensive, that society, students and other interested parties are uncertain about what can be expected of our discipline.

Of course, a certain degree of variation and diversity in the way universities practise “Public Administration” is not a problem. On the contrary: such diversity contributes to the development of the discipline and to a healthy degree of academic competition. But this has its limits. Without giving a definition we claim, for

instance, that Public Administration is a Social Science studying the functioning of the public sector. This simple delineation of the discipline implies that a substantial number of courses in a Public Administration programme have to focus, on the one hand on the public sector and its governance, and on the other on the social scientific character of the discipline (theories and methodology).

In The Netherlands this was, until a few decades ago, guaranteed by the so-called Academic Statute, which provided a short description of recognised academic disciplines, binding all Dutch universities. Such a description was also available for Public Administration. This Academic Statute has been replaced by a Central Register of Programmes of Higher Education (“CROHO”). Only programmes on this list have public recognition and public funding. The admission to this list (and the continuation of a position on this list) is dependent on the outcome of processes of visitation and, more recently, accreditation. Until now the visitation and accreditation committee for Public Administration performed their task on the basis of what became known as the “Minimum Programme for Public Administration”. This definition of the basic content of a Public Administration programme was, informally, accepted by all existing Public Administration programmes of universities and polytechnics.

This practice, based on an informal agreement of the nature of the discipline, has functioned well. But its informal nature is a risk, when new systems of accreditation become operational and may be inclined to steer their own course in defining disciplines. Another weakness was that this informal agreement was shared only by *Dutch* universities. Since the academic labour market is becoming more and more international, Dutch Schools of Public Administration found it necessary to ensure that some internationally accepted definition of the discipline of Public Administration was available. Such an internationally accepted definition can prevent the emergence of programmes that label themselves Public Administration or something similar, without having the ‘adequate’ content. For example: existing programmes in sociology, law, business administration, enriched with just a few courses on public sector issues. Or, another example, the risk of applying the label ‘Public Administration’ to all kinds of training programmes of (national) governments, often with a dominant normative-legal, or economic-legal nature (as can be found especially, but not only, in central European countries).

How realistic these dangers are, is a matter of empirical analysis. For the purpose of this article suffice to say that these perceived dangers motivated the founders of EAPAA to develop a common and Europe-wide accepted description of a Public Administration programme.

Practice has shown that the existence of such a definition of the minimum content of a programme stimulates meaningful discussions. Meaningful for discussions on the point of departure for programme development, or on the content of courses; meaningful for communication (what “is” Public Administration?) and,

lastly, meaningful for the creation of a European academic community of Public Administration.

The Emancipatory Function

Finally, we want to discuss the emancipatory function of international assessments and accreditation. This function is particularly relevant in countries in Central and Eastern Europe.⁵ Universities from this part of Europe show a relatively strong inclination to submit their P.A-programmes to international (EAPAA) accreditation. There are good reasons for this.

First, universities in many of these central and eastern European countries feel the need for international recognition. By doing so these, universities want to prove that their Public Administration Programmes have by now reached a level (almost) comparable to Western European programmes. This facilitates student and staff exchange and creates possibilities for their graduates to enter into Master or PhD programmes all over (Western) Europe.

A second important reason for undergoing international accreditation is the will to show excellence. By international accreditation these programmes show, as it were, that they belong to the leading programmes in their country. (In doing so, international accreditation is also considered to be helpful in safeguarding the national government's financial support for Public Administration programmes.)

Sometimes, international accreditation plays a role in debates about the development of the discipline. The controversy about the identity of the discipline of Public Administration in countries such as Poland and Romania is an example of this: on the one hand we see that the traditional legalist view of Public Administration is still strong and often supported by the officials of important national institutions, while on the other hand, we witness the emergence of a renewed discipline of Public Administration, very much in line with the internationally dominant approach that can be characterised as social-scientific and multi-disciplinary. The emancipatory function of international accreditation implies support for these progressive developments.

The emancipatory function can also be described in somewhat more political terms, – as stimulating the emergence of a truly independent discipline of Public Administration in formerly communist states, where programmes of public administration used to be defined by the needs of the central state bureaucracy.

This emancipatory function is not without risks. The importance of becoming accredited is sometimes huge. And programmes often show a lot of good will and good intentions. But the conditions under which the universities try to emancipate the discipline of Public Administration are often far from advantageous. Each

5 The same can be observed in Africa and, especially, Asia.

site visit team is confronted instantly with the very limited budgets with which the programmes have to cope: limited library collections, low staff salaries, limited I.T. facilities, and so on. Additionally, there is the shortage of personnel. Only a very limited number of people in these countries have had training in the modern social-scientific way of practising Public Administration. A site visit team, confronted with so much goodwill under so adverse conditions, runs the risk of becoming too 'sympathetic'. This can undermine the obligation to formulate an impartial and critical report on what has been seen. Under the pressure of these circumstances, the assessment may tend to focus more on promises than on results.

This mirrors a dilemma of accreditation: formally, accreditation is given on the basis of the degree to which a programme fulfils certain pre-set criteria ("programme conformity"). When this is realised to a satisfactory level, accreditation is given. But, at the same time, it is emphasised that accreditation is more than just assessing the status quo. It is also about the direction of developments and the continuity and stability of the programmes. Site visit teams, keen on evaluating this dimension, often act as a group of 'kindred souls', eager to support positive developments.

These dilemmatic dynamics have to be balanced by the Accreditation Committee, the organ of EAPAA which, on the basis of the reports of site visit teams, grants accreditation. It is their task to balance sympathy with sternness. Sternness alone would lead to unfair judgements over programmes that have to survive a difficult process of restructuring under adverse conditions. But too much sympathy will undermine the quality and thus the relevance of accreditation.

Developments

Above, we have described some developments that will be of great importance for the accreditation of Public Administration programmes in the future. They can be summarised in four themes.

The first theme refers to the need to find a balance between International Accreditation, developed in a bottom-up process, and national systems of accreditation imposed by national governments. The example that most Dutch programmes of Public Administration submitted themselves voluntarily to the EAPAA accreditation process, that all are (accredited) members of EAPAA is not without importance. Just like the growing popularity of EAPAA among European Public Administration programmes, this shows that the legitimacy of this form of international peer review accreditation is high.

The second theme is about the tendencies in national accreditation systems toward 'professionalisation' of accreditation and the trend towards accreditation of universities as a whole. In our view, these tendencies bring the risk of stressing mainly aspects of process, rather than aspects of content in evaluating programmes.

If one wants to prevent that accreditation develops into a huge and rather bureaucratic process, focusing mainly on conformity with ‘objectively’ measurable and quantifiable basic variables, it is worthwhile considering the value of the accreditation of programmes (rather than universities) based on peer reviews by competent (international) colleagues (rather than on statistics gathered by professional accreditors, without a firm understanding of the discipline).

We also brought attention to the meaning of accreditation for the development of the discipline. It is our experience that the discussions related to the organisation of disciplinary (programme) accreditation have contributed to the development of Public Administration in The Netherlands. Such discussions resulted, for example, in the generally accepted definition of the core requirements of a Public Administration programme⁶.

These discussions have stimulated good relationships between the various, sometimes sharply competing programmes, and have contributed to mutual learning processes. All programmes have sound knowledge regarding the other programmes and of the ongoing discussions, experiments and innovations in other universities.

One of the goals of EAPAA is to stimulate this kind of discussion and learning processes all over Europe. In itself, discussions about content and pedagogies of Public Administration programmes are not scarce. But often they are without much consequence. By having this kind of discussion within the context of international accreditation can give them more meaning and a deeper impact.

The last theme was that of the emancipatory function of accreditation. An international accreditation system, actively supported by motivated professors of Public Administration, contributes to the establishment and development of a strong and independent discipline of Public Administration in states where this discipline (in our social-scientific meaning), until recently, did not exist. It also can function as a platform for international learning and support, thus stimulating the development of the discipline in our continent and, maybe also, the innovation of the way our systems are governed.

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Accreditation Processes in Slovakia and Neighbouring Countries in Central Europe: Current Problems and Possible Improvements

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Abstract

There are many approaches to the accreditation of academic institutions in the developed world. Some of them have more regulative functions: others serve predominantly as quality management tools. Our chapter deals with current problems of the accreditation process in the new EU member states of Central Europe, using Slovakia as the main example. The analysis of the process and impact of accreditation is based mainly on a review of existing documents, web pages, and the author's experience. Its outcomes indicate that higher education accreditation in this region has many problems, and its disadvantages may outweigh its advantages. Accreditation in new EU member states in Central Europe is predominantly national in character, undertaken by the state, top down, and frequently misused as a device to limit the access of new actors into the "market". With these characteristics, current accreditation is an ineffective and insufficiently transparent regulatory tool to decide fairly which institutions should and which should not have the right to deliver academic education. Normally non-effective regulations should be abolished or re-engineered. In this case, it is probably politically and also technically impossible to abolish accreditation systems, and so we suggest that the current accreditation system should be replaced, or more effectively combined with quality, mission and peer review based accreditation. For example such a type of accreditation is delivered by the European Association of Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA), whose experience could be used. The main advantages of this proposal are set out below. But because of specific local situations, the implementation of EAPAA or a similar approach will not be simple, and the main known obstacles are described in the final part of this chapter.

1. Accreditation at the University Level

Accreditation of a university programme is normally understood as a process which ends in “yes” or “no”. Such replies may be answers to many different questions. For example:

Can government, its regulatory body or any outsourced institution include the school (programme) in a nationally recognised network? Normally this means a grant of the right to deliver the respective programme.

Can the school (programme) be accepted as a member of some national or more usually international network delivering good quality programmes?

Answers to such questions should be predominantly based on careful evaluation of qualitative and quantitative data describing the school’s programme. Concerning structures, approaches, tools and methods used, we could distinguish between many forms of accreditation, distinguished by different characteristics, such as:

A: Domain:

- National accreditation: valid for a single country (in the EU normally for all member countries);
- International accreditation.

B: Accreditation body:

- Accreditation completely delivered by respective state body (mainly Ministries of Education and their branches);
- Accreditation awarded by the Ministry, but carried out by a semi-independent public body (some kind of Accreditations committee, nominated by the state);
- Accreditation awarded by the Ministry, but created by a fully independent, normally private body – outsourcing to private accreditation bodies;
- Non-state accreditation systems, where the processes and outcomes are fully independent from the state and carried out by a professional organisation.

C: Methods of evaluation:

- Accreditation on the basis of fixed quantitative criteria (probity);
- Accreditation on a more flexible basis – for example on the basis of a set of broader standards and/or a mission and its fulfilment.

D: Evaluation staff:

- Accreditation process carried out by “bosses/controllers” – one level higher than evaluated staff.
- Accreditation process carried out by “peers” (colleagues who assess the situation in order to help to improve it.
- Accreditation process carried out by professional persons independent of the institution.

E: Main goals:

- To award the right to deliver a degree – predominantly a regulative function;
- To help to improve the quality of the school/programme – predominantly a quality management function.

F: Scope

- Accreditation of the whole body (university or faculty);
- Accreditation of part of a programme.

G: Site visit

- A site visit compulsory for the accreditation process;
- A site visit is not included: all evaluation is only “paper based”.

1.1 Accreditation: Do We Need It?

Most, if not all, central and eastern European countries, and also many others, use accreditation as the tool to select universities eligible for public monies. The general rule is that only nationally accredited programmes can be supported by public funds: in most countries non-accredited programmes are not delivered. Let us think about this. We can still ask the question “Do we really need accreditation?” Why should anybody have the right or privilege to say “yes” or “no” to some school or its programme?

Some experts (for example J. Kinkor in the Czech Republic) might argue that students (supported by parents) are the best judges of the quality of a school where they want to study. So there is no need for the government to establish the national accreditation system, to check if a school/programme has the right to deliver a university degree. Students’ choices might be also preferred because of the high risk of “government failure” (Stiglitz, 1997). The “government failure” problem in connection with accreditation means that no accreditation system is perfect, as it is very difficult to get a precise independent measure of quality.

On the other hand – can we fully accept the assumption that students really are the “best judges”? It is relatively simple to show that the majority of students follow certain strategies that prevent “socially optimal choice”. With imperfect labour markets, the typical student’s strategy might be short-term: choosing the easiest way to finish his/her studies. Another problem, very significant in Central and Eastern Europe, occurs when students, perhaps because of, for example a lack of resources or their family situations, prefer to enrol at the nearest available university programme in an acceptable field of study.

There is another unavoidable motive for European accreditation. Globalisation and the Bologna agreements, which focus on bridging national university education systems and institutions, and helping students to migrate during their studies, show that the international acceptance of the programme or institution is

now increasingly important. It is natural that the tutors will want to know if credits obtained in another school are equivalent.

2. Current Problems of the Accreditation Process in the Region

As we show below, there are no major differences between accreditation systems in the region. To illustrate the main aspects and problems of current accreditation approaches in new central European members we focus on Slovakia¹.

2.1 The Example of Traditional Probity Based and “Protective” Accreditation: The Case of the Slovak System

The accreditation process in Slovakia² involves two levels of decision-making. The main part of the process is carried out by the Accreditation Committee (AC) – a semi-independent advisory body of the Government of Slovakia. The Accreditation Committee (www.akredkom.sk) has a main decision-making body and several sub-committees to evaluate study programmes. The members of the AC and its sub-committees are university professors and expert practitioners, working on a voluntary basis, supported by a small group of professional administrative staff.

The system is relative simple – the University submits an application to accredit a selected study programme. The assessment is allocated to one of the sub-committees. The committee checks the application, drafts a proposal and the main body reaches a final decision. There is no site visit. After AC makes a decision, it submits its proposals to the Minister of Education, who has the last word in deciding the awarding of an accreditation. The Slovak accreditation process is mainly based on a set of publicly known criteria. It confirms the capacity of the school to deliver the programme, and it says yes or no to the programme. Non-accredited programmes cannot be delivered.

The set of decision criteria is:

The level of scientific activities of the school and its bodies participating in the programme (the minimum level is set out in a descriptive way, not by indicators).

1. Sufficient material and technical equipment (the minimum concrete criterion is a library; other aspects are set out in a descriptive way, not by indicators).
2. Structure of academic staff (the requirements are set out in only a descriptive way, not by indicators).

1 Slovakia is used as the example because the author was a member of a sub-committee of the Slovak AC and many remarks are based on personal experience.

2 From 2008 a new system of accreditation is to be introduced, focusing more on quality.

3. Quantity of academic staff (defined so that the maximum number of MA and BA theses per staff member is 10. MA theses can be supervised by PhD or higher qualification holders).
4. The structure of committees for the final state examination (the minimum requirements for the approval committee, two members of which must be internal docents or professors).
5. Person responsible for the programme (there must be a full time internal person responsible for the programme, with proven experience in the field, sufficient publications and teaching experience, below 65 years of age, minimum docent for BA and professor for MA programmes).
6. The contents of the programme (as a minimum 3/5ths of the curricula must be based on national “Masters Curricula” and the programme shall provide the necessary skills).
7. Length of studies (BA: 3 – 4 years, MA: 1 – 3 years)
8. Final theses (MA and BA levels shall include final theses of prescribed structure and length).
9. Selection of students (the proper approach is set out in a very descriptive way, not by indicators).
10. The requirements to pass examinations and to obtain a degree (the proper approach is set out in a very descriptive way, not by indicators).
11. The quality of graduates (expectations of graduates are set out in a very descriptive way, not by indicators).

Based on the above mentioned characteristics, we may conclude that the Slovak accreditation system has the following main features:

- fully national accreditation;
- state accreditation system undertaken by a semi-independent state body;
- probity accreditation system;
- experts who undertake the accreditation are peers, but as they do not visit the institution they become more like controllers than peers;
- regulative accreditation;
- accreditation of a programme;
- “paper” based accreditation.

Like any public sector tool, the Slovak accreditation process has its strengths and weaknesses. Potentially positive aspects are some level of peer involvement, the relative independence of the AC and especially the existence of published criteria. On the other hand, it includes many critical points, limiting its effectiveness as a regulative and quality control tool. The following text highlights the most important problems.

The list of above indicators clearly shows one of the problematic aspects of this kind of accreditation – most of the criteria are insufficiently transparent and

can be interpreted very differently, to help or to hinder a school. It is also doubtful whether all these criteria are genuine. For example, in many cases a 63-year old professor would be able to deliver much less than a 35-year old PhD. Some of the criteria even have perverse effects – for example one of a few specific accreditation indicators is the need to employ an in-house docent or professor to represent a programme. Therefore, universities need professors and docents to serve as guarantors of programmes. One option is to artificially speed up the process of promotion, and there are too many indications, for comfort, that this is actually happening. Suffice to mention one – the promotion criteria. As Ciaian et al (2005) show, most economics faculties use rather soft criteria for the promotion of professors – in some cases a person is promoted without being the author of any article in a Web of Science international journal, while the required number of quoted articles in international journals for promotion to professor is 0 – 3. The Slovak President commented on this (Pravda, 26. 07. 2007): “Since 2004 I have named more than 350 professors of higher education. It has never been simpler to meet the criteria...”

As accreditation is the necessary precondition to obtain the right to deliver a university programme in Slovakia, such a system of criteria, in combination with the method of selection of AC and its sub-committee members, and with the method of setting national standard curricula, creates many risks, some of which have happened.

The AC and its sub-committee members are professors, predominantly recruited from existing established universities. Professors from these schools were also responsible for setting the national curricula. As the voice of experts from practice is very marginal, such arrangements give established universities too much influence over the process. This level of influence is normally misused to grant accreditation to their programmes without real evaluation, and to block any new entrants into the “market”.

Another problem connected with the structure of the AC is that in many cases the national curricula were not created on the basis of modern international practice but they simply mirrored the current structures of established programmes (supply driven curricula). Nor does the approved list of study programmes that can be delivered in the national higher education system, reflect modern international practice – for example, many standard programmes (such as public finance) are not included, and several “system specific” programmes are codified (e.g. public economics and services). The national curricula are also far too fragmented. That is, there are too many “small” courses and they still focus on direct education inputs, i.e. lectures and seminars. Most programmes derived from such curricula include over 20 teaching contact hours per week, much more than current international practice, which is moving from direct lecturing towards problem solving and homework.

The accreditation process in Slovakia is expected to serve mainly as a regulatory tool, to prevent low quality programmes either entering the market, or surviv-

ing in it. However, because of the aforementioned features, it does not serve these goals very effectively. In addition, it limits the chances for many positive progressive developments. It allows for too much subjectivity and includes too few international comparisons. Because of this, Slovak accreditation is more of a fighting tool between new and established schools in their search for public funding, and not a positive public policy instrument. We provide just one fact to support such a negative conclusion – in spite of strict accreditation criteria, the situation in Slovakia in 2006, was as follows (www.modernaskola.sk):

- There were approximately 1,200 professors and 2.500 docents in Slovakia;
- However, 8,064 programmes were accredited (!).

2.2 Accreditation in other Countries of the Region

The brief review of accreditation systems in other countries from the region clearly indicates that the problems mentioned for Slovakia are symptomatic and represent very well the global situation in the region, where probity approaches, limited transparency and reliability, state dominance and local approaches limit the chance for effective accreditation.

The accreditation of academic programmes in the **Czech Republic** is delivered by the Accreditation Committee (AC) of the Ministry of Education (<http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/akreditacni-komise>). This committee has 21 members – professors from Czech universities – appointed by the Minister. The support bodies are sub-committees for the respective scientific disciplines – giving a total of 21 sub-committees consisting mainly of Czech university professors and docents.

The AC published set of minimum standards define only minimum general requirements and their fulfilment may be insufficient for accreditation. In reality, these are not standards but clear probity criteria – for example one such “standard” is that 40 % of lectures at the bachelor level shall be delivered by professors and docents.

This brief description clearly indicates that the Czech accreditation is very similar to the Slovak system, but it is even more state dominated, involves minimum expertise from practice and from abroad and provides for too much discretion.

The accreditation process in **Hungary** is also briefly described in chapter of this book prepared by G. Jenei and M. Karolyi (page 151). The Hungarian Accreditation Committee of Higher Education (HAC – www.mab.hu) examines whether the programme submitted by the institution of higher education is in accordance with the qualification requirements of the bachelor or master programme and whether the institution meets the staff and material criteria for launching a bachelor or a master programme. If it is, it delivers classical probity based and regulative accreditation. However, the HAC is also responsible for quality assessment of schools – it evaluates the standard of education and research in each higher education institution ap-

proximately every eight years, based on a detailed self-assessment of the institution and the report of a visiting committee.

The Hungarian Accreditation Committee membership has 29 full members, delegated by higher education institutions, research institutes and professional organisations. Two non-voting student members, representing the National Union of Students and the National Union of Doctoral Students, sit in on the plenary meetings. Additional non-voting members are appointed in order to cover all the main disciplines. In addition to the Secretary General and a Financial Director, the secretariat has a staff of eleven programme officers, four of whom work part-time, and six administrative staff, including one part-time. The programme officers are assigned several expert committees whose work they prepare and guide from inception to completion of the report. In addition, they are responsible for several institutions, prepare and participate in site visits and assist in writing the accreditation report.

The regulatory type of Hungarian higher education accreditation is very similar to the Slovak system – the HAC publishes the criteria and evaluates their fulfilment. The state is the dominant player in the accreditation system. Compared to Slovakia or Czechia, the international dimension is rather more prominent.

The situation in **Poland** is commented on also by W. Mikulowski in his chapter of this book (page 209). The State Accreditation Committee (SAC – www.pka.edu) is responsible for accreditation of academic programmes. Its presidium consists of the President of SAC, the Secretary of SAC the President of the Polish Students' Parliament and the chairs of 11 committees responsible for particular disciplines. The SAC is a semi-independent institution working within the higher education system to improve the quality of education. Its members are appointed by the Minister of Education. The primary formal objective of the Committee is to support Polish public and non-public higher education institutions in the development of educational standards matching the best models adopted in the European and global academic space. The SAC carries out its mission by two main types of activities. It conducts a so-called quality audit – the obligatory and regular assessments of the quality of education in existing schools, based on self-evaluation reports and normally including a site visit. In cases where the quality is evaluated as negative, the Minister suspends the right to deliver the degree. The SAC also conducts probity accreditation by giving opinions on applications for the authorisation to provide degree programmes submitted by higher education institutions entering the system or asking for the renewal or extension of the licence. The basis for both processes is the so-called accreditation standards, defined very broadly and more or less only indicating the area to be evaluated. The most important grounds for negative assessment were an insufficient number of academic teachers with appropriate formal qualifications, and the fact that the curricula and syllabi did not meet the requirements stipulated in educational standards. But in the authors' personal experience, Polish standards in the public administration field are far from best international

practices and these standards clearly and strongly privilege legal components (see chapter by Mikulowski, page 209).

3. Can the Quality Management Based Accreditation Process Help?

As indicated, current existing accreditation processes in the new EU member states in Central Europe are not likely to help very much with the quality of university public administration programmes. Experience from more developed countries might be used to improve it, and for public administration programmes, the EAPAA³ accreditation process might serve as an important benchmark.

The EAPAA system could be characterised as peer-review, mission and standards based, non-state, site visit included, international accreditation process for university PA programmes – with the main aim to improve the quality of education. The EAPAA accreditation process has three main phases – preparation of a self-evaluation report by the programme, a site visit by peers and drafting of a site visit report, and the final decision by the EAPAA Accreditation Committee. The evaluation of a programme is based on a given set of yes and no criteria and on the standards described below.

EAPAA (www.eapaa.org) accredits first cycle undergraduate/bachelor level programmes (3 or 4 years), second cycle graduate/master level programmes (1 or 2 years), combined bachelor/master programmes (4 or 5 years) and post-master level programmes, and also executive programmes, and uses only a small number of disqualifying criteria to decide the programme's eligibility. These are as follows:

A: Domain

The primary objective of the programme to be accredited is professional academic level education preparing persons for academic level roles in the public sector. A broad variety of programme titles are considered to be subsumed under the broad term 'Public Administration' used in these EAPAA documents: 'Public Administration', 'Public Administration and Public Policy', 'Public Affairs', 'Public Management', 'Government Studies' etc. Also Political Science programmes with a clear 'public administration orientation' are included. The discriminating features are orientation to the public sector and training for practice in the public sector.

B: Geography

The university or institute providing the Public Administration programme is located in one of the countries of the Council of Europe.

C: Programme Longevity

3 European Association for Public Administration Accreditation.

Normal accreditation: the programme must have been in operation at least x years (where $x = \text{the length of the programme to be accredited} + 2$), so there are at least two cohorts of graduates to provide adequate data for evaluating programme policies, procedures, and placement of graduates.

New programmes that do not yet fulfil the longevity demand can be certified as 'peer-approved' when the programme is designed in detail, and the organisation and means to implement it are available. In this case, the criteria below will be applicable as far as is reasonable. After one year in operation the certification can be upgraded to 'pre-accredited'.

The EAPAA accreditation standards are intended to maintain and improve the quality of Public Administration programmes. They are not intended to dictate curriculum or administrative specifics for each programme but represent a framework within which each programme will be evaluated. The structure of standards includes:

- A: Domain of Public Administration;
- B: Mission-based Accreditation and Diversity;
- C: Multi-disciplinarity;
- D: Relation to Practice and Internships;
- E: Curriculum;
- E: Quality Improvement and Innovation;
- F: Student Assessment;
- G: Programme Jurisdiction;
- H: Faculty;
- I: Admission of Students;
- J: Supportive Services and Facilities;
- K: Student Services;
- L: Public Relations.

As can be seen from the above description, EAPAA accreditation represents a very specific quality management tool. Its main idea is a peer-review and mission-based quality check of the PA programme. The criteria are very open and have sufficient flexibility.

The contents of EAPAA accreditation targets include most of the really important aspects that should be respected by good quality PA programmes, namely:

1. A multi-disciplinary approach in PA curricula. The EAPAA approach fully respects the principle that there is and must be a diversity of PA programmes across countries, differing in their content, mission, disciplinary orientation, pedagogy, and relation to practice. Simultaneously it supports the necessary level of convergence of all programmes, to allow for exchange and comparability.

2. The need to include all core components of PA into the programme, but also to respect local differences.
3. The need to develop a mission statement and/or an educational philosophy of a programme reflecting local conditions and not to draft mission proclamations that are not achievable in CEE conditions.
4. The need to link PA programmes and the practice of public administration, especially via internships and close relations to practice.
5. The need to use modern effective and transparent approaches to assessing the performance of the students as an answer to changes in the larger environment.
6. The need to include empirical and theoretical research in the daily life of any PA school, faculty or department.
7. The position and role of innovation (substantial and/or pedagogical) and quality improvement in PA programmes.

3.1 The Experience with EAPAA Accreditation in CEE Countries: Important Warnings

EAPAA has already accredited several CEE public administration programmes (Kiev, Banska Bystrica, Bialystok, Cluj). The experiences from the accreditation process and especially from site visits to CEE schools show several deformations that should be respected in order to improve national systems of PA accreditation in the region. We indicate some of them.

Modern teaching approaches

Normally, self-evaluation reports claim that modern teaching approaches are used within the school in a routine manner. Such claims are simple to cross-check, without observing any lectures. In any case, visiting a few lectures or seminars during the site visit makes no sense, as there is no guarantee they would be typical.

Indicators of what is really going on are detailed syllabi, materials on web pages and also whether students use such materials. If the student accompanying the site visit team is unable to open his intranet account to display available study materials, then this clearly indicates their formal existence, but lack of use.

Internationalisation

Programmes also normally claim that they incorporate international experience. In reality this is not simple and not very much practised in many CEE schools. The main barrier is the quality of the library. But CEE libraries cannot be compared to standard Western European facilities because the collection of necessary stock only began after 1989. In most schools, resources to pay for international textbooks and journals are very limited. In many cases the faculty budget for library acquisitions per year is below 1000 EUR and extra resources to purchase more books from grants and commercial activities are also very limited.

However, there are also subjective barriers. The worthiest practice is the fact that many CEE teachers are accustomed to working with only one textbook for the course, and moreover, normally one written by the teacher. This practice is fully visible from different study materials (e.g. syllabi and tests) and in some cases also dictated by the system. For example, the Slovak accreditation committee requests that such own textbooks be the first literature resource in the syllabi.

Research

The classical problem for CEE schools is the lack of international research projects. Too many teachers do not speak the main international languages, especially English. Also, some national research grant systems do not encourage a search for international co-operation. If the grant system supports many small projects, there is no way to check what was really achieved, and such research might be just a formal compilation. In addition, many advisory or training and curricula development projects are counted as research in statistical data provided by schools. The lack of international research is highly visible in faculty self-evaluation reports and CVs.

Students' assessment

As with teaching, schools claim that modern assessment methods are standard. The reality is very simple to check – samples of tests, questions for intermediate or final examinations, theses and their style and contents are a really clear indicator of good or bad practice. If questions simply require memorising facts, then such an approach cannot be accepted as modern. If the bibliographies for the majority of final theses are short and contain only 5 – 6 sources – normally books – again this is not a sign of good practice.

Capacity

The last “big” issue to be mentioned in this short overview is the capacity problem. Preparation of the self-evaluation report and organisation of the site visit are not simple or cost-free issues. The EAPAA fee is moderate, and should not be a problem for the school. Travel and local accommodation costs of the site visit team, which are to be covered by the school, depend on the individual situation, and for remote areas, with expensive flights, may be substantial.

The most important problem seems to be the capacity to write a proper, comprehensive and realistic self-evaluation report. First, fluent English-speaking staff is required. While other languages could be used, in reality they will not be used in the CEE region. These people need to find time to collect all the information, and this can be difficult if comprehensive internal information systems are not in regular use within the school. Then it is necessary to process the information into a proper report. Time and some experience are necessary. The way of describing information for EAPAA purposes might be very different from what is required in national accreditation. Concerning the style and contents of the report, two extremes can

be observed. One has already been described – the report illustrates aspects of the programme more favourably than warranted. But, it can also happen that the report is more critical than warranted.

Both situations are difficult to solve. The EAPAA is not coming into the school as a controller/ reviser, and, because of its specific character, it does not have the proper mechanisms to deal with “Potemkins.” EAPAA must also archive all written documents, and if the self evaluation report is of insufficient quality, it is too difficult to award accreditation on the sole basis of positive messages from the site visit team. In addition, schools must understand that the main goal of a quality audit is also achieved even if the “award” is not given, and is replaced by a list of suggestions for improvement.

3.2 Pros and Cons of EAPAA Accreditation: the Indication How to Use its Advantages

Before introducing EAPAA approaches into the national accreditation systems, it is necessary to understand its very specific character, which limits the chance of its immediate full scale use in CEE conditions.

It would not be simple to switch from compliance-based accreditation to a predominantly peer review realised and standard based type of accreditation. EAPAA accreditation serves only in situations where the main goal is the improved quality of the delivery of a programme and not the award itself. In this case, high quality peers from “top” European PA programmes come to deliver a high quality performance audit for the school at relatively low costs.

Where schools are simply seeking the award of a certificate, EAPAA accreditation more or less fails. As the time period for a site visit is very short, there is a good chance to build “Potemkin villages”, just to prove that the programme is eligible. Comments and recommendations may be simply formally accepted and after the award, everything continues as before, for the EAPAA has only a limited capacity for follow-up.

The EAPAA approach also has only a limited chance of acceptance as the simple regulative tool to “clear” the “market”. It is insufficiently formalised to serve this purpose and outcomes may depend very much on concrete situations, e.g. the approach of the programme, or the structure of the site visit team. Almost everywhere, schools require such formal accreditation first, and may only look later for a quality review. However, to improve its potential, EAPAA has already created a system of joint accreditation, where both approaches might be combined to some extent.

Taking all this into account, we do not recommend an immediate switch to an EAPAA-type new accreditation process to replace the old non-functional approaches. However, on the other hand, we strongly argue for the incorporation of

the main EAPAA standards into national accreditation systems, to reflect modern European approaches to the delivery of PA programmes.

Conclusions

There are many approaches to accreditation processes. In Slovakia and also in most CEE countries, accreditation is used mainly as a regulatory mechanism to determine the list of publicly supported universities, and is based on a probity/compliance approach. This type of accreditation is subject to significant failures and so, in practice, it does not bring CEE programmes closer to international standards, though it does serve to protect hidden interests.

There is no doubt that changes in accreditation processes in CEE are necessary, utilising international experience. EAPAA accreditation of PA programmes may help by providing very important inputs derived from its main standards. However, as EAPAA accreditation serves mainly as an important quality management tool, its potential use as the new accreditation approach in the CEE region is significantly limited. More factors lie behind this, but we are almost sure that, at least in the short term, it will not be accepted by governments and national accreditation bodies in CEE countries.

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PhD Education in Public Administration and Management in Europe

Christoph Reichard and Walter Kickert¹

Abstract

In most European countries, PhD training is adapted and developed according to the Bologna Treaty. A large variation exists between well-established networks of PhD training programmes, and underdeveloped, fragmented, almost non-existent PhD training. Three different patterns can be distinguished: A first group of countries (e.g. Austria, France, Germany and Spain) still have a traditional pattern of individual PhD research without curricular training. Here PhD projects have a relatively long duration and low rate of success. There is a second group of countries (e.g. Italy and Switzerland) where government invests in PhD training via curricula and scholarships; this is the beginning of comprehensive PhD training programmes. A third group of countries (Nordic countries and The Netherlands) had already, prior to the Bologna Treaty, established intensive and activating PhD educational programmes with networking (POLFORSK in Denmark, NIG in Netherlands). The national differences seem related to two different academic traditions in Europe: the *Humboldtian* tradition of individual research project with only limited training, and the Anglo-American tradition of PhD being simply the next phase of continuing education, with dissertation projects besides class room courses. The Bologna Treaty is clearly based on the second model.

In due course all EU member states will have to introduce the three-stage Bachelor-Master-PhD system. Different timeframes of introduction exist in the different countries. The aim is to reduce the duration of PhD from the former 5 or more years to maximum 3 years (=180 ECTS), including substantial training programmes. Our survey shows that PhD training programmes consist of a variety of courses. Course duration and intensity also vary. Some programmes only have a

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few hours of teaching and some up to 900 hours of PhD teaching. The types of PhD candidates also differ. In some countries, PhD candidates are junior staff members, employed by a research institution for a certain term. In other countries, PhD candidates receive (moderate) scholarships from the state. Again, in other countries, there are 'external PhDs' without any funding, dependent on own job-related income or students' parents. The types of financing of PhD training also differ. In some countries, PhD supervision is simply part of the job of professors and not at all funded by government. In other countries, government substantially invests in PhD training (scholarships, schools).

Most university departments in Public Administration and Management are quite small, and have only a few PhD students. Their legally prescribed PhD training courses are therefore somewhat inefficient. Economies of scale by inter-university cooperation are virtually non-existent. There are two marked exceptions: NIG in The Netherlands is a consortium offering joint PhD training for all PhD candidates in all universities. POLFORSK in Denmark is a network offering PhD courses for candidates in all universities (also Norwegian and Swedish participation). Networking activities can also be found in the French part of Switzerland and Italy. National co-operation between universities, however, seems necessary for economies of scale. International co-operation between universities also seems necessary due to growing pressure for internationalisation, not only of PhD research.

1. Introduction

Doctoral training has been, for quite some time, an integral part of university education. The PhD degree is a record for independent research and mastering of scientific methods and the entrance step for an academic career. The quality of PhD training in the university system of a country is an indicator of its ability to provide professionally trained and well-equipped scientists as the rising generation for the scientific community. The style and scope of PhD education is dependent on the patterns and traditions of academic education and research in the respective countries and thus quite dissimilar in the various countries of Europe. This is also the case in the field of public policy/administration/management.

The role and the patterns of PhD education have, however, been changing all over Europe over the last years. The general changes in higher education as a consequence of Europeanisation pressure of the Bologna Treaty of 1999 are a major factor of change. Universities all over Europe have begun to restructure their educational systems according to the general guidelines of the Treaty. Particularly, they introduced a framework of two educational cycles (Bachelor and Master) with a duration of altogether five years and with a common workload standard (the European Credit Transfer System; ECTS). A few years later (2003 in Prague), the European countries agreed that doctoral training should be an integral part of higher education and

should form the third and top cycle of the whole programme of higher education. In Salzburg in 2005, the EU countries decided on 10 basic principles of doctoral education which form a common basic guideline for quality assurance of PhD education (see appendix)². PhD education is, however, not only a matter of educational reform but also an issue of national and European strategies to improve the capacities and potential for research and innovation (the “European Research Area”). The post-Bologna strategies to integrate and improve PhD education are in line with a more general trend of internationalisation of academic studies and research. Exposure to international research and publications in international journals and publishing houses have become important criteria for recruitment to senior academic positions. Consequently, PhD education is increasingly obtaining an international flavour; PhD candidates are stimulated to do their research from an international perspective and to pay attention to international research developments and results. Intensification of PhD education is a further general tendency: Integrating the PhD into the cycles of higher education and an increased international collaboration are major factors which influence the current trend towards a more systematic and structured approach of PhD education. On the other side, there seems to be a tendency to streamline PhD education and to adjust the programmes to the general “Bologna” timeframe of three years or 180 ECTS. This puts pressure on traditional PhD concepts lasting sometimes over five years or longer. These tendencies are not without contradiction and the future will show how countries with different academic traditions are adapting to the new challenges.

The harmonisation and improvement of PhD education in Europe is also an important precondition for ensuring the recruitment of the next generation of scientists for the academic institutions. An acknowledged PhD is becoming more and more the main entrance for an academic career. There are only a few countries such as Germany where the PhD degree is also attractive for professional careers and where young researchers need to fulfil additional entry requirements (e.g. habilitation) for an academic career. Thus, there is a need to design a PhD programme in a way which allows equipping its graduates with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to work in an academic environment, i.e. to undertake independent research and to teach (see Sadlak 2004 for more detail from several European countries).

The following paper concentrates on the field of administrative sciences with special reference to public management. It provides some evidence of the current status of PhD education in several European countries with regard to this field and tries to draw some conclusions for future development. The evidence is based on own investigations carried out by the authors from Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and The Netherlands. Most of the information is based on communication with knowledgeable scholars in the respective

2 For an overview of doctoral education activities in Europe see e.g. the website of the European University Association EUA: <http://www.eua.be/index.php?id=97>

countries. The authors are, however, sure that the empirical picture is incomplete and possibly incorrect (which is not surprising in the present situation with fast changes and some turbulence).

2. Some Country Cases

2.1 German-speaking Countries

The overall structure of PhD training in the three German-speaking countries – Austria, Germany and Switzerland – is similar and comparable. All three systems have, to some extent, common roots and belong to a similar academic culture (for doctoral training in Austria and Germany see Pechar/Thomas 2004 and Hüfner 2004 respectively). Switzerland is perhaps more open to developments in the Anglo Saxon world and more flexible; furthermore, the French and Italian speaking cantons are different as they maintain strong cultural links to their respective language areas.

Conditions and procedures of PhD training are currently changing. Some universities adapt their PhD-concept to the Anglo Saxon standards, i.e. they offer more structured and substantial PhD courses and provide more tutoring (see some examples below). However, the “classical” way to receive a PhD is still the “Master/Apprentice” relation: a candidate contacts a professor seeking to obtain his/her support and to undertake the PhD-related research under his/her supervision in a quite individual and isolated way. She/he works in a narrow relationship to his/her “Doktorvater” and the progress and success of the research project very much depends on the amount of time the “Father” devotes to the PhD candidate. Usually, the intensity of supervision and treatment is low. Systematic course work, seminars and similar forms of “PhD learning” are almost unknown. PhD-scholarships are not frequently offered. In our field, probably less than 10 % of all PhDs obtain such funding. Only a limited part of all PhD-graduates is heading for an academic career; a larger part departs for professional jobs in the business or public sector³. Academic job perspectives are unpredictable and require habilitation or equivalent scientific records. Only universities have the right to award PhDs, but not polytechnic universities (*Fachhochschulen*). There are, however, a few cases of collaboration between universities and *Fachhochschulen* in PhD-training.

Austria: According to the Germanic tradition, Public Administration (PA) is predominantly a field of Public Law. Consequently, several law chairs offer some PA-related contents. Public Management (PM) is not frequently taught at Austrian

³ As a result, Germany is the largest producer of PhDs in Europe with an average of 25.000 graduates per year; Hüfner 2004, 52.

universities⁴. The WU Wien has recently offered a new 3-year PhD programme with relatively intensive course work (57 ECTS). Public Management is one of several specialisations amongst Business Administration, Economics, Law and others.

Germany: As in Austria, PA-issues are taught at several law faculties, in a few political science departments and at a couple of university chairs of Public Management which are usually affiliated with departments of Business Administration (Reichard 2003 and 2008)⁵. Universities with an explicit Public Management focus and with some PhD activities (although usually not more than one professor) can be found in Freiburg, Friedrichshafen, Hamburg, Kassel, Konstanz, Leipzig, Mannheim, Potsdam and Speyer. Apart from being employed by universities as research or teaching assistant, there are a few opportunities to become a member of one of the *Graduiertenkollegs* which are funded by the German Research Council (DFG)⁶. A *Graduiertenkolleg* is a group of about 15 – 25 PhDs collaborating under the supervision of some professors at a university in a common research programme. They receive a scholarship of about 1000€/m. and usually have sufficient time to work for their dissertation. Some universities are currently restructuring their PhD education and introduce a more systematic training programme. The Department of Political and Administrative Sciences at the *University of Konstanz* is an example of this. In a 3-year schedule, each PhD candidate has to participate in several PhD-seminars, in regular colloquia and in various workshops on research design and didactics. Alternatively, she/he can partly set off other forms of academic work (research projects, publications, teaching, conferences etc.)⁷.

Switzerland: The opportunities to study PA and PM are more developed in this country (for PM see Schedler 2008). At least the following universities are involved in teaching and researching in the field of Public Management: the University of St. Gallen, University of Bern with its KPM, the competence centre for public management and the IDHEAP Lausanne. Furthermore, there are some public sector-related research activities at the Universities of Geneva, Lugano and Zürich. Finally, several polytechnic universities are active in this field. St. Gallen university offers a new PhD programme with two years' intensive course work and a maximum three years dissertation phase⁸ with specialisations in management, economics and finance, international affairs and political economy, law, organisation and culture (but so far

4 The following universities have shown clear PM-activities during past years and are also engaged in PhD training: University of Linz, University of Economics and Business Administration Vienna (WU Wien), University of Klagenfurt, University of Innsbruck.

5 The field of Public Management in Germany is highly fragmented; there are contributions from Business Administration/Management, from Political/Administrative Sciences, from Public Law and to some extent from Sociology.

6 See: http://www.dfg.de/forschungsfoerderung/koordinierte_programme/graduiertenkollegs/download/grako_eng.pdf. There is most probably no *Kolleg* in PM.

7 http://www.uni-konstanz.de/sektionen/polver/?cont=stud_prom&lang=de

8 See (so far only in German): <http://www.phd.unisg.ch/org/lehre/ds.nsf/wwwPubInhalteGer/Ablauf+des+Doktoratsstudiums?opendocument>

not in Public Management). Several French and Italian-speaking universities have recently begun a PhD network “*Formation Doctorale en politiques et management publics*” (PhD PMP)⁹ which combines political sciences with public management and law. Courses are offered at the various locations of partner universities in a condensed mode. They are combined in several modules and offer thematic, as well as methodological, contents.

General Assessment: PhD training in Austria, Germany and Switzerland is probably in a similar phase of change. As with Public Management reforms in general, Switzerland has the lead in PhD training in this field. Traditional PhD education is quite unstructured, of low intensity and inadequate for ensuring scientific “new blood”. It is obvious that all three countries have to invest in a more systematic and research-oriented PhD education to compete with the other science-focussed nations. There are indications that there is a recent trend in this direction, i.e. towards the implementation of doctoral programmes and schools.

2.2 France

France has also adopted the Bachelor-Master system of higher education according to the Bologna Treaty (Lemerle 2004). In order to harmonise its higher education, French university programmes henceforth consist of three diplomas: the ‘licence’, the master and the ‘doctorat’, the so-called L.M.D. system. The ‘license’ is a six-semester (three-year) programme, which replaces the former two-year ‘diplôme d’études universitaires générales’ which was followed by a one-year ‘license’. After the three-year ‘license’ a student can continue in a ‘research master’ or a ‘professional master’, which replaces the former ‘maîtrise’. The four-semester (two-year) master corresponds to the former ‘diplôme bac’ plus five years of study. Students of a research master can subscribe for preparing a ‘doctorat’. This doctoral preparation takes six semesters (three years). This corresponds to the former ‘diplôme bac’ plus eight years of study¹⁰. A considerable number of PhD candidates (about 75 %) receive a certain kind of scholarships from government (Lemerle 2004, 46). In fact most of these funds are salaries and related to a three-year’s employment contract with the university.

According to a recent law (7 August 2006), the formation for a doctoral degree has changed. Some elements of the new concept are:

1. The doctoral degree is prepared in an accredited doctoral school, and in a recognised research group or institute.
2. The doctoral schools must organise training programmes for their doctoral students (in French ‘doctorats’). A training programme in the form of seminars should be provided during the entire doctoral formation period. The pro-

9 See (in French): <http://www.masterpmp.ch/pmp.nsf/vwBaseDocuments/AAPMP01?OpenDocument&lng=fr>

10 Source: website French ministry of education.

gramme should open to European and international perspectives, especially in the area of co-operation with foreign universities and research centres.

3. The research groups must regularly organise scientific colloquia and study seminars etc. which are open for their doctoral students.

This legal reform shows that exchange with foreign universities for doctoral degree courses is not only possible but highly recommendable¹¹. The problem is the specific organisation of the exchange, which can hardly be other than incidental – participation in a research seminar or colloquium, travel costs paid by the research group or school of the doctoral student – or in the form of a few weeks' visit to a research group – the French PA research institute CERSA-CNRS regularly receives foreign PhD students for research and participation in seminars and colloquia.

Public Administration is a traditional academic field with a strong variety of involved academic institutions (Bartoli 2008). Apart from the *grandes écoles* such as the ENA, there are various universities offering educational programmes and also PhD programmes in PA. Most of them belong to the traditional departments such as law, sociology, political science and economics; public management as an inter-discipline is thus quite fragmented. Nowadays, about 12 universities offer PM degrees, some of them also PhD programmes (Bartoli 2008, 34, 37).

2.3 Italy

PhD education in Italy is relatively new; it has been of some relevance in the Italian academic system only during the last 25 years as a result of a larger university reform (Moscati 2004). This explains why the PhD is quite a new academic degree and why it is still uncommon in many university departments, especially with regard to older scholars. A PhD degree is primarily attractive for an academic career; it is not so relevant for professional development, particularly not in social sciences. But even in the Italian academia, the PhD is still not a *conditio sine qua non* for a scientific career. The PhD training is based on a national programme and government intervenes regularly in the procedures. At least from a formal point it consists, to some extent, of lectures and seminars as students have to participate in a series of courses and seminars. A large part of all PhD-candidates receives a scholarship (usually 820€/m.) from university which is mostly funded by the Italian Ministry for University and Scientific Research (MURST).

A PhD candidate has to fulfil certain minimum entry criteria (a second level degree with a good grade). She/he has to apply for a PhD study to the favoured university. Universities usually organise an entry selection process based on the CV with a written and oral exam (concorso). In several universities, PhDs have to pay tuition fees (according to their own income or their parents' income, about 1500

11 According to personal communication with Jacques Chevallier, Université Panthéon-Assas (Paris 2) and director of CERSA-CNRS.

– 2000 €/y.). If they receive a scholarship, the fees are covered by the funding institution. Usually each university receives about 2 – 4 scholarships for a PhD programme per year from government (in Southern Italy, many PhD programmes are funded by EU structural funds). If Italian PhD candidates go abroad for their research for one or two semesters, they receive an increased scholarship (+50 %).

A PhD programme normally takes three years. In the first two years, PhDs participate in the offered courses and seminars. If not before, at the beginning of the third year, PhD students begin to write their dissertation. At the end of each year, the PhD student must present a detailed report on his/her research activities and on the attended lectures. The report is evaluated by the council of professors and if approved, determines the passage to the following year. At the end of the third year the PhD candidate has to discuss and to defend his/her dissertation before a commission, which includes three professors (at least one of them from another university). This final exam can be repeated only once and it is not graded. PhDs are narrowly affiliated with their supervisors who involve them in their regular research work, sometimes also in teaching and in consultancy work. Civil servants have a special privilege: they are entitled to take a paid leave for a PhD programme if they are admitted by a university.

PhD training in Public Management: In line with the general structure of the academic field, there is a variety of PhD programmes in PA with regard to content, intensity and research focus (for PM see Meneguzzo 2008). Existing PhD-programmes are not really interconnected. The borderlines between the classical disciplines of public administration are particularly strong. Collaboration seems to be the exception. The following universities are considered to play an active role in Public Management-related PhD training: Catanzaro Magna Graeca (primarily Health Care), Milano Catholic (Public Economics), Parma in collaboration with Bocconi U. Milano and Universities of Modena, Venezia and Trento (Public Management), Roma II with Roma III (Public Management and Governance), Salerno (with some partners in Southern Italy) and Siena in collaboration with the Universities of Pisa and Firenze (Management with specialisation in Public Management). Furthermore, there are some PhD programmes with a focus on Public Management in other faculties, primarily in Law and Political Sciences. The following seem to be of some relevance: Firenze with some partners (political science focus) and Roma I “La Sapienza” (law focus).

2.4 Spain

Spain has recently adopted the Bachelor-Master system of higher education according to the Bologna Treaty. Spanish universities have now begun to implement the new system and to revise the old degrees and diplomas. Spanish universities intend to start research masters besides their professional masters (60 to 120 ECTS) and they also offer doctoral programmes. The most important motive for graduates to

apply for a PhD programme is an intended academic career. Very few students go for a PhD due to unemployment or for mere pleasure.

*General Institutional Framework of PhD education in Spain*¹²: The PhD-title is offered by universities. The Faculty is responsible for the programme. A PhD-programme is organised by a department and one of the professors is appointed as coordinator. According to the National Decree¹³, each university has to establish a commission for postgraduate studies. Each programme has to be approved by the “Consejo de Gobierno” (the main steering board of the university) and by the “Consejo Social” (a board existing in public universities in charge of approving the budget). The Regional Government (“Comunidad Autónoma”) has to approve the programmes of the universities established in the region and it has to inform the “Consejo de Coordinación Universitaria” (the national board where all the ‘comunidades autónomas’ and rectors or chancellors are represented). This board publishes the complete list of all the official programmes on the “BOE” (national gazette). From this moment on, each university may offer their programmes.

PhD programmes in PA: The main PhD programmes in Spain focus on public administration, political sciences with public administration studies, and public policies (Ballart 2008). Public administration has a minor role in the field. Most programmes from faculties of political sciences have a generic focus. There are no more than 4 or 5 programmes in Spain that focus on public administration and the same amount probably on public management. Well-known universities offering a PhD programme in public sector research are UNED (Distance Learning University), Complutense and Juan Carlos I (all in Madrid), Pompeu Fabra, Autònoma and the private Management School ESADE (all in Barcelona).

General structure of a PhD-programme: In the past, programmes offered 2 years of teaching. There was no formal deadline to hand in the PhD thesis. At present, programmes are being adapted to the Bologna agreements. Content and duration of the doctorate are decided by the universities, and they might organise special courses, seminars or other activities leading to student’s research formation. Usually universities design a Master Programme and students that finish it apply to be admitted to the PhD. To be admitted, students need 60 ECTS of an official postgraduate programme or a Master degree; in any case students must have 300 ECTS in both undergraduate plus graduate courses. According to the previous regulations, PhD students have to study for at least 320 contact hours to be admitted to write and defend the dissertation (no information about the workload according to the new regulations). A final dissertation is compulsory and cannot be replaced by

12 The following notes are from Prof. Salvador Parrado at UNED (National University for Distance Learning Madrid).

13 Real Decreto 56/2005, de 21 de Enero (BOE nº 21, de 25 de enero; Real Decreto 1509/2005, de 16 de diciembre (BOE nº 303, de 20 de diciembre); Real Decreto 189/2007, de 9 de febrero (BOE nº 36, de 20 de febrero).

published articles; it supposedly has to be “an original research”. At the end of the process, the PhD student has to defend his/her “thesis” (dissertation) and only when the dissertation is approved by the committee, he/she will receive the “viva” and the grade. The committee is appointed by the commission of postgraduate studies, existing in each university (based on the proposals of the department in charge of the programme and of the individual supervisor). The committee is composed of five members and they all have to be doctors. There are only two restrictions: no more than two members from the department in charge of the programme and no more than three from the same university. In practice, the committee is compounded of ‘friends’ of the supervisor and, depending on the disciplines, will have a more or less independent view on the work of the PhD student.

General Impression: PhD studies in Spain, as in other European countries, are changing. So far, the degree of systematic learning and exposure to independent research in a PhD programme seems to be rather limited. There are only few programmes focussing on public administration/management. An interesting specialty in Spain is the interlinking of a Master and a PhD programme as students normally at first have to pass a master and can then go for their PhD. Also, Spanish universities face the problem of small scale¹⁴. Doctorate programmes sometimes have so few PhD students that the universities are unable to offer all necessary courses themselves. Nevertheless, there are, so far, no plans to form a Spanish inter-university co-operation for PhD training. As the government strongly emphasises the need for internationalisation, especially for PhD research and training, co-operation with foreign universities in some form of exchange of PhD students will probably grow.

2.5 The Netherlands

Writing a dissertation in The Netherlands in the past followed the traditional continental European pattern. After finishing a university degree, a PhD candidate began his work and was called *doctorandus* (in Latin ‘he who will become doctor’, comparable to a Masters degree). Previously, a PhD was a five year-degree and changed to a four year-degree in the eighties. The candidate became a university staff member, chose a professor (the ‘promotor’) and under his/her supervision conducted a research project, culminating in a dissertation. After public defense of the dissertation before a committee of professors (formal ritual, still existing) one became a ‘doctor’. Up until the eighties, writing a dissertation in the social sciences usually was a life’s work, taking a decade or more, and often soon leading to a full professorship. This continental European pattern in the German *von Humboldt* university tradition, where scientific research was closely related to university teaching, was fundamentally different from the Anglo-Saxon university tradition where research (in institutes) and teaching (in colleges) were separate. In the latter tradition, writing a PhD

14 According to personal communication between Walter Kickert and Professor Carlos Alba Tercedor of the Autonomous University of Madrid and with associate professor Xavier Ballart of the Autonomous University of Barcelona.

dissertation was part of the studies of a PhD-student within a regular PhD training programme. Doing a PhD in the US was, and still is, considered to be continuous education.

In the eighties, the Dutch Ministry of Education and Sciences changed the tradition by establishing a new junior staff position called 'AIO' (assistant in education) for PhD researchers. However, AIO's were not considered as students but as staff members, with a regular position (staff members at Dutch universities are civil servants) with a (low) salary. The temporary position was for four years, usually extended to a fifth year. The hidden reason for the ministry to introduce this change was that Dutch universities – due to budget cuts – threatened to become populated by permanent seniors only. Universities were now compelled to hire a certain proportion of temporary juniors, thus safeguarding the creation of a new upcoming young generation of researchers (who, by the way, in the eighties could hardly obtain a regular staff position in universities after finishing their PhD due to budget cuts.)

At the beginning of the nineties, the Dutch ministry introduced another policy change in the direction of the Anglo-Saxon model, by introducing the concept of research schools. Each academic discipline should establish national research schools in which research groups from different universities should collaborate, and in which a regular training programme for AIO's (=PhD students) was to be offered. This more or less formed the beginning of structured PhD training programmes in The Netherlands. Writing a dissertation no longer only consisted of conducting one's own individual research under supervision of a professor. A two-year PhD training programme was to be followed during the first two years of the (four-year) AIO position. Dutch AIO's began to resemble Anglo-Saxon PhD students.

Public Administration: In the field of political and administrative sciences, the national research school NIG (Netherlands Institute of Government) was established in the early nineties, an initiative of the three universities that had a regular full-time PA education programme – Twente, Leiden and Rotterdam (for more details on the PM-status in this country see Kickert 2008). Soon the departments of Public Administration (and political science) at all other Dutch universities joined in (see www.nig.fsw.eur.nl). During the first years of its existence the research school received additional funds from the National Research Council, which was an incentive to join. Since then, the research school NIG is only financed by contributions of the participating university departments. The NIG mandatory training programme for all participating PhD students consists of two courses in the philosophy of science and methodology; two advanced courses on public administration and political science; several courses aimed at developing skills, and four tutorials (tailor-made individual meetings with senior NIG-staff). In the third and fourth year, PhD students can take part in research colloquia.

More recently, the Ministry of Education and Sciences, following the Bologna Treaty, has introduced another policy change, the establishment of *research masters* in universities. Universities are now obliged to offer a two-year master programme on research besides the three-year Bachelor programmes and one-year Master programmes that were introduced nationwide in The Netherlands some five years ago. Some universities (Leiden, Amsterdam, Twente) have chosen to offer such research masters in their own faculty or department, and some other universities (Rotterdam, Utrecht, Tilburg) have chosen to co-operate in one common research master. The first research masters in public administration and political science began to accept students last year so that the first PhD students, who have graduated from the two-year research masters, will begin their research project next year.

The national research school, NIG, is, at the moment, reconsidering its existing PhD training programme in view of this new type of PhD students and in view of the fact that in the future, there will be two types of PhD students who will apply for research projects: with and without a research master. Besides these two categories of full time PhD students in The Netherlands, another category exists: the 'outside' PhD researcher, usually a practitioner who writes a dissertation besides his/her job. Moreover, the internationalisation of research makes it probable that a fourth category of 'foreign' PhD students will gain importance. Foreign PhD students will presumably follow some exchange programme between a Dutch and a foreign university regarding PhD training (there is an exchange between the Dutch national research school, NIG, and the Danish national PhD training network, Polforsk). In some other disciplines (e.g. environmental studies at Rotterdam), specially designed PhD training courses for foreign students have been established, where foreigners conduct their entire PhD training and research project in a restricted number of condensed periods in The Netherlands.

In summary, the overall picture is that in the past, there were no structured PhD training programmes in The Netherlands. From the eighties onwards, a regular PhD training course became a mandatory part of the four-year position of PhD-students (AIO). At the beginning of the nineties, a national common PhD training programme for public administration and political science was established in which all relevant departments in the country jointly co-operated. This relatively stable situation lasted more than a decade until recent developments created a more varied picture of PhD training programmes. Besides the national PhD training programme of NIG, various university research masters have originated. Moreover, other categories of PhD students require different sorts of PhD training.

Institutional framework of PhD education: The most common category of PhD position is the AIO, a four-year junior staff position at a university department. A university master graduate (not necessarily a PA or political science master) applies for a vacant position of AIO. After a formal selection procedure, the PhD researcher is nominated under the supervision of a particular professor, the 'pro-

motor'. The PhD researcher is called 'promovendus'. The AIO junior staff member usually spends 25 % of his/her time on education (the first two years following the NIG PhD training programme, the latter years assisting other staff in Bachelor and Master courses) and 75 % to his/her own research. The first year is normally used to write an extensive research proposal. At the end of the first year, the research proposal is judged and it is decided whether this can ensure a successful end of the research project within the four-year period. If so, the contract is prolonged for another three years. As hardly anyone finishes within four years, the contract can be extended to a fifth year (but due to budget restrictions this happens less and less). It is not unusual for a dissertation to be finished during employment elsewhere, or even during unemployment.

The AIO writes a dissertation which is judged by the first supervisor (promotor) and a second supervisor (co-promotor). In natural sciences it is common that a dissertation may consist of a couple of published articles, but in the social sciences this is still highly uncommon. If positive, the dissertation is forwarded to a committee consisting of about seven professors, one or two from the same department, the remainder from outside the department but at the same university, from outside universities, and increasingly also from abroad. If the committee is positive, the dissertation is publicly defended in a formal session of the committee (professors in gown (toga), chaired by the 'rector magnificus' of the university). After three quarters of an hour the 'pedel' of the university enters in gown (toga) and announces 'hora est' (latin for: it is time). Then the candidate is promoted to 'doctor' by the rector, and the formal degree is handed over to the new 'doctor' by the first supervisor (promotor). Most universities have a heavy procedure for granting the honours degree 'cum laude'. Not only the full committee should unanimously agree, but external authoritative scholars (usually foreign) should also give their consent.

With the newly created research master, a graduate from such a master will probably apply for a three-year AIO position. As the research master finishes an extensive research proposal, the above mentioned first year of the normal four-year AIO has already been accomplished. The rest of the procedure remains the same. It is still unclear what kind of a PhD training programme such an AIO will have to follow during the three-year period. So-called 'outside' PhD researchers do not occupy a formal position in a university department, as they usually have a regular job. It is unusual that they follow (parts of) the NIG PhD training programme. In fact, these 'outsiders' resemble the traditional pattern in which people conducted their PhD research – that is, wrote a dissertation with personal supervision only – up to some twenty years ago in The Netherlands.

2.6 Norway and Denmark

Norway: Here the Bachelor-Master structure of university education has also been introduced. Besides the three-year Bachelor and the professional two-year Master

programmes, Norwegian universities offer Research Masters, a two-year full-time study programme. The Research Master prepares students for doing research work, contains an independent thesis, and is carried out under individual supervision. After finishing a Research Master, a student can apply for admission to a PhD study – a doctoral degree. The doctoral degree programme is a course of education that takes three years of full-time study. It contains a training component equivalent to no less than 30 credits (one semester of full-time study) and a dissertation (PhD thesis). The dissertation is an independent piece of scientific work that meets international standards within the subject area; it is written in Norwegian or English. If the dissertation is approved, it has to be defended at a public disputation. The formal entrance qualification for the three-year PhD degree programme is either a two-year Research Master, or an equivalent professional master degree in various disciplines, or other equivalent qualifications. Besides the 'organised' doctoral degree, Norwegian universities also have a 'free' doctoral degree. No formal training or supervision is related with this degree. This doctoral degree is called *Dr. philos.* instead of PhD but the scientific status of both degrees is equivalent. Work on the doctoral dissertation is carried out under individual supervision. The doctoral candidate is part of a research group. At the University of Bergen the best of these research groups are clustered in research schools.

The PhD training programme contains the academic and methodological training necessary for the student to carry out the dissertation research. It includes training in the theory of science and ethics, and attention is paid to the dissemination of academic work in the field, to students, and to the general public. As the number of PhD students per degree programme is relatively low, so that a single university cannot offer all necessary PhD training courses themselves, PhD students often visit other Norwegian and also foreign universities to complete parts of their curricular training programme abroad. It can be assumed that there will be an interest in entering some kind of exchange programme with other foreign universities in offering PhD training courses. An existing example is *Scancor*, the Stanford-Norway exchange programme which was established some time ago, based on the lifelong co-operation between Johan Olsen and Jim March. Dozens of Norwegian political science scholars have visited Stanford University. The internationalisation of Norwegian political and administrative sciences is intense, but one-sidedly oriented towards the US.

Public Administration: Administrative sciences in Norway still form an integral part of political science (Christensen/Laegreid 2008). The typical characteristic of Norwegian administrative science is the combination of political science and organisation theory, mainly due to the academic backgrounds of Johan Olsen and Jim March. PA studies are concentrated in the universities of Bergen and Oslo with some PM-related activities also in business schools. The focus on PM is not very strong in Norway.

Denmark: The Bachelor-Master structure of university education also exists in Denmark. The aforementioned situation in Norway presumably also holds true in Denmark.

Public Administration: There are several universities offering educational programmes in PA, also with some focus on PM. Well-known universities in our field are in Copenhagen (University plus Business School), Aalborg, Aarhus, Odense and Roskilde. Most of these universities also award a PhD in our field. The main difference with Norway relates to the training of PhD students in that Denmark has a national network for the training of PhD students in political science, the Danish political science research school 'Polforsk' (see www.polforsk.dk). It is a co-operative network established for the education of Danish PhD students, founded in 2002 by the universities of Copenhagen, Aarhus, Southern Denmark, Roskilde, Aalborg, the Copenhagen Business School, the Danish School of Public Administration and the Danish institute of local government studies. The objective is not to transfer the PhD training courses from universities to Polforsk, but to strengthen them through co-ordination. The number of PhD students per single department was simply so small that co-operation in providing PhD courses was mutually advantageous. As most university departments do offer courses in methodology and philosophy of science, Polforsk focuses not on these methodology courses, but rather supplies strong courses on topics of political science (theories, research fields) that are relevant to a group of PhD students. In some cases, international collaboration about the provision of PhD courses is needed because the subject is relevant for too few Danish PhD students. Therefore, Polforsk participates in the international promotion of PhD courses and establishes connections to internationally strong research environments. Polforsk has received funding from the Danish Research Council. Besides, the research school is financed by the founding institutions. These funds enable the network to run a secretariat. Sometimes senior researchers are invited from abroad to give PhD courses. But apart from that, Polforsk does not possess the funds to finance PhD education. Every course supplied by any of the participating institutions is open to PhD students from all Danish departments. For the sake of comparability, and to make it possible for students from all over the country to join the courses, Polforsk offers primarily intensive one-week courses which are typically credited with 5 ECTS including preparation time.

3. The current situation in Europe – some comparative findings

3.1 Status of PhD education

PhD education in Europe in our field already has some common standards. The usual entry criterion is a master's degree (with some exceptions). The formal time-frame for a PhD is around 3 – 4 years (according to the Bologna Treaty: 180 ECTS).

The candidate should generate a piece of original research which should result in a dissertation (still mostly a “big book” and less frequently a series of journal articles). The candidate has to defend his/her dissertation in front of a PhD committee; usually the performance is graded. In most countries, the PhD degree is a major requirement and a first step into the scientific community.

Apart from these formal similarities, there are various dissimilarities between concepts and procedures which are related to the academic cultures and traditions of the respective countries. Very generally, there are two major paths: the classical “unity of research and teaching” in the *Humboldtian* tradition and the more divided parallelism of research and teaching in the Anglo Saxon academia. In countries following the *Humboldtian* tradition, the dissertation as an important and independent research work stays at the centre of the PhD; the dissertation is the “academic masterpiece”. Additional learning activities may play a role but are not compulsory. In countries following the Anglo Saxon path, the dissertation is a major, but not exclusive, part of the whole doctorate. Systematic training and own research are more balanced elements of the whole PhD.

Thus, we observe quite different basic patterns of PhD-training in Europe: On the one side, in several countries a PhD “project” is primarily a heavy piece of individual research work with only limited training support. On the other side, undertaking a “PhD” is simply a phase of continuing education and consists – besides the ultimate dissertation – of an intensive sequence of courses and class-room exercises. The first case can still be found in several continental European states, e.g. in Austria, Germany, France and Italy. The second case is the dominant pattern in the Nordic countries, The Netherlands and the UK. According to the described basic patterns we observe two different types of PhD-training:

- *Type A*: The doctoral thesis as result of very substantial, mostly individual research work, complemented with only limited colloquia or seminars (usually consisting of a few hours on research methods)
- *Type B*: The doctoral thesis as the end result of substantial research, based on comprehensive course work over several semesters covering not only methodological issues, but also multiple content-oriented topics

In line with the “post-Bologna” reforms in Europe’s higher education, the second variant becomes more and more relevant.

3.2 Course work in PhD education

In those countries where a PhD is related with structured training courses, quite different kinds of courses and lectures are offered:

- research colloquia where PhD-candidates present and discuss their research projects;

- courses dealing with methodological issues, e.g. quantitative methods, statistical tools, data collection and evaluation methods etc;
- language courses;
- academic writing or reviewing courses;
- courses to enhance didactical skills;
- various content-oriented courses, e.g. about public administration, economics, management, policy issues etc.

The mix of courses seems to be determined by the educational traditions of the country. PhD-programmes in southern European states tend to put more emphasis on “class-room learning” focussing on the various disciplinary topics. Some of the northern and western states seem to be less concentrated on “class-room” and passive learning situations and pay more attention to the individual skills’ development of the young researchers.

The intensity of course work also varies: While some programmes only offer a few hours of PhD-training, other programmes consist of up to 900 hours of teaching and of other organised activities. It might be questionable, to which extent somebody still has “to learn” in a classical classroom mode after having already done this for 5 years or more during his undergraduate and graduate studies.

Some programmes emphasize research-relevant activities different from class-room lectures. They stimulate their candidates to actively participate in national and international conferences (including paper presentations), to collaborate in research teams within the context of larger third-party-financed projects or to engage in own publications at an early phase.

3.3 Status of PhD candidates

The formal status of the PhD candidate is an important factor of the educational process and success. The role and relation of the candidate to his/her supervisor is a major aspect. In several countries – e.g. in Austria, Germany or Italy – candidates are highly dependent on the supervisor. They work in an isolated 1:1-relation which is similar to a “master-apprentice” relationship. In many cases, the supervisor is unable to invest sufficient time and energy into this relation and the candidate suffers from inadequate tutoring. Furthermore, the status of a candidate in such cases is unclear: She/he has been only informally accepted by the “Doktorvater” and there is no official enrolment as a PhD-candidate during the whole duration of the studies.

In some countries, PhD candidates are well-paid research fellows and even employed by the research institution for a certain term (e.g. for 4 – 6 years; see the case of The Netherlands). In other countries, most of the PhDs receive a scholarship from the state. In yet other countries, we find “external PhDs” without any funding and dependent on their own job-related income or on their parents’ subsidies. It is

obvious that the effectiveness of PhD training also depends on the independence of the candidate from other obligations and on proper financial support.

More generally it may be asked whether a PhD candidate is a “student” and/or a “researcher”. Although she/he usually will feature elements of both during his/her phase of academic education, the answer to this question shows the direction of future development (more training for future academic positions – more experience in doing research). Exposing candidates to research experience may, however, also bear a risk: In some research institutes, research assistants are too heavily involved in larger research projects (and sometimes also in too heavy teaching activities!) that they have to neglect their own dissertation. There seems to be a trade-off between the development of scientific skills and exploitation.

This is related with the *financing* of the whole PhD-programme: While in some countries, PhD-training is just a part of the duties of professors but not at all funded by government¹⁵, governments in other countries invest substantially in PhD education, e.g. by scholarship programme and by funding PhD schools, etc. And, in a few countries, there seems to be a strategy to establish PhD programmes for attracting foreign students and thus to gain additional financial resources. This is, however, also a question of the working language; the “selling” of PhD-studies will probably only work in an Anglophone context. This may partly explain that currently some PhD programmes in Europe move towards English as their working language.

3.4 Institutional patterns

In the various countries, the operation of PhD training activities is organised at different institutional levels. In some countries it is primarily the duty of the individual supervisors who offer some tutoring to their candidates and who sometimes organise a colloquium or seminar (e.g. in the German-speaking countries). In other countries, the departments organise the training courses (e.g. in Southern Europe). And, in a few countries, such as The Netherlands or Denmark there are integrative PhD schools and/or networks initiated by several partner universities.

Although most university departments of PA/PM which offer PhD programmes are quite small, there are not many tendencies towards inter-university collaboration. Two interesting cases are the exception: The *Netherlands Institute of Government* (NIG) which is a consortium of all Dutch universities offering PA/PM degrees and which organises joint courses for all PhD-candidates in our field (see details in section 2.5 and www.nig.fsw.eur.nl). The second case is the Danish “*Pol-forsk*” network which offers PhD training for candidates in political sciences at all

15 Take the case of Germany: Apart from a few PhD-schools funded by the National Research Council, most of the PhD training is carried out “for free” by the individual professors; professors receive no financial incentive, they do not receive any additional funding if they engage in PhD-training, and the candidates themselves do not pay any tuition fees.

universities in Denmark (see section 2.6 and www.polforsk.dk). There are a few more networking activities in other countries, e.g. in the French-speaking part of Switzerland or among a few Italian universities. With a growing need for internationalisation, there will probably be a push towards more international collaboration of university departments to establish a network of PhD training activities.

Table 1

	German-speaking Countries	France	Italy	Spain	The Netherlands	Norway/Denmark
Dominant pattern of PhD education	Fragmented, focus at classical disciplines; dissertation is dominant	Fragmented, focus at classical disciplines			More integration of PA-sub-disciplines; dominance of Political Sciences	
Kind and intensity of coursework	Low intensity, primarily methods	Intensive coursework, primarily disciplinary topics; much classroom lectures			Moderate intensity, theory-based learning; methods plus problem-oriented issues	
Status of PhD candidates	Many external part-time candidates; apprentice role; dependent from supervisor; poor funding	Mostly fulltime students with scholarship; students = members of PhD programme or of research groups; strong dependence; sufficient scholarships		Mostly fulltime students with scholarship; unclear status (new law: PhD= part of master?)	Salaried research assistants (NL: "AIO"); members of research groups	
Institutional patterns	Individual supervisors dominant; structured programmes and schools exception; committees include only professors of same university.	Several PhD programmes in PA/PM; committees include also professors from other universities			Research groups in universities plus NIG; committees include also professors from other universities and from foreign countries.	Research groups in universities plus Polforsk; committees include also professors from other universities and from foreign countries.

3.5 Balancing the existing PhD programmes in PA/PM in Europe

There are three different types of countries (see Table 1): The first group (e.g. Austria, France, Germany, Spain) still follows the traditional pattern of an individual

PhD without adequate training support. In these countries, PhD-candidates qualify themselves by simple “learning-by-doing”. The effectiveness of this pattern seems to be rather limited. A second group of countries is on the move towards a more systematic PhD training (e.g. Italy, Switzerland). Here, the government invests into PhD training via scholarships and here the curricula have at least partly changed into a more comprehensive education of necessary skills and knowledge. A third group of countries (e.g. the Nordic states, The Netherlands, the UK and Ireland) have already set up an intensive and activating educational programme with a lot of networking activities.

4. Future Challenges

From a formal point of view, there are indications that most EU states have made many adjustments also in the field of PhD education. According to some data from the European University Association EUA, in 82 % of all universities, degree cycles are in place (including the PhD = third cycle), 50 % offer taught courses in PhD programmes, 30 % have established doctoral schools and only 22 % still follow the traditional style of individual research under a supervisor (Wilson 2006). After formal adjustments, it is time now to improve the quality of PhD education and research. Some of the important standards for quality improvements of PhD education can be found in the 2005-*Salzburg Principles* (see Appendix). The quality of PhD training is also a general issue of educational policy: If we aim to improve the scientific excellence of administrative sciences, then we have to invest more in PhD training.

Future PhD-programmes in PA should offer sufficient opportunities of interdisciplinary collaboration. In most European countries we find a strong fragmentation of the different sub-disciplines of administrative sciences, which is one reason for the weak standing of our research field in the scientific community. A more integrative and collaborative PhD-training could be one measure to overcome this weakness. Furthermore, future programmes should put more emphasis on self-contained and independent research qualifications of the PhD-candidates. Passive classroom learning cannot be considered to be the dominant concept of PhD-development. The young researchers should be exposed to own research work, to active analysis and reflection of theoretical issues and to the application of modern research methods.

Future programmes should also invest more in national and international networking. As already mentioned, most departments are too small to run an own PhD-programme; thus they are forced to collaborate with partners and to look for synergies. Regular joint research seminars and summer schools are a promising instrument for this aim. The growing interest of universities to recruit professors with strong international backgrounds and with international publications confirms this tendency. The Dutch *NIG* and the Danish *Polforsk*, as well as the newly established

PhD network of Franco-Swiss universities, are interesting models. Existing PhD programmes in our field should join these networks and/or initiate similar own networking activities.

What are the next challenges? One of the next urgent challenges will be the inter-linkage of the different “Bologna» stages, particularly of the Research Master-stage and the PhD-stage. If the research master is already offering sufficiently research-related knowledge and skills, e.g. about methods and research design, then there is no need to repeat it in the PhD-training. This example demonstrates the necessity of coordination between the two layers of higher education. Another pending issue is a “Professional PhD”: This is already an issue in several applied sciences, e.g. in the US or UK, and should also be discussed in our field. The “Fast track PhD” which may allow outstanding students a direct transfer from Bachelor to PhD will probably be another issue of debate. And the *marketisation* of PhD training may become an additional challenge if we think of the growing interest of foreign graduates – particularly from South-East Asia – to join European PhD schools for a prestigious PhD degree. With increasing internationalisation, joint degrees or double degrees will become a further topic: How can schools and departments collaborate in joint PhD programmes and what are the standards of teaching and of assessing performance? This brings us to a last important challenge: the external quality assurance of PhD programmes and schools. While accreditation of Bachelor and Master programmes has been widely practised over the last years, so far this is relatively unknown in the third cycle. Here are new challenges for accreditation agencies, e.g. for the *European Association of Public Administration Accreditation* (www.eapaa.org). Is there already a common body of “good practice” to organise and operate PhD programmes and schools¹⁶?

Last but not least, there is a serious financial issue: If universities want to intensify and improve their PhD-training, they will obviously require more money. A PhD-qualifications “for nothing”, as is still the case in some countries, is not an adequate precondition for quality improvements. Governments have to fund scholarships for PhD-candidates; universities have to establish the necessary infrastructure and to set effective (also: monetary) incentives to departments and to individual professors to engage more in PhD-training.

There is a need for joint initiatives and for strengthening national and international collaboration. The European Group of Public Administration (EGPA) is obviously the ideal institution for supporting such a task. EGPA is already strongly involved in promoting the scientific development of PA/PM and also in supporting the academic development of PhD candidates. The annual EGPA pre-conference for young researchers and the various permanent study groups are an important contribution to support Europeanisation and networking of young researchers. It

16 As an example see “Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Universities. Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB) Dublin 2005 (www.iuqb.ie).

should be a strategic issue of EGPA to further engage in supporting the standard setting and the collaborative efforts of PhD programmes and schools in our field, e.g. with a PhD-platform (website) giving information on the relevant programmes and activities in Europe and with additional research workshops for PhD candidates.

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Appendix

Basic principles of PhD education in Europe

(From the Bologna Seminar on “Doctoral Programmes for the European Knowledge Society”, Salzburg, 3 – 5 February 2005)¹⁷

- i. **The core component of doctoral training is the advancement of knowledge through original research.** At the same time it is recognised that doctoral training must increasingly meet the needs of an employment market that is wider than academia.
- ii. **Embedding in institutional strategies and policies:** universities as institutions need to assume responsibility for ensuring that the doctoral programmes and research training they offer are designed to meet new challenges and include appropriate professional career development opportunities.
- iii. **The importance of diversity:** the rich diversity of doctoral programmes in Europe – including joint doctorates – is a strength which has to be underpinned by quality and sound practice.
- iv. **Doctoral candidates as early stage researchers:** should be recognized as professionals – with commensurate rights – who make a key contribution to the creation of new knowledge.
- v. **The crucial role of supervision and assessment:** in respect of individual doctoral candidates, arrangements for supervision and assessment should be based on a transparent contractual framework of shared responsibilities between doctoral candidates, supervisors and the institution (and where appropriate including other partners).
- vi. **Achieving critical mass:** Doctoral programmes should seek to achieve critical mass and should draw on different types of innovative practice being introduced in universities across Europe, bearing in mind that different solutions may be appropriate to different contexts and in particular across larger and smaller European countries. These range from graduate schools in major universities to international, national and regional collaboration between universities.
- vii. **Duration:** doctoral programmes should operate within an appropriate time duration (three to four years full-time as a rule).
- viii. **The promotion of innovative structures:** to meet the challenge of interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills

¹⁷ http://www.eua.be/fileadmin/user_upload/files/EUA1_documents/Salzburg_Conclusions.1108990538850.pdf.

- ix. **Increasing mobility:** Doctoral programmes should seek to offer geographical as well as interdisciplinary and intersectoral mobility and international collaboration within an integrated framework of cooperation between universities and other partners.
- x. **Ensuring appropriate funding:** the development of quality doctoral programmes and the successful completion by doctoral candidates requires appropriate and sustainable funding.

Quality Management in Public Administration Master Programmes: Towards a Holistic Approach

Valérie Pattyn, Bruno Broucker, & Marleen Brans

Abstract

Under the influence of the Bologna process, the Catholic University of Leuven (K.U. Leuven) reinforced its efforts in developing a culture of quality in its educational programmes. This article deals with the development and the content of the concept of quality 'Guided Independent Learning' (GIL) and its operationalisation in two master programmes that the Public Management Institute organises at the K.U. Leuven: the Master of European Politics and Policies (MEPP), and the Master in Public Management and Public Policy (MPMP). An all-comprehensive educational concept requires an all-comprehensive strategy for quality assurance. Of this strategy, this article describes and analyses both internal and external mechanisms for quality protection as two communicating barrels.

According to the authors, the development of a university-wide didactical framework has been instrumental for improving the quality assurance processes of the two master programmes. Triggered by the BaMa reforms, the diffusion of the GIL concept served a strategic momentum to assess the implicitly existing quality standards and elevate them to a more explicit level. Especially for the MPMP programme, which prepared itself to operate at the initial master's level, the opportunity was taken to reconceptualise its curriculum in conformity with the GIL norms.

The article finishes on a critical note. Despite its beneficial consequences, the top-down quality improvement measurements also involve some critical challenges: time investment and the translation of the generally-formulated pedagogical terminology into a specific public administration/public management setting.

1. Introduction

In response to the mandate given by the Ministers of the Bologna Process, the ‘European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education’ developed a so-called set of ‘*Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*’. These standards called for an improvement of external quality assessment mechanisms. In addition, they place the prime responsibility for quality assurance with the higher education institutions themselves, by instructing them to invest on a ‘*development of a culture of quality*’ in their work (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education: 2005).

The present contribution describes the efforts undertaken by the Catholic University of Leuven (K.U. Leuven) and its Public Management Institute, in particular, to develop such a ‘culture of quality’ in their educational programmes. The contribution is built upon the K.U. Leuven concept of quality ‘Guided Independent Learning’, and its operationalisation in the two master programmes the Public Management Institute organises: Master of European Politics and Policies (MEPP) and the Master in Public Management and Public Policy (MPMP).

Although both programmes had a long history before the formal introduction of the Bachelor Master structure in Flanders in 2004 – 2005, the latter’s implementation has led to an important reconceptualisation of the programmes, linked with an explicit reflection on quality assurance.

Whereas the concept of Guided Independent Learning has been specifically developed within a K.U. Leuven context, the approach might be definitely valuable to export to other settings as well.

2. Guided Independent Learning: a holistic educational concept at the K.U. Leuven

2.1 Quality in Higher Education: the need for an all-embracing approach

When exploring academic and pedagogical literature in search for an adequate definition of ‘quality’ in higher education, opinions seem to converge on the essential characteristics of a highly qualitative educational programme (be it at bachelor or master level). While the educational debate could be long time characterised as rather behaviouristic (putting the emphasis on offering the right stimuli), the quality paradigm in higher education has now shifted to a more process-oriented social-constructivist approach. In spite of their particular emphasis, the current dominant pedagogical models all seem to stress the following basic educational underlying principles:

- The learning process is considered to be active (the student is learning), constructive (the student constructs meaning), cumulative (as contrasted to a *tabula rasa* approach to learning), goal oriented (the student focuses his activities on the learning objectives) and contextualised (the student learns in and in interaction with a social-cultural context);
- The goals of education should not be narrowly restricted to purely cognitive objectives, but should strive to develop all types of knowledge, attitudes, skills and competencies;
- Mutual consistency between educational goals, evaluation approaches and instructional interventions is a prerequisite for educational success (Elen: 2003; Onderwijsraad: 1999).

Confronted with these scientific developments with regard to learning, universities are increasingly challenged to adapt their existing educational concepts. In 1999, the Educational Council of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium) took the opportunity to elaborate an overall educational concept, reflecting the new vision on learning. Some other external and internal evolutions were decisive for this reflection exercise: externally, the university (in common with all other institutions) was faced with the rapid expansion of technological developments which necessitated an appropriate integration of these new tools in higher education. In addition, economic rationality gained power, involving an increased plea for efficiency at universities.

Internally, some deficits, which the K.U. Leuven had diagnosed, were also influential for the elaboration of the educational concept. The university was confronted with an inconsistency between goals and achievements in numerous educational programmes, an insufficient critical attitude of students, a tendency to encyclopaedic knowledge training, and ex-cathedra teaching. Students also frequently complained about their study load, and often indicated that they did not grasp the relevance of information and tasks (Onderwijsraad: 1999).

Both internal and external incentives urged for a suitable educational concept at the K.U. Leuven.

2.2 Principles of the model of guided independent learning

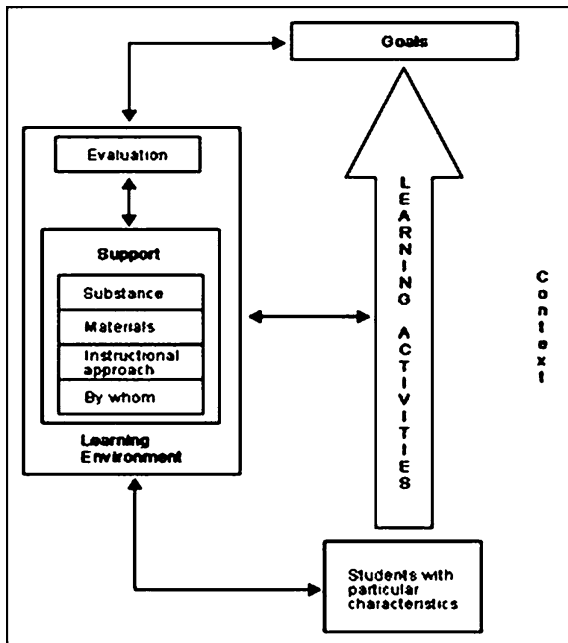
The educational concept that the K.U. Leuven developed under the influence of the above outlined incentives and in accordance with the new scientific findings in the field of learning and teaching was the concept of 'guided independent learning' (hereafter: GIL). It represents what the K.U. Leuven considers to be 'good academic education' (DUO: 2005). The basic principles of the model can be described as follows:

- Academic education should be based on scientific results and students must be able to participate in research projects, so that they can learn to critically eval-

uate scientific findings. This is considered to be a highly valuable educational principle at the university;

- GIL redefines the role of the students and emphasises their active responsibility in the learning process. Students need to assume that responsibility by acquiring an in-depth understanding of the educational goals, by engaging in appropriate learning activities, and by asking for additional help if the learning environment provides insufficient support;
- Within the model, the role of the teaching staff at the faculty is made more explicit. As faculty members are the key players who introduce students to the discipline, their role is of extreme importance. In accordance with their reinforced position, lecturers are expected to define the educational goals on a democratic basis, and to create a fruitful learning environment that provides space for reflection, research and adequate educational support for the student. Their activities should be fully oriented towards the educational goals;
- In order to mirror scientific reality, GIL comprises a call for more interdisciplinary tasks, to offer authentic tasks and to reduce the students' workload.

Those general principles are visualised and made more concrete in what is called 'the global scheme' (DUO: 2005). This scheme is considered to be the frame of reference and a critical point of orientation for all staff involved with teaching at the K.U. Leuven. It also emphasises the different important aspects of GIL.



The *learning activities* are situated at the centre of the model and logically oriented towards the educational *objectives*, which can be made explicit at the curriculum level or at the individual course-level. *Students*, with their specific characteristics, will more or less spontaneously engage in learning activities. Only by offering students opportunities to increase their knowledge, to achieve certain skills and to enhance their competencies independently, will they be able to learn. In order to provide students with a platform for their learning activities, teachers must offer students a *learning environment* that basically evolves around two main elements: support and evaluation. The former implies the offer of domain-specific learning contents, teaching methods, study material and instructors. Depending on the educational objectives, instruction can be given by teachers, assistants, fellow students, and/or practitioners. The 'evaluation aspect' should be maximally oriented towards the goals: did the student really achieve the insight, attitudes and skills the programme expected him to achieve?

Finally, the scheme stresses the *context*-dependency of the entire setting: faculty staffs are, in practice, limited in their operational choices. The range of possible learning activities to be selected will be necessarily determined by organisational preconditions, certain rules and regulations.

Given this holistic approach to education, it is important to note that the different components outlined above cannot be considered as isolated from each other. They should be implemented in a coherent and consistent way. Hence, applying this rationale, it should be clear that an educational goal can only be achieved if learning activities, student support instruments and evaluation measures are all adequately tuned in to each other. A partial approach, e.g. creating a strong learning environment, without a strong evaluation system, will decrease the educational effectiveness, and thus jeopardise the realisation of the goals.

3. Designing Public Administration Master Programmes Along the GIL Principles: Experiences at the Public Management Institute, K.U. Leuven

As stated above, GIL is designed as a structuring pedagogical tool at the level of individual courses but also constitutes the compulsory basis for the structure of entire educational programmes at the K.U. Leuven. Since 1999, the educational concept has been systematically diffused from the university top level to the 'Permanent Educational Committees' operating at the faculty level (see further). The latter pushed all lecturers to translate the concept to their individual courses. The initial response was incremental, and at times sceptical, since the translation of innovative teaching methods, for instance, was not obvious in settings with large groups of students, characteristic of many of the K.U. Leuven degree programmes. Yet, preparing itself for the BaMa era, and triggered by the upcoming visitation and accreditation

processes, the Public Management Institute took the momentum to systematically review its educational programmes in light of the university-wide concept. GIL was further considered as a useful guiding framework for the development of evaluation instruments and a tool for further improvement.

The following paragraphs briefly discuss the implementation of the GIL principles in the two public administration master programmes organised by the Public Management Institute: the Master of European Politics and Policies programme (hereafter abbreviated as 'MEPP', organised jointly with the Institute for European and International Policy), and the other, the Master in Public Management and Public Policy (hereafter abbreviated as 'MPMP'). The Flemish Structural Decree, which fixed the new educational structure in Flanders, introduced a dual master structure on top of the new three-year Bachelor degree. Advanced programmes could either position themselves at the initial master level, or at the post-initial master level. MEPP and MPMP, up until then operating at the same level, opted for a different master level.¹ MEPP kept its advanced nature, and deliberately chose the post-master level. MPMP, instead, strategically opted to re-orient itself at the initial master level, and consequently made the programme accessible for three-year Bachelor students.

In line with the 'global scheme', this section systematically describes the objectives, learning activities, learning environment and student characteristics of both masters in their present form. The divergence between the two programmes clearly illustrates that the GIL concept allows for much implementation variety.

3.1 Master of European Politics and Policies (MEPP²)

3.1.1 Ambition and educational goals

The Master of European Politics and Policies programme was launched long before the formal establishment of the GIL principles at the K.U. Leuven. Whilst several of the dimensions of this concept had always been implicitly present in the programme, GIL began playing an explicit role with the redesign of the programme in 2003. Preparing itself for the Bachelor Master era, the university requested all educational programmes to position them in the new educational structure. The designs (formally called: 'educational reference framework') of both existing and new programmes were only approved by the University Boards if compatible with the

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- 1 MEPP and MPMP could be considered as oddities in the formal educational structure, as they both carried the name 'Master' before the official implementation of the Bachelor Master structure in Flanders.
 - 2 For an elaborate overview of the historical development of the Master of European Politics and Policies programme, and its collaboration with the European Master of Public Administration (EMPA) Consortium, please consult the chapter "*Fostering higher education mobility in Europe. Challenges for international programme collaboration in the post-Bologna era. A diagnosis by a 'European Master of Public Administration' programme*" in this volume. Additional information can be found at: www.kuleuven.be/mepp.

guiding educational concept. The MEPP programme, which since 1990 operated under the name of its wider exchange network 'EMPA' (The European Master of Public Administration Consortium), took this opportunity to thoroughly revise its structure and educational objectives, with the GIL educational concept as a frame of reference. The new name "MEPP" expressed the new position of the programme in this new era.

In addition to internal monitors, external stakeholders have also played a major role in the formulation of the current objectives of the MEPP programme (see below). Peers have continuously been involved in giving their feedback about the programme's objectives, always taking into account the K.U. Leuven guiding educational philosophy. Moreover, the programme has deliberately requested EAPAA accreditation, and has always been an active member of the EMPA network. Both internal and external stimuli have resulted in the following current programme objectives.

The MEPP programme is an advanced academic training, expecting students to achieve a comparative understanding of public sector structures, policies, and processes and to master methods for the analysis of policy-making, administration and management. The programme has an explicit European orientation, which includes the study of institutions, decision-making and policies at the level of the European Union as well as a comparative understanding of these topics at the level of the member states.

The professional competences – knowledge, skills, and attitudes – the programme aims for students to promote and comply with the programme objectives:

- At the cognitive level, the programme familiarises students with state of the art theory and research on decision-making, policy and administration in Europe and with comparative perspectives. The final aim is to strengthen the students' factual and conceptual knowledge and help them to think conceptually about public sector features and problems in Europe;
- At the skills level, the programme intends to equip students with the necessary skills to apply the methods for analysis of public administration, public policy, and public management. The pedagogical working methods also seek to enhance students' communicative and problem-solving skills;
- As for attitudinal training, the programme aims to create enthusiast comparativists, keen to critically assess governance problems in the European domain with an open mind and a rejection of parochialism.

Students who wish to enhance their comparative knowledge, skills and attitudes even further, may choose to spend the second semester at one of the partner institutions of the European Master of Public Administration Consortium.

3.1.2 Learning environment and learning activities

MEPP strives to implement its programme objectives by the *educational strategies* presented in Table 1. The GIL way of thinking is clearly reflected in this. GIL does not impose one specific instructional method to be used, but stimulates the lecturer to use the (combination of) working method(s) that best suit the needs of the MEPP student group, and best fit with the organisational preconditions (such as group size, availability of technical resources, etc.).

Table 1
Educational strategies for mission accomplishment in line with GIL

Educational Strategies	Strategy Objectives
Balance core and elective components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus core courses on a necessary body of European and comparative knowledge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On European institutions, decision-making and policies; ● On comparative public sector structures, administration, policy, and management. ● Provide electives, giving the students the ability to develop their own research interests.
Enhance mutual learning responsibility of professors and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Professors have acquired an adequate level of competence in order to introduce students to the topics and motivate and guide students in their learning and research process; ● Students are motivated to participate in research and are assisted in developing autonomous research.
Offer diversity of working methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students cognitive understanding, analytical, and communicative skills are strengthened by an optimal balance of ex cathedra lectures, introductory lectures, reading and writing assignments and issue oriented enquiries; ● Students are confronted with public sector positions of guest lectures, simulation exercises, cases and by organised site visits to EU institutions in Brussels.
Provide research-based education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students analytical and research skills are strengthened by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Courses that confront students with state of the art theory and results of fundamental and applied research; ● Research seminar that gives overview of theory and research in the field covered by the programme; ● Research seminar assisting the students to develop their research design (in addition to individual assistance of the students' dissertation supervisor); ● Research seminar participation and master dissertation elaboration, where participants join the research dynamics of the different research units, by taking subjects dealt with by teaching and research staff; ● Individual guidance/assistance during the entire dissertation process by the dissertation supervisor. ● A potential recruitment pool for future PhD researchers is created.
Provide comparative training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students' comparative research skills and attitudes are strengthened by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Comparative core courses; ● Optional semester abroad; ● Comparative methods in seminar; ● Use of international comparativists for comparative courses; ● International composition and geographical balance in student group

The implementation of the educational philosophy that inspires MEPP has led to the following programme (table 2).

Table 2
Curriculum structure MEPP

	Course title	ECTS
Compulsory Courses	Political Analysis of the Process of European Integration	4
	European Policy-and Decision Making	4
	Comparative Public Administration in Europe	4
	Comparative Regionalism and Federalism	4
	Comparative Public Policy in Europe	4
	Comparative Public Management in Europe	4
Research Seminar	Research seminar	5
Master's Dissertation	Master's Dissertation	15
Preferential List of Elective Courses (Min. 12 ECTS)	International Political Economy	4
	European Foreign Policy	4
	History of European Integration	4
	International Environmental Politics and Sustainable Development	4
	Strategy: European Security and Conflict Prevention	4
	Comparative and International Socio-Economic Policy	3
	Pressure Groups in the European Union	6
	Current Issues in Eastern European Policy and Russian Studies	4
Free Elective Courses (Students can choose courses until they have a complete programme of at least 60 credits)	Economics of European Integration	5
	Constitutional Law of the European Union	6
	Economic Aspects of European Integration	3
	European and International Social Security Law	4
	Managerial Aspects of European Integration	5

The MEPP curriculum is characterised by a strong core of six *compulsory courses* providing all students with a solid introduction to the comparative study of public policies, public administration and public management in the different national traditions, as well as with the dynamics of European integration.

As both dimensions of the programme's mission are present in the common trunk, there are no subgroups within the compulsory part of the curriculum. However, thanks to the diversity of *elective courses*, students can specialise either secto-

rally, disciplinary or regionally by choosing courses that focus on a particular policy sector (e.g. environmental, economic, social, security policy), that studies one of the subjects from a particular disciplinary perspective (e.g. economic or managerial aspects of European integration), or that take a regional perspective (Central and Eastern Europe). As such, students do have the opportunity to develop their particular interests.

The connection between education and research (being one of the GIL central elements) is probably most present in the *master's dissertation* that all MEPP students are expected to produce. The dissertation topics must be in line with the research agenda of the different professors involved.

The dissertation should consist of work of potentially publishable quality which makes a contribution to theory and practice of public administration, public policy-making in the European context and of other European political issues. In their research, students are required to clearly demonstrate the link between the topic studied and a recognised corpus of literature in public administration, public policy-making or European politics. Besides the individual guidance students receive from their supervising professor, students are offered collective assistance in the *research seminar*, organised in the first semester. The research seminar is designed to help the students in the various stages of the dissertation and assists them in the development of a feasible research design.

3.1.3 Student characteristics

Given the strong academic orientation of the programme, the majority of the student population consists of young graduate students, recruited from all corners of the world. Yet, MEPP increasingly attracts practitioners as well. Given its proximity to the headquarters of NATO, the programme annually recruits a number of NATO/SHAPE officials, who receive the opportunity from their employer to enrich their professional skills and broaden their academic knowledge by combining their job with the study of MEPP. The introduction of flexible learning paths also stimulates more (EEA-) practitioners to register for MEPP.

The advanced nature of the programme implies that students are expected to have a basic understanding of public administration, international organisations and politics. They should show a genuine interest in comparative analysis and in the European integration process. Openness of mind towards the diversity in the European context and excellent communication skills in view of group work are also prerequisites. In conformity with the prerequisites for post-master programmes imposed by the Flemish Decree for Higher Education, MEPP requires an initial master's degree (or a university diploma deemed equivalent) in the fields of political science, sociology, law, economics or contemporary history, obtained *cum laude*. The programme's steering committee can exceptionally grant access to students with another university degree on the grounds of equivalent professional experience,

although this exception is only seldom granted. Proficiency in English is further sought by requiring internationally recognised language tests.

3.2 The Master in Public Management and Public Policy (MPMP³)

Like MEPP, the Master in Public Management and Public Policy [Master in het Overheidsmanagement en -Beleid] has had a long tradition at the K.U. Leuven. It originally began in 1980, under the name of “Special Licence Degree in Public Management and Public Administration”. In 1991 it became a post-academic programme, ‘Advanced degree programme in Public Management and Public Administration’. From the academic year 2002 – 2003 onwards, the programme became the Master in Public Management and Public Policy. As MEPP, the programme was granted permission to formally use the term ‘Master’ in the title, even before the effective implementation of the BaMa structure. The programme operated in this form until 2007 when it was decided to restructure its curriculum to transform it into an ‘initial master in Public Management and Public Policy’. This latest reform was in compliance with the requirements of the Bologna decree, the BAMA-reform and the GIL principles. Those developments had basically three important implications.

First of all, the target audience, which had always consisted of a mix of civil servants and students, increasingly diversified. Up until 2007, the only enrolment requirement was to have a four-year university degree (“licence”). At present, linked with the programme’s new status as initial master, enrolment is now also open to students with a bachelor degree (though restricted to specific fields – see below). Yet, whereas this shift has resulted in a higher proportion of bachelor students in the programme, most civil servants registered possess a master’s degree. As a result, the heterogeneity in the group has clearly increased, in terms of experience and knowledge.

Taking into account the principles of GIL guiding the programme, faculty staff have to rethink the way of teaching this mixed group of students.

Secondly, the programme itself changed. More courses are offered and a ‘preparation programme’ (see below) has been introduced in order to create a common basic level of knowledge among the students. Some new courses were created, while others were kept unmodified. In addition, the programme decided to reshuffle the course structure. While students in the past all shared some compulsory courses; the entire programme now consists of elective courses, though clustered in several subgroups. This gives the students the maximum opportunity to orient their studies towards their interests and perceived needs.

3 For more information about the programme see: <http://soc.kuleuven.be/io/eng/education/index.htm>

Thirdly, as the GIL principles clearly stress the link between research and academic education, the programme is obliged to prepare students more towards an academic career than before. The former post-academic programme merely oriented students towards a career in the public sector. This goal still remains, but has been complemented with the ambition to equip students with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes for an academic career. The latter ambition unavoidably implied that the methodological part needed to be expanded.

Given the limited scope of this chapter, we will, in the following description, only focus on the new initial master programme. However, where necessary, comparison with the former post-academic programme will be made.

3.2.1 Ambition and educational goals

As civil servants in the Belgian, Flemish and local administration are increasingly confronted with reform projects, they require more policy and management expertise. Public organizations, in this respect, need a particular approach, since their goal is oriented towards societal needs, and not, in contrast with private organisations, towards private profit. This involves that civil servants are expected to be aware of the specific context in which they operate, and also, gain insight into the goals, context and management of their particular organisations. It is the ambition of the Master in Public Management and Public Policy to meet the growing need for public administration expertise and provide the necessary insights.

As such, in line with these ambitions, the strategic goal of the programme can be broadly defined as “the reinforcement of the managerial capacity of the public sector”. In line with the GIL philosophy, the educational strategies set forward can be presented as follows:

Educational Strategies	Strategy Objectives
Confront students with the field of public management and public policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electives courses, structured in four clusters, provide students with the ability to develop their own interests. • Students are confronted with new approaches to public management and policy. • Students should after the programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be capable to critically analyze practices of personnel, financial and organisational public management; • be able to design, analyze and evaluate public policy; • gain insight into the specificity of the public sector environment and in aspects of political decision making, alliances and institutions; • be able to analyse problems within a context of societal, economic and political goals. • Public sector managers develop essential competences, including for example, presentation skills and leadership skills
Enhance mutual learning responsibility of professors and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professors have acquired an adequate level of competence in order to introduce students to the topics and motivate and guide students in their learning and research process; • Students are motivated to participate in research and are assisted in developing autonomous research.

Offer diversity of working methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students cognitive understanding, analytical, and communicative skills are strengthened by an optimal balance of ex cathedra lectures, introductory lectures, reading and writing assignments and issue oriented enquiries; • Students are confronted with public sector positions of practitioners in the group of students, guest lectures and courses; • Students have the possibility to do an internship within a public sector organisation in order to confront theory with practice.
Provide research-based education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' analytical and research skills are strengthened by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses that confront students with state of the art theory and results of fundamental and applied research; • Individual guidance/assistance during the entire dissertation process by the dissertation supervisor; • A qualitative research methods course; • Research seminar assisting the students to develop their research design (in addition to individual assistance of the students' dissertation supervisor); • Involving students in research projects in the field of public management and public policy at the Public Management Institute. • A potential recruitment pool for future PhD researchers is created
Networking	The creation of lasting networks among (future) civil servants from various public administrations is encouraged.

3.2.2 Learning environment and learning activities

The learning objectives of the programme are considered to be achieved through the following programme structure:

Table 3
The MPMP curriculum

Group	Course	ECTS		
Management	Personnel and organisation management in the public sector	5	Two courses from each group have to be selected	
	Organisation and steering of public tasks	5		
	Financial management in the public sector	5		
Policy	Policy design and strategy	5		
	Hierarchy, market and networks in policy	5		
	Policy evaluation	5		
Administration	Public sector – citizen relationship	5		
	Administrative law	5		
	Institutions and policy of the European Union	5		
Methods and techniques	Seminar management skills	5		
	Management and Information Technology	5		
	qualitative research methods	5		
Subtotal		40		
Master dissertation		20		
Total		60		

As illustrated by the table above, the courses are divided into four clusters: 'policy', 'administration', 'management' and 'methods and techniques'. Each cluster in turn contains three courses, from which students are obliged to choose two. The courses have been combined in such a way that internal cohesion can be guaranteed in each cluster.

Good managers rely on integrating managerial dimensions of personnel, finance and organisations. The cluster 'policy' incorporates all the different aspects of policy making and analysis: from policy design, over policy implementation to policy evaluation. The cluster titled 'administration' provides insight into the relationship between the administration and its citizens, in a context of law and continuous Europeanisation. The purpose of the cluster 'methods and techniques' is to support the first three clusters by providing management skills, research skills and insight in the usefulness of ICT for managerial purposes.

The aim is to offer students a clear understanding of the public sector as a whole, its policy-making and the way it organises itself internally and externally. This objective can be achieved by studying the way public sector organisations are coping with policy, administration and managerial issues from a holistic approach.

As in MEPP, the programme completion requires a master's dissertation. The dissertation is considered as an individual research project that students must accomplish in order to prove that they have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge. They must be able to formulate a relevant research question within the field of public management and public policy, subsequently analyse it, and formulate a critical answer to the specified question. The output must be potentially publishable, and students have to defend their research project for a dissertation jury. One of the new possibilities introduced with the implementation of the new master programme is the option to combine the master's dissertation with an internship in a public organisation. By offering this opportunity, it is again aimed at narrowing the gap between theory and practice.

Although ex cathedra lectures are not excluded in the educational philosophy of the K.U. Leuven, the educational goals of the programme require a more mixed method of learning activities. As such, students are stimulated to investigate societal phenomena themselves by studying public sector organisations and debating with civil servants. This is made possible through individual and group tasks, periods of discussion and debate in class, the master dissertation, the seminar, individual and group papers, etc. This necessarily implies that students are not only evaluated through exams, but on a regular basis, and that the educational staff does not only incorporate academics but also practitioners.

Given the diversity of the group, the concept of GIL is considered of the utmost necessity for the effectiveness of the programme. Different people have different educational needs, and it is by creating dynamism within the programme that

those needs can be encountered, and that earlier achieved knowledge and skills can be taken into account.

3.2.3 Student characteristics

In order to maintain a minimum level of homogeneity within the group of students and in order to maximise learning effects, the initial master programme had to re-think its target audience. In principle, access is not limited in numbers, but through specific requirements of the study body.

Basically, two types of groups may enrol for the programme: (1) civil servants who, in their daily work, require more knowledge and skills in the field of public management and public policy and who would like to have more managerial responsibilities within their or another organisation, and (2) students with a societal oriented bachelor degree who wish to specialise in public management and public policy. In practice, this means that students with at least an academic bachelor degree and every civil servant with an academic bachelor or master degree may enrol. Students with a bachelor degree in Political and Social sciences can register directly for the programme. But, students with an academic bachelor degree in Communication sciences, (applied) Economic sciences, Law and Criminology, Pedagogical and Psychological sciences or any other master degree must first succeed in a preparation programme. The latter consists of three courses: public management, policy analysis and public administration. The purpose of the preparation programme is to create a common level of basic knowledge within the group, which the post-academic programme sometimes lacked.

Despite the existence of a preparatory programme, the target audience is clearly still diverse, as previously stipulated. Both students with a well-specified bachelor degree and civil servants (either with a bachelor or a master degree) may enrol. This obviously creates a substantially heterogeneous group, in terms of age, experience and knowledge.⁴ Notwithstanding the obstacles linked with this diversity, the programme is convinced that this mix creates a major opportunity and added value for teaching (Broucker & Hondeghem: 2006). It is believed that on the one hand, civil servants can confront students and teachers with their work experiences and hence contribute to narrow the gap between theory and practice. Moreover, the presence of practitioners has another added value for educational purposes, as they facilitate access to public organisations which themselves feature as a subject in educational tasks (including the optional traineeships). On the other hand, students on their part may confront civil servants with fresh and original ideas that are not yet biased

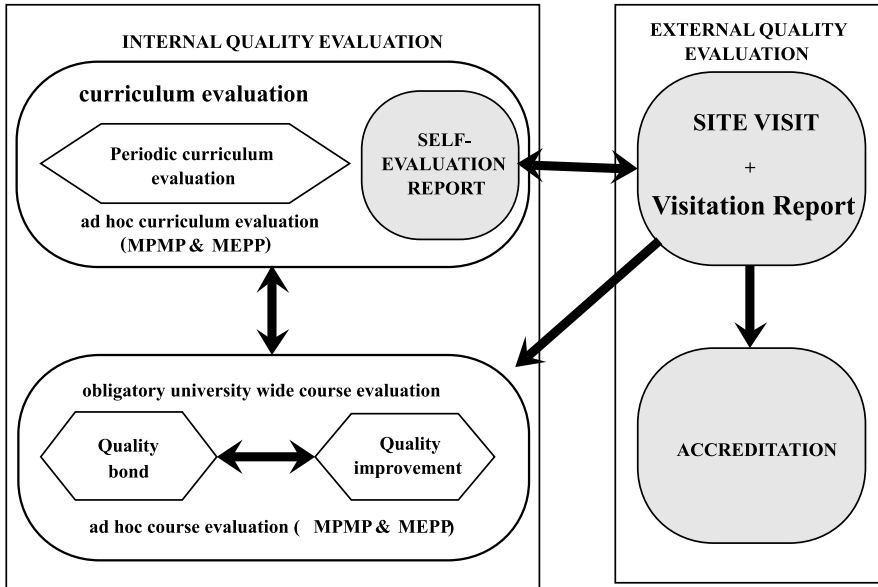
4 It should in this respect be noted that the former generation of the programme also comprised a mixed student population. Yet, with each of them having the same level of university degree, the diversity at that time only concerned the difference in experience between students on the one hand and civil servants on the other. This diversity was, however, in questionnaires, evaluated as positive by the majority in both groups.

by practical experience. Students can also help civil servants familiarise with the university setting and help them cope with academic demands and changes.

Deliberately opting for this mixed group, it is hence considered to be the task of the teaching staff to be creative with the heterogeneity.

4. Striving for a synergy between internal and external quality assurance mechanisms

Figure 1
Internal and External Quality Assurance at the K.U. Leuven



An all-comprehensive educational concept requires an all-comprehensive strategy for quality assurance (K.U. Leuven, 2007). Internal and external mechanisms for quality protection are in this respect considered as two communicating barrels, as illustrated in figure 1 above. The following section discusses how both are made operational by the K.U. Leuven Public Management Institute.

4.1 Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms

4.1.1 Structurally embedded

Taking care of quality is a responsibility of everyone who is involved with educational matters at the K.U. Leuven. This involvement is guaranteed by the Permanent Educational Committee (POC) at the level of the faculty. It is the responsibility of

this body to 'permanently' monitor the quality of the educational programmes and to control the curriculum. This means, in essence, that the POC watches over the content of the curriculum and its pedagogical and organisational coherence.

Proposals of the POC are discussed by the faculty board which can approve or disapprove them. Curriculum changes also need the approval of the faculty council, which is the highest decisional body of the faculty. The decisions of the latter are subsequently transferred to the group level of the university, which incorporates all human science oriented educational programmes. Once a curriculum is approved, it is the responsibility of the POC to monitor the quality of the programme, and its implementation. The POC is also responsible for educational innovation projects.

At the faculty of social sciences there are several POC's. Both MEPP and MPMP resort under the POC Political Sciences.

The POC is chaired by the programme director, who is the key responsible person for the functioning of the POC and the quality assessments of the different programmes. The programme director tries to resolve problems and acts as a mediator. He has an important initiative right and is *ex officio* a member of the faculty board. As such, there is an indirect involvement of all programmes in the educational policy of the faculty.

Other POC members are the teaching staff, and an assistants' representation. Students are also given a substantial voice: they must represent 1/3rd of the whole POC, with a minimum of 4 members, and a maximum of 20. The POC meets 6 or 7 times per academic year.

Major inputs for any decision regarding MEPP, in particular, come however, from the MEPP steering committee, which is *de facto* serving as a sub-POC Political Sciences. In order to guarantee the link between both boards, the POC chairperson takes a full part in the MEPP steering committee meetings. The steering committee also includes the academic director, the vice-director, the programme co-ordinator, the administrative co-ordinator, the lecturer of the research seminar, and the academic Erasmus co-ordinator of Political Sciences (in view of the EMPA student exchanges). Following the advice of the EAPAA site visit team (cfr. below), a student representative has also been elected to take part in the steering committee. On an occasional basis, guest members (e.g. guest professors teaching within MEPP) are also invited to express their opinion on particular MEPP issues.

In principle, the MEPP steering committee meets on a monthly basis, usually following the meeting roster of the POC Political Sciences. It deals with the detailed MEPP programme development, the proposal of curriculum reforms, the determination of selection criteria, individual student issues, extracurricular activities, the organisation and discussion of evaluation questionnaires, etc. All its decisions have to be approved by the POC Political Sciences.

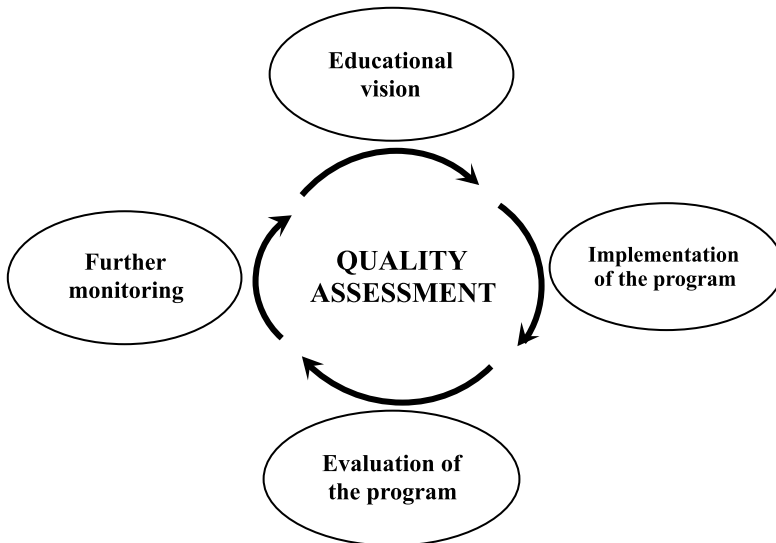
Based on the views of the steering committee and on the participants' perceptions expressed in questionnaires, the POC Political Sciences introduces any proposed changes to the MEPP curriculum into the procedures of the academic decision-making process.

The MPMP does not have a formal committee as MEPP. Yet, the most important decisions about the programme are taken at the level of the Public Management Institute, which is the prime organiser of the programme. Obviously, informal decisions of the teaching staff of the Institute must be officially approved by the POC.

4.1.2 Four pillars of quality

The internal quality assessment strategy at the K.U. Leuven rests upon four major pillars: the educational vision, the implementation of the programme, the evaluation of the programme, and the further monitoring of the evaluation results. Those pillars are considered as a process, which Figure 2 below illustrates.

Figure 2
Pillars of quality (K.U. Leuven: 2007)



Educational vision. The K.U. Leuven has described its vision on 'good academic education'. As already stated above, the model of 'guided independent learning' is a concept guiding the university as a whole, but which every POC must translate in an educational framework for every programme it is responsible for.

No programme is allowed to start without the approval of its GIL educational framework by the four main bodies in charge, being the POC, the Faculty Board, the University Boards and the Flemish Government at the highest level.

Educational implementation. It is the responsibility of the POC and of the teaching staff to implement the educational framework. Support for this implementation is, however, provided by services at the faculty level and at the university level. The most important university body in this respect is the University Education Support Office (DUO/ICTO), which is specialised in curriculum development and evaluation, educational innovation and teaching.

At the level of the faculty of Social Sciences itself, the main support is given by the 'Centre of Study support and Educational Innovation'. This centre is responsible for innovation projects, educational support for students, ombudsman, and provides information about the further implementation of the principles of GIL at the programme curriculum level. To this end, they also collaborate with the different POC's of the faculty.

Evaluation of the programme and further monitoring of the evaluation. Each programme is in detail evaluated by the faculty itself every eight years. This internal 'self evaluation report' constitutes the starting point of the external visitation process (see further).

Each POC or programme can nevertheless decide to organise evaluations more frequently. Both MPMP and MEPP have a tradition of evaluating their programmes on a yearly basis. In co-operation with the University's Education Support Office, the programmes have developed a survey, asking students' opinions about the coherence and consistency of the programme and their perception about the realisation of the programme objectives. The results of the survey are gathered by the educational coordinator of the programme, and are added to factual information (including *inter alia* the total number of students, the number of students per course, et cetera). This report is discussed and analysed by the teaching staff involved, who develop, if necessary, suitable strategies for improvement. Similarly, alumni questionnaires for the MEPP graduates are circulated annually.

As far as the evaluation of particular courses is concerned, programmes were, until recently, obliged to apply a university wide system of teaching staff evaluation, which required students to fill out a questionnaire for every course they registered for. Due to several malfunctions, this system has, since 2007, been replaced by a new faculty led evaluation system, which assesses the quality and workload for every course. The course evaluations which the MPMP programme previously organised on its own initiative will probably also be replaced by this new instrument.

4.2 External Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Complementary to the internal quality control mechanisms, K.U. Leuven public administration programmes make maximal use of both compulsory and voluntary externally controlled tools for quality monitoring. As illustrated in Figure 1 above, we can procedurally distinguish between ‘visitation processes’ on the one hand and accreditation schemes on the other, although the distinction between both seems to gradually dissolve.

4.2.1 Visitation

In compliance with the Flemish Decree for Higher Education, all educational programmes are subjected to an 8-yearly visitation, co-ordinated by VLIR, the Flemish Interuniversity Council.⁵ The visitation mechanism, conceived as a quality assessment by an independent team of peers, is seen as a system serving multiple goals (Van Damme, 2007):

- Quality improvement: the recommendations made by peers help programmes to continuously improve their quality as well as their internal quality assurance mechanisms themselves;
- Accountability: as the quality assurance mechanisms are mainly university controlled, the visitations are the main information source for the Flemish government, and the larger society to have feedback about the functioning of the different educational programmes. Similarly, the VLIR system is useful to optimise the supply of the higher education programmes in qualitative and quantitative terms;
- Benchmarking: as visitations are organised per discipline, programmes receive useful information about their position vis-à-vis comparable courses at other universities.

The visitation itself is organised in three steps, with the first step being fully situated at the ‘internal university level’. The basis for the VLIR quality assessment is formed by the self-assessment report, which each programme has to compile along a joint format. Typical of the self-assessment is the compulsory involvement of the different stakeholders in the process, including academic, administrative and technical staff, students, alumni and representatives of the professional field. In the second stage of the process, the site visit itself takes place, during which a panel of peers checks the self-evaluation report ‘on the floor’, by interviewing all relevant actors. The quality standards to be met are only broadly defined by VLIR. What is crucial is whether programmes meet the objectives which they set for themselves.

5 In Flanders, as in The Netherlands, along which the Flemish quality assessment process is modelled, quality and autonomy are considered as intrinsically linked (Van Damme, 2007). In exchange for more autonomy, and based on a negotiated agreement, the state instructed universities to jointly establish their own system of externally quality assurance. The responsibility and the ownership of the quality assurance system is fully resting with the universities themselves (VLIR, www.vlir.be).

Hence, as K.U. Leuven public administration programmes are all modelled along the GIL principles, GIL forms the main reference framework during the quality assessment.

In a third stage, the commission publishes a public 'visitation report', with its quality judgement about the programmes, as well as recommendations for further improvement (Dassen & Luijten-Lub, 2007; VLIR, www.vlir.be). Internal and external quality assurance is, as such, intrinsically linked and mutually influencing each other.

4.2.2 Accreditation

Up until recently, the external quality assessment process formally ended with the publication of the visitation report. Yet, in the mid-90's critical voices began questioning the existing VLIR quality assurance system. In line with an increasing awareness of the external functions of quality assurance, critics blamed the vagueness of the visitation reports and the lack of a clear overall conclusion. This fed a debate about accreditation among academics and policy makers. The discussions were also nurtured by the Bologna Declaration, which explicitly demanded more intensive international co-operation in the field of quality assurance. This was in an effort to promote transparency and comparability between European higher education systems. In 1999 the new Flemish Government took the initiative to set up a joint accreditation system with The Netherlands. It considered the Flemish educational area as too small to establish its own system. In addition, The Netherlands were already more advanced in the development of such an accreditation scheme. The accreditation is conceived as independent from the quality assurance system, but should be based on the results of the visitation reports. Hence, as visitation panels need to comply with the accreditation frameworks, accreditation can, as such, also be considered as a kind of meta-evaluation of the existing quality assurance system.

The mandatory accreditation system began in 2004/2005 along with the launching of the bachelor-master structure. The Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation (NVAO) replaced the existing Dutch National Accreditation Organisation (NAO), and established joint accreditation standards, criteria and protocols to allow for comparable and compatible accreditation decisions. With a positive accreditation decision of NVAO, programmes are recognised for a period of 8 years. The accreditation is binding: universities are not allowed to organise and issue degrees of non-accredited programmes.⁶

Being only recently established the relationship between the VLIR quality assessment scheme and NVAO accreditation is still not fully clear. At present,

⁶ The accreditation decision is binding, although non-accredited programmes need not be immediately abandoned. A system of temporary recognition should allow non-accredited programmes to implement the necessary modifications, if considered feasible within a limited time frame.

since the VLIR visitation reports form the basis for accreditation judgement, the visitation panel *de facto* takes the accreditation decision. With the accreditation decision closely linked to the visitation process, observers fear, however, that the self-evaluation process will decreasingly serve the programme improvement function, as programmes will become more occupied with external accountability (Van Damme, 2007). The future will tell how both processes will be positioned against each other.

Both MEPP and the MPMP programme were the subject of a VLIR visitation in 2007, as part of the assessment of all political science related programmes in Flanders. In conformity with the NVAO guidelines, a request for accreditation will be submitted when the final visitation report is made public.

The newly introduced NVAO accreditation is not incompatible with other, private accreditation schemes. Given its increasing role in the field, and considering the input of public administration peers as extremely valuable, MEPP also deliberately applied for accreditation of the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA), which was successfully awarded in 2005. The feedback of the EAPAA site visit team served as an essential input to implement important changes to the programme (which again demonstrates that the analytic distinction between internal and external quality assurance is somewhat artificial). The steering committee of MEPP engaged itself to systematically follow up the comments of the EAPAA site visit team, which led to *inter alia* a reformulation of the mission statement and the decision to involve a student representative in the steering committee. Although, following its own accreditation guidelines, the EAPAA operation served as a major preparation for the VLIR self-evaluation. Private and state accreditation procedures can, in this respect, be seen as mutually enriching. Similarly, having now received the input of VLIR, the MPMP programme is considering also applying soon for EAPAA. For the future, however, it would be commendable to rationalise accreditation procedures by perhaps letting EAPAA perform evaluations for NVAO.

Although not having the formal status of external quality assessments, feedback about the Public Management Institute's educational programmes is further continuously sought through the active participation of staff members in some wider international platforms (EGPA, European Thematic Network of Public Administration)⁷ dealing with the quality development of public administration programmes (including the joint elaboration of innovative teaching methods, such as the development of joint teaching modules, of a comparative case catalogue, etc.).

As far as MEPP in particular is concerned, the partners of the European Master of Public Administration (EMPA) network also act as major stakeholders in the quality assurance process.

7 European Thematic Network of Public Administration, <http://bl.ul.ie/epan/>

5. Challenges and Triggers for Quality Assurance: A Conclusion

As demonstrated by the analysis above, the development of a university-wide didactical framework has proved extremely instrumental for improving the quality assurance processes of the two master programmes organised by the K.U. Leuven Public Management Institute, MEPP and MPMP. Triggered by the BaMa reforms, the diffusion of the GIL concept served as a strategic momentum to assess the implicitly existing quality standards and elevate them to a more explicit level. Especially for the MPMP programme, which prepared itself to operate at the initial master's level, the opportunity was taken to reconceptualise its curriculum in conformity with the GIL norms. The upcoming visitation and accreditation processes were, in this respect, considered as an extra stimulus. Internal and external quality assurance mechanisms as such mutually influenced each other.

Despite its beneficial consequences, the top-down quality improvement measurements also involve some critical challenges, not at least in terms of time investment. Intrinsically linked to the top-down approach, its implementation at the programme and course level requires a translation of the often generally-formulated pedagogical terminology into a specific public administration/public management setting. This difficulty was especially felt at the time of preparing for the VLIR visitation process.

In this respect, one should assess the advantages of a more bottom-up approach, as applied by the EAPAA accreditation body. Departing from a mission-based perspective, EAPAA assesses programmes against their own formulated missions and targets. Programmes are hence exempted from the sometimes difficult translation of a higher-level normative framework to a lower level. MEPP already underwent both accreditation processes, first bottom-up controlled, subsequently top-down. Being recently assessed by NVAO, MPMP is now challenged to monitor its quality from a more bottom-up perspective. Notwithstanding the necessity to assess quality on a permanent basis, the question remains whether the existing accreditation processes should not be more rationalised, and more attuned to each other.

As it happens, public administrationists have the right language to capture the challenges that our teaching and quality insurance mechanisms face. Public sector trends such as decentralisation, devolution, inter-organisational networks, negotiation and marketisation have had effects, not only on the content of teaching of Public Administration, but also on the class setting itself. Compared to 15 years ago, we now teach: "less organisational charts, more process; less bureaucracy, more governance; less standardisation and generalisation, more difference. And in class itself, we have less lecturing and more student-engaging work (Bogason and Brans 2008). "The same trends may be found in the field of higher education in general:

differentiation and de-nationalisation are confronting universities, which have to adapt their strategies accordingly (...). There is strong pressure from many interests towards better tailoring of education towards particular needs. As internationalisation of the European learning scene continues, we may witness more demands from ordinary students for tailoring general education towards specific needs – and since the alternative (under the influence of the Bologna process) is likely to be the student moving to another university, most universities will probably acquiesce, at least to some extent.(Bogason and Brans 2008)”

In conclusion, as higher education is increasingly determined by market-based rationalities and a more active student body, one should critically ask whether the existing institutionally steered quality assurance processes will remain the best approach. Should our customers (students and employers) not be given a stronger voice in the quality assessment of present-day public administration programmes?

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Privately Funded Public Servants? Public Administration Higher Education in Estonia

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1. Introduction

In the following chapter we will examine public administration and related higher education in Estonia. More specifically, we will analyse the development, position, content and environment of the academic field as well as bring out the key challenges and opportunities for the future.

There are only a limited number of overviews of public administration in Estonia. Nearly a decade has passed since the publication of the most well-known account (Randma 2000) and this period has brought profound changes to the area. Our chapter adds the new developments and offers a more in-depth analysis of the structural features of the public administration higher education.

In addition to providing an overview of the field of public administration and related education in Estonia, we will also demonstrate the possible impacts of a still not fully-formed tradition of governance in a young and small state. The framework of public administration development, as well as teaching, is highly fragmented in Estonia.

At present, there are no clear political decisions about the basic orientation and model of public administration organisation (bureaucratic legalism vs. public management) and public service (career vs. position system). In practice, different factions of bureaucracy (ministries) follow their own definition of public administration development strategy. Thus, it is not surprising that there is no effective link between teaching, research and development activities and everyday government. However, the setting also seems to produce some impacts to public administration higher education practices.

¹ The authors are grateful to Kerstin Oudekki Loone, Kristiina Ling, Kersten Kattai and Kaie Lepik for their technical assistance.

As Estonia is a very small country (1.3 million inhabitants) with a rather limited tradition of educating public officials (only since restoring independence in 1990 – 91 after the long Soviet rule) the education of public administration and political science in general has a limited scope and is not completely separate. This tendency has been even more strengthened after the introduction of the Bologna 3+2 system and some other structural choices.

Hence, in this chapter we proceed in two levels. We generally discuss all the programmes and institutions relevant to public administration education (including governance, administration, management, political science, international relations and European studies). In more precise analyses we focus on public administration education.

The chapter is composed of seven content blocks:

1. General characteristics of higher education system
2. Genesis of public administration higher education
3. Funding and staff
4. Comparison of the content of the programmes
5. Quality and efficiency
6. Research
7. Students

At the end of the chapter, the main findings are summarised and discussed.

2. General Characteristics of the Estonian Higher Education System

Estonian higher education system could be characterised by three rather different features: the freedom of enterprise, the rigid quality assurance system and the conservative principles of public financing.

There are two branches with different types of educational institutions. University is an institution for research, development, study and culture (The University Act 1995). University has to offer bachelor-, master- and doctoral-level programmes at least in two fields. Applied (professional) higher education institutions have to offer applied higher education and may offer master-level programmes in co-operation with universities (The Applied Higher Education Act 1998).² All people with secondary school education have the right to apply for the programmes of higher education.

² In addition, there are some first-level applied higher education programmes in the vocational education institutions but their share is marginal and their number is decreasing.

It is possible to choose between two types of first level higher education programmes:

- Universities offer mainly academic programmes at bachelor-level. The bachelor degree offers broad competences in a larger field (e.g. social sciences with an emphasis on politics and government) and specialisation in specific fields comes about mainly at the master level.
- Applied higher education institutions offer applied programmes at diploma and bachelor-level. Practical training has to be at least 30 % of the curriculum in applied higher education (The Standard of Higher Education 2002). Applied higher education institutions are not supposed to give academic education. Universities may offer applied programmes in their colleges.

Applied education has been declared the first priority in the educational field by national strategic plans. Accordingly, the number of students in applied programmes has increased. In the middle of the 1990s only 20 per cent of students studied in applied education programmes; in five years, the percentage has increased to 40. There are national support schemes from structural funds and national funds to develop the programmes, educational and technical infrastructure in applied education institutions (Ministry of Education and Research 2007).

The administration of higher education is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Research, which defines principles of higher education policy. In this role, the Ministry is assisted by a number of executive and consultative bodies with administrative or academic functions. These bodies include: Council of Rectors, Estonian Research and Development Council, Estonian Science Foundation, Higher Education Quality Assurance Council. Their actual impact on the development of an effective higher education system in Estonia still remains rather low. Universities are effectively using their autonomy in developing own strategies, and as a response, the Ministry is in no hurry to enhance its funding support to these autonomous actions.

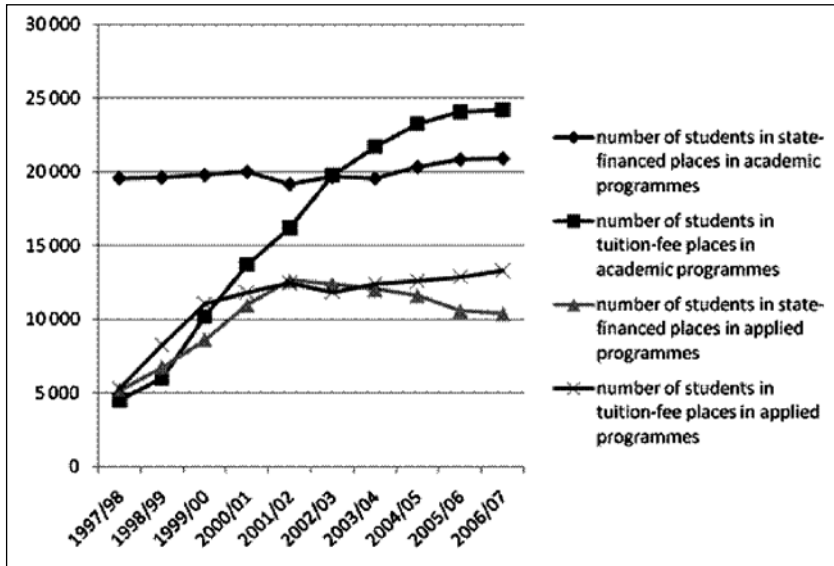
Besides the public universities and less autonomous state applied higher education institutions, there is an opportunity to acquire higher education from the private sector. Every joint stock or limited partnership company that meets the prescribed requirements is entitled to receive a licence and to open up a private university or applied higher education institution (The Private School Act 2007). Tuition-fee based student places are freely available in private, public and state higher education institutions.

Studies on the level of higher education are financed from the state budget according to student places. The fields of study of national priority and with increasing admission rates are: engineering; manufacture and processing (different industrial technologies and products); IT sciences; environmental protection (environmental and geotechnologies); life sciences (biotechnology, biomedicine) and

services. All other fields are defined as stable or decreasing. Public administration is defined as decreasing.

Chart 1

Numbers of state-financed and tuition-fee based students in academic and applied programmes in 1997 – 2007



Source: Ministry of Education and Research

Student places are financed according to the number of graduates specified in the state-financed education directive. According to the student places financed by the state, a university must create, as a rule, at least 1.5 student places in bachelor’s study per student place in the master’s study. Financing is carried out from the beginning of the nominal studies period³ for bachelor’s study until the end of the nominal studies period for master’s study.

All public universities have tuition fees for non-state-financed places. Full-time students can finance their studies from a study loan (approximately 1280 euros per year⁴). The interest of the loan is fixed by the state (5 per cent per year) and if the student obtains a job in the public sector after graduation, the state will finance the loan apart from the interest. A student can apply for a loan during the nominal

3 The nominal studies period refers to the normatively expected length of studies defined in a programme following the Standard of Higher Education. Usually, the nominal studies period for a BA is 3 years, for an MA 2 years and for a PhD 4 years.

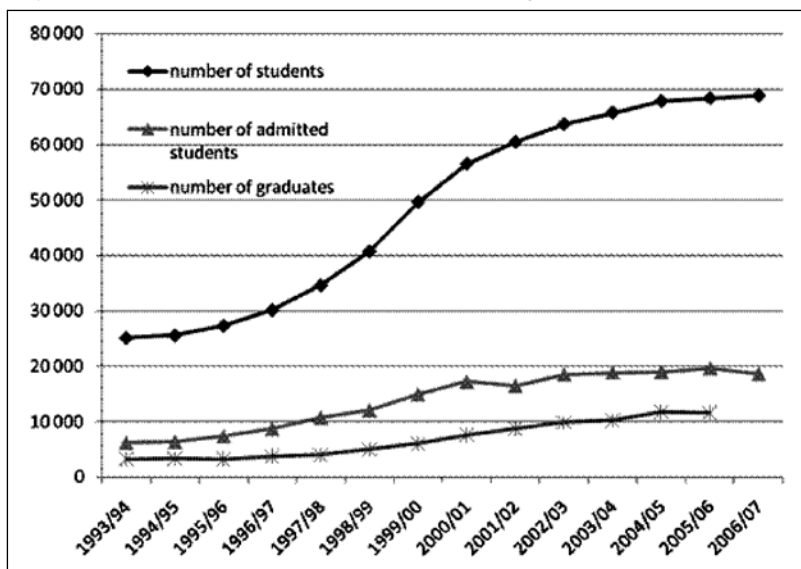
4 Usually the study loan does not cover full tuition fees, but is still a significant part of it (ca. 50-80 %).

studies period. The number of tuition fee places has been increased in recent years (but not in social sciences as will be discussed afterwards).

State financial support for bachelor and master students is 65 euros as study support, based on academic results and 30 euros for travelling costs per month. All doctoral students enrolled in state-commissioned places are awarded with a scholarship of 385 euros per month during their nominal study period. The main reason behind the doctoral scholarship is to reduce the doctoral student's pressure to be employed full time during studies. As the loan and state support do not cover living and tuition costs, the majority of students finance their studies by working full-time and in some cases, part-time.

Chart 2

Dynamics of students, admitted students and graduates in 1993 – 2007



Source: Ministry of Education and Research

In the former USSR, there was a three-level degree system. All students achieved the first degree after 5 years of studies (roughly equivalent to the Bologna system master degree) and the next degree (named “candidate of sciences”, equivalent to PhD) was awarded after 3 years of supplementary studies to a very small proportion of students. The third degree was Doctor of Science that was rare and roughly corresponds to the requirements and status of *Doctor Habilitus*.

In 1992, the first master and doctorate degree studies corresponding to the Western system were introduced in Estonia. To begin MA studies, a student had to successfully graduate from a 4-year BA programme. Up to the end of the 1990s, the

2-year master degree studies were oriented towards an academic career. The principal level for planning and financing of education was that of a BA and the entrants to the MA programmes constituted ca. 10 – 15 % of the BA students.

The Bologna system of degree studies was launched in Estonia in 2002 (cf. The Standard of Higher Education 2002). It transformed the former 4-year (BA studies) + 2-year (MA studies) system into a 3 + 2 formula. Now, the first qualification obtained is a bachelor's degree, where the programmes contain 120 credit points (180 ECTS). At this level, basic knowledge and skills are obtained.

After graduation from a bachelor programme, students may continue in the second stage leading to the master's degree. The master's study is devoted to in-depth preparation for the specialisation within the study discipline; the programmes contain 80 credit points (120 ECTS). The master's degree is required for professional posts where advanced qualification is required.

The doctoral degree is given after the completion of 4 years of study and research. The MA degree is an obligatory prerequisite for admission to doctoral studies. The programmes contain 160 credit points (240 ECTS).

Estonian academic programmes are classified following the logic of ISCED. There are 8 main study fields. Programmes in public administration fall into the main field of social sciences, business and law. The proportion of this field of total student numbers has increased from 26 per cent (6439 students) in 1993 to 40 per cent (27 339 students) in 2007.

The main field of social sciences, business and law is divided into four study directions: social and behavioural sciences, journalism and information, business and administration, law. These study directions are in turn divided into more specific programme categories. The Ministry of Education and Research may order state-financed places under the study direction or mark specific programmes.⁵

Faced with a large amount of quality problems, the national decision-makers introduced a much more elaborate system of quality assurance during a decade after 1995. The new system included international accreditation of teaching and evaluation of research, more rigid standards for programmes and study process as well as starting new institutions in higher education.

The Ministry of Education and Research hires experts outside Estonia to evaluate the quality of programmes and study process and the level of research. The full

5 The public administration programmes in UT and TUT are classified in the study direction of social and behavioural sciences. The TLU master in public administration is classified in the study direction of business and administration and the corresponding PhD in politics and government into the study direction of social and behavioural sciences. The system of programme categories is still not well adjusted in the case of public administration and needs further elaboration (there is another category possible for public administration curricula but it is currently not used by the universities etc.). The main study fields and study directions are somewhat better institutionalised.

accreditation, as proof of good quality, is valid for seven years and the conditional accreditation for quality improvement for three years. The graduates receive an internationally recognised diploma if the programme has full accreditation.

However, not all the problems were foreseen or dealt with by this system. As all the programmes had to be accredited, the larger departments faced the duty of accrediting something almost every year, which meant composing rather lengthy accreditation reports etc. Some weaker institutions developed shiny façade techniques. The process has turned out to be costly but not entirely targeted. This has implied criticism and preparations have now begun to move to a system of institutional accreditation.

3. Genesis of Public Administration Higher Education

There are three main public universities, which have been stably and continuously providing higher education in public administration and related fields:

- 1) Tallinn University (hereafter TLU);
- 2) University of Tartu (hereafter UT);
- 3) Tallinn University of Technology (hereafter TUT)⁶.

In addition to this, one state applied higher education institution and four private universities have launched various programmes in the field:

- 1) Public Service Academy (state) – public administration,
- 2) Estonian Business School – public administration,
- 3) University Nord – public administration and European studies,
- 4) Eurouniversity – international relations and regional international studies,
- 5) Audentes International University – international relations and European studies

All other programmes referring to public administration were closed down in the mid-2000s as they were usually not profitable and often faced problems in international accreditation. In these institutions, the content of curriculum was usually imbalanced, changed constantly and there was usually a shortage of academic staff. The prospects for the still remaining programmes on international relations seem to deteriorate as TLU will launch its international relations programme in 2008.

During the Soviet period, education for civil servants was quite fragmented. There were three main channels for training state officials and managers of public organisations: first, the university faculties or special academies of economics and management or legal studies; second, the closed communist party schools and

⁶ University of Tartu ended the admission to public administration programs this year (2008). This means that there remain two universities in Estonia that provide public administration higher education: Tallinn University and Tallinn University of Technology.

third, people could just start working in the civil service with different or no higher education and gradually rise in the hierarchy.

When Estonia began as an independent country in 1991, needing new civil servants, the Ministry of Education showed no interest in supporting the preparation and development of public administration programmes in public universities. This resulted in universities taking an active role directly in co-operation with the interested government institutions. The start of special public administration education in public universities was much influenced by people from the west.

This reflects the general tendency. Since the early 1990s, Estonia has followed a very liberal higher education strategy. For a long time, practically everyone who was able to meet rather limited requirements (such as physical space for conducting lectures) was entitled to receive a licence and open a university or applied higher education institution. The state declared it would interfere as little as possible. In practice, the field of higher education was (and still is) largely dominated by the 3 – 4 main public universities making up ca. 2/3rds of the total student body and leaving some specialised niches to others.

The public administration programmes in TUT and in TLU (formerly Tallinn University of Educational Sciences) were developed with the assistance of a Tempus programme (managed by Manchester Metropolitan University) in 1992. In Tartu, the School of Social Sciences began in 1992. The first students began their studies in full degree programmes in 1994 in TLU and TUT, and in 1995 in UT.

For a couple of years after launching the programmes, there were only state-financed places but from the mid-1990s the amount of tuition fee-paying students exceeded the amount of state-financed students in three public universities. In the second half of the 1990s the TLU and TUT public administration programmes diverged partly due to the lack of national rules for the operation of joint programmes. Now, TLU and TUT public administration programmes and units are clearly distinctive entities.

Public administration programmes were popular in the second half of the 1990s and several private universities opened public administration programmes at diploma or bachelor level. The Estonian Business School (EBS) opened the BA programme in public administration in 1999 as the first private university. At the same time another private university – University Nord – started a BA programme in public administration and European Studies. Both programmes received full accreditation in 2002.

The state-applied higher education institution, Public Service Academy, was an exception to the general trend in several ways. There, the programme of public administration was started in 1999 by an initiative from the State Chancellor and was very much oriented towards law. The master programme was offered in co-op-

eration with TUT. However, as political support faded, the programme was closed down in 2008.

Because of the high turnover in the civil service, the demand for educated civil servants was still high. Also, as accession to the European Union opened new possibilities, programmes in European Studies began, next to public administration in public and private universities.

At the beginning of the century various public and private universities were teaching public administration. The focus of the programmes strongly depended on the teaching staff's competencies and background. Therefore the content of programmes varied strongly amongst different universities.

Although the freedom of enterprise in education resulted in many new initiatives and fast development of the previously underdeveloped fields (including public administration) it also produced setbacks such as dissipation of very limited human resources and limited ability for research; poor quality of education in some institutions and bankruptcies of some providers of higher education. Hence, during a decade, after 1995, a much more elaborated quality assurance system was introduced.

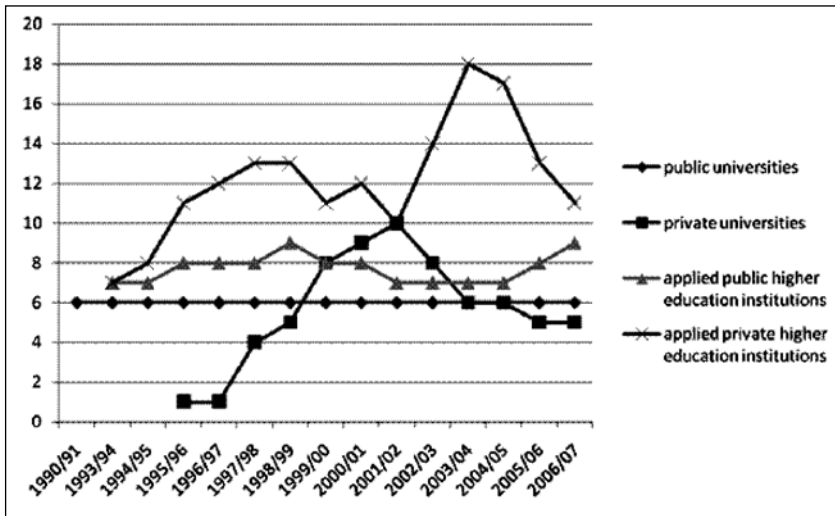
EBS and University Nord ended their programmes in public administration in 2005. The continuation of solely tuition fee-based programmes did not raise interest either from the students' or universities' perspective to continue and there was also a constant shortage of competent academic staff. Today, only the three public universities teach public administration at bachelor, master and doctoral level and other programmes have been closed down.

The public administration programme of the Estonian Public Service Academy was closed in 2007 – 2008 by an Act of the Estonian Government. The background of this decision was a desire to promote understaffed specialised civil servant fields (police, border guard, rescue etc) programmes. The decision to open and close public administration in academia was essentially a political decision.

The power lines have also changed among the public universities. TLU started to teach public administration in the Faculty of Social Sciences (Department of Social Studies, Chair of State Sciences/Government). In 1997, the university formed the Department of Government with focus on public administration and political sciences. In ten years, the department has grown in number of staff, students and programmes. Today there are five permanent professors who are responsible for public policy, administrative politics, comparative politics, political theory, international relations and European Studies but also for management, law and economics. In 2008, the Institute of Political Science and Governance of TLU was established, being the only faculty level academic unit of public administration in Estonia (the others are departments in larger faculties).

Chart 3

Dynamics of the number of higher education institutions in 1991 – 2007



Source: Ministry of Education and Research

While the importance of teaching public administration is increasing in TLU, the reverse has transpired in UT. In the middle of the 1990s, separate departments of Public Administration (and Social Policy) and Political Sciences in Faculty of Social Sciences were established with independent programmes and around the turn of the millennium, UT was probably the most vivid academic unit. With the 3+2 reform, in 2002 the merged BA programme in government and politics began. The separate departments operated for five more years and at the beginning 2008, the united Department of Government and Politics was founded in the Faculty of Social Sciences. One of the three chairs in the department is the Chair of Public Administration. Following this, two professors left to join TUT and currently there are neither permanent professors, nor associated professors of public administration, in UT.

The position of TUT is also strengthening. The Department of Human and Social Sciences in the Faculty of Humanities has six chairs, the majority of whom focus on public administration. The Chair of Regional Policy, Chair of Governance and Chair of Public Management and Public Policy all have at least one professor and there are also some younger academic staff members. The strength of the university has gained much at the expense of UT as two of the chairs are held by former professors of UT.

4. Funding and Staffing Public Education Higher Education

4.1 Public funding

The Estonian public expenditure on education has been generally relatively high in the context of Central and Eastern Europe. However, over the last years the share from the annual GNP spent on education has decreased. The growth in expenditure numbers has not been sufficient to balance the inflation.

Table 1

Public expenditure on various sectors of education in 2000 – 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Estonian GNP (mill. EEK)	95 491	108 218	121 372	132 904	146 694	173 062
General education (% of GDP)	3.39 %	3.36 %	3.42 %	3.45 %	3.26 %	3.04 %
Vocational education (% of GDP)	0.52 %	0.49 %	0.45 %	0.44 %	0.46 %	0.55 %
Higher education (% of GDP)	1.03 %	0.98 %	1.06 %	1.03 %	1.05 %	0.90 %
Other education costs (% of GDP)	0.48 %	0.48 %	0.55 %	0.57 %	0.61 %	0.58 %
Public educational expenditure total	5.41 %	5.31 %	5.48 %	5.50 %	5.38 %	5.07 %

Source: Ministry of Education and Research

Focusing on the dynamics of higher education expenditure we can see a general instability. The funding of higher education has changed rapidly over the years; a significant increase was followed by stagnation, which has made the financial climate very unstable for higher education institutions.

Table 2

Dynamics of public expenditure in higher education in 2000 – 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Public expenditure to higher education (mill. EEK)	982	1 058	1 288	1 375	1 540	1 553
Change compared to previous year	0.4 %	7.7 %	21.8 %	6.7 %	12.0 %	0.8 %

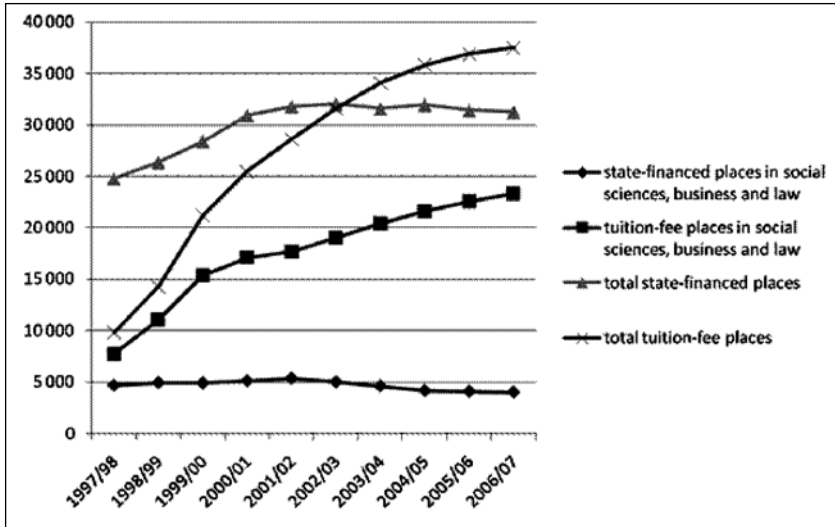
Source: Ministry of Education and Research

The most recent period not covered in the table was characterised by only a modest change in public expenditure, with nationally prioritised applied and voca-

tional education institutions receiving most of it. This means a steady decrease of the share of higher education in GNP and especially more hardship for universities. However, 2008 marks a significant rise in higher education public expenditure with the sums allocated for state-commissioned places rising by 30 % as a corrective measure.

Chart 4

Dynamics in state-commissioned and tuition fee based student posts in social sciences compared to total numbers in 1997 – 2007



Source: Ministry of Education and Research

The proportion of the field of social sciences has decreased in the general public expenditure on higher education between 1997/98 and 2006/2007. Beginning with 4688 state-commissioned places in 1997/98 and with a peak in 2001/2002 (5383 places) the number has been rapidly decreasing and was 4013 in 2006/2007.

At the same time, the number of tuition fee places has been exploding with a constant growth from 7727 in 1997/98 to 23 326 in 2006/2007. At the moment, ca. 15 % of all students in the field of social sciences can study in state-commissioned places and 85 % must pay for their education. This is notably different from a general setting of 45 % state-commissioned and 55 % tuition-fee places. Also, tuition fees for social sciences tend to be the highest among all fields of study.

Such disproportions are in part related to the somewhat defective system for planning the state-commissioned places. The Ministry of Education and Research orders a number of graduates in clearly defined larger fields from higher education institutions, officially basing these numbers on national higher education strategy

and suggestions from an advisory committee. In practice, this has given preference to prioritised fields but also to many outdated, non-sustainable organised programmes or those which are otherwise unable to attract paying students.

There is no exact nationwide data on public administration and related programmes but as Tallinn University Institute of Political Science and Governance has, over the years, kept records on the performance in the field, it is possible to demonstrate some general trends.

The total number of **36 state commissioned places for public administration in the universities per year accounts for 0.6 % of the total number of state commissioned places in higher education** (5904 in 2007). Even if we add related fields (political science, international relations and European studies), the 56 places account for only 0.9 % of all the state-commissioned places in 2007.

Out of six BA level academic and applied programmes only four have state-financed places, leaving two of the three applied BA programmes aside. Altogether, there were 76 state-commissioned BA student places for 2007 in public administration, political science and related programmes in the universities⁷. At the MA level, there are altogether 49 and on the PhD level, 7 state-commissioned places. More detailed information on the allocation of places is available in the chapter on quality and performance indicators.

The very low proportion of state-commissioned public administration and related places features a peculiar tendency that public administration education is becoming a private interest for (future) civil servants. This also means that a very significant proportion of the overall financing of the units responsible for public administration teaching comes from the educational market, implying necessities to advertise, compete with various providers of schooling etc. in addition to the main academic activities.

This phenomenon might be partly linked to the socio-historical background of Estonia. As social sciences were an illicit subject during Soviet times, the emerging high demand for specialists in the field was directed to universities, which were unable to recruit sufficient specialised academic personnel. The competence obtained by studying up-to-date and “Western style” public administration was an excellent basis for success for practically every occupation in public, business or non-profit sectors related to management, leadership, politics and administration.

This created a spiral effect: a small, but stably increasing state funding and a concurrent great interest in entering the programmes resulting in many students studying for a tuition fee. The payment level in the public sector was mediocre, which elicited a mediocre interest in working as a civil servant and this pushed a

⁷ The classification of state-commissioned places treats BA level places as expansions of the MA level places; for that reason BA places do not appear in the calculations of the state-commissioned places.

substantial proportion of graduates to enter the private sector. This, in turn, resulted in mutual interpenetration of the public administration and business management discourses and its practical corollaries such as decreasing state-commissioned places in the field.

At present, we may see people studying public administration with personal funding, but later being occupied in various sectors of life, while the universities are simultaneously re-educating the actually practising civil servants with a different educational background, who need to acquire the discipline at their own expense whilst working. The problem is not only with middle-aged officials, but increasingly young people. The structure of the state commission in the field gives the signal that obtaining specialised education while already working in the civil service is not in the interests of the government sector.

Altogether, the structure of state financing might have inadvertently developed to the present state of affairs, where as a rule one can become an educated civil servant for private money.

4.2 Academic staff

One of the big challenges in developing political science and public administration education in Estonia has been the lack of academic staff, because these educational fields were severely restricted in the Soviet era, and also because of the ever high demand for specialists in the field both from the private and public sector. The staff that started off included many young professionals who were returning from exile, who were soon hired in key positions of public service, and only the real academic patriots remained in the universities. The entire period has witnessed the aging of academic staff.

Due to the very limited education funding and practically non-existent research funding, there is a major lack of academic progeny. Therefore, the lack of qualified human resources has been one of the reasons for shutting down some of the programmes in the smaller applied and private higher education institutions.

The transition to the Bologna system meant a period of great change in public administration education. If we analyse the relations amongst people previously responsible for separate public administration and political science BA programmes and department, then TLU has been an example of co-operation, UT of competition and TUT of separation (there was and is no programme of political science in TUT).

TLU did adjust better to the changes than other institutions and has developed, besides public administration, a full-size political science profile during the transition. The academic staff has grown in the TLU equally from its former students as well as some people from UT. The reform was hardest on UT where the BA programmes superseded the public administration field and where also personal

tensions mounted. This resulted in the main staff of the UT former public administration department moving over to TUT, which might lead to a dwindling of UT public administration tuition, but reinforces the sustainability of the TUT public administration department, which was in serious hardships before.

In most recent years, the concentration of tuition, as well as the opening of European funds, has created new possibilities in all the institutions. In the last few years, the universities have obtained a certain capability for engaging younger lecturers. Still, sustainability is rather fragile and easily affected. On the other hand, the performance of the universities in difficult conditions gives hope that some solution will evolve in future.

Table 3
Comparison of the academic staff in the units responsible for public administration education in 2008⁸

	Tallinn University	University of Tartu	Tallinn University of Technology
Professors of a speciality ⁸	5	4	6
Professors, other fields	–	–	3
Associate professors of a speciality	1	1	1
Associate professors, other fields	–	–	1
Lecturers on a speciality	9	7	2
Lecturers, other fields	–	–	5
Researchers on a speciality	4	6	5
Researchers, other fields	–	–	2
Total academic staff of a speciality	19	17	11
Total academic staff in other fields	–	–	14
Total academic staff	19	17	25

Source: web pages of the respective universities, institutes and departments

The numbers of academic staff are broadly similar in all the units responsible for public administration teaching. In the last year, TLU and TUT have slightly increased, while UT has remained stable. The numbers indicate a more profound

8 Data includes all staff with permanent, extraordinary etc. contracts irrespective of nominal workload except with suspended labour contracts.

9 Speciality includes public administration, political science, international relations and European studies. Other fields are distinguished in order to make TUT data more comparable as TUT has a common unit to cover all humanities and social sciences. Other fields include psychology, philosophy and languages.

trend. Compared to similar western institutions, all the Estonian academic units are short-staffed. For example, in TLU the academic staff of 19 is responsible for educating 458 students in Tallinn and 161 in colleges. This gives a ratio of 24/33 students per teacher respectively. The other institutions face similar challenges.

5. Comparison of Programmes

Our subsequent analysis focuses on the three major institutions in the field – Tallinn University, University of Tartu and Tallinn University of Technology – and on their 16 programmes directly associated with public administration. In addition to this, there are various less related programmes such as Baltic studies, teacher of civics and history, technology governance etc.

Table 4

The main higher education programmes in public administration and related fields in Estonia in 2007/2008

	Tallinn University	University of Tartu	Tallinn University of Technology
Normal BA programme	Yes (politics and government)	Yes (government and politics)	Yes (public administration)
Applied/distant learning BA level programme	Yes (public and business management)	Yes (local government's administration)	Yes (office management)
Normal MA programme in Public Administration	Yes (public administration)	Yes (public administration)	Yes (public administration)
MA level programme in Public Administration for practitioners	Yes (government and administration)	Yes (public management)	Yes/No (slightly different version of the normal programme of public administration)
Political science MA programme	Yes	Yes	No
European studies MA programme	Yes	Yes	No
International Relations MA programme	Yes	Yes	No
PhD programme	Yes (government and politics)	Yes (political science, public administration and policy)	Yes (public administration)

Source: web pages of the respective universities, institutes and departments

We examine the 16 programmes for the 2007/2008 academic year for which the English versions were presented in the preceding table. We bring out the general characteristics for all of the programmes and subsequently compare the public administration programmes, the titles of the subjects they include and the amount of credits they give.

The Estonian system of credit points (CP, *ainepunkt* in Estonian) is used as a measure since all the programmes did not include the credits in ECTS-s. One Estonian credit point equals 40 hours of work and usually (but not always) corresponds to 1.5 ECTS.

For analysis, we compare the structure, contents and aims of the programmes. Since the actual structure of different programmes is very heterogeneous, most programmes have been adjusted and recalculated. Subjects mentioned repeatedly in a programme are counted only once.

At the BA level, we have divided the subjects into general subjects (introductory courses, including public administration associated courses), core subjects (compulsory specialised courses) and elective subjects (elective specialised courses). On the MA and PhD level, the subjects are divided into two categories: general and specialised subjects based on expert opinion. Also, categories such as open electives, practical electives and thesis are separate.

We define specialised courses as courses in public policy, administration, management, political science, law, economics, international relations, European studies and other related fields. General courses include history, languages, culture studies, computer and e-learning skills etc.

We analyse the contents of the programmes based on a rough division between various fields of study, e.g. governance, management, psychology and political science. The division is based on the titles of subjects, and in some cases, on the course descriptions.

The aims are analysed based on the introductory remarks in the programmes.

5.1 Normal BA programmes

All the normal BA programmes analysed are based on classical full-time studying, which makes them most suitable for recent high school graduates. The main aim of all three programmes is to provide a basic knowledge about the primary areas of specialisation – in the case of TLU or TUT it is the field of public administration and political science and in the case of UT the wider field of social sciences – and shape the basic competences to work in the field of governance, public management and politics (TLU) or public management, the third sector and international or-

organisations (TUT).¹⁰ The programmes also stress the graduates' ability to continue their studies at the MA level.

The structures of the programmes are in accord with the differences in the main aims of different universities. As in the case of TLU and TUT, the main emphasis is on the core subjects, UT is placing much more emphasis on general and elective subjects. At the same time, TLU is offering much more elective courses balancing this with a far larger requirement of open electives. Therefore, TUT can be said to be placing most emphasis on the students' knowledge of general specialised knowledge (core subjects in the programme) and UT on the general field of social sciences (general subjects). TLU is giving a basic knowledge of both the general scientific and more specialised overview of the field of government and politics, but leaving the specialisation up to the student (equally general and core subjects, but the main stress on elective subjects).

This can also be summed up in the amount of specialised modules each programme provides. In TUT there is only one (public administration); in UT there are three (public administration, international relations and comparative politics) and in TLU, eight (public administration, project management, political science, public law, economics, European studies, Baltic studies and international relations).

Table 5

Structure of normal public administration bachelor programmes in 2007/2008

	Tallinn University	University of Tartu	Tallinn University of Technology
General subjects: general and (in brackets) PA-related	24 (9)	32 – 48* (16)	14 (2,5)
Core subjects	32	16	78
Elective subjects	28	24 – 40*	14
Amount of total elective subjects	132	54	34
Open electives	30	8	6
BA thesis	6	4	5
Practical training compulsory/voluntary	2 V	4 C	3 C
Total credits	120	120	120

* Depending on the choice of specialisation module

Source: web pages of the respective universities, institutes and departments

¹⁰ It should be mentioned that the analysis of the aims of the programmes is based on the formal text in the programmes. As can be seen from the analysis of the subjects, TUT aims could be fulfilled only with regard to public administration, leaving political science, third sector and international organisations basically uncovered.

The contents of programmes also display some differences. In UT, most courses are associated with political science (36 credit points) and international politics (28 credit points), which refer to the main accent being set on the two other specialisations apart from public administration.

TUT provides a larger amount of courses associated with management (23 credit points) and economics (16 credit points), and 26 credit points worth of subjects, mostly language courses, that fall into the category of “other subjects”. This might refer to the intense co-operation with the TUT Faculty of Economics, but might also be related to the lack of public administration related courses and staff.

Table 6

Contents of normal public administration bachelor programmes in 2007/2008

Field	Tallinn University		University of Tartu		Tallinn University of Technology	
	Number of subjects	Credits	Number of subjects	Credits	Number of subjects	Credits
Governance	7	22	1	4	2	6
Administrative policies	3	10	1	4	3	11
Management	6	19	2	8	7	23
Economics	6	19	2	4	5	16
Law	6	19	1	4	2	7
Political science	8	22	9	36	2	5
International politics	6	18	7	28	1	3,5
EU	7	21	1	4	1	3,5
Methodology and data analysis	5	15	2	8	4	12
Other social sciences ¹⁰	8	26	3	12	6	14,5
Practical training	1	2	1	4	1	3
Thesis	1	6	1	4	1	5
Other	4	12	1	2	10	26

Source: web pages of the respective universities, institutes and departments

TLU represents the largest and most even selection of governance, management, economics, law, political science, international politics and EU related subjects (all from 18 to 22 CP). This means that the students have great conditions for acquiring knowledge equally about all those fields, but also refers to the necessity to specialise.

¹¹ Other social sciences include sociology, psychology, philosophy and history in all comparative tables.

The TLU programme has also placed more effort into introducing the related branches of study, such as sociology, philosophy, psychology and history (27 CP altogether), which are mostly covered in other programmes as well (12 CP in UT and 14.5 CP in TUT). Also, it is more extensive in the variety of methodology and data analysis courses offered.

5.2 Applied/distant learning BA programmes

All three universities provide additional BA programmes that are mainly directed to already working public administration specialists with no prior higher education. Two of the three programmes (TLU and UT) are offered outside Tallinn and Tartu, namely in Haapsalu and Narva, and are aimed at improving local level governance and regional development. These programmes feature specialisation in public and business management (TLU), management and bureaucratic procedure (asjaajamine) at the level of local government (UT) and office management (TUT).

As these programmes have a more applied orientation, the main emphasis is on core subjects. All three programmes represent again a wide selection of total elective subjects, although the general subjects are quite significant in UT. UT also highlights the importance of practical training (in the amount of 25 CP while only 3 CP-s are offered in TUT and 4 voluntary CP-s in TLU). Therefore we see a more modest choice of courses in UT's programme (which might partly be a result of the lack of academic personnel in the college) than in the other two universities.

Table 7

Structure of applied public administration bachelor programmes in 2007/2008

	Tallinn University	University of Tartu	Tallinn University of Technology
General subjects: general and (in brackets) PA-related	21 (9 – 12)	32 (6)	12 (0 – 2)
Core subjects	44	64	70,5
Elective subjects	16	8	21,5
Amount of total elective subjects	50	34	53
Open electives	33	5	5
BA thesis	6	6	5
Practical training compulsory/voluntary	4 V	25 K	3 K
Total credits	120	140	120

Source: web pages of the respective universities, institutes and departments

The contents of the programmes underpin the presumption about the lack of academic personnel specialised in public administration in the UT Narva College. Although in the management and administration, policy related subjects are represented pretty well, most of the courses (worth 88 CP-s) fall into the category “other subjects” (featuring language courses and etiquette and communication-related courses). The general view is relatively similar in TUT.

Therefore, the link between these programmes and public administration is quite weak. Rather, they are institutions of integration (i.e. UT College in Narva teaching Estonians Russian and Russians Estonian) or simply giving marginal know-how about public officers’ ethics and etiquette, archiving and public relations with a touch of basic knowledge in management, economics and administration policy.

Table 8

Contents of applied public administration bachelor programmes in 2007/2008

Field	Tallinn University		University of Tartu		Tallinn University of Technology	
	Number of subjects	Credits	Number of subjects	Credits	Number of subjects	Credits
Governance	5	20	1	2	1	2
Administrative policies	3	11	5	16	1	4
Management	3	10	4	13	3	10,5
Economics	8	27	10	5	4	12,5
Law	2	5	3	6	3	8,5
Political science	1	3	-	-	1	2,5
International politics	-	-	-	-	-	-
EU	1	3	2	6	1	3,5
Methodology and data analysis	5	16	-	-	3	8
Other social sciences	8	25	2	4	4	9,5
Practical training	1	4	1	25	1	3
Thesis	1	6	1	6	1	5
Other	4	13	26	88	27	73,5

Source: web pages of the respective universities, institutes and departments

TLU is putting more effort into subjects related to governance and economics, but also methodology and data analysis, which should actually not be the main aim of an applied programme.¹² Also, it features a more elaborate selection of courses

¹² However, in contrast to the other institutions TLU distant learning BA programme is currently designed, registered and accredited as an academic programme.

from related branches of study. Therefore the programme of the TLU distant learning BA is drifting towards the opposite extremity and could be compared more to the normal BA programmes than with the other applied programmes.

5.3 Normal MA programmes

Influenced by the differences in the BA level programmes, some occur in the MA profiles as well. One of the most notable lies in the expectancies the departments have for students applying for the programme. TLU accepts primarily students with a background in social sciences, which creates a heterogeneous auditory, and means some introduction into the general subjects is required. After that, a wide selection of mostly governance and administration policy and management related courses are offered for specialisation.

Table 9

Structure of normal public administration master programmes in 2007/2008

		Tallinn University	University of Tartu	Tallinn University of Technology
General subjects*	Allowed credit range ¹²	0 – 6	–	8 – 14
	Total amount of credits ¹²	18	–	14
Specialised subjects	Allowed credit range	44 – 50	52	38 – 44
	Total amount of credits	104	40 + other courses in the timetable	76
<i>Including</i>	<i>Working practice C/V</i>	3 V	4 C	3 C
	<i>Academic practice C/V</i>	2 C + 2 V	–	–
MA seminars		4 – 7 V	4 C	4 C
Open subjects		10	4	5
MA thesis		20	20	20
Total credits		80	80	80

* including methodology, philosophy of science, psychology, pedagogy, basics of social sciences

Source: web pages of the respective universities, institutes and departments

UT has stipulated the fulfilment of certain preconditioned subjects from their BA programme, which technically means that the only qualifying applicants are

13 Allowed credit range marks the amount of credits a student is allowed to take from the block (general subjects, specialised subjects etc.). Total amount of credits indicates the total number of credit points available in the block.

their own BA graduates, and gives them a more specialised overview of the area of public administration, as can be illustrated by the sole emphasis on specialised subjects in the narrow programme, but allows the students to apply to other courses lectured in the department.

On the other hand, TUT sees the graduates of technical and natural sciences as their target group. This also explains the greater amount of general subjects in the programme. The courses represented in the programme give them a more thorough overview of management and economics, but also cover briefly the “neighbouring” sciences such as psychology, philosophy and sociology. Therefore, this programme produces public managers with a specific background in their future specialisation field (e.g. ecosystem management, engineering etc).

All three programmes represent some practical assignments: in UT and TUT there is compulsory working practice; in TLU, working practice is voluntary, but there is some compulsory academic practice, which gives students some notion of participation in academic life. The emphasis of compulsory subjects is on management and law, but also on governance and economics, which sets the emphasis more on “management” than on “public”.

Table 10

Contents of normal public administration master programmes in 2007/2008

Field	Tallinn University		University of Tartu		Tallinn University of Technology	
	Number of subjects	Credits	Number of subjects	Credits	Number of subjects	Credits
Governance	8	27	2	6	2	7
Administrative policies	7	22	1	2	2	8
Management	6	22	2	6	6	18
Economics	1	3	1	4	3	10,5
Law	1	5	2	8	2	7
Political science	3	12	–	–	–	–
International politics	–	–	–	–	1	2,5
EU	1	4	1	2	2	6
Methodology and data analysis	8	24	2	8	4	8,5
Other social sciences	1	3	–	–	5	17
Practical training	3	7	1	4	1	3
Thesis	1	20	1	20	1	20
Other	2	6	–	–	4	9,5

Source: web pages of the respective universities, institutes and departments

5.4 MA programmes for practitioners

The prerequisite of all these programmes is previous work experience. Therefore, the programmes are aimed at giving to the already practically experienced specialists a theoretical and knowledge-based grounding to improve the quality of public administration and reduce the number of people in the sector who obtained education earlier in another field.

As in the normal MA programmes, the UT represents no compulsory general subjects – again, these could only be chosen voluntarily by the student from courses lectured on other levels. The main thematic emphasis is on management.

As the name of the programme indicates, TLU's programme is more public administration and governance centred. It gives an equally wide selection of governance, management and policy centred courses, but at the same time, it also represents a variety of methodology and data analysis related subjects.

The programme in TUT also features a wide selection of management, governance, law, international politics and economic oriented subjects. At the same time, it represents the largest variety of compulsory general subjects.

Table 11
Structure of public administration master level programmes
for already working people in 2007/2008

		Tallinn University	University of Tartu	Tallinn University of Technology
General subjects*	Allowed credit range	0 – 7	–	8 – 14
	Total credit amount offered	12	–	14
Specialised subjects	Allowed credit range	41 – 48	52	38 – 44
	Total credit amount offered	103	40 + other courses in the timetable	76
<i>including</i>	<i>Working practice C/V</i>	–	–	3 K
	<i>Academic practice C/V</i>	–	–	–
MA seminars		2 V	4 K	4 K
Open subjects		12	4	5
MA thesis		20	20	20
Total credits		80	80	80

* including methodology, philosophy of science, psychology, pedagogic and didactics, basics of social sciences

Source: web pages of the respective universities, institutes and departments

Table 12
 Contents of public administration master level programmes
 for already working people in 2007/2008

Field	Tallinn University		University of Tartu		Tallinn University of Technology	
	Number of subjects	Credits	Number of subjects	Credits	Number of subjects	Credits
Governance	8	32	–	–	5	17,5
Administrative policies	6	15	1	4	2	5,5
Management	9	27	4	14	10	31
Economics	5	14	2	6	3	11,5
Law	3	11	2	8	5	16
Political science	3	10	–	–	–	–
International politics	–	–	–	–	4	12
EU	2	5	1	4	2	6
Methodology and data analysis	5	10	–	–	3	9
Other social sciences	1	3	–	–	6	17
Practical training	–	–	–	–	1	3
Thesis	1	20	1	20	1	20
Other	3	8	–	–	4	9

Source: web pages of the respective universities, institutes and departments

5.5 PhD programmes

The three universities represent four different public administration related PhD programmes. They are all meant to offer their graduates the highest level of competence in their specific area, and allow them to continue as academic professionals. In the UT political science programme, as well as the TUT programme, there is more emphasis on general subjects, although in all the universities, there is a wide variety of subjects the students can choose from.

In the field of specialising subjects, the UT doctoral programmes offer a very narrow compulsory variety of subjects, while the TLU and TUT programmes offer a much wider selection. However, this might pose a danger of all those courses not being in accordance with the level of PhD students.

The PhD students may (and in many cases have to) gather their specialising credit points with practical academic work. The UT students of public administration and policy have to gather at least 10 CP-s for practice, while political science

students need only 4 and TUT public administration students 3 CP-s. In TLU, the practice is voluntary, but can add up to 48 CP-s. Therefore the doctoral studies in TLU are very much oriented towards developing other levels of study through the engagement of PhD students, but also leave them the choice of refusing academic practical work.

Table 13
Basic parameters of public administration and related doctor level programmes
in 2007/2008

		Tallinn University	University of Tartu		Tallinn University of Technology
Name of programme		Government and politics	Political science	Public administration and policy	Public administration
General subjects*	Allowed credit range	4	8	12 – 20	4 – 16
	Total credit amount offered	35	28	28	26,5
Specialised subjects	Allowed credit range	22 – 24	16	12 – 20	24 – 36
	Total credit amount offered	83	16	20	61,5
Including	Teaching practice; supervising and reviewing students final thesis C/V	6 – 13 V	4 C	4C	-
	Working practice and participative observation C/V	2 – 5 V	2 C	-	3 C
	Work with literature, articles, subject related conferences C/V	24 – 30 V	4 C	4 V	-
PhD seminars	Allowed credit rate	12 – 14	12	4 – 12	8
	Total credit amount offered	14	32	28	8

* including methodology, philosophy of science, psychology, pedagogic and didactics, basics of social sciences

Source: web pages of the respective universities, institutes and departments

5.6 Basic trends and variations

The similarity of all the programmes is a strong feature of social sciences, although the main courses have a clear profile of public administration. The most differentiated in this sense is TUT, where there are many courses on IT, administration of working processes and technology, ergonomics etc. However, compared to many central and eastern European public administration programmes and the now closed Estonian Public Service Academy public administration programme, the social scientific orientation of Estonian main universities is clearly visible.

On a more precise level, the strategies of the universities vary greatly. TLU has the most abundant programmes, which leaves the student a choice, but also an obligation to choose a specialisation already at the BA level. It should also be mentioned that TLU does not limit the student's opportunity to take courses in addition to the nominal amount of CP-s of the programme, free of charge. Other universities, especially in the applied programmes, have overloaded the courses with marginal subjects. UT normal degree programmes leave the students little choice of specialisation.

The public administration related programmes in TUT offer education with the technical science dominant and primarily for people from other fields. UT, on the other hand, is becoming a rather downsized entity in public administration, which has little variety of courses to subject, although offers a good and wide ranged basic education at the BA level and in political science MA. From the aspect of public administration education, this is not enough, though.

The applied programmes suffer from a lack of specialised courses, but they are not likely to be improved, because the colleges have a monopolistic status in their region. Additionally, the state commissioning process does not seem to be the likely instrument for influencing the quality of the programmes.

Technically, the list of courses is usually a very explicit one and the choices are clearly structured. In practice, they are, at least in the case of TLU and UT, rather open. This is in accord with the aim of the BA level goals, where emphasis is (aside specialising) to pass on knowledge about the wider discipline of government and politics, as well as social sciences in a more general sense.

The emphasis on research varies greatly amongst the programmes as well as the universities. In the applied programmes, the more feeble accentuation on methodology and data analysis courses is understandable (although TLU tries to prove the opposite), but in the normal programmes, this aspect should exist in a stronger way. The programmes of TLU indicate much more dedication to methodology than the other universities throughout all the levels of study.

6. Quality and Efficiency

We have compared the programmes of public administration and related higher education in TLU, UT and TUT in the years 2000 – 2007. The analysis covers accreditation of the programmes and real numbers of graduates, as compared to state-commissioned places at each level of higher education of public administration. Based on the analysis, we are able, to a certain extent, to discuss the efficiency of public administration higher education in Estonia.

The only significant event in the accreditation has been the negative accreditation of the TUT PhD programme in 2001 reflecting the difficulties of the institution. Only after the expansion of staff (after former UT professors joined TUT) did the university succeed in acquiring a conditional accreditation in 2006. Since the initial failure in accreditation, TUT has not received any state-commissioned PhD places in public administration.

Most of the other programmes have been easily accredited in all the institutions (with the exception of the UT applied programme, which has not yet been accredited). After the transition to the Bologna system, when the old 4-year bachelor programmes were closed, some of the existing accreditations were transferred to the new programmes. This was allowed due to the principal similarities between the contents of the old and new programmes. This is the main reason why some of the programmes need to be accredited again in the coming years (UT in 2008, TUT in 2009, TLU in 2011). However, the vast majority of students in Estonia are studying public administration in the fully accredited programmes.

We present the comparative data by higher education levels below.

Table 14
Accreditation and state-commissioned places on BA level
in public administration in 2007/2008¹⁴

Tallinn University			University of Tartu			Tallinn University of Technology		
Programme	ACR	Ord. nr.	Programme	ACR	Ord. nr.	Programme	ACR	Ord. nr.
Politics and Government	A (2014)	17	Government and Politics	A (2008)	35	Public Administration	A (2009)	14
Public and Business Management	A (2014)	0	Local Government's Administration	–	10	Office Management	A (2009)	0
In total		17	In total		45	In total		14

Source: Information System of Estonian Education

¹⁴ From here on we have compared the programmes which had admissions in 2007/08.

Abbreviations:

- ACR – state of accreditation
- Ord. nr. – Ordered/requested number of graduates (i.e. state-commissioned student places) for 2007/08
- A – fully accredited
- (A) – full accreditation transferred
- TA – conditional accreditation
- “-” – not yet accreditable (new programmes)

Table 15
Accreditation and state-commissioned places at MA level
in public administration in 2007/2008

Tallinn University			University of Tartu			Tallinn University of Technology		
Programme	ACR	Ord. nr.	Programme	ACR	Ord. nr.	Programme	ACR	Ord. nr.
Political Science	A (2011)	3	Comparative Politics	A (2008)	7	-		
			International Relations	A (2008)	7	-		
Political Science in total		3	Political Science in total		14	-		
Public Administration	A (2014)	8	Public Administration	A (2013)	5	Public Administration	A (2009)	9
Government and Administration	A (2011)	3	Public Management	A (2013)	7			
Public Administration in total		11	Public Administration in total		12	Public Administration in total		9
European Studies	(A) (2011)	0	European Studies	A (2014)	0	-		
In total		14	In total		26	In total		9

Source: Information System of Estonian Education

Analysing the dynamics of state-commissioned places, we can see that the numbers have been surprisingly stable. At the applied level of higher education, the requested number of graduates by state has been 0 through the years; only UT has 10 state-commissioned places annually to its non-accredited applied BA programme since 2004, but there have been no graduates yet, so it is a bit early to talk about the efficiency of the programme.

Table 16

Accreditation and state-commissioned places at PhD level in public administration in 2007/2008

Tallinn University			University of Tartu			Tallinn University of Technology		
Programme	ACR	Ord. nr.	Programme	ACR	Ord. nr.	Programme	ACR	Ord. nr.
Government and Politics	TA (2010)	1	Political Science	A (2008)	3	Public Administration	TA (2009)	0
			Public Administration and Policy	A (2013)	3			
In total		1	In total		6	In total		0

Source: Information System of Estonian Education

At the bachelor level the numbers are also quite stable. TLU and TUT have similar state-commissioned place numbers (17; 14). The number of state commissioned places in UT (37) is more than twice as many compared to TLU and TUT and has also stayed relatively stable over time.

At the master level, the requested numbers of graduates have been almost equal between the three universities. It has risen since the application of the Bologna system, because this process views master level studies as a natural continuation of the bachelor, so that 5-year education would be the norm. The requested numbers at master level are slightly smaller than at bachelor level, but here the UT stays at the same level with another two universities (~ 10). The state commission in political science (including international relations) at master level is also smaller compared to bachelor level education in the field, but here there is a notable large difference between the two universities teaching political science. The requested numbers in UT are considerably larger compared to the TLU; they are even larger than the ordered numbers of public administration.

Analysing the real number of graduates, we can see that allocating state-commissioned student places is not in accordance with the real numbers of graduates in the universities. For example, the number of real graduates in 2005 at the bachelor level is the smallest in UT, where the state-commissioned places (i.e. the requested number of graduates) was the largest in 2002/03. The real number of graduates in 2005 was the highest in TUT where the state commission was the smallest in 2002/03. In TLU, the amount of BA graduates has been quite stable – around 25 students a year.

At master level, TLU and TUT show the best graduation results although their number of state-commissioned places is smaller. The graduation rates for MA programmes for practitioners tend to be higher than those of the normal programmes.

Maybe the efficiency indicator for the TLU normal MA programme is not so high because almost all of the students studying there also work and it is more difficult to go through the normal MA programme while working.

The real number of graduates at PhD level in all of the three universities is rather modest, but developing. The requested numbers of graduates are rather large in the UT, but the real number of graduates is not much bigger than the other two universities. The requested numbers of graduates are very small in TLU and TUT.

Table 17

Longitudinal graduation rates in public administration programmes, 2002 – 2008¹⁵

	Tallinn University			University of Tartu			Tallinn University of Technology		
	Graduates	Ord.no	Rate	Graduates	Ord.no	Rate	Graduates	Ord.no	Rate
Normal BA programmes	78	53	1,5	106	115	0,9	126	46	2,7
Applied BA programmes	46	0	∞	0	40	N/A¹⁵	117	0	∞
MA programmes ¹⁶	122	30	4,1	21	31	0,7	73	21	3,5
PhD programmes	2	0	∞	2	8	0,3	0	0	∞

Source: Database of Institute Political Science and Governance

It should also be mentioned that Estonian students have not yet realised the importance of the +2-master level education. The competition for the master level (~ 2 – 3 applicants per 1 state commissioned places) – although constantly rising – is by no means anywhere near the competition at bachelor level (10 – 20). One of the reasons for that trend might also be that it is possible to get a relatively good job in your field of study after the 3-year education and with a full-time job it is difficult to get through the normal full-time studies at the master level (even BA graduation suffers because of that). In this context, it is not surprising that going for a PhD is

15 The aggregated data includes all the public administration programmes in TLU, UT and TUT. The numbers are calculated on the basis of all the completed state commission contracts between 2002/2003 and 2006/2007, but uncompleted contracts are left out.

16 Not possible to calculate because the nominal study period has not yet ended for any of the state-commissioned places.

17 It is possible to distinguish the normal and applied MA graduation rates in TLU and UT, but not in TUT. The normal MA graduates numbers are: in TLU 14 graduates, 27 state-commissioned places, rate 0.5 and in UT 18 graduates, 27 state-commissioned places, rate 0.7. The applied MA graduates numbers are: in TLU 103 graduates, 3 state-commissioned places, rate 34.3 and in UT 3 graduates, 4 state-commissioned places, rate 0.8.

still very rare in Estonia. We will come back to that in more detail in the section on students.

7. Research

In Estonian universities, teaching is based on research. Also the strategy of knowledge-based society and teaching promotes research in universities (The Knowledge-based Estonia 2007). The priority of the national research and development policy is to promote high quality and internationally competitive research.

The quality of research capacity is evaluated by an international commission. The research evaluation performance is as follows (Higher Education Quality Assessment Council).

1. Tallinn University:
 - Political science (politics and government, i.e. including public administration), Institute of International and Social Studies – result 4/4 (4 means good in a scale from 0 to 5)
 - Political science (politics and government, i.e. including public administration), Institute of Political Science and Governance – result 4-/4-
2. University of Tartu:
 - Political science (without public administration), Department of Political Science – result 4/4
 - Public administration, Department of Public Administration – result 4/4
3. Tallinn University of Technology:
 - No positive evaluation.

The missing evaluation of research of TUT is not surprising, given the negative accreditation of the PhD programme in 2001. However, the now strengthened TUT might well move into evaluation.

Generally, most of the research is focused on comparisons between Estonia and other countries, or is an applied research for the Estonian government (Elgström et al 2002). Theoretical publications are rarer. One of the main problems is the overload of personnel with teaching responsibilities, the very low level of public financing and fragmentation of research topics due to the need to join with funded research projects outside of the university, i.e. applied and development projects. However, the co-operation between professors is extremely important to receive national funding. Currently the professors of TLU have begun to develop a joint theoretical framework for their studies of different dimensions of democracy, governance and civil society.

Previously we emphasised different programmes' development strategies (directions) between the main current public administration academic centres, TLU

and TUT. Naturally this determines different research strategies and vice versa. Different universities are focusing on different research topics.

UT studies focus was public administration studies (civil service, public management, theory) and has been the major partner of the Estonian government to develop the Estonian civil service (Randma 2000), although the representatives of TLU also participated in this process. Traditionally, the focus in TUT has been on regional and local government and education management but it now also includes technology governance and possibly other fields transferred from UT. TLU has gradually developed its professorships from 2001 and has developed different research directions and groups in political science (inter-ethnic relations, civil society and participation, citizenship studies), public policy (welfare policy, policymaking process, cabinet decision-making, local democracy, state theory).

The Ministry of Education and Research has divided the funding of research and development into five categories:

- Targeted financing, aimed to ensure a competitive basic structure for scientific research in basic and applied research.
- Baseline financing, aimed to support the development and initiative research of research and development institutions.
- Research grant funds, aimed to support specific research projects.
- Targeted national research and development programmes. None of the programmes support research in public administration. The priority is given to natural and exact sciences or the Estonian language.
- Funding of research and development infrastructure. Natural and exact sciences are also the priority in this category. (Estonian Research Portal)

All in all, research is under-funded and fragmented between different schemes (Nedeva & Georghiou 2003). In the context of implementing the Lisbon strategy and the aim of building a knowledge-based society, the funding for R&D has increased in recent years from 0.6 per cent of GDP in 2001 to 0.88 per cent in 2004 in Estonia, but the finances in social sciences have remained at the same level (Ministry of Education and Research 2007). The proportion of research finance from GDP is two times lower than the European average, but a little more than the average in the new EU countries. The funds are not sufficient to develop sustainable research infrastructure – especially in social sciences with very limited support schemes – and research is mostly carried out besides teaching. Full-time employment of doctoral students is also hindering the sustainability of research. The number of researchers has increased by 12 per cent in the period 1996 to 2004 (Ministry of Education and Research). This number has increased only in social sciences and humanities; in other fields personnel has decreased.

Universities have received a broadly similar number of national grants. TUT, which has not evaluated research, currently owns the highest number of national

research grants. In fact, a more important source of public administration research financing is international and other domestic funding. Much research is carried out in co-operation with other institutions. The actual research workload of professors is 2 or 3 projects annually.

Table 18
National research funding in 2003 – 2013

	Tallinn University		University of Tartu		Tallinn University of Technology	
	active	completed	active	Completed	active	completed
Targeted financing	1	1	1	1	1	–
Estonian research grants	2	3	2	1	3	1

Source: Estonian Research Portal

Besides national funding, Estonian research is fragmented between different international funds. The main source for appropriate funding is the European Framework Programmes. Only the TLU Institute of Social and International Studies (responsible for sociology) have been able to develop FWP as a coordinator in Estonia in the field of social sciences. Researchers from the Tallinn University Institute of Political Science and Governance have been involved in five different European framework programme projects in the last years and are currently actively participating in the next stage of application to 7th FWP. This reflects the general trend in the field.

In the long run, TLU and UT have actively participated in international networks in NISPAcee and EGPA. Researchers of UT have been members of NISPAcee's Steering Committee. A researcher at TLU has been the co-coordinator of the longest standing NISPAcee working group for five years. Degree students of TLU have been especially active in participating in NISPAcee meetings and publishing in NISPAcee publications. In the last two years, degree students from TLU have won the NISPAcee prize for the best graduate student paper.

The research of public administration at three main universities is highly internationalised and not only from a CEE perspective. In this century, researchers of TLU and UT have also been participating at ECPR meetings and both TUT and TLU have contributed to research at EGPA. TLU has, since 2001, become the main partner of the IEA in conducting worldwide comparative research of different dimensions of educational systems, i.e. civic education and value orientation of youth.

International co-operation has been also conducted in the context of programme development. TLU opened a joint MA programme in European Stud-

ies in co-operation with the University of Tampere in 2006. In addition, TLU was the initiator of creating the Nordic-Baltic-Russian PhD network in governance to strengthen public administration and political science PhD studies in the Baltic region. TUT has launched a new MA programme in Technology Governance with significant foreign staff involved.

The next dimension of research at universities is applied research projects at various government agencies, internationally funded domestic applied research and international research and development programmes. In this dimension, the researchers often compensate the lack of funding for academic research. For this reason, the very impressive empirical evidence collected through these programmes does not find its output in academic publications due to a lack of time. As a result, TLU delivered a special grant to the Institute of Political Science and Governance in the last year for supplementary in-depth analysis of the collected data and for creating academic publications.

All in all, the scope of the state's development and research programmes is small, and although it has increased over the past years, it has remained extremely low in social sciences, including public administration. Neither is there a programme for developing subject field related terminology in Estonian, nor projects for under-gridding the intellectual environment. Characteristically, to Eastern Europe and more generally to countries with a less developed economy, the private sector is not too eager to contribute to innovation.

What is even more problematic for the field of public administration is that the government does not use applied expert analyses in policymaking, nor does it have the know-how to use them, if conducted. As already mentioned, the framework of public administration development is still fragmented in Estonia and it has not succeeded to effectively link teaching, research and development activities to everyday government.

Rather, the policy is made on the basis of incremental official level analysis or political competition. When a research contract is made, structural problems might occur and the analyses cannot be realised due to the weaknesses of the application mechanisms. Yet, the redeeming valve might be seen in the EU research and development programmes.

The state has, to some extent, opened up to research in the past years. Some think tanks have evolved, but many of them have closed down. The applied research centre, Praxis, is one of the survivors, working with great effort to receive public contracts and has received enough to survive. Yet, the administration analysis contracts have been still rather irregular and they are considered more as a source of additional resources. Simultaneously, the opening European structure funds have given hope for more rationality in the field inside Estonia as well. In 2007, the Strategy Office of the State Chancellery was launched and in 2008 the Fund of Wise Decisions will be opened.

8. Students

We try to analyse the overall amount of students between the different universities, on different programmes and at different levels of higher education. Unfortunately, some of the data on the dynamics of the numbers on TUT was not available to us.

Comparing the student numbers in the universities TUT has the highest amount of students in the field of public administration; TLU is the second largest and in UT there is only half the number of students, compared to TUT. There have been ups and downs in the number of students of public administration.

Overall, the amount of students has risen since 2006, especially at the bachelor level. This has happened partly due to the demographic processes (large cohorts entering universities), changes in the entrance system of the universities on the other (using the fixed entrance point levels taking in everyone interested and above the minimal point level), closing the programmes of the other higher education institutions and the fact that after moving to 3+2 programmes, the joint BA programmes of politics and government have gained popularity as such.

Table 19
Public administration student numbers and the dynamics in annual intake
in 2002 – 2006

	Tallinn University	University of Tartu	Tallinn University of Technology
Total number of students	619 ¹⁷	360	773
Normal BA programme	206→272 Increasing	241 Stable	323 Stable
Applied BA programme	33→94 30 per year, stable	0→45 14 per year, volatile	109→235 80 per year, increasing
Normal MA programme	28→38 Increasing	20→31 Increasing	187 (includes also the MA programme modification for practitioners)
MA programme for practitioners	21→75 Volatile, increasing	15→37 Increasing	
PhD programme	2→21 Increasing	6 Stable	28 Volatile

Source: Database of Institute Political Science and Governance

Looking at the competition figures relating to different programmes in different universities, we will see that competition at the bachelor level has grown over the last few years, especially in TLU. Competition in UT and TUT has been quite

¹⁷ 458 in Tallinn, the remainder in colleges.

stable and in the case of UT this has been lower due to the larger number of state-commissioned student places.

Competition at the master level has somewhat fallen, it was higher in the years 2003/04 – 2004/05. The reason for this lies in the fact that a very large number of students today have not yet understood the goals of and the necessity for the +2 master level education and considers a 3-year higher education to be enough. This attitude will probably change in the coming years. There is a discussion to update the Public Service Act and make the master degree a standard requirement for the civil service.

Doctoral studies are more and more popular in TLU; unfortunately the latest data for the UT and TUT are missing here. All in all, there is still plenty of scope for expansion of PhD programmes student numbers – if only there were enough supervisors available.

Table 20

Competition to public administration programmes: number of applications per one state-financed student post in 2002 – 2007

	Tallinn University			University of Tartu			Tallinn University of Technology		
	BA	MA	PhD	BA	MA	PhD ¹⁸	BA	MA	PhD
2002/03	8,6	1,4		9,2	1,7	1,25	19,9	9	
2003/04	27,6	8,3		10,1	1	1,25	22,4	11,5	
2004/05	20,9	6	4	8,3	5	1,25	18,2	6	
2005/06	9,9	2,2	7	4,8	1,5 ¹⁹ ; 3,5	1,25	13	2	
2006/07	36,4	2,5	3		2,2; 2,3		27	2,9	
2007/08	41,8	5,4	9		2,6; 1,7		19,8	3,1	

Source: Database of Institute Political Science and Governance

Summing up, we can claim that the students have been divided broadly and equally between the universities with TLU constituting 35 %, UT 21 % and TUT 44 % of the total of ca. 1750 students in the field in 2007. The bachelor level programmes have been more popular over the last few years and hopefully the master level will gain popularity in the next few years.

With respect to graduate careers, there is no comparable data available. General figures indicate that people with a social science background have no problem

¹⁹ For UT, the data is on the public administration and (social) policy PhD programme.

²⁰ The first number refers to normal public administration MA curriculum, the second one to applied MA curriculum.

in finding a job and informal feedback refers to an impressive performance. At least TLU and UT have a notable amount of high-ranking alumni, including ministers, chancellors, etc. In characterising the linkage of the universities and students to professions and the labour market, we would like to highlight three further aspects.

All three public universities have academic BA and MA programmes where the internship proportion is only a couple of credit points (see programmes comparison tables above). The CP amount of internship has decreased since transition to the Bologna system. Students usually have to find an internship places themselves, but all universities co-operate and liaise with public institutions.

The constant high turnover in the civil service created an opportunity to begin a professional career already in the second or third study year at bachelor level. The workload in the job was the first obstacle of learning and graduating. Most of the graduates have started their professional careers in the public sector but also in the private sector, especially students with a Russian background. The unemployment level of the graduates is practically nonexistent. The accession into the European Union has opened additional job opportunities outside Estonia.

Universities create networks between university, alumni and partners. Such networks are the main channels to communicate with governmental institutions. As a result of this co-operation, students are able to obtain internship places, first jobs or recommendations; also the applied research project proposals are frequently received through these networks. Every programme has to have a curriculum council where the representatives of employers and alumni are involved alongside academic staff and students.

Also, the alumni and partners hold lectures in the university to strengthen the link between theory and practice. As the alumni are shown to be a great resource for universities, the universities support the creation of organisations and other forms of co-operation of the alumni. The history of public administration is long enough and the number of alumni in high profile jobs is not rare in Estonia, acting as a marketing channel for new students.

9. Conclusions

9.1 Business discourse and inadequate public support of public administration education

In terms of the overall funding of education, Estonia is doing quite well in comparison to other central and eastern European countries. However, state-financing is not based on performance indicators, but rather is targeted on the priorities of the educational policy and often subsidises the programmes which could not survive without public support.

Currently, it is the universities and especially social sciences and humanities that are in the most difficult position in terms of public funding as the current priorities of the educational system are applied (higher) education, technology and natural and exact sciences. Public administration education is no exception, and it has resulted in the subject evolving into a market-based subject.

With the background of such development, we could argue that public administration education has obtained strong business connotations in the Estonian public discourse. This could be explained by a spiral development. As social sciences were an illicit subject during Soviet times, the emerging high demand for specialists in the field was directed to universities, which were unable to recruit sufficient specialised academic personnel.

The original small, but stably increasing state funding, could not satisfy the vast interest in entering the programmes resulting in many students studying for a tuition fee. Simultaneously, the payment level in the public sector was mediocre, which also elicited mediocre interest in working as a civil servant and finally, resulted in mutual interpenetration of public administration and business management discourses and its practical corollaries such as decreasing state-commissioned places in the field.

This has resulted in public administration graduates studying at their own expense and having neither a moral nor any other kind of responsibility to enter office after graduation. The proportion of graduates of public administration programmes in the civil service and public sector is however, high.

At the same time, mobility of staff into and out of government service is extremely high, especially in the capital city and professional level of staff. It becomes obvious that some of the graduates consider entrance into government service as some kind of supplementary and free period of in-service increasing of qualification and after some years of service, these highly qualified specialists will go into the private sector. Moreover, many officials are continuing their degree education in parallel with their service and acquire the discipline at their own expense. This problem is not only in middle-aged officials, but increasingly young people.

Meagre public funding also means that a very significant proportion of the overall finance for teaching public administration comes from tuition fees, implying the necessity to advertise and compete with various providers of schooling etc. in addition to main academic activities.

These problems could be eased when public authorities start to acknowledge the existing problem, increase first-hand financing in public administration education and therefore create the opportunities for universities to be more proactive: educate young professionals for public administration rather than re-educate them, and develop more suitable programmes for students studying with private money.

9.2 Institutions: competition and concentration

The possible problems of a small state are closed corporate relations and strong institutions. The first is visible, especially in the case of the allocation of public financing and research funding among universities, but due to the compensating market mechanisms, they have not managed to prevail. There is no doubt that in the embodiment of the three leading universities – TLU, UT and TUT – the strong institutions have come to life, but in the given conditions, it seems dubious whether the sector could include a larger number of competing institutions.

The co-operation of the public authorities and the leading universities has remained hectic and rather modest. The universities have had to develop public administration programmes mainly on their own. The main regulative mechanism has been competition. This has led to rather similar developments in the programmes' composition as well as using the already existing strengths in the institutions. The majority of students are paying tuition fees. Together with TLU and TUT, where 70 – 80 % of students are paying fees, UT contrasts with traditionally more state-commissioned places and less than half tuition fee students.

The transition to the Bologna system also meant a period of great change in administration education. From one perspective, this meant a backfire for administration education since public administration and political science were integrated into joint programmes. As an exception, this did not happen in TUT, since there was no department of political science. On the other hand, the transition opened up the possibility to gain from an economy of scale and scope, which is positive in the case of a small country. During the transition process, many private universities providing public management education disappeared. This distinguished the three public universities – TLU, UT and TUT – and gave them an opportunity to consolidate their position in public administration education.

Regarding the relations of public administration and political science in creating joint studies, TLU has been an example of co-operation, UT of conflict and TUT of separation. TLU has best adjusted to the changes and has developed a full-size political science profile besides public administration. The academic staff of TLU has grown, both from its own graduates as well as from recruited former staff of UT. The reform was hardest on UT where the public administration component of BA programmes became relatively modest. This resulted in the main staff of the UT former public administration department moving over to TUT, which might lead to a dwindling of UT public administration tuition, but reinforces the sustainability of the TUT public administration department, which was in serious hardship before. Currently, more favourable conditions are emerging for mutual co-operation between universities.

9.3 Constant shortage of academic staff

One of the big challenges in developing public administration and political science in Estonia has been the lack of academic staff, because these educational fields were severely restricted in the Soviet era, and also because of the ever increasing demand for specialists in the field, both from the private and public sector. The staff that began included many young professionals who were returning from exile, and were soon hired into key positions of public service. Only the real academic patriots remained in the universities. The whole period has witnessed the aging of academic staff.

Due to the very limited tuition funding and technically non-existent research funding, there is a major shortage of academic progeny. Therefore, a lack of qualified human resources has been one of the reasons for shutting down some of the programmes in the smaller applied and private higher education institutions.

The concentration of tuition, as well as the opening of European funds, has created new possibilities. In the last few years, the universities have obtained a certain capability to engage younger lecturers. Still, sustainability is rather fragile and easily affected. Many of the public administration graduates who continued their career initially in the university have left to join the civil service or gone into politics and reached high positions in public office (ministers, chancellors to the ministry, heads of units, etc.).

9.4 Reorganisation and new quality of the programmes in the post-Bologna stage

The first years of the Bologna system marked the era of often imbalanced and swiftly changing programmes as the previously rather specialised BA was arduously transformed to a wider profile. The move to the MA programmes with the new specialist orientation instead of a scientific degree was not undemanding either. This brought about protests, especially in UT. The Bologna 3+2 model, as such, was sometimes claimed to be unsuitable for the public administration profile as such. However, current trends indicate that public administration education is doing rather well, using Bologna-based programmes.

The Estonian programmes have a strong dominance of social sciences, whereas the main courses have a clear administration profile. The most differentiated in this case is TUT, where there are many courses on IT, administration of working processes and technology, ergonomics etc. However, compared to many central and eastern European public administration programmes, the social scientific orientation is clear.

In general, the TLU BA programme covers both political science and public administration rather widely, while the UT programme has its main accent on political science and TUT on administration. The MA programmes are all specialised;

the TLU MA programme is specialising mainly on public policy, governance and management; UT on management and TUT on management and technology governance. The emphasis on research varies among the programmes, as well as the universities, with TLU indicating more dedication to it than the others.

The PhD programmes are all still in the development phase. One of those indicators is the small number of graduates. But this is also dependent on the attitude of the state, the market demand and the overall support of the environment, but also of research and international co-operation. Until now, UT has received many state commissioned places, while TUT has a medium amount and TLU only a few. Yet, the amount of graduates is almost equal in TLU and UT (3 and 4); while from the TUT public administration department, only one graduate has earned a PhD.

Organisationally, the programmes are punctual and course-centred. The list of courses is usually very explicit and the choices are rather strictly structured. In practice, they are, at least in the case of TLU and UT, rather open.

9.5 Weak research funding and the new possibilities of the EU

The funding of research and development activities is very low, which is not uncommon in Central and Eastern Europe. The capacity of the state's development and research programmes is small, and although it has increased in the past years, it has remained extremely low in social sciences, including public administration. Typical to this region, the private sector is not too eager to contribute to innovation.

What is even more problematic for the field of public administration is that the government does not use applied expert analyses in policymaking, nor has the know-how to use them if conducted. As already mentioned, the framework of public administration development is still fragmented in Estonia.

The state's limited analytical policy making capacity can be related to the long dominance of Estonia by foreign powers. This has meant that for most of the time, strategic planning and policy development have taken place abroad, while the technical planning and realisation have been conducted at the domestic level. Most likely, the public authorities in Estonia need to become accustomed to strategic planning and implementation more than in other central and eastern European countries, and a more conceptual framework is still widely unknown. (Goetz 2001)

The other challenge lies in the basic features of governance. A lot of discussion has evolved around the alienation and media based dominance of the elite in CEE countries. (cf. e.g. Agh 1994, Palmaru 2001) It is perhaps even more important to note the connection of this with the general changes and globalisation. The governance approach hints that a clear division of responsibility is replaced with network governance. According to the theories of Europeanisation (cf. Tiilikainen and Palosaari 2007 for an overview) the impact of EU level policymaking in several fields of

policy will reduce the need for domestic politics to shape clear policies and thus also the need for policy analysis. Of course, these suggestions need separate analysis.

However, generally, the government has opened up to research and development to some extent over the past years. The increasing European co-operation in both policymaking and research, as well as the opening European funding mechanisms, indicate the possibility for developing more rationality in the field inside Estonia as well.

9.6 Coda

Throughout this chapter, we have seen several features probably characteristic to public administration education in various central and eastern European countries, complemented by the Estonian trends related to the smallness of the country and the formative years of independent policymaking. Besides common challenges we also see common possibilities, especially in the processes of Europeanisation.

In the current situation, all the academic structures teaching public administration are coping with various challenges. Still, they have survived so far. Estonian public administration education has shown a remarkable viability and willingness to change and innovate. Perhaps in another ten years we can have an account of the positive transformations in Estonian public administration education and hopefully, many more publicly funded public servants.

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Implementation of the Bologna Requirements in the BA/MA Programmes of the Corvinus University of Budapest

György Jenei – Károly Mike

1. Introduction

The Bologna process has ushered in new forms of university-level education (BA in Public Governance; MA in Public Policy and Management) in the field of public administration in Hungary. Building on its research and teaching experience in public policy and management, the Corvinus University of Budapest has taken a leading role in this process. The new developments can be analysed from different viewpoints. First, they can be perceived as a step in the long historical process of the modernisation of the Hungarian state. Second, they fit into the general pattern of the implementation of the Bologna requirements in the entire system of Hungarian university education. Third, they are a continuation of previous efforts at the University to integrate, both in research and education, legal, political, economic and managerial aspects of public administration, with particular emphasis on non-legal approaches. In the following, we elaborate on each of these three inter-related perspectives in turn. In particular, we review the resources and constraints (both outside and within the University) that have influenced the development and introduction of the new programmes. Finally, we discuss the experience of the first two years of the Bologna system, drawing on statistics regarding the attractiveness of the BA programme in Public Governance.

2. Setting the stage: public administration education in Hungary since World War II

PA education in Hungary during the Communist era

The development of public administration education in Hungary is perhaps best understood as a series of responses to underlying political and social changes. In 1949,

a “state party” or “party state” system was established in Hungary. The Communist Party came to dominate both the economy and society. Its power had a totalitarian nature and was exercised by arbitrary actions. The totalitarian system had no special academic background. Political reliability was the only requirement for obtaining a position in the leadership of public administration. No special expertise was needed in public management, public economics or public policy. The leaders of public administration were educated at the Party-controlled “Council Academy”.

Throughout the Communist era, the practice of administration consisted mostly of the *execution* of legal norms, regulations and non-legal Party regulations that were similar in character to legal rules. Norms and directives transmitted all state decisions and intentions towards the lower levels of a unitary hierarchy, including a dominant proportion of the productive sphere. It is important to note that this legalism of public administration differed from the legalism of traditional, Weberian bureaucracies of liberal democratic systems in one very important respect. Namely, while the administrative apparatuses of liberal democratic political regimes historically played an important role in both preparing and executing laws, the role of administrative apparatuses was restricted to execution; all important policy decisions were prepared by strictly separate Party organisations.

However, the totalitarian character of the system began to erode in the late 1960s. A shift began from a totalitarian system to an authoritarian political system. The main economic and societal functions were still accomplished by the Communist Party, but the importance of legal norms increased in the day-to-day practice of public agencies. This shift resulted in changes in the academic background.

First, the knowledge of administrative law was now required, besides political reliability. Second, a series of economic reforms was launched in 1968, which gave more emphasis to market incentives and mechanisms in the framework of a centrally planned economy. As a result, state enterprises acquired a new, albeit limited autonomy in decision-making. The extension of economic reform was not continuous and contained many controversial elements and intentions. At the end of the 1980s, however, market incentives already had significant influence within the general framework of a planned economy. The consequence of this was a growing importance of economic sciences for state enterprises and, increasingly, a number of public agencies, especially in those sectoral ministries and central bodies that dealt with economic planning or administration. This knowledge was mostly provided by the Karl Marx University of Budapest, specialising in economic sciences. Third, a new demand for managerial skills emerged. This was the consequence of the growing autonomy of public agencies. In order to meet these needs, a new educational institution called the College of Public Administration was established. The College provided degree programmes at bachelor level. Its graduates found jobs mainly in regional and local public administration. Education at the College had a strong legal focus but also covered fields such as public management and social sciences (Hajnal – Jenei 2008)

New challenges and requirements in the process of transition

The transition from command and control to a market economy and from a totalitarian state to a pluralistic, multiparty democracy is best perceived as a process of transformation, which requires essential reforms in the basic functions and institutions of the state (König 1992; Balázs 1993).

It makes sense to break up the process of administrative transformation into three phases. The first phase lasted from 1989 to 1992 (Verebélyi 1993); the second phase from 1993 to 1997; while the third phase covers the period from 1998 to the present.

The first phase was characterised by fundamental changes in the economic, political and legal environment of public administration. In economic terms, the basic thrust was to move away from central planning towards a market-oriented economic system. In political and legal terms, the principal development was the collapse of a totalitarian political system and the emergence of a pluralistic, multiparty regime based on a constitutional state and liberal democratic political institutions. These fundamental changes required basic shifts in the functions of the state and a comprehensive reform of public administration. The most important elements of the public sector reform included:

- creating the institutional and legal foundations of democratic political control over state apparatuses, with special emphasis on the creation of a loyal and competent civil service;
- decentralisation of decision-making to the regional and local level, providing genuine legal and financial autonomy for local institutions;
- deregulation reforms that make the long, complicated laws and regulations understandable to the public.

The new functions of the state required new knowledge and new skills from its civil servants. The former Karl Marx University, renamed the Budapest University of Economic Sciences in 1991, responded by developing new teaching programmes preparing students for these completely novel functions. In 1992, the Department of Public Policy and Management at the Faculty of Economic Sciences launched a major in Public Policy and Management. The curriculum was based on four pillars:

- Public Economics and Finance,
- Public Policy and Management,
- Constitutional and Administrative Law,
- Public Management.

The Department's main aim was to provide insights into how democratic governments (should) function and provide students with analytic skills. The crucial question was the following: What knowledge, skills and type of personality is re-

quired of public sector employees? The Department defined the main components of the *knowledge requirements* as follows:

- knowledge of society, based on sociology, psychology,
- knowledge of politics, based on political sciences,
- knowledge of the legal system, based on Constitutional, and Administrative Law,
- knowledge of government policy, based on public policy process and analysis,
- knowledge of economic activities of public agencies, based on public economics and finance,
- knowledge of public sector organisations, based on public management,
- knowledge of ethics and justice, based on ethics and responsibility in the government,
- knowledge of methods and techniques, based on statistics, mathematics, informatics.

Furthermore, *skill components* were defined as follows:

- thinking strategically,
- decision-making skills,
- managing resources and people,
- effective delegation of tasks and responsibilities,
- cross-cultural understanding,
- introduction of new technology,
- communication skills,
- speaking foreign languages.

Finally, the defined personality components included:

- productivity and efficiency,
- reliability,
- responsibility,
- loyalty (without being subservient),
- positive attitude towards people and problems,
- neutral towards political parties,
- creativity and resourcefulness,
- constructively critical,
- flexibility,
- cooperativeness,
- showing human interest,
- taking initiative,
- taking risks,
- working under pressure.

The second phase of the transformation process was based on the recognition that the performance of the public sector was a crucial factor in ensuring the success of the politico-economic transition. It was increasingly accepted that public sector performance was one component of the overall performance of national economies, not only because of its direct impact as a buyer and seller of goods and services, but also because of its indirect effects on product and labour markets. Poor administration and inadequately conceived or unnecessary regulations could substantially burden the private sector as well as voluntary, not-for-profit organisations. The effectiveness with which governments fulfil their tasks in health care, education of the workforce, housing etc. influences international competitiveness of economies. It became obvious that under these circumstances there was only one solution: to enhance public sector productivity through general public management reforms. In this second phase, institutional capacity building was at the heart of reforms and the demand for a managerial approach increased significantly.

The Department of Public Policy and Management responded to these challenges by introducing a modified version of the major in Public Policy and Management which placed more emphasis on managerial requirements, such as management skills, substantial knowledge of the institutional settings of public agencies, mastery of human resources and information management. This programme was accepted as a major by the Faculty of Business Studies. (The original version of the major, focussing on public policy, remained in place in an updated form at the Faculty of Economic Sciences.)

In 1999, the Hungarian Parliament made a decision to integrate the Budapest University of Economic Sciences and the College of Public Administration. This institutional change opened up opportunities for co-operation in curriculum development as well as teaching. The unique experience of the Department in teaching and researching public policy and management could now be utilised by the College. In return, the legal components of education at the Faculty of Economics could be strengthened. The College soon introduced a new University-level degree programme in public administration with a strong legal emphasis.

In the third phase of the transformation process, the main objective has been to re-establish the institutionalised position of Hungary in the Euro-Atlantic World. The country entered OECD, NATO, and finally the European Union in 2004. As a new member state, Hungary has been obliged to implement the standards and values of the European Administration Space. This has brought about great challenges for the Hungarian public administration. Although the relevant administrative principles are not formalised *acquis*, they are more than simply a code of ethics. They are considered to be common trends and features, rather than a particular organisational model of national civil service.

Furthermore, there are fundamental and ongoing changes in the economic, political and social environment of the Hungarian government and public adminis-

tration. The economic and political environment has become increasingly complex and there are significant changes in the character of Hungarian society, with greater diversity in the population, growing income disparity, changes in family structure and lifestyles, and increasing public safety concerns. People are losing confidence in the government and public institutions have been facing pressures and constraints on their resources and budgets at the same time. Some social groups have pushed for more direct and participative democracy, accompanying the decreasing respect for traditional instruments of representative democracy.

The nature of public organisations has also been changing. Their organisational pattern has been transformed. In many cases, their services do not meet citizens' demands for quality and performance. The capacities of public agencies to lead, guide and manage have been increasing but they cannot meet the rapidly growing requirements of the citizens.

These changing frameworks require substantial changes from the government and public institutions. An essential shift is needed from government to governance. That is,

- public institutions need to provide for citizens a full-range participation in public policy making;
- private enterprises should be involved in the service delivery by different means of privatisation, contracting-out and public-private partnerships;
- public institutions should be transformed in order to be able to compete with private enterprises and civil society organisations;
- public institutions need to design new “networking structures” for governance;
- public organisations have to be able to change faster and must become more responsive, with a shift from a mechanic attitude to task execution, to the development of problem solving capacities,
- more complexity in service delivery needs to strengthen regulation and monitoring;
- new ways of accountability need to be developed – public institutions should not only be implementers with no decision power; they need autonomous responsibility based on their neutral expertise;
- public institutions should contribute to the political stability and policy equilibrium (i.e. a balance between opposite political forces) and should resist the pressures of extreme political forces.

To better grasp the challenges that Hungarian public administrators face, one must understand that since the early 1990's fundamental changes have been introduced in public administration in terms of private management methods and the commencement of an overall effort to reduce the scope of the state. The increasing economic, political and social pressure on public administration has forced bureaucrats to consider the requirements of legalism and managerialism at the same time. Even in EU countries there are tensions between these principles. However, in

these countries the development of the “Rule of Law” and the introduction of “New Public Management” was a sequential process. There is a broadly discussed tension between the principles of professional integrity and professional loyalty. And a well-known consequence of customer orientation, quality improvement and application of management techniques is the growing tension between legalism and managerialism.

However, CEE countries have had to face a special dilemma. In the early 1990's, they established the legal and organisational framework of a “Rechtsstaat” and shortly afterwards had to introduce managerial systems and techniques in the public sector. Basically, the development of the “Rule of Law” and “New Public Management” were parallel processes. This implies that the real danger in the region is not a tension between legalism and managerialism, but a fragmentation. Creating a legal-organisational framework for a “Rechtsstaat” does not mean that it is already a functioning legal state based on Weberian principles. But without a functioning Weberian democratic system, without regulative and monitoring power of the state, the initial steps of “New Public Management” can strengthen corruption. On the other hand, without introducing the quality models, CEE countries cannot increase the competitiveness of the public sector, which is an essential component of the economic, social and political modernisation processes of these countries. (Hajnal – Jenei 2008).

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that there is a *demand for a new type of civil servant* who is not only well-versed in legal and managerial skills, but is also capable of active participation in the policy process and co-operation with a wide range of societal actors.

Hungarian higher education has attempted to satisfy this demand by introducing a new multi-cycle degree structure and extending PA education beyond the core institution of the Budapest University of Economics, renamed Corvinus University of Budapest in 2003.

3. BA and MA Programmes in the Bologna Framework

At the Corvinus University of Budapest, a three-year, full-time *BA programme in Public Governance* was introduced in the academic year 2006 – 2007. A two-year *MA programme in Public Policy and Management* will be launched in the academic year 2008/2009 for full-time and part-time students. The University thus offers a complete five-year programme in the field of public administration. Graduates at the Master's level will also have the opportunity to participate in different PhD programmes. Public Policy Analysis is a specialisation in the PhD programme in Economics; Public Management is a specialisation in the PhD programme in Business Studies; and the Department of Public Policy and Management is also involved in the PhD programme in Political Sciences.

Five other universities and colleges have also introduced BA programmes providing the same official degree of 'Bachelor of Arts in Public Governance'. Two of them (the University of West Hungary in Sopron and the University of Szeged) are also launching *MA programmes in Public Policy and Management*. These programmes mainly cater to regional needs.

The BA and MA programmes cover all the major areas of Public Administration with a focus on public service. The MA programme has two main focuses: policy analysis and public management. The BA programme contains the basics, while the MA programme contains the advanced knowledge of the major areas of Public Administration Studies: Constitutional and Administrative Law, Public Finance, Public Sector Economics, Public Management and Public Policy Analysis. Both programmes strongly emphasise affiliated fields such as Political Sciences, Sociology, Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science.

At Corvinus University, one important concern has been to ensure high quality education by including the main findings of standard and up-to-date professional literature in the curricula. This implies that each basic theoretical approach should be taught and alternatives and schools with different focuses and priorities should be presented. Moreover, curricula have been based on the assumption that public administration is always problem-oriented with a set of inter-related decisions and actions in a world of conflicting values. The University has sought a balanced position among the underlying philosophies of the American (job orientation), the British (developing personal skills) and the German Humboldtian (science orientation) traditions.

The development of BA and MA programmes at Corvinus University: the role of the Bologna process

By far the most important factors influencing the development of the new BA/MA programme structure at Corvinus University are related to the implementation of the Bologna requirements in Hungary. First, the Bologna process has implied a complete reorganisation of degree programmes in the larger field of economic and management studies, which provided an opportunity for introducing the new degree programmes. Second, Parliament, government and the Ministry of Education have exercised close control over the implementation of the Bologna process and adopted strict rules for establishing and launching degree programmes. Therefore, the way the University has been able to respond to the above-mentioned demand for educated civil servants is, to a large extent, determined by the higher education policy of the Hungarian government.

The legal basis of the Bologna-type multi-cycle system includes the following acts and decrees:

- The Act on Higher Education (29 November 2005, No. CXXXIX) regulates the training structure;

- A government decree (28 December 2004, No. 381/2004) defines the new structure of training programmes in the multi-cycle system, the designation of the programmes, credit ranges attached to the programmes as well as the procedure of launching a new programme;
- A ministerial decree specifies the qualification requirements of the distinct training programmes, the competences, skills, fields of study and their scope of credit related to graduation levels and qualifications.

Based on the above system, institutions are free to develop their new curricula, i.e. they decide for themselves which courses they use and what educational and, assessment methods they apply to transfer the knowledge, competences and skills to students as defined in the programme framework.

The general structure of higher education

The structure of Hungarian higher education conforms to general European practice. The first cycle within the newly introduced system comprises 6 to 8 semesters (180 – 240 credits). At the end of this cycle, students obtain a bachelor's degree, which entitles them to continue their studies in the master's cycle (after a successful entrance exam, if required). Master programmes last for 2 to 4 semesters (60 – 120 credits), except for teacher training, which lasts 5 semesters (150 credits). The admission requirements of the master programmes (e.g. from which bachelor programmes and with what conditions students are to be admitted) are specified by the institutions of higher education. The total period of the bachelor and the master training cannot be less than 10 semesters and must not exceed 12 semesters. PhD programmes consist of 6 semesters (180 credits). Students may be admitted to PhD programmes only after having accomplished a master's programme. It must be noted that the structural reform has also brought about general changes in course contents. Responding to the challenges of educating a growing number of students, higher education policy prefers (at least in principle) bachelor programmes that are less specialised and more broadly founded. The key policy goal is that training should better adapt to the changing needs of the labour market and better meet the purposes of lifelong learning.

Establishing and launching new programmes within the new system

The system of the bachelor's and the planned master's programmes of the new structure has been developed by professional organisations, consisting of representatives of universities and colleges, and laid down in a government decree. A new bachelor programme may be *established* upon recommendation of the professional committee set up by the Hungarian Rector's Conference, subsequent to supervision regarding the complete programme structure, and the previous request for the opinions of professional organisations, employers as well as the sectoral ministries concerned. A new master's programme may be established upon the initiative of the institution

or institutions of higher education. The qualification requirements of bachelor and master programmes are published in a decree by the Minister of Education.

Bachelor's and master's programmes may be *launched* in institutions of higher education only on the basis of a previous supporting opinion of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee of Higher Education (HAC). The very essence of the process is that a programme is generally accredited in the establishment phase then the accreditation of launching the programme is based on the individual application of the consortium member higher education institution. During the procedure, HAC examines whether the programme submitted by the institution of higher education is in accordance with the qualification requirements of the bachelor or master programme and whether the institution meets the staff and material criteria for launching a bachelor or a master programme.¹

The Hungarian Accreditation Committee membership has 29 full members, delegated by higher education institutions, research institutes and professional organisations. They receive their letters of appointment from the Prime Minister. Two non-voting student members, representing the National Union of Students and the National Union of Doctoral Students, sit in on the plenary meetings. Additional non-voting members are appointed in order to cover all the main disciplines.

Establishing and launching the new BA/MA programmes in public administration

As mentioned above, the BA programmes in public governance were first launched in the academic year 2006/2007. In accordance with the general rules, the introduction of these programmes proceeded as follows:

- The first task was the *establishment* of the programme. A consortium – consisting of the representatives of 10 universities and colleges – applied for the establishment to the Ministry of Education. The approval of the application by the Hungarian Accreditation Committee was a necessary precondition for the favourable decision of the Minister.
- The second task was to *launch* the programme, based on the permission of establishment. Each consortium member university or college had to apply individually for the accreditation.

The Department of Public Policy and Management had an outstanding role in the accreditation process. Members of the Department were the Chairman and the

1 Besides this type of programme accreditation, HAC also assesses the standard of education and research in each higher education institution approximately every eight years (*institutional accreditation*) based on a detailed self-assessment of the institution and the report of a visiting committee. In 1999/2000 the Hungarian Accreditation Committee was evaluated by an international review team under the auspices of the European Rectors' Conference (CRE, now European University Association), whose report and the Committee's response is downloadable at <http://www.mab.hu/english/doc/extevalhac.pdf> (20 March, 2008).

Secretary of both consortia, preparing the proposals of accreditation in the phase of establishment.

The forming of consortia was strongly encouraged by the Ministry of Education and had far-reaching consequences. First, it ensured that the general structure and contents of the new degree programmes reflected the academic and teaching experience of the outstanding members within each consortium. Thus, the above-mentioned BA and MA programmes in public administration were heavily influenced by Corvinus University. At the same time, compromises had to be made to obtain the support of all those institutions which wished to launch such programmes. These compromises reflected capacity constraints and the major differences in the learning capabilities of different groups of students (with regard to methodological subjects). The participating universities agreed, however, that they retained sufficient autonomy in working out the details of their own programmes.

4. Resources and constraints within Corvinus University affecting the development of the BA and MA programmes

The most important resource that has facilitated the introduction of the new multi-cycle course structure at Corvinus University is the *experience* it has accumulated in *teaching and researching public policy and management* since the early 1990s. The antecedents of the new degree programmes were described in the historical overview above.

Another key factor is the experience of Corvinus University and its predecessors in providing economists and social scientists with *thorough methodological and theoretical knowledge*. As mentioned above, the University was once named after Karl Marx, which symbolised that the school was under the direct control of the Communist Party. In the late 1960's, however, parallel with the introduction of market-oriented economic reforms, modern economic science began to play an increasing role at the University, and other modern social sciences also appeared. The University came to play an ever more important role in the dissemination of modern economic knowledge, research into the real state of the Hungarian economy and Hungarian society, the working out of proposals for market-oriented reforms and initiating the process of democratisation. In the 1980's, the University played a vital part in providing the scientific underpinning for the transition from a centrally planned economy based on state ownership to a market economy based on private ownership. It must also be emphasised that the University has, for a long time, paid attention to supplement economics and business studies with teaching and research in other social sciences such as sociology, political science and economic and social history.

Another important resource is the tradition of *international co-operation* at the Department of Public Policy and Management. Since the early 1990s, the De-

partment has participated in a great number of multilateral and bilateral co-operations with West European and North American universities and scholars. The co-operation has taken many forms:

- Making the western public policy literature, from research methods to highly theoretical to highly applied, available and accessible to eastern partners.
- Creating curricula and teaching materials to provide the content of the programmes, based on European and American models.
- Fostering collaborative research programmes, including joint conference papers, articles, edited volumes, and research grants.
- Developing educational resources and technologies, particularly in libraries and computers.
- Assistance in developing in-service training programmes, seminars, and courses for public sector employees.
- Faculty development activities including language skills, research methods, course development, and research activities.
- Faculty and student exchanges between eastern and western partners.

Since 1996, Corvinus University has been a member the *EMPA* (European Master in Public Administration) programme. *EMPA* focuses on the comparative analysis of questions of public administration, public policy and public management in different (EU and non-EU) European countries in the context of processes of internationalisation, Europeanisation and European integration. Close co-operation with foreign universities participating in *EMPA* was extremely useful when it came to developing a full-blown Master's programme.

One of the guarantees of high quality teaching is the *participation of faculty members in international academic life*. Corvinus University was the first East Central European institution to host the annual conference of the European Group of Public Administration in 1996. The hosting of the International Research Symposium of Public Management in 2004 and the European Conference on Health Economics in 2006 are further symbolic signs of the involvement of the Department of Public Policy and Management in the international academic world of studies closely related to public administration.

Having reviewed the resources, we must also consider the internal constraints at Corvinus University which have affected the introduction of the BA and MA programmes. The *support of the leadership* of the University and the Faculty of Economics has been vital in establishing the new programmes. However, they have also been responsible for deciding the number of students that could be admitted to each programme. Basically, the various programmes compete for allotments of student places. In 2006, the University chose to create a BA programme in Public Governance with one group of students (i.e. 30 to 50 places). The experience, so far, suggests that this actually gives the programme an advantage over other programmes with higher student numbers since it allows for a more personalised form of educa-

tion. The MA programme in Public Policy and Management will be launched with a similar allotment of student places in the academic year 2008/2009.

Another difficulty arose from the need to ensure the *co-operation of several departments* within the University. In the pre-Bologna system, all students at the Faculties of Business and Economics received the same basic education. Now, departments teaching basic methodological and theoretical subjects had to be convinced to revise their curricula in order to adapt them to the specific needs of the new programmes. The most important experience so far is that this process takes time: two years after the launching of the BA programme, adaptation is still not complete.

Within the Department of Public Policy and Management, one important constraint has been the *lack of previous experience of teaching several subjects at Bachelor's level* (e.g. Public Policy Analysis) or, in some cases, the first two years, rather than the third year (e.g. Public Economics). This implies that course instructors have to put a lot more effort into their teaching activities than usual. First, they must develop new didactical and pedagogical methods. Second, practical applications have to be included in the curricula already at the undergraduate level, without compromising theoretical rigour.

5. The experience of the BA programme so far: some facts and figures

It would be rash to conclude much from two years' experience with BA programmes in Public Governance. However, some hard data on entry statistics do provide some information about the position of these programmes within the entire system of Hungarian education and among the undergraduate programmes offered by the Faculty of Economics at Corvinus University.

In 2006, six universities² and colleges launched full-time BA programmes in Public Governance. In 2007, only four of them³ had a sufficient number of applicants. This suggests that there were initially too many participants on the market. Table 1 shows the entry requirements for state-financed places in full-time BA programmes in Public Governance. To put them into context, Table 2 shows the overall distribution of bachelor programmes based on their entry requirements (as expressed in minimum scores based on a student's secondary school performance). The BA programme at Corvinus University was in the top 11 per cent in 2006 and in the top 5 per cent in 2007. On average, BA programmes in Public Governance were in the top 36 per cent in 2006 and in the top 16 per cent in 2007. The higher scores for

2 Budapest School of Management, Corvinus University, Debrecen University, General School of Enterprise, Károly Róbert College and University of West Hungary.

3 Budapest School of Management, Corvinus University, Debrecen University and General School of Enterprise.

Corvinus University undoubtedly reflect the high prestige of the institution within Hungary. The programmes became markedly more popular in 2007. This might be explained by the fact that, unlike most other undergraduate programmes, the BA in Public Governance was a novelty in 2006 and gained somewhat wider recognition by the next academic year.

Table 1
Entry requirements for full-time BA programmes in Public Governance
(state-financed places, maximum score: 144)

	2006	2007
Corvinus University	122	134
Average of other institutions of higher education	108	122
National average	110	125

Source: www.felvi.hu (16 March, 2008)

Table 2
Distribution of Bachelor programmes based on their entry requirements
(number of programmes; percentage of programmes)

	2006		2007	
141 – 144	11	0,34 %	20	0,65 %
131 – 140	99	3,06 %	138	4,51 %
121 – 130	253	7,82 %	323	10,54 %
111 – 120	468	14,46 %	452	14,76 %
101 – 110	335	10,35 %	280	9,14 %
91 – 100	470	14,52 %	294	9,60 %
81 – 90	423	13,07 %	293	9,57 %
80 – 72	1177	36,37 %	1262	41,21 %

Source: www.felvi.hu (16 March, 2008)

Since the entry statistics for BA in Public Governance at Corvinus University are heavily influenced by the general attractiveness of the institution, it is worth comparing admission data within the Faculty of Economics. Presumably, the closest competitors of the BA programme in Public Governance are the other programmes offered by the Faculty of Economics. This presumption is based on the fact that curricular overlaps are greatest among these programmes. Tables 3 and 4 indicate that from 2006 to 2007 the programme in Public Governance almost caught up with the traditional, very popular and prestigious programmes in Applied Economics (BA) and Economics (BSc). Although the entry requirements remained somewhat lower,

it attracted the greatest number of applicants *relative* to its allotment of student places. It remains to be seen whether this positive trend will continue and whether it will extend to the graduate level.

Table 3

Admission statistics for Bachelor programmes at the Faculty of Economics, Corvinus University in 2006

Programme	Source of financing	Number of applicants		Number of admitted students	Entry requirement (minimum score)
		Total	First place		
BA in Applied Economics	State	608	193	52	139
BA in Applied Economics	Private	128	14	37	120
BA in Human Resources	State	202	39	36	132
BA in Human Resources	Private	48	2	4	120
BSc in Economics	State	316	115	70	138
BSc in Economics	Private	41	4	73	130
BA in Public Governance	State	93	21	35	122
BA in Public Governance	Private	18	1	2	120

Source: www.felvi.hu (16 March, 2008)

Table 4

Admission statistics for Bachelor programmes at the Faculty of Economics, Corvinus University in 2007

Programme	Source of financing	Number of applicants		Number of admitted students	Entry requirement (minimum score)
		Total	First place		
BA in Applied Economics	State	596	207	84	140
BA in Applied Economics	Private	229	15	65	120
BA in Human Resources*	State	-	-	-	-
BA in Human Resources*	Private	-	-	-	-

BSc in Economics	State	250	78	48	139
BSc in Economics	Private	64	4	6	120
BA in Public Governance	State	459	86	36	134
BA in Public Governance	Private	64	2	7	120

* Discontinued as a full-time programme in 2007.

Source: www.felvi.hu (16 March, 2008)

6. Conclusions

The Bologna process provided a window of opportunity for the Corvinus University of Budapest and a number of other institutions of higher education in Hungary which wished to introduce BA and MA programmes in the field of public policy and management. The launching of these programmes is best perceived as a response to a growing demand for civil servants of a new type – i.e. civil servants who dispose of legal, managerial and economic knowledge and are capable of co-operating with a wide range of societal actors in all stages of the policy process. Corvinus University could build on decades of teaching and research experience in the field. Besides this accumulated ‘capital’, the most important resources it could utilise were the long tradition at Corvinus University of providing thorough methodological and theoretical training in economics and other social sciences, the experience resulting from international co-operation in research and education and the participation of faculty members in international academic life. The most important external constraint was that compromises had to be made to obtain the support of all institutions that wished to launch the same programmes. Within the University, the support of the Faculty and University leadership proved crucial. The most important internal constraints included the difficulties posed by co-operation among departments and the lack of previous experience of teaching several subjects in the fields of public policy and management at undergraduate level. In terms of entry statistics, the BA programme in Public Governance was in the top 5 per cent of Hungarian undergraduate programmes in 2007. This gives some ground for optimism. However, we have merely taken the first few steps on the road from Bologna.

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Expansion and Adaptation: Irish Public Administration Programmes and the International Context

Bernadette Connaughton

“There is general agreement among representatives of Government and of tertiary education that the expansion has been enormously beneficial to both Irish society and the economy” *Review of Higher Education in Ireland: Examiners’ Report (OECD, 2004)*

“Europe’s universities are a major force in shaping the Europe of Knowledge” *Lisbon Declaration ‘Europe’s universities beyond 2010: diversity with a common purpose’ (EUA, 2007)*

1. Introduction

The first university established in Ireland was Trinity College Dublin which received its Royal Charter in 1591. Its ethos was considered by the Catholic hierarchy to be suitable only for Protestants. Catholics therefore attended institutes of higher learning that later became incorporated as constituent colleges of the Federal National University of Ireland under the Irish Universities Act, 1908. Much has changed since the religious interventions of earlier centuries and Irish higher, or tertiary, education developed substantively in the final decades of the twentieth century. This is illustrated in participation rates which increased from 11 % in 1965 to an estimated 57 % in 2003 (Department of Education and Science, 2007). These figures illustrate not only the expansion of the Irish education sector, but its prioritisation by consecutive Irish governments since the introduction of free second-level education in 1966. This expansion also coincides with Ireland’s application for EEC membership and subsequent accession in 1973. Ireland is widely perceived as a country that has adapted successfully to EU membership, which in turn has stimulated and facilitated a process of modernisation, social transformation and economic prosperity. Instrumental to this adaptation was the existence of an established and professional

public administration system inherited from the British upon the foundation of the state in 1922.

A characteristic of the Irish case is the claim that Ireland was one of the first European countries to grasp the economic importance of education and economists suggest that this upskilling of the labour force accounts for almost 1 % per annum of additional national output over the last decade or so (OECD, 2004). The provision of skilled graduates, effective use of social/structural funding and a low corporation tax rate attracted a steady flow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) which bolstered the economy in spite of its peripheral location. Current government policy envisages a key role for the third level education system in maintaining this progress and the development of a 'knowledge economy'. The university system in particular is undertaking a process of change in culture, structures, management and use of resources, relationships with students and society and how they approach their core functions of teaching, research and service to the community (IUA/IUQB, 2007). As the most wide-ranging reform of higher education in Europe, the 'Bologna Process' poses further adaptation challenges for the Irish education system.

In Ireland, legislative reforms, consistent with the Bologna Process, were made during the late 1990s. In addition, several developments have followed the Prague (2001), Berlin (2003), Bergen (2005) and London (2007) Communiqués, including an OECD Review of Higher Education in Ireland (August 2004). Key elements (and learning) of the Irish system's adaptation to the wider international context are therefore: Integration of quality assurance and enhancement systems into the Universities, based on good international practice; establishment of a national framework of qualifications (2003); a review of the Irish universities quality systems (2004 – 5); external reviews and adoption by the Minister for Education and Science of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education area (2005), within the wider context of the Bologna Process.

This article aims to discuss these developments with particular emphasis on public administration programmes (specifically at the University of Limerick). The paper is organised into the following sections:

- Reform and modernisation of the Irish administrative system and socio-economic environment, which provides a context for understanding the significance of developments in higher education.
- An overview of characteristics and structural dimensions of the Irish higher education system.
- Developments in its institutional and legal structure that provide an implementation framework for the Bologna process.
- Advancements in the development of public administration education in Ireland, and
- Adaptation to the Bologna reforms and experience of the international context within an institutional setting.

2. Reform and Modernisation of the Irish Public Administration

Ireland's socio-economic landscape has changed considerably since the economic crisis of the 1980s as it has become increasingly integrated into the European economy and reflects a progressively more urbanised and multi-cultural society. Employment trends have also changed with unemployment figures in 2006 at 4.2 % which sharply contrast with 15.7 % in 1993, and a changing employment profile with numbers employed in traditional agriculture and manufacturing in decline and employment in the services sector growing considerably (CSO, 2007). The exceptional growth in the Irish economy in the past decade has prompted the interest of other states in emulating the success of the 'Celtic Tiger'. The period ahead, however, marks a transition from a prolonged phase of economic growth and social progress to a period of reduced growth in employment and living standards. The investment in human capital, often with the assistance of EU funding and development of higher education, has long been recognised as a strategic issue for the economy. The investments during the 1970s, 80s, and 90s have resulted in a more educated workforce generally – and this is equally applied to the public service (Callanan, 2007). However, the environment in which public servants operate is radically altered and central government civil servants are working in a society that is markedly changed. Therefore the management of the civil service and upskilling of the wider public service are arguably political tasks to be vigorously pursued (Quinn, 2007).

Prior to the 1990s, the administrative system remained steeped in British practice, rigid in organisation, method, and demonstrated a pragmatic policy style. To a large degree, the model of public administration inherited following independence in 1922 had not significantly kept pace with practices and changes of other OECD/EU states in order to reflect contemporary governance challenges. From the mid-1990s, an injection of new thinking has been apparent since it was recognised reform was imperative. The increasing complexity of economic and social developments were straining the capacity of the public service to contribute to national development and deal effectively with the impact of European integration on the policy making process. As with other small states, globalisation and involvement with international organisations have played an important role in the dissemination of reform ideas and the generation of good practice. In the Irish case it was also internally acknowledged that public administration could benefit from adopting aspects of the model of corporate governance in order to deal more effectively with increasing public expectations of better service.

In Ireland, senior civil servants have been directly involved in driving the reform process which began via informal developments in the service and resulted in a blueprint for a programme of change known as *Delivering Better Government* (1996). In other countries, reform programmes have predominantly been the pre-

rogative of the politicians (see Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004) whereas in Ireland they endorsed them. Reform has been characterised by modernisation, as opposed to radical change driven by ideological factors like the UK. Three interdependent factors are noteworthy in terms of driving the Irish reform experience. They are membership of the EU (1973), social partnership with its explicit bargain of economy wide wage moderation in exchange for tax cuts (1987) and embracing aspects of new public management via a strategic management approach for delivering better government (1994) (see Connaughton, 2008). However, many of the expectations of reform have so far fallen short of expectations and necessity. Some indicators do suggest a relatively strong performance by the Irish system but there is equally clear evidence of dissatisfaction with abilities for long term planning, value for money and weaknesses in dealing with cross-cutting (horizontal) issues. In order to address this, recruitment and training of civil servants needs to change more fundamentally in order to appoint specialists. To a limited extent this is being addressed in the latest agreement with the social partners – *Towards 2016*. It advocates further change in HRM: open competition for a proportion of the policy making civil service grades and performance evaluation. The Public Services Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004 also signals a move away from centralised recruitment to devolution in that it makes formal provision for departments to recruit (relevant) staff directly. In the same way that the quality and flexibility of the labour force was instrumental in attracting and stimulating investment, the civil and public service must further adapt to new economic and social pathways and decentralised recruitment and further training and education will assist this.

3. Overview of higher education in Ireland

The Irish higher education sector is based on a binary system comprised of the universities (7) on the one hand and the institutes of technology (13) on the other. The Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) was established in 1978 on the basis of an amalgamation of six vocational colleges and is the largest institute. In addition, there are some small teacher training institutions. The Department of Education and Science has overall responsibility for the higher education system in Ireland. It is assisted in its task by a number of agencies such as the Higher Education Authority (HEA), National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI), and the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC)

The seven universities are recognised under the Universities Act, 1997 – University College Cork, University College Dublin, National University of Ireland Galway, National University of Ireland Maynooth, Trinity College Dublin, the University of Limerick, and Dublin City University. Though differing in age and traditions, the seven existing universities are a reasonably homogenous group with respect to national and international perceptions of the qualifications they award (IUA/IUQB, 2007). The Universities validate and award their own qualifications as well as insti-

tutions, such as the Colleges of Education, which have a management agreement with the universities. The thirteen Institutes of Technology (ITs) are designated under the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992. All bodies are in receipt of state funding, either via the Higher Education Authority (in the case of Universities and Colleges of Education) or directly by the Department of Education and Science (in the case of the institutes). One of the consequences of there being so many higher education institutions in a country with a population of just over 4 million is that even in spite of the high age participation rate, institutions are comparatively small by international standards (OECD, 2004).

The universities are essentially concerned with undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes, together with a growing research agenda. The main work of the Institutes of Technology is generally in certificate and diploma programmes, with a smaller number of degree programmes and a growing involvement in regionally orientated applied research (Department of Education and Science, 2007). However, within each sector and between the sectors, there is a diversity of institutions offering differing types and levels of courses. In recent years, a number of independent private colleges and other institutions have been established. These colleges offer a range of courses complementing the existing provision in the higher education and training sector, some of which have submitted programmes for validation to the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC). Both the *Report of the Steering Group on the Future Development of Higher Education* (1995) and the White Paper *Charting our Education Future* (1995) emphasised the significance of maintaining the diversity of institutions and the separate missions of the two broad sectors in Irish education. The reports outlining Ireland's progress on the implementation of the Bologna process stress that 'the approach of maintaining the third-level system of universities and institutes of technology remains stated Government policy in order to ensure maximum flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of students and the economy' (National Report on Bologna, 2005). However, since many of the institutes are strategically sited in areas where populations are low [it] is not surprising but the question of institutional size becomes important when issues of research concentration and postgraduate numbers have to be addressed because of the high cost of providing the appropriate infrastructure, both physical, in terms of facilities, and human, in terms of size of research teams and technical and other support (OECD, 2004).

In spite of this, the dispersal and locations of universities/institutes remains an important factor in the Irish National Spatial Strategy 2002 – 2020 and generally in terms of contribution to local economy and society. It also reflects a personalist political culture whereby much lobbying has occurred over the years from areas seeking to establish a university within their region.

4. Implementation structure for the Bologna Process

4.1 Institutional mechanisms for implementation

It is understandable that the variety and number of institutes of higher education presents a rather unwieldy backdrop to the implementation of the Bologna agreement. The sector has, however, become increasingly responsive to international influences. Some of this commitment is supported increasingly by the Bologna process, but is also, in many respects, independent of it (IUA/IUQB, 2007:24). Links and collaboration with agencies and individual institutions in Australia, Canada, China, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, the US and other countries, including European (and particularly the UK) have also developed.

For the implementation of the Bologna Process a structural framework now exists. A national steering group has been established to oversee implementation. It is chaired by the Department of Education and Science and has nominees of the Conference of Heads of Irish Universities (CHIU), the Council of Directors of Institutes of Technology (CoDIT), the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), the Higher Education Authority (HEA), the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) and the Union of Students of Ireland (USI). In 2002, the governing authorities of the seven Irish universities established the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB) and devolved to IUQB the statutory responsibility for conducting the reviews of the effectiveness of quality assurance. Between 2003 and 2005 the following developments also took place:

- Ratification of the Lisbon Convention on Recognition of Qualifications
- Development of National Template for the Diploma Supplement
- Appointment of Bologna Promoters to facilitate and provide a resource for higher education and disseminate knowledge of the Bologna declaration to the higher education community and in the context of policy development
- Establishment of Irish Higher Education Quality Network (McKenna, 2004)

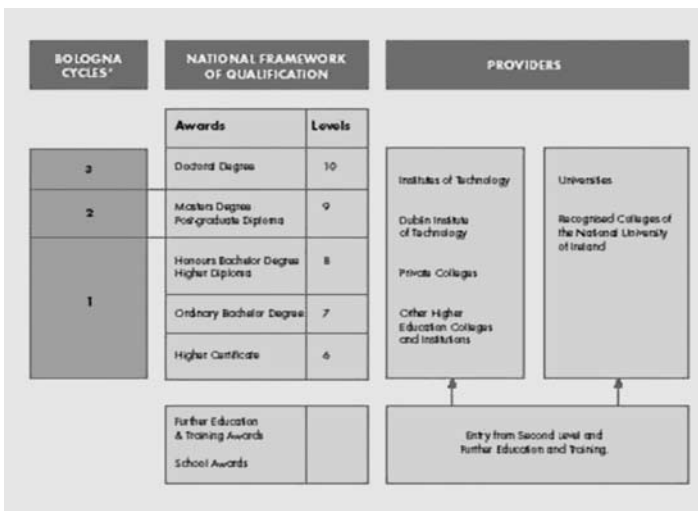
4.2 Recognition of degrees and periods of studies

The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland is the Irish centre for the recognition of international awards, and represents Ireland in a European Network of centres known as ENIC/NARIC (European National Information Centre/National Academic Recognition Information Centre) and NRP (National Reference Point) which promote the recognition of international awards throughout Europe. The development of a National Qualifications Framework (a statutory framework based on learning outcomes) is a key part of the 1999 Act (see appendix 1) in order to set out arrangements for access, transfer and progression.

4.3 Qualification System based on Two Main Cycles: Undergraduate and Postgraduate

The Irish system is traditionally based on two cycles: undergraduate and postgraduate. Access to the second cycle shall require successful completion of first cycle studies, lasting a minimum of three years. The second cycle should lead to the master and/or doctorate degree, as in many European countries. The National Report on the Bologna Process (2003) argued that Ireland generally fits in with the flexible model set out in the Bologna declaration. Irish academics in specific subject areas e.g. mathematics have also participated in the ‘Tuning educational structures in Europe’ project, sponsored jointly by the European University Association and the European Commission, and which addressed several of the Bologna action lines, including the adoption of a system based on two cycles, the adoption of a system of easily and readable degrees and the establishment of a system of credits.

The Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 noted above has been enacted, and in July 2004 the implementation arrangements for the framework in higher education was announced. Awards at levels 6 to 10 will be made by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council and the Dublin Institute of Technology, while universities make the awards from level 7 to 10.



Source: www.bologna.ie [Progress on implementation of Bologna framework]

The framework, however, does not impose any requirements in relation to the duration of programmes, rather, the emphasis is on the *development of learning outcomes*. In November 2006, Ireland verified the compatibility of its National Framework for Qualifications with the Bologna Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area.

4.4 Establishment of a System of Credits

The implementation of credit systems is becoming more prominent in Ireland with the NQAI (which established a Technical Advisory Group on Credits) moving towards defining a national approach to credits. The approach takes into account credit arrangements already in use in Ireland and in accordance with European developments. The ECTS system is effectively already incorporated into the previous awards system of HETAC and is implemented in many programmes in the Dublin Institute of Technology and in Dublin City University and University of Limerick (National Report on Bologna, 2003). The use of ECTS in other education institutions is confined to students under the ERASMUS and SOCRATES programmes. The National Report on the Bologna Process (2005) indicates that it should not be a significant problem to extend ECTS and offer a credit accumulation and transfer system with European applicability and approval.

The recognition of prior learning is apparent in National Council for Education Awards designated institutions using the concept of a “ladder of qualifications”. In addition, the universities have similarly operated a system of advanced entry and exemptions for NCEA transfer students and for other approved prior learning/awards. Mature applicants do not need to present normal entry requirements for undergraduate admission. The recognition of prior learning has been a feature of the Irish Higher Education system and accreditation of prior experiential learning is beginning to assume a higher profile.

5. Public Administration Programmes in Ireland

Public Administration (PA) programmes in Ireland have largely originated prior to the coining of the term ‘European Higher Education Area’ but they have a long association with the EU sponsored mobility and student exchange schemes such as ERASMUS and SOCRATES. The appearance of PA as an academic field of study is deemed to have emerged in circa 1928 at University College Dublin whereby PA was offered as an option to students studying for a Bachelor of Commerce degree or a Bachelor of Arts degree (Millar, 1999). The establishment of the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) founded in 1957 by a group of public servants, marked the promotion and study of the subject amongst practicing public servants. Over time, the provision of PA as a subject within university programmes (generally arts and social science) and as an interdisciplinary degree programme at the University of Limerick continued to develop during the 1970s and 1980s. In the late 1990s, Public Administration programmes began to expand within Irish universities as the central focus of several multi-disciplinary degree programmes to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the extensive role of government and impact of public policies in modern society. Until 1998, the only full-time undergraduate degree programme in Public Administration was the *BA Public Administration of-*

ferred at the University of Limerick (UL). The degree was established by the former National Institute for Higher Education, Limerick in 1978. Between 1998 and 1999, three new programmes with Public Administration as a core element were introduced within Irish universities.

1. The *BA in Public and Social Policy* was established at the National University of Ireland (NUI), Galway in 1998. This remains a full time three-year programme anchored in the Faculty of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies (overseen by the Department of Political Science and Sociology) which offers courses providing a specialised insight into the application of public and social policies in Irish and European society.
2. The Faculty of Commerce at University of College Cork (UCC) has offered Public Administration as a specialism in its Bachelor of Commerce degree since the 1950s. A new Department of Government was established in 1999 and it commenced a *BSc. in Government and Public Policy* (later renamed as the *BSc. Government*).
3. The Department also launched a part-time Master of Commerce in Public Policy aimed at civil and public servants in 1999. The *MComm. in Public Policy* (renamed *MComm Government*) utilises distance learning techniques via ICT in the delivery of the programme, participation in seminars and completion of a thesis.

In 2003, the University of Limerick introduced a *Graduate Diploma in PA and MPA degree*. In addition, the IPA currently delivers a four-year part-time *BA in Public Management*. It coordinates and delivers several other undergraduate degree programmes including Healthcare Management, Local Government, and HRM. It also runs several graduate programmes in public management.

The genre of the programmes in the university sector reflects that they are generally situated within Political Science departments and there is a strong emphasis on public policy and governance, as opposed to management. Although the structure and specific content of courses varies between the different universities, it may be suggested that teaching Public Administration in Ireland may be broadly divided into courses on the institutional aspects and organisational set-up of Irish public administration, theory and concepts of the policy process and European/comparative studies of public administration systems. The multi-disciplinary nature of the undergraduate programmes provides a solid generalist education for graduates but does not afford them any privileges of access, since civil service recruitment still remains strongly centralised through open competition.

6. Public Administration Programmes – University of Limerick

6.1 Short History of the University of Limerick (UL)

The University of Limerick (Ollscoil Luimnigh) was established in 1972 as the National Institute of Higher Education (NIHE) Limerick, following a long lobbying campaign. From the very beginning, the Institute forged strong links with business and industry, as manifested in its relationship with the regional development company Shannon Development. Such synergies led to the creation of the National Technological Park beside NIHE after its foundation. These initiatives reflect the policy link forged between education and the attraction of overseas investment. NIHE Limerick was granted full university status by legislation enacted in 1989 and is the first new University established since the foundation of the State. During the period of fiscal rectitude in the 1980s, NIHE successfully attracted funding from the European Investment Bank, World Bank, private sector, in addition to philanthropic contributions. This entrepreneurship was unusual at a time when Irish universities depended almost wholly on the State for funds and did not pursue other alternatives.

In 1991, the University amalgamated with Thomond College of Education which shared a campus with it. There are currently approximately 12,000 students studying at the University, of which over 9,852 are full-time students. There are also over 800 research postgraduates and 1,300 taught postgraduate students at the university. The Cooperative Education programme allocates all students with an 8-month work placement as part of their degree and is one of the first such programmes in the Irish state. The development of the University is guided and supported by the University of Limerick Foundation Board, composed of international leaders from business, the professions and the arts.

6.2 Credit and modular system

As a new third level institute, UL was strongly influenced by the American system of education. It synthesised US ideas as is evident in a cooperative education programme and grade point average marking. The University of Limerick's credit system is known as the Quality Credit Average (QCA). In this system, the quality and standard of a student's academic performance is expressed as a numerical average of that performance in the credited modules attempted. It is this average which is termed Quality Credit Average (QCA) and is calculated on a semester and on a cumulative basis for each programme or for each part of a programme (the first part of a programme is usually the first year of the programme, the second part is usually the remaining three years).

The University of Limerick has a modularised system. A module is a unit of study extending over a semester. These are described in a standard template used in the academic approval process. Contact hours for particular modules vary with

the discipline, as do the number of modules undertaken by learners per semester. Credits are assigned to modules in multiples of three. These are not ECTS credits, though the University has established a task group to advise Academic Council on how to move to ECTS for all modules. On any programme, exemptions can be requested for previous study undertaken. Each request is considered on its merits, and the system is intended to support transfer between fairly similar programmes when other conditions are met. A few of the University's programmes allow exemptions for prior experience and have been built into the programme design.

6.3 University of Limerick and the Bologna Process-actions undertaken: 2007

- The programme management system has been redesigned (new database)
- As noted above, the National Qualifications Framework does not impose any requirements in relation to the duration of programmes, rather, the emphasis is on the *development of learning outcomes*. All taught programmes have to be rewritten in respect to learning outcomes. This involves collecting data from over 260 programmes and 4000+ modules. A handbook in association with the University's Centre for Teaching and Learning has been produced to provide guidance on how to write learning outcomes.
- Establishment of an ECTS committee

It is the policy of UL to move to the use of ECTS credits in all programmes. This is consistent with the Bologna Process and plans by the HEA to use ECTS in the calculations underlying a revised HEA Funding Allocation Model. Step 1 involved agreeing the total number of ECTS credits applicable to each year of each programme. Step 2 is to allocate the total credits for a year among the modules taken in that year. This has given rise to a number of difficulties in dealing with what has become locally termed as 'problem modules'. These are modules that are offered in more than one programme, and where these programmes do not have the same number of modules per semester. This would be an issue for the BA Public Administration programme given its multi-disciplinary nature. An institutional decision has yet to be made (2008) on directly what path this solution will take. The eventual solution may involve the creation of new modules or the restructuring of programmes. In terms of how the QCA is calculated, it has been envisaged that the changeover would happen on a phased basis so that students already on a programme part could progress to graduation based on a QCA calculated using UL credits only.

6.4 BA Public Administration

The BA Public Administration programme is a full time four-year (eight semesters) degree programme directed by the Department of Politics and Public Administration. The programme aims to provide students with an understanding of the ex-

tensive role of government in modern society with particular, but not exclusive, reference to Irish and European society; the impact of European integration on the management of national resources, public and private; the processes of public policy-making and public management; and the relationship between the public sector and the wider society with particular reference to the modern social market state (www.ul.ie). The programme was first devised in the late 1970s and set up in 1978. The dual nature of PA as both a subject matter and professional activity probably fitted in with the vocational ethos of the NIHE and historically it was one of the first programmes in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. In addition to incremental adjustments, the BA PA has been rigorously reviewed in each decade (1984; 1996; 2006) in the light of evolving intellectual perspectives in the field of Public Administration and changing social conditions. The programme content from the academic year 1997/98 to 2007/08 was an extensive multi-disciplinary programme (24/33 modules), a choice of 3x7 module minor options in language (French, German or Spanish) or Development or Management and 2 elective modules in year four.

6.5 Graduate Diploma / Masters in Public Administration (FT/PT)

The Grad Dip./MPA programmes commenced in autumn 2003 and both programmes provide an opportunity to acquire an advanced knowledge of public administration and comparative public policy. The development of the MPA complements the range of postgraduate programmes directed by the Department of Politics and Public Administration (European Integration, International Studies, Peace and Development, Politics) and provides an alternative to the part-time graduate programmes offered by the Institute of Public Administration. Students pursuing the established MPA or the Postgraduate Diploma (since 2003) must successfully complete six taught modules. In addition, MPA students must complete an individual research project in the form of a written dissertation. Students following either programme may opt for full or part-time studies. These programmes are designed to attract students from two distinct yet complementary areas: professionals from the public sector and related areas, aiming to up-skill/augment their professional expertise with a postgraduate qualification; and recent graduates, seeking a postgraduate qualification to develop either their career or research potential (www.ul.ie)

6.6 Cooperative Education

Cooperative Education (or 'Co-Op') is an integral part of the Public Administration degree and is a compulsory and integrated element of all undergraduate degree programmes in the University of Limerick. Regardless of discipline students study, they must undertake relevant work experience as a formal part of the completion of their degree. Co-Op is paid employment and normally constitutes eight months in duration. It may be argued that Co-Op provides a challenge to adaptation to

Bologna since, as a result, most undergraduate degree programmes are four years in duration (though the NQF emphasis on learning outcomes seems to 'get around' this.) Few Public Administration students are placed internationally since language is not a component of the degree. Placements typically are located in the civil and public service – the principal government departments in Dublin, Health Services Executive, state agencies e.g. Fás (training and employment authority) and a majority in local government. Some students prefer to request a private sector placement in areas such as financial services (insurance, banks, accounting) and this is catered for by the placement office. Co-Op is one of the largest placement programmes in Europe with some 1,600 employers participating in the programme annually with approximately 75 % of these also employing UL graduates (Cooperative Education and Careers Division, 2007).

In the BA Public Administration, students commence cooperative education in semester 5 (beginning of the third year). They are requested to reflect on assessing their skills, knowledge and work experience through both pre- and post-cooperative education assessments and all students must be visited in their place of employment by a faculty member.

6.7 First destinations of BA Public Administration graduates

Employment prospects with the BA Public Administration have been very good for the past decade, reflecting the strong economic performance of the Irish economy and its demand for graduates. In relation to the civil and public service, central government is not typically a recruitment hub for graduates of this degree but a reasonable proportion is employed in local government and other public agencies. The annual graduate first destinations survey illustrates the scope and nature of employment.

Degree Programme	BA Public Administration (2006 graduates)
Employed in Ireland	60 %
Employed Abroad	2 %
Further Study	28 %
Not Available	4 %
Seeking Employment	6 %
No. of Responses	54
Total no. of Graduates	62

Source: Graduate Employment First Destinations Report, UL Graduates 2006

7. Reforming Public Administration programmes

Increasing student mobility brings a requirement that students be protected from low-quality provision, with both 'sending' and 'receiving' countries sharing the responsibility for quality in such cases (IUA/IUQB, 2007). As noted, the BA Public Administration was revised in 2006 (for the incoming 2007 – 08 academic year). The revisions to the degree were largely determined by domestic factors and learning as opposed to being specifically shaped with adaptation to the Bologna Process in mind. The degree programme remains four years in duration and its structure refined. The revisions did not take place simultaneously with the development of learning outcomes for each module included. This remains an issue on the university agenda for all programmes. The structure of the revised programme (appendix 2) is based on a first-year core programme of 10 (5x2) modules in Politics, Public Administration, Law, Sociology and Economics. In years two to four, the programme has a core of 10 (5x2) modules in Politics and Public Administration and 10 (5x2) module concentration in one of two streams – either Law and Sociology or Economics and Management. There are two elective modules in the final year. The concept of a minor option (Language, Development or Management) has been removed from the programme. The revisions have reduced the total module load from 33 to 30, closer to the 28 module load of the newer undergraduate programmes in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. A movement towards such consistency may facilitate adaptation to ECTS. It also endeavours to provide students with the opportunity to specialise through the streams, yet still retain a 'minimum package' in terms of a PA education.

Feedback and review are important considerations and the Bologna Process aside, a system of External Examiners (a large proportion of which are drawn from institutions abroad) is an ingrained feature in all Irish undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes. Developments that have been influenced by the international context in recent times are the introduction of further systems to assure the quality of teaching and research. Features of this that would not have necessarily been in place over a decade ago now are – feedback mechanisms for student evaluation of teaching, regular quality reviews of academic, administrative and support departments/units. All Irish universities also now have permanent teaching support units that provide training programmes for staff.

In terms of looking out to the international context in terms of curriculum, the European and comparative dimension of Public Administration teaching is well developed with established courses on the BA Public Administration degree (UL) addressing civil service systems, local and regional government and the reform of public policy structures and processes in a comparative and European perspective. The inventory of Public Administration programmes by the Socrates Thematic Network in Public Administration 1997 – 2000 indicated that very few universities in Western and Central and Eastern Europe have core courses on European integration

and comparative public administration, that is, obligatory courses that all students have to take. Verheijen and Connaughton (2003) noted that the BA Public Administration programme, offered at the University of Limerick, is one exception worthy of mention since the core curriculum contains some four courses on European Integration or comparative public administration. The international dimension of the programmes has been enhanced in recent years with the introduction of new modules e.g. international public policy, African politics, Ireland and globalization.

8. International Cooperation

A recommendation from the OECD (2004) review of higher education in Ireland was that Irish higher level institutions need to more energetically market themselves internationally. At present, approximately 5 % of total student enrolments are from overseas. Although this is deemed to be the OECD average, the report indicated that Ireland has not benefited from the significant expansion of international students or emulating the strategies of countries such as the UK, US, Germany and France that attract very large proportions of the totals going to OECD countries (OECD, 2004). Given that courses are already taught in English there is certainly scope to market Irish institutions more effectively. The authors of the OECD review indicated that it was difficult to escape the conclusion that Irish third level education had continued to look to the State rather than the international market for its income and had perhaps missed out on much needed support for research as well as alternative sources of income.

The University of Limerick has long been involved in established exchange programmes such as the Study Abroad Programme for North American students and the Socrates programme for students from the EU member states. It has also developed a select number of bilateral agreements with universities and other third level institutions outside of the USA and Europe. These agreements allow for a small number of UL students to participate in a reciprocal exchange with the universities concerned. More recently, students from Japan, Korea and China constitute the international student body. The Public Administration programme has a long connection with ERASMUS/SOCRATES. The Department of Politics and Public Administration (previously Government and Society) was the Coordinator of the Socrates Thematic Network in Public Administration 1997 – 2001. It has also participated in numerous projects e.g. Joint European Module on subnational governance and in teacher exchange. Both the Department and the Centre for European Studies (a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence) have been involved in ACE/Phare, Tempus/Phare projects in Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia and Russia. The value-added by international cooperation has been a rise in the profile of the University abroad. As a small peripheral university on the Western seaboard, UL sought to carve out a niche for itself in terms of European Studies from its early years. International cooperation has facilitated an influx of good students, research con-

tacts and curriculum development. It is noteworthy, however, that Irish students on the PA programme (UL) do not avail of Erasmus/Study Abroad in any significant numbers – rather they are few and far between. On some of the other programmes in the College (including those whereby public administration is taught as a minor option), international placement in a foreign university is a compulsory part of the programme whether studying a language or not.

9. Conclusion

What is visible from this overview is that the Irish higher education sector, supported by the Higher Education Authority, is committed to the Bologna Process and is investing in the associated reforms. The international context is also deemed important for the development of third level. In Ireland, investment in third level education has far outweighed the investment in primary and secondary schooling in past decades. This further reflects the drive towards skilled graduates and attraction of FDI within an increasingly globalised economy. Within this environment, and the past, disciplines such as Public Administration are not highlighted. Rather, massive expansion took place in the engineering and computer science fields and this was championed by government agencies (such as the Industrial Development Authority) directly at the coalface of attracting FDI and noting the disparities between graduate outflows and the country's demand projections. On the other hand, there has been a lag in reforms to improve the public image of the civil and public service bureaucracy and upgrade its capacities to deal with the challenges of economic success.

As noted, Public Administration is studied within a range of multi-disciplinary undergraduate programmes and MPA education. As an academic discipline, however, its recognition is weak in comparison to disciplines such as Political Science and Law. Despite this, graduates of public administration programmes, as indicated in the example of the UL BA Public Administration, are faring relatively well in seeking employment and a solid cohort undertake postgraduate study. Surveys of graduates generally indicate that postgraduate qualifications are usually pursued in specific areas e.g. social work, accountancy given the generalist nature of the degree. Although the number of Public Administration programmes expanded during the late 1990s and the subject is taught within other multi-disciplinary/joint honours programmes, PA faces stiff competition with an ever increasing repertoire of degree options/programmes in Irish tertiary education. This is reflected in the falling de-

mand and correspondingly falling 'points' for PA courses.¹ Attempts at UL, for example, have been made to combat this with the revision of the degree programme. In terms of the Bologna Process, it is evident that an institutional framework has been put in place as part of adaptation. However, the transition of the UL modular credit system to ECTS raises challenges, and final decisions have yet to be taken on moving this process forward. In general, more time must pass before it is possible to make a realistic assessment of the impact of Bologna on PA programmes.

Overall, the Irish university quality system is already broadly consistent with European standards and guidelines (IUA/IUQB, 2007). Evidence of adaptation is apparent in the establishment of the National Framework of Qualifications and in November 2006, Ireland became the first European country to verify the compatibility of its national framework with the Bologna framework for qualifications in the European Higher Education Area (*ibid*). During its stocktaking exercise, the London Communiqué acknowledged the progress made in Ireland in terms of implementation of the Bologna goals relative to the forty-eight higher education systems participating (Department of Education and Skills, UK, 2007 cited in IUA/IUQB, 2007). It could be argued, however, that while this reflects a good record at the national level, there are individual institutional challenges and pragmatism prevails. This applies in particular to the scope (and scale) of programmatic reform, whereby all courses and each programme must have learning outcomes defined in accordance with agreed criteria and standards.

1 The 'points system' is devised to ensure that entry into various academic programmes in third level education is open and on a strictly unbiased basis. Points are calculated on student grades e.g. A obtains more points than C and a Central Applications Office processes lists of choices from students. The lists are based on first preferences of the students and their projected assessment of how they will perform. There will be a set number of places on degree programmes and correspondingly those students with the highest points will be offered places first. There is significant demand for courses like Medicine and Pharmacy, hence pushing up their points and competition to obtain a place. In reality the minimum entry requirements for many programmes are rather meaningless though students must usually obtain passes in Irish, Maths, English and a foreign language.

Appendix 1

Principal Institutions in Irish Higher Education

The *Department of Education and Science* (www.education.ie) has overall responsibility for the higher education system in Ireland. It is assisted in its task by a number of agencies. These are:

- *Higher Education Authority* (HEA) (www.heai.ie) established in 1972 with responsibilities for development and facilitating co-ordination of state investment in higher education.
- *National Qualifications Authority of Ireland* (NQAI) (www.nqai.ie) established by the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999. It has responsibilities for establishing and maintaining the National Framework of Qualifications.
- *Higher Education and Training Awards Council* (HETAC) (www.hetac.ie) also established under the 1999 Act, is the qualifications awarding body for the Institutes of Technology and other non-university higher education colleges and institutions. HETAC may also delegate the authority to make awards to the Institutes of Technology. In 2002 HETAC published *Guidelines and Criteria for Quality Assurance Procedures in Higher Education and Training*. These require all providers of higher education and training programmes associated with HETAC to establish quality assurance procedures and agree those procedures with HETAC.

The institutional framework is guided by the following legislation:

The Universities Act, 1997 specifically requires each university “to establish procedures for quality assurance aimed at improving the quality of education and related services provided by the university”. This model, which recognises institutional autonomy, is one of self-assessment. It must include the evaluation, at least once every 10 years of each department and, where appropriate, school of the university and any service provided by the university, by employees of the university in the first instance and by persons, other than employees, who are competent to make national and international comparisons on the quality of teaching and research and the provision of other services at university level. A governing authority must implement any findings arising out of an evaluation carried out in accordance with procedures unless, having regard to the resources available to the university or for any other reason, it would, in the opinion of the governing authority, be impractical or unreasonable to do so.

The Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999

The main objects of the Act are to:

- Establish and develop standards of knowledge, skill or competence;

- Promote the quality of further education and training and higher education and training;
- Provide a system for co-coordinating and comparing education and training awards and
- Promote and maintain procedures for access, transfer and progression.

Appendix 2

BA Public Administration Programme Structure

Semester 1	Semester 2
PO4011 Introduction to Government and Politics PA4021 Ideas and Concepts in Public Administration LA4901 Principles of Law SO4011 Introduction to Sociology EC4111 Microeconomics	PO4022 Modern European Political Thought PA4011 Civil and Public Service LA4012 Comparative Legal Systems SO4012 Contemporary European Society EC4112 Macroeconomics
Semester 3	Semester 4
PO4023 Comparative European Politics PA4012 Paragovernmental Organisations <i>and either: Law & Sociology</i> LA4410 Public Law 1 SO4048 Women, Welfare and the State <i>Or Economics & Management</i> EC4333 Economics of European Integration MG4031 Management Principles	PO4015 Government and Politics of the EU PA4013 Local Government <i>and either: Law & Sociology</i> LA4420 Public Law 2 HU4013 Computers for the Social Sciences <i>Or Economics & Management</i> EC4325 International Economics MK4002 Marketing: Context & Philosophy
Semester 5	Semester 6
Cooperative Education	PO4013 Government and Politics of Ireland PA4018 Public Policy Process <i>And either: Law & Sociology</i> LA4918 Company Law SO4035 Sociology of Organisation <i>Or Economics & Management</i> EC4711 EU Economic Environment PM4004 Employment Relations 1
Semester 7	Semester 8
PA4017 Subnational Government-Challenge or Change Final Year Project 1 <i>and either one of Law & Sociology</i> LA4942 Law of European Institutions <i>or</i> SO4018 Socio-Economic Change-Dependency and Development <i>or one of Economics & Management</i> EC4407 Ireland in the World Economy <i>or</i> MG4037 Strategic Management Elective from: PO4077 Nations and Nationalism PO4027 International Organisation and Global Governance PO4028 Politics of Ethnic Conflict PO4032 Russian Politics PL4017 Regional Development	PA4038 Public Administration in Democratic States Final Year Project 2 <i>and either one of Law & Sociology</i> LA4722 Substantive Law of the EU <i>or</i> SO4016 Issues in Contemporary Irish Society <i>or one of Economics & Management</i> EC4408 Public Finance <i>or</i> MG4038 Sustainable Development Elective from: PO4016 Issues in European Integration PO4058 Politics of the Third World PO4067 Studies in Political Thought PO4078 State and Society in Postmodern Europe PL4013 Community Development

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Delivering International Public Management programmes: the Case of Bocconi University

Greta Nasi and Emanuele Vendramini¹

Introduction

This chapter presents the main features of public policy programmes in Italy. In particular, it presents the overall structure of higher education and then focuses on programmes in the field of public policy, such as the broader stream of public administration, public management, public affairs and public policy.

Furthermore, it discusses the pre-experience programmes in public management offered by Bocconi University, a private non-profit University at Milan founded in 1902 with the Faculty of Economics and Management. Research and study in the area of public management has been underway at Bocconi since the early '70s. It has held executive seminars for public managers and managers of health care organisations since the '80s and launched Italy's first higher education programme in public management, a Bachelor of Science in Economics of Public Administration and International Institutions in 1993. This chapter discusses the pre-experience programmes in public management currently available at Bocconi and presents similarities and differences. It is organised into four sections. Section 1 briefly provides an overview of the higher education system in Italy. Section 2 describes the context for public policy programmes in Europe and describes the Italian ones in a similar way. Section 3 illustrates and discusses the programmes in public management offered by Bocconi University and section 4 draws some conclusions.

1. A brief overview of the higher education system in Italy

The European higher education reform, known as the "Bologna Declaration", was signed in 1999 by the Ministers of Education of 29 countries and recently set objec-

¹ Albeit this chapter is the result of the work of both authors, par.1, 2, 3, 3.1 was written by Greta Nasi; par.3.2 and 4 was written by Emanuele Vendramini.

tives shaping all University programmes, including those on public affairs, with the aim of achieving easily understandable and comparable degrees and introducing standardised degree structures. The degree structure is mainly based on a two-cycle model. The first cycle lasts a minimum of three years and culminates in a bachelor-level degree. The second cycle consists of a master programme and subsequent doctoral degrees and second level masters; both of the latter are postgraduate degrees requiring the two-year specialisation degree.

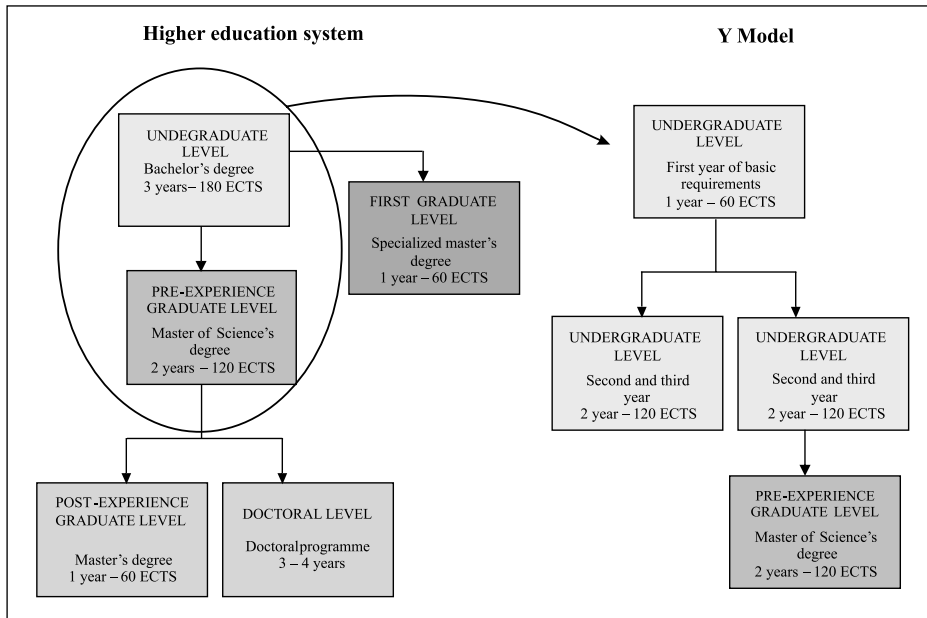
Italy adopted the Bologna Declaration reform in 1999, introducing a higher education system based on a three-year undergraduate Bachelor programme (*laurea triennale*) plus a two-year master programme and referring to the system as “3+2”. The undergraduate Bachelor degree requires 180 ECTS credits, whilst the two-year master programme requires 120 ECTS credits plus a compulsory internship and a final thesis. The two-year master programme was initially called the *laurea specialistica* but was ultimately re-named the *laurea magistrale*. The *laurea specialistica/magistrale* is a pre-experience Master of Science with specialisations in various disciplines (i.e. Political Science, Economics, and Engineering etc.). However, students with an undergraduate degree may apply to take a one-year, first-level master programme which does not give access to doctoral programmes and is aimed primarily to provide vocational training. Students completing one-year master programmes receive a specialised Master diploma in the field of their discipline, whereas students completing a *laurea magistrale* receive a Master of Science diploma.

The Ministry for Higher Education and Research passed a decree aiming to introduce further amendments to the “3+2” system. In particular, it will introduce a “Y model” starting in the academic year 2009 – 2010 with the following aims:

- Set a common basis of knowledge enabling students to customise the rest of their University career. At undergraduate level in particular, there will be a core requirement of 60 ECTS credits; students are able to define their professional development at undergraduate level (1+2 years; 60 + 120 ECTS credits) by obtaining the undergraduate degree (*laurea triennale*), or can set the methodological basis to prepare for the undergraduate and master degree in five years (1+2+2 years; 60 + 120 + 120 ECTS credits);
- Reduce the number of courses taken by students. There will be a maximum of 20 courses at undergraduate level (there are currently about 30) and 12 at master level (*laurea magistrale*). The internship will still be compulsory. Students completing the master degree will receive a Master of Science diploma in the discipline of their studies.

Figure 1 summarises the current higher education system and the “Y model”.

Figure 1
The Italian Higher Education system



2. Public policy programmes in Europe and Italy

Historically, public administration as a field of study has had a strong following in Europe. However, the development of public policy programmes was emphasised during the second half of the last century and was given greater emphasis in the '80s when the *New Public Management* became the paradigm for public sector reform. An assessment of the focus of public policy programmes shows three different streams of programmes in policy studies (Hajnal 2003; Geva-May, Nasi et al. 2007). In some Continental European countries, such as Belgium and Spain, public policy programmes have a distinctive, broad and significant political science component; Scandinavian countries and the UK put more emphasis on Business Administration, while law and administration are predominant in the curricula of most southern European countries and a number of post-communist countries. As a consequence, public policy research and training programmes are offered by Business Schools, Political Science Departments and Public Affairs Schools in Europe. Relatively few provide core courses in policy analysis. Most European institutions currently offer graduate level programmes in public policy and some offer executive masters. The more common labels for these programmes are "Master of Public Administration" or "Master of Public Management". The label of "Public Policy" is seen less frequently. It is also interesting to point out that some universities are

introducing specialisation into “public sector” and “health care management” in their MBAs.

In the past, the field of public administration in Italy was dominated by administrative and public law because of both the juridical culture of the public sector and the recruitment requirements for civil servants. Some universities began to develop programmes in the ‘60s focusing on public administration issues in the field of political sciences. In the last two decades however, most of the higher education programmes in this field have been developed in the area of public management. This stream of study has emerged in parallel with the diffusion of the new public management paradigm of reform of the Italian public sector.

Public management programmes have been developed primarily at graduate and executive level to train current and future public managers with the skills and competences needed to support public sector reforms. However, some universities with a faculty of economics and management, such as Bocconi University, the University of Rome Tor Vergata and the University of Siena, introduced a four-year University degree in Economics of Public Administration and International Organisation in the early ‘90s. Although these programmes had an interdisciplinary study plan, they offered a management-focused approach for managing and solving the problems of public agencies at national and international levels. Other universities developed University and executive programmes in the field of public management and health care management throughout the ‘90s, whereas there are still few doctoral programmes specifically in the field of public administration (less than 10).

The Bologna Declaration reform affected the allocation of undergraduate and graduate programmes in the field of public management. Some universities took the opportunity to offer more general programmes at undergraduate level and highly specialised degree programmes at Master of Science level, while others decided to offer more specialisation in the field of public management from undergraduate level. At Bocconi University, for example, the Bachelor of Science in Economics of Public Administration and International Institutions is no longer taught, as University policy requires a reduction in the number of undergraduate programmes in order to offer a solid base in the area of economics and management and allow students to customise their University career at pre-experience, Master of Science level (the so called “+2” or *laurea magistrale*). However, the undergraduate programme in management offers a major in Public Administration and International Organisations. A similar phenomenon occurred at the University of Rome Tor Vergata, whereas the Faculty of Economics at the University of Siena still offers both the undergraduate bachelor degree in Management of Public Administration and

International Institutions and a Master of Science in Management of Public Administration².

3. Public affairs programmes at Bocconi

The development of public affairs programmes at Bocconi took place alongside the establishment of a group of researchers focusing on the issues of public and health care management since the '70s, coordinated by Prof. Elio Borgonovi. The disciplinary character of research and studies carried out in this field was influenced by general studies in management and researchers and academics have contributed greatly to national and international debates in the field of public management. About 60 full-time researchers and thirty part-time fellows are currently part of the Institute of Public Administration and Health care at Bocconi University, which recently merged with the Department of Institutional Analysis and Public Management. Research fellows focus on public management issues in the area of health care, local and regional governments and national public system comparisons. It is probably the largest group of researchers in public management in Europe. Executive seminars for managers of health care organisations and local governments have been developed since the '80s and the Bachelor of Science in Economics and Management of Public Administration and International Institutions has been taught since 1993. Some master and executive master programmes in the field of public management and health care management were launched in the late '90s. Bocconi is a very complex organisation with a five-school structure: Bocconi College, which runs the undergraduate programmes; the Graduate School which runs the Masters of Science; the School of Management which runs executive seminars, post-graduate master programmes and specialised masters, the Ph.D. School and the School of Law. Figure 2 shows the current offer of programmes in public and health care management at Bocconi University that are actually held by the academics and researchers focusing on the field of public and health care management even if they are run at different Schools. Most of the programmes are taught in Italian but the Master of Science does offer courses both in Italian and English, and two international specialised master programmes are taught entirely in English: the Master of Public Management and the Master of International Health Care Management, Economics and Policy. Some executive seminars are also being developed for an international audience.

2 For more information please visit the Faculty of Economics at the University of Siena website at http://www.economia.unisi.it/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1, last accessed on Nov. 16th 2007.

Figure 2
Programmes in the field of public and health care management offered at Bocconi University

	Master of science Economics and Management of Public Administration and International Institutions	First graduate level Specialized master programs	Post experience graduate level	Executive seminars	Executive Master programs
Managed by	Graduate School at Bocconi University	Master Division at the School of Management, Bocconi University	Master Division at the School of Management, Bocconi University	Public Management and Policy Area, School of Management, Bocconi University	Master Division at the School of Management, Bocconi University
Public management and policy	1 (Bilingual)	1 (English)			
PAs, Regional Government & Local Governments		1 (Italian)		42 (41 in Italian, 1 English)	2 (Italian)
Public utilities				5 (Italian)	
Health care		1 (English)	1 (Italian)	40 (38 in Italian, 2 English)	1 (Italian)
Not profit Organisations		1 (Italian)		8 (Italian)	
Tour operator				3 and 2 (weblearning), under construction	
Pharmaceutical companies				1 (Italian)	
TOTAL	1	4	1	97	3

The objective of the next session is to discuss Bocconi University’s decision to offer two programmes in the field of public management and policy at pre-experience graduate level: the Master of Science in Economics and Management of Public Administration and International Institutions and the Master of Public Management. These programmes are similar in terms of the areas of study, but differ greatly in their target participants, their focus and marketing strategies.

3.1 Master of Science in Economics and Management of Public Administration and International Institutions

The Master of Science in Economics and Management of Public Administration and International Institutions, also known as LS CLAPI (*Laurea specialistica/magistrale in Economia e Management delle amministrazioni pubbliche e delle istituzioni internazionali*), is a two-year programme. The programme was first launched during the 2004 – 2005 academic year to cope with the requirements of the Bologna

Declaration reform and the adoption of a higher education system in Italy aiming to combine a three-year undergraduate degree and a two-year pre-experience master degree. As mentioned earlier, the programme was formerly a four-year Bachelor of Science in the same field established in 1993. During the first few years since the introduction of the reform, Bocconi offered both a Bachelor and the Master of Science in this field of study; however the number of undergraduate programmes was greatly reduced with the aim of offering a solid undergraduate education in the field of economics and management to prepare students with the right tools for a specialised education at Master of Science level. As a consequence of this decision and in light of the general principles of the Bologna Declaration reform, the Bachelor of Economics and Management of Public Administration and International Institutions, among others, was no longer offered from the 2006 – 2007 academic year.

LS CLAPI is a bilingual programme, even if it is formally listed as being taught in Italian. In fact, one of the core courses is taught in English (Management of International Organisations) and most elective courses are also in English.

The *mission* of the programme is to provide an advanced and specialised foundation in key policy issues in public administration and international organisations and to develop an analytical view of public policy and assessment of intermediate and final results of interventions. LS CLAPI's study plan aims to support students in developing the analytical, forecasting and interpretation skills needed to understand the processes of innovation and change in the public sector and the international community, as well as to help graduates master the methodologies of public management, the relationship between these and other companies/institutions active in the area and planning and assessment of policies.

Admission places are limited, as with all Master of Sciences at Bocconi. In the first three years of the programme, the intake was 100 students per year, and the number has since been cut to 85 students per year, beginning from the 2007 – 2008 academic year. Students attending Bocconi undergraduate programmes are assessed prior to admission, based on the number of credits and GPA of their first five semesters at Bachelor level. Admission of students from other universities is based on their GPA and an entrance test similar to the GMAT. Admission of international students is based on the assessment of the student's portfolio. All the graduate programmes offered at Bocconi Graduate School have the same admission criteria. Students are admitted to Graduate School programmes and enrolled according to their preferences and their position on a merit list, common to all the Masters of Science.

Most students have an undergraduate degree in either economics or management, also including public management and business administration, but the Director of the programme can admit students with a bachelor degree in other disciplines. This option is usually offered to a limited number of students with a bachelor degree in political sciences. The average age of students when they enrol

is 22.5. Almost all of them enrol straight after graduating from an undergraduate programme.

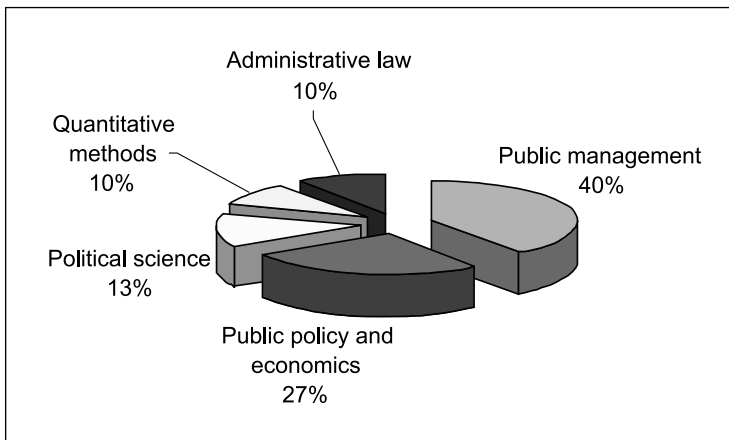
The structure of the *study plan* allows students to undertake all core requirements during the first year of study; they then choose a major from the three offered during the second year. Figure 3 shows the structure of the study plan.

Figure 3.
The study plan of the CLAPI Master of Science

Requirements	ECTS Credits
9 core courses	60
4 elective courses	24
English	4
Another European Union language (chosen by the student)	4
Internship	8
Thesis	20

The core courses promote an interdisciplinary approach to relevant subject areas of public management, economics and public policy, political science, administrative law and quantitative methods, thus providing an integrated approach to the problems encountered on the job. Figure 4 shows how each of these disciplinary areas of study contributes to the core requirements.

Figure 4
Field of discipline of the core requirements



As mentioned, LS CLAPI offers three majors during the second year:

- management of public administration and international institutions;
- public policy analysis at national and international level;
- management of non-profit and non-governmental organisations.

Students may choose one major or choose their elective courses from those offered by all the Bocconi Graduate School's masters of Science (about 120 elective courses). In the latter option, their diploma will not specify any major. The structure of the major is quite flexible: students choose one elective course from a short list, two from a longer list and one from all of those offered at Bocconi. The structure of the major in Management of Non-profit and Non-governmental Organisations is slightly different: students have to take two core courses. They can choose one from a list of about ten courses and can choose the fourth from all of those offered at Bocconi. By way of example, figure 5 shows the current structure of the major in Management of Public Administration and International Institutions.

Figure 5

Major in Management of Public Administration and International Organisations

Major in management of public administration and international institutions
Students may choose ONE elective among the following courses
Management of public networks (ITA) Management tools of european and international institutions (ITA) Public management for competitiveness (EN)
Students may choose TWO electives among the following courses
Economics of european integration (EN) E-government strategies (EN) Financial management of european and international projects (ITA) Management of health and social care (ITA) Funding and financial management in the public sector (ITA) Economics, society and institutions: A perspective view (ITA) Management of technological innovation in health care (EN)
Students may choose one elective among all offered by Bocconi University at the Graduate School

The CLAPI Master of Science offers students the opportunity to enrich their curriculum abroad in three ways:

- *Exchange programmes*: students spend one semester abroad during their second year and usually take all elective courses in a host university around the world.

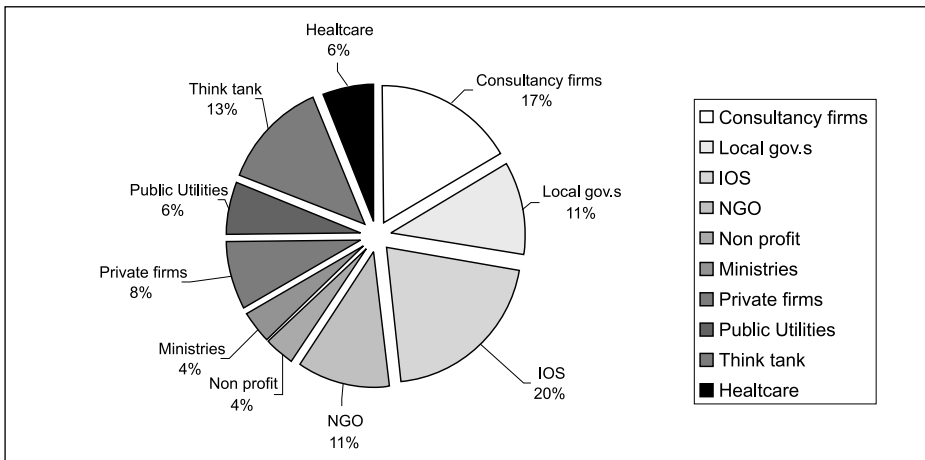
About 30 % of LS CLAPI students exploit this opportunity to study abroad, mainly in Europe, North America or Latin America.

- *Campus abroad*: students take a course at a host institution during the summer. The LS CLAPI offers students the opportunity to take the elective course “Management tools of European and International Institutions” at the Wagner School of Public Service at New York University. Students take the course during the month of July, between the first and second year of the Master of Science. The course is taught jointly by Bocconi faculty members and NYU faculty members. In addition to regular classes, they also have the opportunity to go on field trips to expand on the course content (e.g., they visit the United Nations and discuss current affairs with UN personnel);
- *Double degrees*: the LS CLAPI currently offers two double degrees. One in partnership with Sciences Po in Paris and the other in partnership with the University of Geneva and with *L'École des Hautes Etudes Commerciales* and their MBA in International Organisation (IOMBA) in particular. Students remain one year at Bocconi and one year at the host institution and fulfil the requirements set through the dual degree agreements. Once they fulfil all their academic requirements, they receive the Master of Science diploma from Bocconi and the diploma of the host institution. The programme is about to launch a third double degree programme with the MPA of the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy at the University of Albany, State University New York, USA. Students will be able to enrol in this new double degree from the 2008 – 2009 academic year.

Specific requirement criteria apply to all international opportunities and students may only apply after they have enrolled for the LS CLAPI.

Figure 6

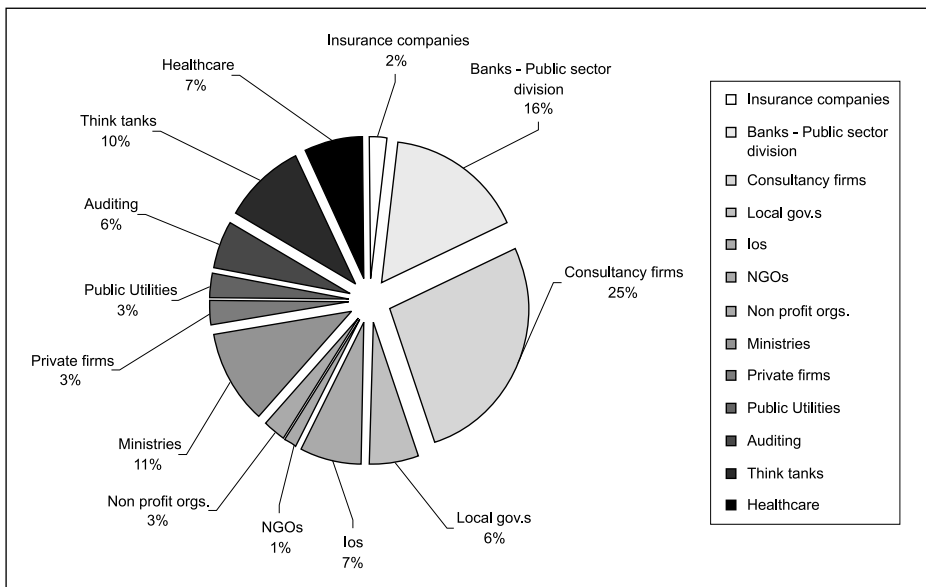
Types of organisations which hosted LS CLAPI students during their internship



Bocconi University offers its students full support as far as internship is concerned. The University lends its support through two offices: the International Relations Office for internships abroad, primarily in non-governmental and international organisations, and the Career Service for all domestic opportunities. The CLAPI Master of Science management team also supports students by assessing their preferences and stimulating demand for internships through the faculty’s professional networks. Figure 6 shows the types of institutions that hosted LS CLAPI students for their internship. Data refers to 92 students enrolled in 2005 – 2006.

Placement rates for students enrolled in 2004 – 2005 who graduated from July 2006 were very positive. On average, students were recruited less than three months after graduation; this figure is very similar for all Masters of Science offered at Bocconi. Figure 7 shows the types of organisations that recruited graduates from the CLAPI Master of Science. The survey was carried out by the programme’s management team in June 2007. 98 out of 101 students graduated. 86 responded and 72 are currently working, whereas the remaining are attending doctoral programmes or are applying for them. On average, about 50 % receive a net monthly salary between 1000€ and 1250€.

Figure 7
Types of organisations recruiting LS CLAPI students



The future challenges that the programme must embrace include the recruitment of students in an era when the public sector and the political system in Italy

is in the midst of a crisis. However, changes in the study plan, as well as the programme's structure, will be adjusted to address these issues and meet the Y model requirements.

3.2 Master of Public Management

The Master of Public Management offered by SDA Bocconi University School of Management is a one-year, full-time programme taught in English. The formal mission statement of the MPM programme is the following:

“The Master of Public Management (MPM) helps international young individuals to develop specialised knowledge and personal qualities for professional work in the public sector and associated institutions, locally and globally. State-of-the-art scientific background, actionable knowledge, professionalism and openness to diversity, make the MPM a unique, once-in-a-lifetime learning experience for future managers of public interests.”

The Master of Public Management (MPM) was designed to provide management education for international young professionals interested in the field of public interests. The programme aims to pursue the following objectives:

1. Provide participants with the opportunity to develop a specialized knowledge based on a critical understanding of the complexity of public management and governance issues. This objective is pursued by:
 - offering an interdisciplinary learning path built on rigorous scientific knowledge and comprising various perspectives on public management and governance;
 - ensuring a unitary, integrative framework drawing on the vision of public management and governance adopted by the programme.
2. Help participants develop a creative mindset and substantial actionable knowledge for decision-making, innovation and change in institutions operating in the field. This objective is pursued by providing participants with the opportunity of learning how to:
 - develop their technical abilities, by putting scientific knowledge in context and maximizing the interplay between concepts and practice;
 - improve their personal social abilities, by offering an educational setting that builds on existing experience and challenges individual and social behaviour.
3. Provide institutions operating in the field with a source of competent talent and a scientific partner for mutual co-operation and knowledge development.
4. Provide SDA Bocconi School of Management and the scientific community at large with a scientific organisation capable of contributing to the generation of

knowledge in the field of public management and governance, as well as innovation in management education.

The above mentioned objectives are pursued in an international perspective, with attention to:

1. Public management knowledge and experience developed in different domestic domains (i.e. national public sectors).
2. The peculiarities of public management in institutions and programmes dealing with global and trans-national public interests, such as multilateral organisations and NGOs.
3. The implications and value of cultural diversity in both public management issues and learning dynamics.

The general prerequisites for the MPM programme are an overall education career from primary school to undergraduate degree should be at least 15 years including the degree. The University central admissions office controls that the relevant documentation meets bureaucratic entry requirements. There are no specific public administration requirements for the MPM. Given the international perspective, there are no prerequisites with respect to public administration. A Bachelor's degree, preferably in a relevant academic subject, such as International Relations or Political Science, is desirable.

The Master of Public Management (MPM) was developed throughout 2003 and was first launched in September 2004; the fourth MPM intake is currently underway. From the onset, the MPM was designed to:

- building on the vision of public management developed in the Public Management Department, which we wanted to share with the rest of the world;
- drawing inspiration from the management education approach developed within the Italian programme, which we believed to be a unique, valuable asset for international participants;
- comparing our design ideas with leading post-graduate programmes of public management all over the world;
- building on a growing number of resident professors with international experience in the field of public management education and a rich network of partnerships with international institutions and individuals (academics and practitioners).

Unlike other programmes, the MPM enjoyed a truly international audience from the onset; in its first year there were 33 participants from 10 countries around the world, including four students from Italy. More specifically:

Figure 8
 Number of students and countries represented (per intake)

Edition	Number of students	Number of countries represented
MPM I	33	10
MPM II	22	11
MPM III	19	10
MPM IV	23	15

Programme Structure

The Master of Public Management is made up of 4 different parts: three terms and the internship period.

The three terms (September – December, January – March, April – June) have different tasks: the first aims to provide basic knowledge of Public Management and provide participants with a common background. The second term introduces managerial functions applied to the Public sector (cost accounting, management control, marketing and communications, law and public management). The third term offers students a wide variety of elective courses, also provided by other programmes (e.g. focused on special topics such as Healthcare). The fourth component of the Master of Public Management is the internship programme. In line with MPM’s mission, the primary function of the internship is to offer students a practical perspective on public management, complementing the learning generated throughout the residential part of the programmes. The internship, which lasts at least three months – comes at the end of the MPM learning path, where experience-based learning has maximum expectations. In order to safeguard high professional standards, the purpose of the internship is not only to enable students to practice public management in a public institution, but to make them accountable for producing a valuable result for the host institution. In this perspective, students are required to act professionally within the host organisation and pursue their given work assignment. The host institution is similarly encouraged to select such an assignment and expect commitment and performance by the student.

Summing up the previous points, the expected outcomes of the internship are:

1. To provide the student with a challenging and professional environment.
2. To generate useful and professional results for the host institution.
3. To enable MPM to complete its assessment of the student’s MPM performance by reviewing a final report.

The actual content of the internship assignment is decided jointly by the host institution and the student. It is acknowledged, however, that this decision must take the specific needs and goals of the host institution into account. The MPM pro-

gramme offers advice to both the intern and the host institution in order to aid the creation of a project that is feasible and in line with the academic requirements of the Bocconi Faculty. At the end of the internship, students have to submit an internship report, consisting of a document given both to the host organisation and the MPM Management Committee. The internship is mandatory for completion of the MPM learning path and to fulfil the credit requirements for the MPM degree. No prerequisites are set, but as internship opportunities are generated through negotiations with the host institutions, the requirements of the latter may apply.

Figure 9 shows placement information relating to MPM alumni.

Figure 9
Placement details for MPM students.

Host organisation	Location
Price Waterhouse Coopers	Stellenbosch, South Africa
European Bank of Reconstruction and Development	London, UK
Economic and Financial Affairs DG in Luxembourg	Luxembourg
ENIA	Parma, Italy
EUSA	Taiwan, China
FAO	Rome, Italy
IBM	Wroclaw, Poland
ILO	Turin, Italy
ISKUR	Istanbul, Turkey
Italian Embassy	Belgrade, Serbia
IUCN	Brussels, Belgium
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Sophia, Bulgaria
OHCHR	Geneva, Switzerland
UNCTAD + European Com DG Development	Geneva, Switzerland
UNDP UNECE	Geneva + Azerbaijan
UNESCO	Paris, France
UNOPS	Nairobi, Kenya and Geneva, Switzerland

Next steps

Having now achieved EAPAA (European Association for Public Administration Accreditation), the Master of Public Management hopes to finalise international agreements for the provision of concurrent courses and double degrees, namely the new double degree programme with IOMBA (international organisation MBA) provided by Geneva University starting in 2008 – 09. The goal is to offer international students the opportunity to study for 2 degrees (an MBA and a MPM)

in three semesters. In the near future, the Master of Public Management will be involved in a new network of programmes to give students a wider variety of opportunities and specialisations (elective courses will be organized in majors with a specific focus: no profit management, consultancy management for the public sector, environmental management, e-government). Bilateral agreements with other leading universities will give the Master of Public Management a truly international focus and offer students the best opportunities in terms of the quality of subjects and their future career.

4. Conclusion

Bocconi University Graduate School and its School of Management are investing a great deal of effort in internationalisation. Its two programmes (LS CLAPI and MPM) meet different needs and approach different targets. The CLAPI Master of Science is essentially a pre-experience programme, while MPM has an increasing number of mature applicants. The CLAPI M.Sc. is closely linked to the University system provided by the Graduate School with a vast majority of Italian students, while MPM is run by the School of Management (like MBAs) and has more non-Italian students. Naturally, there are some positive externalities and spill-overs in managing the two programmes with greater coordination (the forthcoming double degree with the University of Geneva and its MBA on international organisations is a clear example).

These programmes give Bocconi University the opportunity to offer targeted programmes to the entire education “market” on public management topics, globally instead of nationally. This can also be seen by looking at the composition of the faculty of the two programmes. On the whole, both programmes are taught by resident faculty and visiting professors from leading schools of public affairs from around the world. However, the focus of their lecture and the pedagogic methods they use are different. The MPM programme stands out for the diverse and international background of its participants and topics are discussed by presenting operative tools and logic that are easily applied in the professional environment. The focus of the discussion is broad and the examples and case studies analysed focus both on developing and higher income economies. At the CLAPI Master of Science, most courses provide students with a sound theoretical basis of economics and public management applied to domestic and international case studies.

The Bologna Declaration reform and its application in the context of Italian higher education was a major input for structuring such a diverse offer for domestic and international students interested in public management issues. It contributed to the differentiation of target participants as well as the flavour of the study plan. As the CLAPI M. Sc. is a programme incorporated in the 3+2 model, it is subject to certain criteria, such as the number of credits per disciplinary area, stipulated by

the Ministry for Higher Education and Research for the awarding of a diploma with legal value. The MPM, however, is a one-year specialised master with fewer limitations in terms of the areas of study and the structure of the study plan. However, the most important institutional constraints on the M.Sc. are not the result of the Bologna Declaration reform, but come from Bocconi Graduate School criteria standardising the Masters of Sciences offered in terms of admission processes, marketing and communication purposes and international opportunities. These procedures are shared by all School programmes, regardless of the students' interests in public management, finance or family businesses. The MPM is not subject to these procedures and has very different recruitment and marketing strategies. Its staff attends the majority of international fairs and conferences interacting with other institutions and organisation to guarantee a sufficient number of outstanding applicants.

On the other hand, the CLAPI M. Sc. takes advantage of all University services, including the career service, with its dedicated staff supporting student internships and placements, and the international relations office and its University-wide exchange agreements. Given the economics and management background shared by students, CLAPI M.Sc. students can also take advantage of University level partnerships with Schools of Management around the world in addition to agreements signed with other Schools of Public Affairs and the dual degree programmes. The University currently offers about 80 exchange agreements for students with leading Universities on all continents, offering programmes in management and economics. MPM students can only partially benefit from these opportunities according to the student's background, their heterogeneous age and differences in tuition fees.

It is also a clear and common view at Bocconi that it will soon be time to start looking at the output and outcomes of internationalisation. The real questions are the following: do MPAs deliver? How can we measure their performance?

It is not an easy task: literature and most research focus on MBAs, without research controls (Dugan Grady, Payne & Johnson, 1999) and centre on narrow samples from three or less schools (Pfeffer, 1977).

MBA uses the salary of students to measure performance but research undertaken in 2002 shows that there is little economic gain for an individual in getting an MBA unless he or she attends a top-ranked programme. At the same time, Schools of Management over-emphasise management as a science and not a profession based on best evidence practice (Mintzberg 2004).

Literature would not appear to be useful and we must consider whether assessing the performance of the programmes is really the point currently. The main issue to address is the assessment of the level of internationalisation of master programmes. Is offering a programme in English enough? If not, how should the level of internationalisation of these programmes be measured? Three key successful areas should be considered: content, faculty and the heterogeneous background of the class.

Globalisation should also affect master programmes to some extent and Universities have to start delivering programmes without frontiers in term of the topics discussed, a truly international and multidisciplinary faculty and the heterogeneity of the students in class. These programmes should also include exchange programmes, double/joint degrees and internship opportunities in order to bypass possible concerns regarding the working skills of graduates. Finally, Master programmes may be provided by several networking institutions in the very near future. Such Master programmes would have the additional benefit of providing a balanced approach and analysis from multiple perspectives of what it means to be a Public Manager in an international arena. Thus, the purpose of Universities and Management Schools will no longer be to offer MPA programmes, but to train Public Managers for the 21st century.

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Between Tradition and Modernity the Past, Present and Future of Public Administration Degree Programmes in Poland

Witold Mikulowski

Summary

Introduction – Subject, objectives and approach of the study

- 1. Historical background and post communist development of PA programmes of higher education in Poland**
 - 1.1 Origins and heritage of PA programmes and their development under the communist rule.
 - 1.2 Development of PA degree programmes after the fall of the communist regime.
- 2. General overview and assessment of existing PA degree programmes in Poland**
 - 2.1 Place of PA programmes in the Polish system of higher education institutions.
 - 2.2 Problems of PA programmes' standards, assessment and accreditation in a national and international context.
 - 2.3 PA programmes' curricula, resources and methods of teaching.
 - 2.4 Research and consultancy activities and their impact on curricula development and on the teaching and learning processes.
 - 2.5 National and international environment of public administration education,
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3. Conditions and prospects of further development of Polish PA degree programmes in the Bologna Process perspective

3.1 Main problems of PA education in Poland.

3.2 Conditions, orientations and prospects of PA education in Poland.

Introduction

This study presents the evolution of public administration degree programmes in Poland (hereafter PA programmes), tries to assess their present situation and to identify some conditions and prospects of their improvement and future development in the Bologna Declaration perspective.

After the fall of communist rule in 1989, the administrative reforms and the break in the state monopoly of higher education¹ have created a new dynamic for the development of public administration education. Presently, we have in Poland two types of PA programmes: officially recognised, bachelor and master degree programmes, delivered by public as well as private institutions of higher education, and a constantly growing number of professional post-graduate training programmes². A large number of post-graduate programmes, in the largely considered field of public sector administration and management, are delivered by the majority of existing institutions of higher education and scientific research. Generally, they require no official authorisation and no-one assesses their quality³. Nowadays in Poland, we have no post-graduate special master or doctorate PA 3rd degree programmes, officially recognised as such and supervised by educational authorities⁴.

We will analyse the PA Bachelor and Master Degree programmes delivered by the public and private or non-governmental institutions of higher education and

1 In fact, this monopoly suffered some exceptions in Poland. Poland was the only country in the communist block with three private higher education institutions: the Catholic University in Lublin, the Academy of Catholic Theology in Warsaw and Pope's Theological Faculty in Cracow, recognised as such by the State, running officially recognised programmes and delivering academic degrees. But, they had no PA programme.

2 The creation in 1990 of the National School of Public Administration (NSPA) should be considered separately. It is placed under the authority and control of the Prime Minister, is totally independent of the higher education system and delivers the post-graduate programme ensuring direct entry into middle management official positions in the civil service.

3 Official authorisation to deliver this type of programme is required only when the institution of higher education concerned has no officially authorised degree programme in the same field. They are often considered mainly as a money-making business for the delivering institution, as well as for its academic staff. Certificates, sanctioning these programmes, frequently legitimise political appointments in different public sector and government-controlled semi-public institutions for the cronies of governing parties without any real qualifications and experience.

4 However, few programmes of this type have been developed and conducted in the past in cooperation with foreign partner educational institutions. They could correspond to the 3rd degree programmes requirements of the Bologna system.

placed under the authority and/or supervision of the Minister in charge of Higher Education (presently the Minister of Science and Higher Education). The analyses concern mainly autonomous degree programmes formally classified as Public Administration programmes.

However, we also consider the specialisations of other discipline degree programmes concerning specific public administration fields, public management and/or public policies issues. This concerns different programmes of the faculties specialised in Business Management, Economy, Finance and Banking, Medicine, Pedagogy, Political Science, Sociology and different technical and professional schools of higher education. They are officially agreed and recognised by the Ministry in charge of Higher Education as these faculties' programmes and they must respect official standards, not of PA programmes, but of the specific standards of these faculties.

The study begins with a general presentation of the historical background and evolution of public administration programmes and the basic information concerning the variety and quantity of presently functioning degree programmes. The core part of our study contains a general overview and assessment of presently existing PA degree programmes and their national and international environment. In the conclusions the main problems of the present system of PA education in Poland are identified in the context of the Bologna process implementation and some conditions and activities necessary to its further development and improvement are indicated.

1. Historical background and post communist development of PA programmes of higher education in Poland

1.1 Origins and historical heritage of PA programmes and their development under the communist rule

Teaching public administration has a very long tradition in Poland. The first School of Administrative Sciences was created in Warsaw in 1811, during the period of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. Very soon, this school merged with the Warsaw School of Law which had been created a bit earlier – in 1808 – and in 1816 was transformed into the Faculty of Law and Administration, the first faculty of the new Royal University of Warsaw⁵. From this time, Public Administration was considered as a subject of studies which were naturally and inseparably linked to the study of Law. This was also the case during the period of the second Polish Republic (1918 – 1939).

5 Warsaw at that time was the capital of the Polish Kingdom created in 1915, containing only part of the former independent Republic uniting the Polish Kingdom and Lithuanian Principality, and placed under the sovereignty of the Russian Empire, with the Russian Emperor Alexander the 1st as the King of Poland.

Post 1945 Poland did not have any educational institutions or programmes specialising in PA. The study of Law, Economics, History and Social Sciences were the preferable pre-entry studies which opened the way for careers in the public sector. However, any level and speciality of a technical or general education were sufficient if the candidate was considered politically correct, loyal and active. The last criterion was even more important than any educational level and speciality; even high ranking officials at that time often had no higher education at all.

After 1956, the post-Stalinist liberalisation, economic difficulties and relatively open access to the western world, led to the recognition of the need for more competent administrators and managers. As a consequence, Public Administration, as a specific autonomous programme, appeared in the sixties, when 3-year programmes of Professional Administrative Studies (Polish abbreviation ZSA) were created at certain Law Faculties. These programmes were organised exclusively during weekend sessions (every two weeks) and were destined to the communist party apparatus, police and security services, army, public administration and enterprise officials, occupying managerial positions with no formal qualification at a higher education level. Progressively, the ambition of those people with ZSA certificates was to complete their studies in order to obtain a master degree and ensure that no-one would contest their aptitude to occupy such a position, which required full higher education⁶. To meet their expectation a new, two-year programme of Complementary Master Degree Administrative Studies was introduced in the seventies. In this way the 3 + 2 system was introduced in Poland well before the Bologna Agreement, but only for a limited number of programmes, particular types of studies (fortnightly weekend sessions) and for specific types of students (state and Party officials)⁷. Soon, these Public Administration programmes were also introduced for ordinary students, but only as uniform 5-year long master degree programmes. Certain Law Faculties were renamed at that occasion “Faculties of Law and Administration”. Due to the large number of candidates for this type of study, all faculties conducting these programmes were progressively opening subsidiary training centres in other

6 During this period, all higher curricula were organised as 5-year programmes (7 years for medical studies) and ended with a master (magister) degree. Any other post-secondary education was considered as incomplete higher education and there was no lower degree than a master in the official educational system. This situation was partly justified as a reaction to the post-war period of introduction and enforcement of the communist regime when many accelerated “higher education” programmes were developed with easy access (even without a high school certificate) to promote the active and merited followers of the regime, especially in such sensitive fields as the judiciary but also in other important fields such as medicine, technical education or teachers’ training. This policy opened the way for the promotion of many incompetent but zealous supporters of the regime. This policy was stopped and reversed after 1956 and the relative democratisation of the Stalinist system. From that time, the idea that only full five-year programmes could be considered as real higher education is deeply enrooted in the consciousness of the Polish people.

7 Out of the public administration programme, similar facilities were organised in pedagogical colleges and technical schools of engineering).

locations. Some of these centres were later transformed into independent professional schools of higher education or even autonomous universities.

During this period, the State maintained the monopoly of higher education and the number of higher education institutions was limited, as well as their infrastructures and teaching staff. Therefore, they were recruiting a limited number of full-time and part-time students and were obliged to organise very selective, competitive entry examinations, even if, in the minds of the important bosses of the Party and State apparatus, it was in fact, rather a simple formality to accomplish.

1.2 Development of PA degree programmes after the fall of the communist regime

With the liberalisation of the economy, non-governmental and private schools of higher education began very quickly to spread all over the country. There were two complementary reasons for this development. The first was the demographic boom and rapidly growing number of young people with diplomas from secondary schools. The second was the large demand for better-educated staff with higher education degrees, created by the rapid development of the private sector and the creation of local self-government but also the rapidly growing structures of the governmental administration. This demand was particularly strong in the fields of business and public administration.

In the beginning, this trend contributed to a rapid development of private schools of higher education. Later on, not only public universities, but also other types of public schools of higher education, began to develop a new degree programme in most demanded specialities. The majority of these programmes were organised on a part-time basis (fortnightly weekend sessions) for working students. For this reason, in Poland we now have PA programmes run by public schools and faculties of different profiles. A certain number of private schools were created especially to deliver PA programmes and bear the name of Higher School of Public Administration or have the term "Administration" as part of their denomination. More and more frequently, even public schools of agriculture, engineering and medicine are conducting PA programmes or other public sector management oriented degree programmes or sub-programmes.

In the 2005/2006 academic year, official PA master degree programmes were delivered by 14 public universities' Faculties of Law, or Law and Administration, Academy of Economics in Cracow and the Warsaw Polytechnic School. The bachelor PA degree programmes were conducted by 27 various public institutions of higher education (see Table 1 below).

Table 1
Public institutions of higher education delivering PA degree programmes
(2005/2006)

Type of institution	MPA	BPA
Univ. Faculties of Law or Law & Admin. (17)	14	14
Technical schools (20)	1	2
Pedagogical schools		3
Schools of economics	1	
Professional schools of HE (34)		7
Higher School of Police (1)		1
Principal School of Fire-fighters (1)		1
Total public institution of HE	16	27

Source: "Informator maturalysty 2005/2006" (Guide for higher education candidates), following Pawelska-Skrzypek, 2006: 31 – 33

In the same period, 288 private and non-governmental institutions of higher education were offering 75 PA degree programmes (including 7 graduate or long-term master degrees).

We shall add to these numbers the various other programmes in the faculties specialising in other branches of education, delivering sub-programmes, named "specialisations" in the different sectors of public administration and management. We can see below in Table2, that more than one hundred such public sector oriented programmes and specialisations were available at that time.

At present, some 117 localities have at least one school of higher education and every regional, and even some sub-regional towns have at least one higher education, public or/and private, institution. In 2007, following Public Information Bulletin 325, existing private schools of higher education offer 62 bachelor and 10 degree PA programmes⁸. Working, part-time students represent a large majority of their attendants.

The quantitative development of PA and other public sector oriented programmes and specialisations reflect, in the first place, generally a low level of qualifications of public sector employees inherited from the communist era. The second reason is the large demand for new competences in different fields of public sector management and public governance, due to development of new, more democratic

⁸ Private schools are also conducting:

- 47 bachelor and 10 master degree programmes in political Science;
- 21 bachelor degrees on European Studies (there are no master degree programmes in this field yet), and
- 81 bachelor degrees in Management (or Management and Marketing); 36 of them also deliver a master degree.

and decentralised models of governance, especially at the local level. In our further developments we also analyse the problems of their quality.

Table2

Degree programmes of different faculties containing specialisation in different fields of public administration or public sector management

School & faculties profiles	Programme	NB	Speciality (sub-programme)	NB
Local self-government • Finance	Admin. & Public Finance	1 (P)	Local Economy & Finance	1(P)
Local self-government • Political Sciences	Political Science		Policy studies	3 (P) 4 (PR)
Local Policy • Political Science • Management • Economy	Regional policy Reg. Economy Spatial Econ.	1 (P) 1 (P) 1 (PR) 2 (P) 1 (PR)	Sociology Rural Economy	5 (P) 8 (PR) 6 (PR)
Public Health • Political Science • Health Management	Public health	3 (P) 9 (PR) 11 (P)	Health Management	18 (P)
Management & Marketing	Management & Marketing		Local Self-Gov. Management Public Marketing	2 (P) 1 (PR) 14(P) 2 (PR)
Educational studies • Pedagogy • Management			Pedagogy Local Community Animation Physical Education Philosophy	4 (P) 1(PR) 1 (P) 1 (P)
Customs			Customs Servicing	1 (PR)
Economics			Public Economy	4 (P) 4 (PR)
Environment Studies	Protection & management of natural environment	2(P)	- Environment engineering • Management & production process engineering	4 (P) 3 (P)
Finance & Banking			Public finance	3 (PR)
TOTAL	Programmes	13 (P) 11 (PR) 24		51 (P) 29(PR) 80

Source: "Informator maturzysty 2005/2006" (Guide for higher education candidates) following Pawelska-Skrzypek, 2006, 31 – 33

2. General overview of PA programmes in Poland

2.1 Place of PA programmes in the Polish system of higher education institutions

The Polish higher education system is presently ruled by the Law on Higher Education (Act of 27 July 2005)⁹. The Law distinguishes traditional, full academic institutions: universities, polytechnics, academies (of Economics, Medicine, Agriculture and Sport) and vocational (professional) schools of higher education¹⁰. Institutions of higher education can be public, as well as private. Some specific rules of this legislation govern private institutions, giving them more autonomy concerning mainly the areas of their organisation and financial and personnel management.

The vocational (professional) schools of higher education mainly deliver undergraduate bachelor degree programmes. However, they open the way to further education, which can permit obtaining a master degree in full academic institutions. The latter are authorised to provide an undergraduate bachelor degree, complementary 2-year as well as uniform 5-year long graduate master degree programmes and, under some supplementary conditions, also doctorate degree programmes. Both types of institutions are placed under the supervision of the Minister in charge of Higher Education¹¹. The differences between vocational and academic institutions of higher education lie mainly in the number and academic level of the teaching staff required to conduct the programmes¹². Otherwise, there are no different standards for degree programmes in vocational and academic institutions and both programmes are, in practice, academically (theoretically) rather than vocationally oriented. However, the vocational schools often employ professionals available in their direct environment (many of them were created in provincial centres where there are no academic type institutions).

The Minister in charge of Higher Education disposes of a consultative body – the General Council of Higher Education (GCHE), which proposes, for the Min-

9 They are governed by the Act of 27 July 2005, Law on Higher Education which replaced two separate Acts: the Act on Higher Education of 12 September 1990, and Act of 26 June 1997, which governed non-university “vocational schools” of higher education. The new act is extremely detailed. It contains 277 articles covering 95 pages (in English Adobe Reader version).

10 The Polish version of this act uses the term “vocational” (or “professional”) school of higher education, which is translated into the English version published in the official Bulletin of Public Information as “non-university higher education institution”. This term is defined as “a higher education institution providing first cycle, second cycle or long cycle programmes which is not authorised to confer an academic degree of doctor” (art.2.1.23 of the Act).

11 Except in a certain number of specialised schools (medicine, military higher education, art studies, etc.), which are placed under the supervision of the ministers in charge of these domains (Health, National Defence, Culture, etc.).

12 To run a vocational school of higher education, the Act requires at least 4 full-time academic teachers with habilitated doctor degrees (professors or assistant professor) and 6 with doctor's degree (PHD).

ister's approval, the names of fields of study and degree programme requirements. The same Council adopts and submits, for approval by the Minister's regulation, general standards and programme minima for each type of programme. These standards contain:

1. General requirements (the minimum teaching hours, semesters and ECTS points);
2. Expected qualifications to be acquired by the programme's graduates;
3. General framework of the programme contents¹³;
4. Internship requirements (minimal duration)
5. Other requirements (hours of physical education, foreign languages, information technology, etc.).

The margin left it up to the individual schools to use their imagination, their innovation, initiative and adaptation to the changing needs and new trends in the scientific development in the programme's field of studies, which is rather narrow and schools' autonomy in this domain is limited.

However, the new Law on Higher Education offers certain possibilities to develop a more interdisciplinary approach. In fact, it introduced two new concepts: "*macro-field of study*" defined as "*an area of study combining fields of study which have similar degree programme requirements*" and "*interdisciplinary programme*" defined as "*a degree programme provided jointly in various fields of study by authorised organisational units of one or more higher educational institution*". However, to obtain such official authorisation requires a very long procedure with very uncertain results. It is not astonishing, that until now, at least in the fields related to the public sector administration and management, none of these new types of programme had been developed and proposed for assessment and the authorisation of the educational authorities.

The respect of the official standards is required for the official authorisation to conduct the programme and to deliver corresponding diplomas. All these standards were supposed to be adopted at the end of 2006. However, for certain fields of studies, these standards are already published, but not yet approved. This applies mainly to the case of interdisciplinary programmes, such as European Studies and Public Administration.

Moreover, the programme standards do not differentiate between full-time and part-time studies. This means that both forms of studies are supposed to have the same curricula. It is completely unrealistic and never respected in practice. Actually, they have the same duration (number of semesters) but the part-time programmes

¹³ It includes: The list of matters, contact hours and ECTS points for the group of basic general matters and field oriented courses (to choose from the proposed list) and the list of compulsory matters in each of these 2 groups, minimal numbers of contact hours and basic elements of their contents.

present more or less 60 % of full-time programme classroom contact hours. This must have, and really have in fact, a negative impact on the quality of the part-time studies and on the appreciation of their graduates in the employment market¹⁴

For supervision of the development of higher education institutions and the implementation of the quality standards of their programmes, the Minister in charge of Higher Education disposes of the State Accreditation Committee (SAC) – a statutory consultative body created by the Act of 20th July, 2001. Now the SAC is governed by the new Law on Higher Education, which determines its mission, composition and organisational structure. The present Statute of the Committee, adopted by the resolution of its Plenary Session on 13th October 2005,¹⁵ determined its tasks, internal organisation and its day-to-day running.

The SAC presents to the Minister its opinions and proposals concerning:

- The establishment of a new higher education institution;
- The authorisation for a given institution to conduct higher education programmes in any given field and at any given level of study;
- The assessment conducted by the Committee of the quality of education provided by the given programme, including the training of teachers and compliance with requirements to the provision of degree programmes;
- Fulfilment of other conditions required by special regulations to conduct higher education activities.

The Committee is governed by the President, Secretary and Presidium. It is organised into sections, grouping the programmes belonging to 11 main families of scientific disciplines considered as the main fields of higher education¹⁶. Public Administration programmes are followed by the Section of Social and Law Studies, which does not include any economists and specialists of management. On the other hand, other public sector oriented programmes and specialisations are followed by the sections representing the scientific branch of their attachment and may not contain any jurist¹⁷. Such a system is evidently not well adapted to modern interdisciplinary studies.

14 Financial interests supporting this practice are crucial for both the institutions concerned and their clients. Therefore everyone is hypocritically turning a blind eye and do not want to see and discuss this embarrassing problem (Mikulowski, 2006: 19, Kiezun, 2007).

15 Uniform text of this resolution published in 2007 includes modifications introduced by resolution Nr 1 of 23rd November, 2006.

16 The Committee includes 11 groups of fields of studies: 1) humanity, 2) natural sciences, 3) mathematics, physics and chemistry, 4) agricultural, forestry and veterinary sciences, 5) medical sciences, 6) physical education, 7) engineering and technology, 8) economics, 9) social sciences and law, 10) fine arts, 11) military sciences.

17 For instance, public sector management programmes are followed and assessed by the Team of Economic Studies specialists.

The quality of education evaluation follows the guidelines adopted by the resolution of the Committee's Executive Presidium. Recently, the Presidium of the SAC has adopted detailed common general requirements and assessment criteria for all plans of studies and teaching programmes (resolution of 8th February, 2007)¹⁸.

The periodic evaluation of each higher education programme is compulsory and is organised systematically, following a pre-established calendar known in advance to the institutions¹⁹ concerned.

2.2 PA programmes' standards and their application in the national and international context

The story of PA programmes' standards is long, turbulent and not yet completed. The question of quality standards of higher education PA programmes began to be discussed in 2000 when the first draft project coming from the Ministry in charge of Higher Education was disseminated for discussion in all the institutions concerned. The project was analysed and discussed, among others, by the then newly

18 The evaluation begins with the preparation of a self-evaluation report, followed by a site visit. The evaluating team prepares its report, containing the assessment of the fulfilment of conditions required by the regulations, and the opinion on the quality of education delivered. The report should contain:

- 1) short presentation of the institution, its history, legal status, internal structure, staff, number of students, financial resources and its budgetary allocation, etc.;
- 2) presentation of the organisational unit in charge of the field of education containing the programme;
- 3) detailed description of the academic and non-academic staff of the organisational staff of the unit including the system of assessment of the academic staff;
- 4) presentation of the education process, rules of recruitment, number of students per year and mode of education, students' profile, teaching methods and materials, learning conditions, system of assessment, etc.;
- 5) students' social affairs, students' organisations, fees, internships, sport and recreation facilities, etc.;
- 6) research activities of the unit;
- 7) national and international co-operation;
- 8) the most significant achievements;
- 9) the most important weaknesses of the unit;
- 10) its plans for the future.

On the basis of this report, the Presidium adopts a resolution containing the assessment results, which are submitted to the Committee Plenary Session for approval. The assessment can rate the programme as "outstanding", "positive", "conditional" or "negative". In the case of rating the programme "conditional", the resolution of the SAC should contain the recommendations and a calendar for their implementation. The programme curricula should be annexed to the report. The SAC transmits the resolution to the Minister and the institution concerned. The Minister decides to cancel or suspend the authorisation to run a negatively evaluated programme.

19 SAC produces annually the report of its activities. In 2006, SAC assessed the quality of 407 degree programmes, realised 316 site visits in 186 schools of higher education and formulated opinions on 383 authorisation requests. During this year, for the first time, 42 experts representing students participated in about 100 site visit teams.

created Association for Public Administration Education (SEAP). The project was strongly criticised for its very traditional, dominantly legal approach. In reaction, in 2001, SEAP proposed to the Ministry its own counter-project based on a much more modern, interdisciplinary approach, inspired by the standards and common practice in Western Europe and North America (Mikulowski, 2003). This project found strong opposition from the traditional Law and Administration faculties, which reacted by adopting another project of PA degree programmes' standards by the resolution of the Conference of Deans of Faculties of Law and Administration of Polish Universities in September, 2002. The deans' standards represented, once again, a traditional and mainly juridical approach. Both projects have influenced and are still influencing institutions running PA programmes. But, the influence of the deans project seems over-weighted and new official standards and programme minima for PA degree programmes, even if not yet sanctioned by the Minister's regulation, are already officially published and used in practice by the SAC teams assessing the PA programmes²⁰. However, more ambitious institutions are trying to use the margin of liberty left them by these standards and are combining compulsory elements with the more modern and interdisciplinary approach of the SEAP project. Also, the latest SAC team in charge of PA programmes took a stand for modernisation and is interpreting official standards trying to conciliate, as far as possible, both apparently contradictory approaches.

The PA programmes' standards, presently applied by SAC, are clearly and strongly privileging legal components representing more than half of the programme minima components. In practice, legal matters are occupying often much more space, especially in public institutions. For example, at Warsaw University, they represent 90 % of PA programmes and 75 % in Bielsko-Biala Higher School of Public Administration (Pawelska-Skrzypek, 2006: 25)

We can find more interdisciplinary approaches and better proportions of different PA programmes' core matters in private institutions and also in public schools where PA programmes are not attached to the Law or Law and Administration Departments. Generally speaking, the differences between different PA programmes mainly reflect the school profile and corresponding profiles of their academic staff. This phenomenon also explains the fact that the schools without a Law Faculty often prefer to develop programmes in other fields of studies, even if in fact, they are focused on governance and public administration issues (Stelmasiak & Stefaniuk, 2006:90).

The PA programmes standards contain only minima requirements and leave theoretically sufficient place for school specificity and necessary modernisation. But, it is possibly only adding matters and teaching contact hours to the compulsory

20 These standards are obviously defending the position and interests of the Law and Law and Administration faculties, which were not convinced, nor interested in a substantive modernisation of their PA programmes and the introduction of a more interdisciplinary approach.

minima. In fact, most of the authorised programmes offer much more programme matter and teaching hours than standard minima requirements. However, unfortunately, often they also add other legal matters instead of developing a more interdisciplinary approach. These schools, which wish to modernise and re-equilibrate the proportion of different core matters, must inevitably overload their programmes, which makes it impossible to rationalise and modernise their teaching methods.

In this situation, present PA programmes' standards still remain far from the philosophy of the European Association of Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA) accreditation criteria. From this point of view, the main problem lies not in the fact that the present Polish standards do not correspond to EAPAA's. Actually, the latter are taking into consideration a very large spectrum of programme profiles and specialisation, but under two conditions: that curriculum components contain substance proving that the programme is basically concentrated on public administration issues and, that it is really of a multi-disciplinary character. It means that they are looking to see if the programme covers more or less equitably all disciplines considered fundamental for public administration studies²¹, even if one of these disciplines is given more place in the programme, taking into account its specialisation. The problem is that the Polish standards recognise as PA programmes only those programmes which have a predominantly juridical profile, and are, ipso facto, excluding all other programmes focused on public administration issues, but privileging other core disciplines entering into a more modern, interdisciplinary approach to this field of studies.

2.3 Programme organisation, curricula and methods of teaching in the perspective of the Bologna Declaration and prospects of international accreditation

2.3.1 Programme's faculty and faculty nucleus

PA programmes are rarely organised in PA departments or Institutes. All universities and many other schools delivering PA programmes have no concrete component, or "basic organisational unit", using the terminology of the Law on Higher Education, which can be considered as the PA programme faculty nucleus. Generally, PA programmes are included in larger organisational units (departments) composed of two or more programmes considered as belonging to the same family of disciplines. This is particularly evident in the case of PA programmes within Law or Law and Administration Faculties (departments) of the universities. But, even in the case of the professional (vocational) Higher Schools of Public Administration, it

21 All programmes are always multi-disciplinary to some extent, in the sense that they encompass not only one scientific discipline but also some elements of other disciplines, necessary to build a general culture and situate the main subject of studies in the larger context of its cultural and scientific environment. We can consider as multi-disciplinary, the programme referring to several scientific disciplines combined in equitable proportion and where none of them is secondary or simply supporting another, considered as main or obviously dominating.

is often difficult to identify any distinct organisational unit particularly in charge of PA programmes. In private schools, the decisions concerning programme contents are generally strongly centralised and concentrate at the top managerial (rector) level. The rector generally entrusts one person to conceive proposals, which are discussed in a small committee, then submitted for approval by the School's Senates, largely dominated by an older generation of professors, representing all schools' departments and programmes. Many of them are not really competent and interested in this sector of activity. Actually, the PA programmes have no specific institutional framework for systematic programme evaluation and improvement. As a consequence, the innovations are not based on a bottom-up process and democratic debate, which should involve every level of academic staff actually participating in the development and delivery of these particular programmes. In practice, very few members of academic staff consider themselves as being mainly attached to the PA programmes and feel responsible for their coherence and quality.

The further successful development of PA programmes, and even in many cases, their survival in a more and more competitive market of higher education needs reinforcement and more autonomous programme organisation. This organisation should be built on an active, institutionalised and participatory system of regular self-assessment and constant improvement, modernisation and innovation of programmes' curricula. Some sort of programme council should systematically analyse the curricula with a view to ensuring their coherence with programmes' missions and objectives, the logic of the sequence and internal economy of their components. Closer analyses of the contents of different subjects could help to avoid frequent overlaps and/or omission of important problems and clarify their interdependence. It could permit diminishing their number (merging some of them together or eliminating if they are considered to be overlapping or unnecessary elements) and/or reduce the number of hours of lectures. This could give more time to the students to do their individual work, to permit them to read and write more, and more actively participate in the learning process under the control and advice of more available academic staff.

The programme council should be composed of the academic staff representing all programme core components and specialities and who are really involved in the teaching process. The opinions and recommendations of this council concerning important changes in programme curricula could be submitted to the upper level (s) of the school authorities (Faculty or Department Council and/or Senate) for approval. Also, on the other hand, any opinion, proposal or recommendation concerning programme curricula, should not be submitted to the upper levels of organisations before former internal discussion by the programme council.

The council could work during plenary sessions and in working groups formed to examine problems concerning a group of inter-related subjects or other particu-

lar problems of programme delivery (teaching methods, internships organisation, etc.)

2.3.2 PA programmes' curricula, resources and methods of teaching

As we have already mentioned above, administrative studies in Poland are largely dominated by the study of Law and more particularly, Administrative and Constitutional Law. The autonomy and specificity of administrative studies were never completely recognised. The administrative studies graduates are rated much lower than Law graduates. In comparison with Law studies, the programmes of administrative studies contain a slightly larger proportion of Administrative Law, Public Finance and Financial Law, some History of Public Administration and some hours of Administrative Science, which can also contain some elements of public management. The programme generally also contains a course on Organisation and Management, but this tends to be rather business oriented because public management specialists have been until now, very rare, especially among university professors.

Like most other programmes of higher education in Poland, the programmes for full-time students are heavily overloaded with teaching classroom hours. This is particularly evident for the 5-year long MA programme curriculum.

In the Leon Kozminski Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management (LKAEM), considered as one of the best private business school in Poland, there are 65 different components containing 2,862 classroom contact hours²². This does not leave much time for individual work in the library or at home or teamwork out of classrooms. The specialisation courses are reserved only for MA programmes and are delivered only during the last two years. They include only five courses plus a seminar for the preparation of the final thesis. Once a student chooses his specialisation, all five become compulsory. This means that in practice, all courses are compulsory. Only a few, very good students can follow a more supple individual track²³. Other students can take some additional courses from other specialisations or even other programmes. However this is not easy when the compulsory programme is already overloaded. Generally, one term course has 30 class contact hours (16 for part-time students) and two term courses of 60 hours. But, certain specialisation courses have only half of this and sometimes even less (8 hours). These short courses should be considered rather as monographs²⁴.

The number of class contact hours for part-time students (one-and-a-half-day sessions every two weeks during the weekends) represents about 60 % of the time allotted to the full-time students, almost exclusively ex-cathedra lectures. The part-

22 One classroom contact hour lasts 45 minutes in the Polish system at all educational levels.

23 The Law on Higher Education allows students to "follow an individual study plan and curriculum pursuant to the rules laid down by the board of a basic organisational unit or other body indicated in the statutes" (art.171.2 of the Act of 27 July 2005).

24 Monographs are special courses consecrated to deepen a specific subjects, aspects or problems of larger matters.

time students, who are generally full time employees, also have much less time for individual work, but are supposed to follow the same curriculum, learn the same contents of the same programme and receive the same degree. Logically it should mean one of two things – that the number of class contact hours of full-time students could be significantly reduced, or, that the number of hours of part-time students is largely insufficient to learn the same programme. In fact, I personally think that both considerations are true.

The workload of the students should contain less classroom contact hours for passive reception of knowledge, leaving them more time for more active and participatory learning. More importance should be given to the personal research based on more comprehensive readings of Polish and foreign literature, preparation and presentation of working papers, case studies analyses, etc. and other forms of students' active, continuous, systematic personal involvement in the learning process.

In parallel, the remunerated workload of academic staff should count not only lectures, classes and seminars, but also include tutoring time and individual consultations. In this way, with less classroom contact hours, the level of their remuneration might be maintained, without supplementary costs.

Compulsory internships should be introduced for all students who have no professional experience of public service activities, including working part-time students if their present job has little or nothing to do with their study programme. Closer relations and effective co-operation with a professional environment, including more frequent engagement of qualified and experienced professionals as teaching staff, should play an important role in this process.

A reduced number of curricula components (regrouping, merging and/or eliminating certain subjects) and a reduced number of classroom contact hours should permit reserving more time for individual and team-work and contacts with academic staff out of classrooms. More flexible programmes should give more possibilities to adopt curriculum to the students' specific needs and interests and give them the opportunity to deepen their specialisation. Individualisation of curricula should include it being possible to take credits from programmes of other disciplines or develop a certain number of interdisciplinary courses common for programmes of different disciplines.

2.3.3 Differentiation between first (Bachelor) and second (Master) cycle education

The Bologna Declaration, distinguishing two levels of higher education, do not make much sense if each level does not have its own finalisation and does not offer any prospects for rational insertion into a corresponding level and domain of professional life. Therefore, the curriculum of each programme and teaching methods should be adapted to a mission statement for each programme, describing the professional profiles of its graduates. When a school offers three different pro-

grammes: BA, MA complementary 2-year programme and a unique MA five-year programme, and students choose from the very beginning which one they want to follow, then logically the BA and first three years of the long MA programme should differ. If not, the BA programme does not have its own finalisation and the long MA makes not sense other than that the students of the BA option are following a seminar preparing a thesis and a final exam.

Presently, the institutions, which are delivering all 3 types of programme, are following almost the same curriculum during the first 3 years (except the seminar, which long MA students are not following). The logic of the sequence of their components is conceived on the basis of the long MA programme and, as a consequence, such BPA programmes are often open ended, do not offer any specialisation and have no own finality and corresponding logic to its curriculum. This situation reinforces the common opinion that BPA degrees cannot be considered as a full higher education programme, which goes against the principles of the Bologna Declaration, which stipulate that *“The degree awarded after the first cycle shall also be relevant to the European labour market as an appropriate level of qualification”*. It is also compromising the chances of this type of BPA for EAPAA accreditation.

Taking into account that, the specialisation track starts often only in the last year of the programme, there are no significant differences in graduates' profiles. The main difference comes from the choice of the seminar, preparing the final thesis and the exam. The seminar is compulsory for students in the last (third) year of a bachelor degree programme and covers most often, the last three terms for students of a master degree programme. The choice offered to them depends, in fact, more often on the availability of academic staff with at least a doctorate degree, than of any other rationality or faculty policy. The majority of these seminars are conducted by jurists and they concern mainly legal questions, sometimes with no relation to the field of public administration. This situation is related probably to the difficulty of understanding the specificity of a multi-disciplinary programme. In fact, in the case of mono-disciplinary programmes such as Law, Economics, Sociology or Marketing and Management, it is easier to distinguish the main field of studies from the subsidiary disciplines and no-one even thinks to propose one of the latter as a field of final specialisation.

The lack of a specific mission for autonomous graduate master degree programmes can have some negative consequences on the prospects of further development of this type of programme in the context of a more and more competitive market of higher education services in Poland. This programme should have its own logic and structure, attracting bachelors in public administration and also bachelors of other close disciplines wanting to specialise in public governance issues. It will have much more chance of attracting them if it is innovative and modern, than by trying to conform to the form and contents of the majority PA programmes existing in traditional Polish universities.

It would be good to formulate more precisely and concretely the mission of each programme, indicating professional profiles of programme graduates. It could facilitate improving programme curricula specialisation and teaching methods adapting them to their missions and objectives. One of these objectives should be the promotion of PA undergraduate programmes and the competences of its graduates. It requires development and implementation of a specific marketing programme, active development of closer relations with potential employers and the follow-up and well-maintained contacts with programme graduates, who should be the first to be interested and involved in these activities.

However, for the long term, the most effective promotion will be granted through the quality of programme graduates, proving the adequacy of their education to the needs of a modern democratic public administration in their role of efficient public servants or “interaction managers” working in other sectors. This promotion can be effectively supported by more active participation in the existing informal rankings organised systematically by opinion making media where PA programmes are, till now, dramatically absent.

2.3.4 Teaching staff

More schools and more students need more teaching staff. In particular, public sector education suffers from a lack of qualified teaching staff since the growing private economy can offer them much better opportunities²⁵. In this situation, the only solution was to increase the workload of the existing teaching staff²⁶. Many professors started to teach in two, three or even more public and private schools, with other extra jobs in other fields of activity. The growing demand for teaching staff coincided with a very low remuneration of academic staff, particularly in the public sector. Without a doubt, the increased workload of teaching staff in public education institutions has not helped to increase the quality of teaching. Furthermore, facing financial problems and difficulties in keeping their teaching staff, public universities are developing new post-graduate and graduate programmes based on evening courses or external education for students paying their fees.

In the situation of an unlimited and, at the beginning, weakly controlled development of higher education institutions, “all participants of higher education system in Poland (students, academics, schools of higher education and government) were simply trapped by the invisible hand of the market” (Buchner – Jeziorska, 2001:18). In fact, we still have high unemployment, even amongst well-educated

25 During the 90s about 15 % of staff has left higher education for managerial functions in private and public enterprises.

26 The number of teaching staff in private schools of higher education grew from 1210 in 1993 to 8472 in 2000. But the number of students for one teacher passed, at the same time, from 23.9 to 49.4 and most of them are teaching in more than one institution. This situation can be partly attributed to the policy of successive governments which, due to the lack of a strategic planning at central government level, were unable to develop and implement early enough an adequate policy of higher education and scientific research.

young people, and at the same time, a strong demand for higher education from young people and their parents, to give them a better chance to find a good job. The schools of higher education (both public and private) cannot expect a lot of help from the State, which continues to reserve a very limited budget for higher education and research. Therefore these institutions, to secure their survival and further development, need a lot of “clients” paying fees for their education. This is legally doubtful because the new Polish Constitution contains the principle of free education, but it is now legally sanctioned by the new Law on Higher Education, which is accepting to charge fees by public schools for certain educational services²⁷.

The new Law has limited the possibility of academic staff teaching in other institutions. It introduces the notion of a primary appointment and academic staff may be employed in only one institution in this position. The appointment of academic staff can be established only on a full-time basis employment. More than one supplementary employment on the contractual basis requires the prior consent of the rector. The SAC is progressively reinforcing quality control over all programmes of higher education and controls the conformity of the teaching staff quantity and quality to the general requirements for different levels of degree programmes and particular requirements of different programme standards.

At the same time, the demographic situation is progressively changing. The number of potential students is progressively falling and, in 2010, the population between 19 and 24 will reduce in comparison to 2004 of about 600 thousand (Buchner – Jeziorska, 2001:23). This factor also plays in favour of better quality of education and should contribute to eliminating a large number of weaker schools and to ameliorate the ratio students/teachers in the better ones.

An insufficient number of teaching staff could be fully compensated by the larger use of professionals working in public administration or even private or non-governmental institutions. This is actually often the case in small provincial schools, but then, their qualifications for teaching certain basic matters are sometimes doubtful. However, a well organised and better targeted selection of professionals for teaching activities could contribute to a better adaptation of programme contents to the needs and reality of the employment market and closer, more effective co-operation of the schools with their institutional environment. It could also help in the rational organisation of students’ internships.

27 The following educational services can be charged by public institutions: the teaching of part-time studies, the repetition of specific courses as part of full-time degree programmes and full time doctoral programmes as a result of unsatisfactory learning achievements, the provision of programmes in a foreign language, the provision of courses which are not included in a study plan and the provision for no-degree postgraduate programmes and retraining courses.

2.4 Students' profiles and their motivations to study public administration

The mode of recruitment for PA programmes depends on the popularity of the PA programme in general; the reputation of the quality of a particular programme in a particular school of higher education and of the specificity of the local employment market²⁸. But generally, there is no need for other factors upon entry to bachelor and uniform master degree PA programmes, than a formal requirement to have a secondary school diploma (BPA programme) or BPA degree (MPA programme). For complementary master degree studies, candidates with bachelor degrees in PA from the same school are generally recruited without any other procedures and candidates from other schools are interviewed and their diplomas analysed. But, even in this case, the selection is more often formal than real. The factor of the general trend and mode are also playing an important role. In 2005, PA programmes occupied 8th position in the ranking of the most popular fields of studies among public schools of higher education, with 13,700 candidates (average of 6.3 candidates for 1 place).

The main reasons for the lack of a substantive selection for entry in the majority of schools delivering PA programmes are financial. On the open market of higher education services, with a constantly falling number of candidates, the competition is becoming harsh. Private schools have no other resources than the students' fees and for public institutions the fees are an important source of revenue. If the school has a certain number of comparative advantages, such as an excellent reputation and good learning conditions, its fees are rather high in comparison with other schools offering the same programmes. The number of candidates is diminishing and entry selection could reduce and endanger the status of the programmes.

However, lack of selection on entry obviously has a negative impact on the quality of the students, who are often very weakly prepared, lacking the necessary basic knowledge, intellectual capacity and/or interest and motivation to study Public Administration.

In a longer perspective, this policy of recruitment seems dangerous. It endangers the reputation of the PA programmes. Paradoxically, more selective recruitment could permit the enhancement of the quality of education, to build up the reputation of the PA programmes on the excellence of their graduates and could finally attract more candidates. This approach could be particularly of worth for the master degree programmes in the situation where there is a very large number of

28 In 2006, the number of candidates for the 13 most popular PA full-time programmes in public schools varied from 12.7 for 1 place at the Opole University (large regional town) to 1.6 at the Professional School of Higher Education in Gorzow Wielkopolski (smaller sub-regional town). In 2004, the PA programmes of the Opole University were even more popular with 20 candidates for 1 place; it has occupied 11th place in the ranking of most popular programmes and 1st place went to the European Studies in Nicolas Copernicus University of Torun with 33.6 candidates for 1 place.

schools running BPA programmes and less schools authorised to run master degree programmes.

There are no systematic investigations and official statistics concerning profiles, origins and motivations of PA programme students. However, personal investigations, conducted regularly with part-time students, permit me to make some credible evaluations. We can distinguish presently four categories of part-time students. About one-third are middle aged people working mainly, but not exclusively, in public institutions and occupying managerial or clerical positions. They are highly motivated because they are defending their jobs or trying to open the way for promotion. Another tier is composed of young people, unemployed or occupying jobs in the private sector, who do not require any higher education but who hope to find any job and are willing to upgrade their present social status. These people are motivated to obtain any higher education degree and the choice of a PA programme is more or less accidental (often because PA programmes are considered easy). They often present a very limited general education, no real particular interest or knowledge of governance issues and a very limited ability to study at an academic level. The third group is composed of wealthy young people more interested by the social advantages of being a student than by the subject of their studies. There is another quickly growing group of students composed of young dynamic people, studying PA as a second programme, the first one being a full-time programme. They believe that to have two degrees in different fields of speciality, instead of one, give them more chance on the labour market. They are motivated and ambitious but, to follow, in parallel, 2 overloaded programmes, is not easy. The last and sad finding of this investigation is, that very few students look really interested and attracted by a career in the civil service.

2.5 PA programmes' graduates profile and the needs of the employment market

All central and local government authorities are playing triple roles: political (political power game functions), policymaking and administrative – managerial²⁹. As the main actors of the political power game, they are supporting the governing party (or coalition) and more particularly its political programme. They are playing a leading role in the policymaking, which means the translation of this general programme, its orientations and priorities, on concrete policies aiming at the realisation of programme general goals and concrete objectives. Finally, as the administrative authorities, they are responsible for the implementation of the policies and good functioning of governing machinery in conformity with the constitutional order. All these

29 In the Polish theory of public administration, the spheres of politics and policy making are not clearly distinguished and are considered together as a “politic sphere”. Michal Kulesza and Adam Bodasiewicz are distinguishing executive administration *stricto sensu* and “the so-called governance-support administration structures supporting and providing service to the prime minister and individual ministers, helping them to perform their political functions” (2007: 37).

roles are complementary, inter-related and inter-dependent and their frontiers are often confused and difficult to define³⁰. Each of these roles and functions requires competent civil servants as well as their competent counterparts and interfaces in the social and economic environment. The necessary knowledge and know-how present a very large spectrum of competences. Of course, all of them cannot be included in the PA degree programmes, but their general overview of all combined, with a more profound specialisation in certain of them, should constitute the base for a PA education philosophy. Present PA degree programmes' standards and most of the presently existing programmes are not following this approach. Their mainly juridical profile, with insufficient knowledge and understanding of the policymaking process and public management issues, is reducing their value to the public employment market and diminishing their chances in the competition for senior civil service positions. In fact, very few PA programme graduates are presently occupying this type of position and job vacancy announcements very seldom refer to a PA programme diploma.

The programmes' curricula need modernisation in their present form and contents with a view to improving their adequacy to the needs of modern public administration and to the common practice in higher education in other European countries. Modernised curricula should give more place to the subjects, important for the improvement of democratic governance and efficiency of public administration, such as Public Management, Public Sector Economy, Public Policy, Public Finance and Public Service Ethics, and less to the formal legal aspects of public activity (particularly private Law components).

30 *Certain political functions* are carried out by the PR, press and communication units, which are responsible for the protection and promotion of the image of the political authority and for effective marketing of their policy and activities. They are ensuring communication and good relations with other authorities, media and political, business and social environment. Successful execution of these tasks requires professional knowledge and proved skills of PR and communication techniques as well as some experience of political relations.

The policymaking includes policy formulation, the conception of an institutional and legal framework, follow-up control and evaluation of the implementation process. These activities are piloted and coordinated by the political cabinets. But, the conceptual work is concentrated in the strategic research and planning and logistic support units and substantive line departments. It requires highly qualified professional, objective and critical expertise. The experts from these units should closely co-operate with specialists from concerned substantive line departments. The policymaking process often involves special advisory and consultative bodies as well as external think tanks, specialised research institutions and/or private consulting firms, which need highly qualified experts in public administration and management.

The administrative executive and managerial functions concern different fields of governmental responsibility and the strategic management of financial, human and material resources. They require highly qualified and experienced high ranking officials, able to integrate institutional memory, mastering institutional, legal and social constraints and opportunities and able to stir, survey, control and regulate the implementation of adopted policies and execution of repetitive regulatory (administrative decisions) and managerial functions.

2.6 The place and value of PA programmes and their graduates in the employment market

2.6.1 Specificity, status and image of the PA degree programmes in the employment market

An official, centralised and uniform system of higher education quality assurance cannot respond entirely to the growing pressure of a competitive market and the social aspirations of young people and their parents, more and more aware of the importance of real quality in the education received, rather than their formal recognition and certification.

The official recognition by the ministerial authority only gives an entrance ticket, but to be a winner in the market, the most important roles are playing the comparative advantages of the costs of education and common opinion about the obtained degree's market value.

The supposed quality of an educational offer and its often aggressive marketing, are based on three main arguments: position obtained in rankings annually organised and largely diffused by the media, national and especially international accreditations and intensity of different forms of bilateral co-operation with foreign educational institutions.

Lack of clear specificity of majority PA programme profiles has a negative impact on the image of PA programmes graduates in the employment market. Very often graduates of these programmes are considered as incomplete jurists. This opinion has particularly heavy consequences for young bachelors of PA without any professional experience, because in practice, their graduation certificates are not recognised as an asset and better starting point for a career in public administration than French Literature or Archaeology.

The BPA programme should not be considered merely as the first stage of education preparing for a master degree programme, but, in conformity with the Bologna strategy, as an autonomous programme preparing directly to professional life. Otherwise, it is contributing to maintain the traditional archaic conviction that only uniform five-year master degree programmes can be considered as true higher education³¹.

2.6.2 Rankings

Official governmental sources are giving very limited information to the public concerning the quality of the assessed programmes and they are not establishing and publishing any official rankings or ratings. Neither are they largely publicising

³¹ It is not just a coincidence that Law Faculties are categorically rejecting any attempt to introduce bachelor degree programmes and recognise the possibility of any juridical profession or position for people with an undergraduate level of legal studies, despite the fact that it is common practice in all developed, democratic countries.

their negative opinions and sanctioning decisions to present potential candidates with the risk of taking misguided decisions.

This role is played in Poland only by the independent media. For around the past 15 years, some important daily newspapers and periodicals are systematically organising and publishing their annual rankings of the best schools and programmes of higher education³². These rankings include both public and private schools³³. The main objective of these rankings is to facilitate the choice of the main stakeholders i.e. the candidates and their parents, giving them an idea of the quality of an existing educational offer. However, the criteria used in rankings of higher education institutions and programmes gives some indications but no proof. The validity of the criteria used in these rankings such as prestige or scientific strength, as well as the methodology of their application, were often contested (Jalowiecki, 2002). However, despite their superficiality and doubtful validity of their criteria and methodology, they are offering a good opportunity for schools to promote their programmes and it motivates them to ameliorate at least the quality of indicators used in the rankings. It can also inspire them to initiate a self-assessment and to organise their internal system of quality management.

The rankings are certainly an important tool of development in the competitive market of higher education. They would be much more useful if they could consider programmes rather than schools and also take specifically into consideration PA programmes³⁴. Unfortunately, they are ignoring their importance reflecting a very low interest attached to these programmes in the employment market.

32 They are: important daily opinion journal *Rzeczpospolita*, weekly *Wprost*, *Polityka*, *Profit* and *Newsweek* and monthly *Perspektywy*.

33 The participation in these rankings is not compulsory and certain schools, even some public universities, are refusing, for different reasons, to participate in the process (refusing to answer a questionnaire) and are not taken into account. The principles of these rankings are constantly updated on the basis of earlier experience but still their criteria of appreciation and indicators of quality are controversial. The schools are evaluated taking into account slightly different criteria and are using different methods of investigation. The scope of these rankings varies too. Some concern only managerial education, others only selected types of programmes: Economics and Business Management, Law, Sociology, Psychology, Political Sciences, Pedagogy and Informatics. None of these rankings is treating specifically PA programmes.

34 These rankings are based on evaluation following a certain number of criteria. The prestige of the school has certainly a qualitative character but also is a most subjective one and can differ following the population addressed. The scientific strength should be considered rather as a potential which can enhance the quality of education but its real impact cannot be easily demonstrated. It is also much more significant for the quality of the highest level of education and less on the professional level (bachelor degree). The learning conditions are certainly favouring the quality of education but it cannot be considered as a decisive factor. In sum, the rankings of this type are rather situating the potential of the quality than the quality itself. The latter are determined by the usefulness of programme contents (knowledge and know-how) in relation to present and future social needs, modernity and effectiveness of pedagogical methods and teaching materials and the quality of graduates, measured by their professional success and their preparation for the functions conform to their specialty.

2.7 Research and consultancy activities and their impact on curricula development and the teaching process

The quality and autonomy of PA programmes depend in the first place on the autonomy and development of their roots and hinterland of scientific research. Unfortunately, this is probably the weakest point. The faculties of Law or Law and Administration have sometimes Chairs of Administrative Science or History of Administration but the number of scientific staff specialised in these fields is very small, especially with habilitated doctor degrees or full professors. Public management remains practically unknown in this milieu, composed almost exclusively of public law specialists.

Very few educational and/or research institutions conduct research activities in the field of public administration based on interdisciplinary or at least not a basically legal approach. Most often, this kind of research is conducted in University Management Departments, in rare Public Affairs Institutes or in schools of economic and commercial studies. The publications in this field are still rare and specialised scientific reviews practically non-existent, even if certain reviews are more and more frequently publishing some articles in this domain. The Polish National School of Public Administration has no research activity or an own review. The Polish Academy of Science has no institute or unit specialised in public administration or public management and the only valuable quarterly review – “Civil Service” – has recently disappeared, together with the Civil Service Office abolished by the new government coalition.

Each PA degree programme should have its distinctive institutional framework, based on faculty nucleus, composed of academic staff really feeling attached to the programme, able, motivated and empowered by the school authorities to conceive, implement, follow and assess the strategy and planning of the programme's constant development. This strategy should aim at the quality improvement and effectiveness of the learning process and adaptation of the programme contents to the needs of the employment market. It should contain the development of research activities linked and interacting with the learning process. This research should have more empirical, problem solving, interdisciplinary orientation and should involve the students preparing their working papers and final thesis. These researches should preferably be organised in a networking system with other national, foreign or international institutions. It would effectively help to build PA programmes' autonomy, reinforce their status and position within their own institution and to develop badly needed research centres in the field of public administration and management. In fact, serious development of an important and autonomous research constitutes the necessary backbone for every field of educational activity. Without it, the PA degree programmes will continue to be treated and considered as useful, but marginal partners, in educational and research systems and, last but not least, their graduates will never have a strong position in the employment market.

In many countries, consulting activities are also creating a very useful hinterland for public administration studies and research. This is the case of the French ENA and many schools and institutes of public administration in other west and central European countries where consulting activities are bringing supplementary resources and precious experience useful for the educational process. Unfortunately, despite Polish experience in the field of public administration reforms, it is not yet the case in Poland. In practice, this experience is exploited more often on individual bases in different EU or UN projects abroad.

2.8 PA programmes in their institutional environment

2.8.1 National and international networking and scientific co-operation

Up until now, at the state level, international co-operation in the field of public administration has concerned mainly training programmes and the improvement of professional skills of administrative personnel, while systematic interaction in the sphere of education for future civil servants is generally missing.

Polish institutions running PA programmes have their own networking organisation named the Association of Public Administration Education (Polish abbreviation SEAP) created at a founding meeting organised in Bialystok in 1999. Certain important international institutions such as OCDE-SIGMA, USAID and USIA participated in this meeting and are continuing to co-operate and support SEAP activities³⁵.

Each year, SEAP organises its annual scientific conference and publishing conference proceedings. As we have already mentioned, SEAP has prepared and submitted in 2001 to the Ministry in charge of Higher Education its own project of PA programmes' standards, which were also largely disseminated amongst all schools running this type of programme.

SEAP also promotes EAPAA standards and accreditation procedures. The bachelor degree PA programme of non-governmental Higher School of Public Administration in Bialystok is one of the first central and eastern European programmes awarded with EAPAA accreditation.

Out of the SEAP national and international network and the participation of a certain number of individual academics and researchers in the activities of the above mentioned international organisations, such as working groups and common publications of presented papers, bilateral scientific and academic co-operation between Polish and foreign institutions of public administration education are more occasional than institutional.

³⁵ SEAP has 127 individual and collective members representing 54 institutions and is actively cooperating with NISPACEE, EGPA, AISIA, EAPAA and NASPAA. Its individual members regularly participate in international conferences and seminars organised by these institutions and SEAP itself has hosted several times some of these events in Poland.

However, the exchange of students, visiting professors or common research programmes are not well developed in the field of public administration or public management, in comparison with other disciplines, such as Business Management, Law, European Studies or Sociology. Once again the problem lies mainly in a lack of institutional autonomy in this field of studies and specialised research centres.

2.8.2 Links and co-operation with public administration and political, economic and social environment

At the national level, the co-operation between the Civil Service Office and the Association for Public Administration Education (SEAP) was promising and growing closer. But, this did not have any considerable effects. It did not influence the policy of recruitment for the civil service and the definition of qualifications required from the candidates for civil servants, as well as the contents of curricula and learning methods in the schools and facilities for future administrative personnel. Recently (in 2006), the Civil Service Office was dissolved as an autonomous institution and this co-operation no longer exists.

An urgent task, in that field, is to index the professions of specialists in administration and public management, both at the level of bachelors and masters and their place in public administration structures and job descriptions. This requires the adoption of more modern standards for the curricula, organisation of student practical internships and the introduction of selection and recruitment based on knowledge in the fields of public administration, public management, and policy-making, tested during the qualifying procedures.

The relations of schools or faculties running PA programmes with their political, economic and social environment are stronger and more effective in the case of small educational institutions located in smaller provincial centres than in the case of strong university faculties and large, well-developed academic institutions situated in metropolitan cities. The smaller provincial schools are playing a more important role in their direct environment and their PA programmes have a much bigger impact on the local employment market and beneficiary institutions. They have less, if any, local competitors and they are using more frequently locally hired professionals as complementary academic staff, which gives them in return, stronger support of local authorities and facilitates the organisation of the internships programmes for their students and follow-up of their final research memories. Generally, important local personalities sit on the schools' managing board and/or senate.

In big metropolitan centres exist several competing educational institutions running many programmes and the PA programmes are naturally less influential and less integrated with the local social and political environment.

3. Conditions and Prospects of Further Development of Polish PA Degree Programmes in the Bologna Declaration Perspective

As we have seen above, present PA programmes in Poland have no clearly formulated mission statement and specific “philosophy” setting out their general assumptions, programme and graduates’ profiles and particular objectives. They rarely have a hinterland of an autonomous, institutionalised scientific research unit, which could ennoble them and free them from the stigma of an offspring derived from the study of Law, just good enough to satisfy the casual need to complete the education of uneducated administrative staff from the public and private sector. This is an important point i.e. there is this profoundly enrooted common opinion which considers PA studies as being less exigent, with lower standards and producing weaker graduates than traditional Law or Management studies.

This opinion is reinforced by the fact that in the Polish higher education system, a bachelor degree in Law does not exist and, unfortunately, continues to be considered as inconceivable. It creates an unnecessary inflation of master degree graduates and pushes all bachelors to continue with graduate studies, even if they do not have the necessary abilities to pursue higher academic education. It considerably lowers the academic level of master degree studies and their graduates who, at the end of their studies, are obliged to occupy most frequently, middle or even lower level positions, in public administration. This solution is irrational because it is costly for the Administration as well as for students and their parents and gives a false impression that the general level of education in the country is rapidly progressing.

However, the PA programmes, particularly those which are not institutionally attached or dependent on their teaching staff of traditional Law and Administration faculties, generally have the important potential to improve and modernise their curricula and teaching methods and to develop valuable research in the field of public administration and public management.

This is particularly the case of the faculties of Management which should play a leading role in necessary PA programme modernisation. In fact, an important portion of their most experienced academic staff was involved in research in this field before the fall of the communist regime, when the frontiers between public and business management were much less evident than now. These faculties have specialists and research centres in almost every core discipline, composing the multi-disciplinary domain of public administration and management. Their young academic staff, preparing their doctorate degrees, can be easily oriented (or reoriented) to this domain, dynamically developing all over the world. Public sector management can certainly be considered as a most promising market niche for further

development of educational and research activities. It only needs to take this option and change some presently dominating bad prejudices and mental habits.

The most important point is to stop considering PA programmes as less a noble field of activity than Business Management, Law or Political Science. PA programmes should not be considered instrumentally as useful only, or mainly as one of the easy sources of revenue, which should be invested in the quality of the present flagship programmes of Law, Business Management or Finance and Banking. The school authorities should be convinced that PA programmes can also become one of, if not their main flagship programme, and can also earn money as such because there is a large demand for high competences in this field.

The BPA programmes should strive to become a high quality reference model for other programmes, proving that their graduates can meet HR needs and competency requirements of a modern public and also private sector. The only issue from this present pathological situation is to promote and give more value to the bachelor degree level of education in general, and more particularly BPA programmes. Therefore, information and promotion of BPA programmes and their graduates should become an important element of their mission.

Leading public and private schools and faculties delivering PA programmes should be aware, that with a growing inflation of much cheaper, traditional low quality PA programmes, the good schools have no chance to confront successfully their low-cost competitors. The only realistic prospect for PA programmes is to aim at high quality, interdisciplinary and modern programmes corresponding to European standards bachelor and complementary master degree programmes. The latter should be based on selective recruitment of their own bachelors and the best candidates coming from the numerous schools running bachelor degree programmes.

The first step to achieve these objectives should be a more realistic and frank adoption of the Bologna strategy. Generally speaking, the implementation of principles of the Bologna Declaration is steadily progressing. Diploma supplements are commonly introduced. The ECTS system of credits is generally applied even if the possibility to acquire credits in non-higher education contexts remains unfortunately difficult to conceive. Two main cycles – undergraduate and graduate – were already introduced into PA education in the sixties and 5-year master degree programmes are supposed to disappear soon.

The main difficulties concern the *promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance* and *necessary European dimension in higher education*. The EAPAA accreditation criteria and interdisciplinary approach are not easy to conciliate with the official, mainly legally-oriented PA programmes' standards, and are not taken into consideration by the SAC evaluation teams. Up until now, only one BPA programme has received European accreditation. Inter-institutional co-operation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research, already very common in other fields, such as Management and Marketing, are not

yet developed with regard to PA degree programmes. The doctorate degree PA programmes are not developed and will have difficulty in developing without more dynamic development of the research institutions specialised in this field.

Effective (not only formal) introduction of the real ECTS system and intensive preparation to obtain the EAPAA accreditation for different PA programmes are necessary. Also, more selective recruitment, especially for master degree programmes, its European or International specialisation and progressive introduction of use of foreign languages³⁶ in the learning process should decisively contribute to the implementation of this strategy.

Another important step should be the development of partnerships with a good quality foreign partner (or partners) of modern, high quality Master of Public Administration, Public Management and Policy Studies postgraduate programmes.

The necessity of reform and modernisation of public administration education were rarely discussed and no official document presenting a global strategy of education in public administration has ever been presented, discussed or adopted. Certain policies developed already in the early 1960s still dominate, to a large extent, the main stream of public administration education and traditional faculties of Law and Law and Administration are still continuing to offer slightly modified PA programmes conceived more than 45 years ago.

Present official standards and programme minima of PA programmes representing a dominantly legal approach to public administration studies, cannot be defended eternally. Even if the graduates of PA programmes, based on the concept of "limited Law studies" completed with some elements of certain other disciplines, may correspond to certain needs of public institutions, there are many other and more important competency needs, which this profile of administrative studies cannot satisfy. More particularly, two very important dimension of public administration education: public management and public policy, remains neglected.

The creation and successful development of the National School of Public Administration (build on French ENA model) in 1990, combined with a dynamic development of private higher education schools offering BPA and even MPA programmes, independent of traditional faculties of Law and Administration, can be considered as the first steps towards a new orientation of development in this field. Actually, more and more public and private schools are developing PA programmes challenging the traditional, legalistic approach and, in close collaboration with their foreign partners in the European Union and beyond, they are trying to update and modernise them following the Bologna Declaration requirements.

Dynamic development of public sector oriented specialities within a framework of degree programmes in other fields of studies, is bypassing the formal obstacles of official PA standards. Also, the present PA programmes' evaluation team

³⁶ Presently none of PA degree programmes in Poland is delivering courses in foreign languages.

of the PCA is no longer formally defending the traditional approach to PA degree programmes. However, a real change in the present officially sanctioned practice in this field requires open discussion and the adoption of a new, officially sanctioned development strategy built upon a reviewed and updated theoretical background. However, this strategy requires some institutional changes, the mobilisation of necessary human resources through better competency and knowledge management of the resource already available, and a new approach to their future development. It should be elaborated in close collaboration with all stakeholders: employers, government bodies in charge of the educational system, public and private training, research institutions and the civil society organisations concerned.

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The Bologna Process in Romania's Public Administration Higher Education Programmes: Case Study on Department of Public Administration

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the restructuring of curricula and the functioning of the Department of Public Administration (DPA) of Babes-Bolyai University, Romania during the implementation of the Bologna requirements. The reform of the public administration and the regulations addressing the restructuring of the higher education institutions within the Bologna framework represented important background factors for the decision-making during this process. The initial lack of conceptualisation of the public administration reform in Romania and the inconsistency of the provisions of the Bologna Process (BP) have represented not only hindrances during this time, but also possibilities to promote change and innovative ideas about the reform of public administration and the reform of higher education in the field of public administration.

The history and evolution of the DPA played a significant role in the process. Section 2 discusses the mission and objectives of the department in relationship with public administration reform and with the reform efforts of the PA higher education programmes. The mission and objectives of department were framed according to a modernising perspective from the beginning, therefore establishing for the unit a particular place among other public administration schools in Romania. DPA was to shift the focus of PA education from the application of the law to service delivery for citizens. The choices made regarding the mission and objectives of the department were made at important points in structuring the debate about public administration reform.

In Section 3, policy conditions, curriculum, personnel and international cooperation are discussed as dimensions for the implementation of the BP. The Department's assumed role and mission to educate graduates able to provide knowl-

edge and skills needed for the public administration reform provided the central line of argumentation for promoting change.

Section 4 summarises the present state of this process and identifies future developments in the larger context of the Romanian educational system.

2. Mission and the objectives of the department within the context of the PA reform. Implications for the Romanian higher education programs in public administration.

The reform of public administration in Romania during the 1990's had a very tortuous evolution. Public administration was seen only as an instrument to apply the law. The functioning of institutions was politicised and bureaucratised; administrative capacity was low and rapid and inconsistent changes of the legislation created an uncertain climate in the functioning of the public institutions. This led to increased criticized at both the domestic and international levels. At the end of the '90s, external pressures coming from the European Union (EU) and from other international stakeholders made the administrative reform a top priority, closely intertwined with the process of joining the European Union¹. The rhythm of changes accelerated after 2001, when various measures addressing institutional and personnel changes were implemented.

The focus shifted from applying the law to service delivery to the citizen. Weberianism and New Public Management had to be introduced almost simultaneously²; the lack of proper preparation in implementing the changes led to confusion and resistance – aspects that also had to be addressed via the policy process. The language used throughout the policy documents was increasingly managerial and, to a lesser extent, juridical. Public administration has entered into a phase of public management reform (at all levels – planning, implementation, and evaluation). In recent years, the reform in public administration has been evident in high level policy documents. Chapter 11 of the current Government Program for 2005 – 2008 introduced a change in focus, emphasising the importance of improved service delivery to the citizen³. The current National Program for Reforms⁴ is encouraging for the future direction of the reform. However, as documented in the literature and through previous experience, reform commitment represents an essential fac-

1 Calin E. Hinteá, Șandor, S. D., Junjan, V. 2004. Administrative Reform in Romania and the European Union in *Driven to Change: The European Union's Enlargement Viewed from the East*. Edited by Antoaneta Dimitrova, Manchester University Press.

2 Campbell A., Coulson A. 2006. Into the Mainstream: Local Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe. *Local Government Studies*, 32:5, 543 – 561.

3 <http://www.gov.ro/obiective/afis-docdiverse-pg.php?iddoc=255>

4 http://www.gov.ro/obiective/200705/pnr_ro_oficial_2.pdf

tor that influences the success of the reform⁵ and must be supported at institutional and social levels.

This evolution has had a serious impact on public administration education and training. The confrontation between the supporters of the legal-based approach and the public management approach took place in contexts ranging from intellectual debates to discussions concerning curriculum criteria for public administration programs. Whereas the law-based programs emphasised that the role of public administration is to enforce the laws, the alternative approach argued that its role is to solve the citizens' demands and problems. One of the arguments in favour of modernisation was that the juridical basis for the administration is necessary in a democratic state but represents only a first step. Further, it was argued that public servants need to acquire and develop new knowledge, skills and abilities in order to deliver the level of services needed by the citizens and current society. The new challenges that practitioners were facing in restructuring their activities encouraged them to accept new expertise in fields previously considered non-essential or non-related to the field of public administration, such as policy analysis, programme evaluation, public sector performance measurement, public sector accounting and budgeting and human resource management. The orientation towards restructuring curriculum along multidisciplinary lines was an important choice to be made – a choice with a long-term impact on the development of public administration education.

Tension between the legal and managerial approaches reached its peak in the second half of the 90's. DPA strongly advocated then for administrative reform and oriented its philosophy towards incorporating modern developments in the field of public administration. Early international exposure⁶ of DPA played an important role, not only in terms of learning about international developments (for instance New Public Management), but also in provoking reflection about their applicability and significance for Romanian reform. The assumed values of the DPA led to a temporary strain in its relationship with other departments in the country.

The Department of Public Administration at Babeş-Bolyai University adhered early on to the idea that the study of public administration is interdisciplinary in nature and should be based on four main pillars:

1. **The law** – Administrative and constitutional law are important because public administration can be regarded as the “law in action” and also because the legislative framework defines and constrains the capacity of public administration

5 Papadimitriou D., Phinnemore D. 2004. Europeanization, Conditionality and Domestic Change: The Twinning Exercise and Administrative Reform in Romania. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 42:3: 619 – 639.

6 Curriculum development projects supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) on one hand, together with faculty member's exchanges via Tempus programs on the other hand are examples of early exposure during the second half of the 90's.

institutions to act. However, public administration is more than just law; good legislation does not necessarily lead to good public administration.

2. **Political science** is important because public administration cannot be separated from politics, the latter being that which delineates the tasks to be accomplished by the public administration. Although both political science and public administration function within a democratic environment, political science embodies the concept of “public” rather than the concept of “administration”.
3. **Sociology** is important because public administration is part of the broader societal system and also because research in public administration borrows methods and techniques used in sociology.
4. **Management** is also important as it enhances the good functioning of public administration. Within the contemporary context described by blurred boundaries between the public and the private sector, the transfers from the management to the public sector are becoming increasingly important.

As a result of this approach, a substantial alteration of the undergraduate curriculum has taken place over the years. In 2000, the curriculum moved to an interdisciplinary approach. The Department of Public Administration has focused over the years on sharing this approach to the study of public administration with other schools of public administration. The meetings of the schools of public administration (later gathered under the institutional framework of the Association of Schools and Institutes of Public Administration⁷) represented a good forum for the exchange of ideas. They have contributed to the acknowledgment of the interdisciplinary character of the study of public administration and to the departure from the dominance of the law. As a result of this approach, a substantial alteration of the undergraduate curriculum has taken place over the years. In 2000, the curriculum moved to an interdisciplinary approach.

The ratio of law-based subjects within the curriculum of BA programs of other public administration departments also decreased (based on data on 11 programs).

A discrepancy remains among the schools of public administration in Romania with regard to which field of study is the dominant one within the curriculum. This can be considered as an advantage for prospective students because they may choose from a large variety of program structures. Three main dimensions – law, economics, and public administration – were employed in order to distinguish among different types of curriculum. The following graphic displays the results:⁸

7 ASIAP (Association of Schools and Institutes of Public Administration) was created in 2001 as an initiative of the DPA, combined with efforts of other departments with reformist views.

8 The numbers represent different undergraduate programs in public administration: 1 – Cluj; 2 – Academy of Economic Sciences, Bucharest; 3 – Constanța; 4 – Galați; 5 – Oradea; 6 – Ploiești; 7 – Sibiu; 8 – National School of Political and Administrative Sciences (SNSPA) Bucharest; 9 – Suceava; 10 – Târgoviște; 11 – Târgu-Mureș.

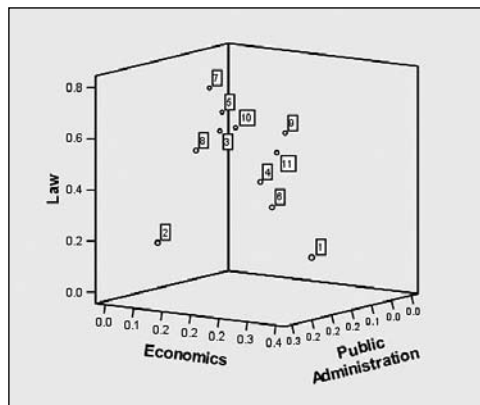
Table 1

Public Administration Higher Education programs in Romania – 2005 – Research conducted by the Department

Type of subject	Ratio (%)
Law	46.4
Economics	15.4
Public administration	12.0
Other social sciences	11.2
Foreign languages and computers	11.0
Specific policies	3.2
Research methods	0.8

Figure 1

Distribution of the PA programs in Romania



The DPA in Cluj-Napoca (labeled 1 above) has a slightly different composition of the curricula when compared to other programs. Although the interdisciplinary character of the study of public administration is now acknowledged and accepted, the study of law continues to dominate the curricula in the majority of public administration programmes in Romania.

3. Implementation of Bologna Process: policy conditions, curriculum, personnel and international cooperation

This section presents the first aspects of the implementation of the Bologna provisions in Romania. Using these as a framework, the discussion focuses next on the organisation structure and the evolution of the public administration program in

the DPA. Further, the way the DPA coped with the impact of the Bologna Process is analysed in terms of the decisions that were made and of the impact that previous international experience of the Department facilitated this coping process⁹.

3.1 Policy framework of Bologna Process in Romania

The Bologna process aims to create a highly competitive European Higher Education Area by 2010. The main directions of the process include:

1. Creating a comparable degree structure, based on three cycles: bachelor degree (three years in most cases), master (two years), and the doctorate (three years);
2. Mobility programs for students, teaching, research and administrative staff accompanied by mutual recognition of degrees and course units based on the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The Diploma Supplement was introduced as an instrument to describe the degree and qualifications obtained in terms of workload, level and learning outcomes;
3. Quality assurance by assessment and accreditation of institutions and academic programs based on common quality standards and procedures.

Romania signed the original Bologna Declaration in 1999. Since then, serious efforts have been made in order to introduce the Bologna principles into reform measures. They appeared in a comprehensive legislation package addressing aspects ranging from the structure of the educational process to competencies needed to be acquired at the end of each educational cycle. The main facets of the process are discussed below.

The Law 288/2004 on the organisation of university studies addresses the issue of a comparable degree structure by introducing a three-cycle structure of the higher education process. The Law came into force in the 2005/2006 academic year. As a result, a substantial alteration of the undergraduate curriculum has taken place over the years. The Ministerial Order no. 3235/2005 concerning the organisation of the first cycle (bachelor) of university studies, the Government Decision no. 404/2006 concerning the organisation of the master degree and the Government Decision no. 567/2005 defining the main objective of the doctoral programs regulate the structure of each cycle.

⁹ DPA does not yet offer a PhD programme. The current material addresses only the impact of the Bologna Process upon Bachelor and Master level programmes.

The three cycles are:

- First cycle (180 – 240 ECTS) – bachelor degree;
- Second cycle (90 – 120 ECTS, exceptionally 60 ECTS) – master degree;
- Third cycle (three years and in special situations four or five years) – doctoral degree

The Ministerial Order No. 3617/16.03.2005 generalises the application of ECTS in Romanian universities. ECTS was first implemented in 1996 as a pilot in the four leading Romanian universities and generalised in 1998. However, it was applied in a rather mechanical way and used primarily for the mobility schemes with foreign partners¹⁰. Beginning in the 2005 – 2006 academic year, the Diploma Supplement was issued by all Higher Education Institutions (HEI).

The law on quality assurance in education, No 87/2006, includes provisions about the methodology for quality assurance in education; quality assurance at the institutional level, external assessment of quality education and institutional arrangements involved in quality assurance. This law also includes the establishment of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. This new organisation replaces the National Council for Academic Evaluation and Accreditation (CNEAA), in place since 1993 and responsible for accreditation, academic evaluation and quality assurance.

The idea of a three-cycle structure has encountered reduced resistance. The most problematic issue was, however, the duration of studies¹¹. Previously existent short-term higher education programs¹² were transformed usually into bachelor programs. Master programs were already in place, most of them designed as one-year programs. The consequence of the focus of the debate on the duration of study was that many academics perceived the Bologna transformation as a threat to their teaching loads¹³. Two types of solutions developed: either to compress four years into three or to transform the fourth year of the bachelor studies into the first year of the master studies. Responses seemed to be primarily directed at a formal level (given the focus on indicators such as: duration of studies, number of contact-hours per week, etc). To a lesser extent, to the authors' knowledge, issues such as

10 At the domestic level, the credit system was perceived as a rather artificial construct.

11 The dilemma was defined in a normative way: "should bachelor studies be designed as a three-year programme or as a four-year programme?" The supporters of the "three plus two" concept versus the "four plus one" were organised in two opposing parties who used arguments related to the specific content of the program to support their position. The "four plus one" camp included law, medical and technical programs and eventually negotiated exceptions from the general rule.

12 Higher education institutions offered short-term education programmes (3-year programmes) and long – term education programmes (4-year programmes). Only the latter led to obtaining a full-university diploma, namely a licence.

13 The salary package at the university level in Romania is still based, to a large extent, on the teaching load.

necessary competencies needed for each education cycle¹⁴, structural connection between courses within each cycle, coordination of curricula between cycles, etc. were addressed.

The problem of the second cycle (master) is the gap between the educational offer and the labour market. Master degrees (previously defined as post-university degrees) were present on the educational market before the BP provisions introduced the division into three cycles. However, current work legislation defines professional requirements in terms of a university licence diploma, thus the equivalent of the bachelor degree. For most job vacancies, only a licence diploma (thus bachelor diploma) is required. Because employers frame the jobs primarily in terms of a licence (bachelor) diploma, master diplomas were less important criteria for the selection and recruitment process¹⁵. The situation is expected to change in 2008 with the arrival on the labour market of the first class of Bologna graduates, who have a three-year bachelor diploma. Two possible reactions from the labour market can be expected: a) employers raise the standards and require additional master qualifications, or b) employers focus on the characteristics of the individual employee and offer possibilities to combine the study for a bachelor degree with working, as the time invested is relatively short¹⁶.

The result of the pre-2008 situation is that students had little incentive to expand their education beyond the first cycle. A notable exception from this situation lies in the field of public administration. As a part of the public administration reform directed towards the professionalisation of the public service, since 2005 a master's degree in public administration is required in order to occupy any managerial position in public institutions¹⁷. The legislation provision that imposed this requirement facilitated a better understanding and acceptance of the role of the second cycle by the labour market, in this case in the field of public administration. The only other situation where master level studies are currently required is the admission to Ph.D. level studies. Reactions after the first two years of applying Bolo-

14 The Law itself included provisions on the competencies, see also footnote 25.

15 The public sector knows more constraints in terms of conditions for hiring, and for entry-level positions a master diploma did not bring added value. The private sector is more flexible in that respect. It should be mentioned that a master diploma brings no financial compensation in terms of salary for the employee.

16 It cannot be estimated how long it will take until work legislation is adjusted in order to take into account the new education conditions and requirements.

17 According to the provisions of the Law nr. 161/2003, civil servants in managerial positions in public institutions need to complete (within three years) a post-university specialisation program with the duration a minimum of one year in an accredited institution (in Romania or abroad) or to obtain the title of PhD in the specialty of the occupied position. It should be noted that the concepts "Post-university education program" and "master" were used almost interchangeably before 2005.

gna are positive, as 80 per cent of Romanian academics believe that the three-cycle structure is an efficient way to organise higher education studies¹⁸.

In terms of mobility programs, the number of Romanian students spending periods of study abroad increased compared to the period prior to 2000. Still, there are problems with the recognition of the courses taken in other universities. Generally, only courses that are similar to those in the curricula, are recognised, leading to frustrations on behalf of students who need to take additional exams upon studying a semester abroad as part of an exchange program. This indicates that there is still a problem in the way the substance and role of the ECTS is understood and applied.

Quality assurance issues (existence of poor quality programs) were not solved by the establishment of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education which took charge of the accreditation process. The present methodology (still under experimentation) is ambiguous; the performance indicators listed are general and permit different interpretations; experts have a great deal of discretion assessing conformance with the standards. It is not clear on which criteria permanent experts were selected. It is difficult to implement such an unclear methodology, and therefore is a wide variety in the quality of the programs.

The above discussion suggests a rather mixed view on the implementation of the Bologna Process. On the one hand, formal aspects of the cycle (such as division of educational cycles, issuing of the Diploma Supplement) were followed carefully. However, the substance of the Process seems to be, in some respects, less understood. One example is the case of recognition of courses followed in other universities, even though the ECTS was developed specifically in order to answer such needs. An even more pressing issue, namely the recognition of the importance of the secondary cycle (master) diploma, is expected to become more pressing with the graduation of the first Bologna cohort. It is regrettable that the compatibilisation of educational conditions (such as duration of studies, type of competencies comprised by a diploma of a certain level) and those of the job market (such as official work legislation, employer's lack of information about educational degrees) were not addressed in a pro-active manner.

3.2 Short history of the DPA

In 1995 Babeş-Bolyai University was one of the first universities in Romania to consider the development of a higher education program in the field of public administration. Until then public administration was not regarded as an independent field of study. The DPA was formed one year later within the organisational framework of the Faculty of Political Science and Administration. At that time, DPA offered

18 Mircea Coșea, Tufiş C.D., Voicu B. 2007. Sistemul universitar românesc. Opiniile cadrelor didactice și ale studenților (Romanian university system. Opinions of teaching staff and students). Fundația Soros România.

only an undergraduate degree¹⁹. The curriculum for the undergraduate program was established at national level and was compulsory for all DPAs. The original curricula consisted of approximately 80 per cent courses in law, and it was designed according to a 1960s version of the legalistic approach. DPA offered one of the very few programs then existent outside law schools.

The establishment of the Public Administration Department within the Faculty of Political Sciences in 1996 is considered an important step towards the re-thinking of the undergraduate programs in the field of public administration in Romania. The most important change stems from a completely different perspective regarding the role of public administration. This perspective originated via early contact with international co-operation programs (with US and European partners in various countries²⁰), co-operation which facilitated not only familiarisation with theoretical developments in the field, but also learning from the experiences of international partners.

International partnerships played a significant role in the restructuring of the curricula. Establishing joint programs²¹, participation in exchanges dedicated to course and curricula design²², seminars and conferences where faculty members of the DPA could make contact with the latest developments in the field were also used later to argue for the curricula choices that were made. One important observation is that, during this process, international partners refrained from offering ready-made solutions to the issues that DPA was facing. However, they recommended conducting local level analyses in order to test the hypotheses about needs with the actual issues faced by the practitioners. Experiences of international partners were also used in order to project possible needs in the future and design solutions for these needs.

Currently, the Department offers BA programs (three years of study, 180 ECTS) in Cluj-Napoca, Bistrița, Satu-Mare, Sfântu-Gheorghe, taught in Romanian, Hungarian and German; a Professional Master Programs (one year, 60 ECTS) in Cluj-Napoca and Satu-Mare; and a Master in Public Administration (two years, 120 ECTS) in Cluj-Napoca, taught in English.

19 Equivalent to the degree of licence (4 years). Until 1995, the university degrees (licence) were 5 years long (except medical sciences degrees that took 6 years), since 1996 the study duration was reduced to 4 years (6 years for medical and 5 years for engineering degrees).

20 Calin E. Hința, Șandor S. D. 2002. East-West Co-operation Models: An Analysis of the “Babes-Bolyai” University Public Administration Programme, in *East-West Co-operation in Public Sector Reform*. Edited by in Frits Van den Berg, Jenei György, Leloup Lance. IOS Press.

21 Master in Public Administration, program developed together with Michigan State University, East Lansing, USA; Nelson Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, State University of New York at Albany; Florida International University; University of Delaware; cooperation also with Corvinus University Budapest, Hungary and University of Genoa, Italy.

22 Faculty members of the DPA have participated to exchange programs dedicated to course development in partner universities in USA, Hungary, and Italy.

The total number of students taught reached 1600 in the 2006/2007 academic year. The transition from a legal-based curriculum to an interdisciplinary curriculum represented a radical change that originated in the perceived need for the rethinking of public administration, both in academic and practitioner circles. Changes and contacts at the international level on the one hand, and domestic requirements for personnel equipped with skills needed to answer the challenges of reform on the other hand, have led to re-thinking the curriculum oriented towards providing the graduates with skills needed to act as change agents for the reform of the public sector.

3.3 Coping with the Bologna Process

In 2002, discussions about introducing the Bologna Process in the Romanian higher education institutions (HEI) gained momentum. The Department of Public Administration appointed an internal team to investigate the challenges associated with the implementation of the BP provisions at the organisation level. The question to be analysed was:

What expected impact has the restructuring of curricula according to the BP provisions as defined by existent provisions upon the functioning of DPA?

The introduction of the three cycles of studies was the first condition that had to be answered. Until that time, the Department offered a bachelor degree (four years, 240 ECTS) in Cluj-Napoca and three short-term degrees (three years, 180 ECTS) in branch campuses. The Master of Public Administration had begun a few years earlier. It had been established within international co-operation and had several specialisation tracks (three at that time, four since 2005), and it was already in the two years of study format, (120 ECTS). It required no further modification²³. The analysis was further focused on the transformation at bachelor level.

The team structured the elements of a SWOT (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) analysis. As a result of interviews with department members, several dimensions for the SWOT analysis were established: personnel, students, finances, curricula, competencies (skills), quality of the teaching process, and organisation/administration of the program. The results on each dimension are summarised in the following table:

²³ Since 2007 this program obtained international accreditation by the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA).

Table 2
SWOT Analysis concerning the situation of DPA in 2002

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current curriculum is well balanced; • Current curriculum is compatible to international standards; • Courses of the program are well prepared and structured, with published teaching materials; • Offering the courses in several languages (Romanian, Hungarian, German) is an attracting point for potential candidates; • Three (later four) well-structured master programs tracks are functional, all developed in cooperation with foreign partners, which represents an attractive point for potential candidates; • High degree of compatibility between four years program and three year program curricula; • DPA has a solid financial situation. 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branch campuses do not have enough personnel, especially for the courses previously taught only in Cluj-Napoca; • Teaching courses in several languages (Romanian, Hungarian, German) raises personnel problems, because it is difficult to find appropriate personnel able to teach in these languages; • Due to the change in curricula, quantity of workload will increase with approx. 15 percent in branch campuses; • Current lack of legislation to support master programs brings difficulties for their further development; • Coordination of curricula with other PA schools; • Although the law requires²⁴ it, there is no clearly defined profile and specific competencies for the graduates; • Personal attachments of the staff members to the courses previously taught and sentimental reactions to the elimination of their course from the curricula.
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring personnel (personnel development) in branch campuses; • Stronger focus on the master program makes it more attractive for potential candidates; • Branch campuses are more attractive because they will offer a full undergraduate curricula and a full-term university diploma²⁵; • curricula improvement will continue within the framework of the Bologna process; • Students have more opportunity for individual work; • A shorter time for university studies will increase attractiveness of the programs for candidates with less time available for study 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreasing number of courses in the curricula could cause some staff to oppose the change due to its negative effects on their workload; • In Cluj-Napoca the hiring and promotion processes would be affected negatively by the decrease in number of courses in curricula; • Decrease in budget of the DPA due to the smaller number of years in study cycles; • Courses in several languages with lower funding could increase budget deficits; • During the transition, working with two different curricula in tandem could raise organisational difficulties: a certain course might have to be taught both for the first and third years; attention should be paid to avoid scheduling the same course in different semesters. • Due to the lower number of years to study (three opposed to four), graduates would be less prepared, would have acquired fewer skills than in current conditions.

The constraints related to the prerequisites, teaching language, and maximum allowed number of contact hours per week had to be taken into account in order to structure the problem:

- Current prerequisites existent in the curricula fit within the sequential logic of the curriculum, and they should be maintained;

- In the branch campus of Satu Mare the curricula are taught in three languages (Romanian, Hungarian and German), and in Sfântu-Gheorghe the curricula are taught in two languages (Romanian and Hungarian);
- The number of hours taught per week should not exceed 20.

Based upon the SWOT analysis and the identified constraints, the following results emerged:

- The transformation according to BP is made in all locations and it begins in the same academic year. The changes in the number of courses and the limit of the contact hours per week result in additional workload in branch campuses. That meant the equivalent of 20 teaching hours, or, according to the requirements of the law, to 11 positions of senior lecturer, and 60 hours of seminars, or five positions of teaching assistant. This could be solved via additional hiring or with redistribution of personnel from Cluj-Napoca to the branch campuses. Language competencies had to be taken into account, as qualified personnel specialised in teaching in Hungarian or German was rather difficult to find.
- Due to the decrease in the number of years of study from four to three, the budget will decrease by an estimated 15 – 20 percent. The budgeting process allocated funds from the national budget according to a system of coefficients, the level of education and the language in which the program is taught. The reference used is as follows: the undergraduate student taught in the Romanian language had a coefficient of 1, a student taught in the Hungarian language had a coefficient of 1.25, an undergraduate student taught in German had a coefficient of 1.25, and a master student taught in an international language (master programs coordinated by the DPA are taught in English) had a coefficient of 6²⁶. The standard amount received from the ministry for a student with coefficient of 1 was, in 2004, 450 Euros per academic year. Since then it has risen to 600 Euros per academic year.

Taking into account all of the above, a first version of the curricula was proposed, then discussed within the two focus groups in Cluj-Napoca and in group

24 The Law no. 288/2004 established the general competencies (skills) required by graduates of undergraduate and master programs. The specific competencies in each field were supposed to be established by the National Conference of the Rectors of the universities. Neither professionals in the field, united in professional associations, nor specialised departments in universities were asked to issue opinions or position papers about these specific competencies. It is not known when the National Conference of the Rectors plans to discuss these specific competencies. According to the Cabinet Decision No.88/2004, the number of the fields in which Universities are allowed to offer degrees decreased from approximately 350 to approximately 70, and thus the establishing of the specific competencies would take much time and effort.

25 The branch campuses offered at the time of the analysis a “short-term university diploma” which took three years, which was somewhat less valued than the “full-term university diploma”. The latter was organised in 1996 as a 4-year program, equivalent to the degree of licence.

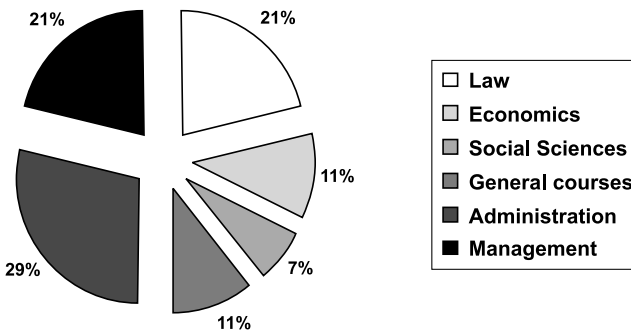
26 In 2006 for master programs taught in foreign languages the coefficient was reduced to 3. For Hungarian and German students the coefficient was raised to 2.

interviews in the three branch campuses. The suggested changes were analysed and incorporated into the curricula.

The proposed curriculum to be implemented upon the BP is structured as follows:

Figure 2
Proposed structure of the curricula within the Bologna conditions

BP structure of the curricula



The differences in terms of the proportion of courses in a particular field in the curricula are small, showing that the DPA decided to continue the previous approach of the PA curricula as an interdisciplinary one. The most important changes are the decrease in the percentage of law courses (4 per cent), management (7 per cent), and in the increase of the administration courses (9 per cent), and general courses (3 per cent), which shows the department chose to offer more courses specific to the field. In the above analysis, the courses in a foreign language (a minimum of one foreign language is compulsory for the first two years of study); physical education (which is also compulsory for the first two years) and the compulsory internship (two weeks in a public or non-profit organisation at the end of each academic year) were not included.

The fact that DPA had been involved from its inception in international co-operation projects had an important role in the process of coping with the BP requirements. Following the experiences of various international partners with whom discussions were carried out, and who had experience both with one-year programs and two-year programs, the master program was designed from the beginning as a two-year program. This meant that no changes were needed in order to comply with the BP requirements. The advantages of designing the master program as a

continuation of the bachelor program were identified and used in the design of the curriculum²⁷.

Both bachelor and master programs were designed from an interdisciplinary perspective, so the change process actually offered the possibility of fine-tuning in terms of curricula. International contacts also had offered a good ground for discussions and information about the situation at European level in terms of the BP even before the Ministry of Education had launched its legislation package; thus, DPA could approach pro-actively the upcoming changes instead of only reacting to the proposed legislation.

4. Discussion

The SWOT exercise offered a good overview for the DPA in terms of preparing for the implementation of the BP. It clarified the connections among various components of the BP and drew attention to the fact that the mechanical application of the BP agreements, without a proper diagnosis of the situation of the higher education institutions level, would lead to serious strain on the system and upon personnel in particular. Lack of personnel and the increased number of students were probably the most important constraints that DPA had to deal with during the first years of the implementation of BP. Lack of coherence within the legislative framework dedicated to the implementation of the Bologna process and a certain lack of synchronisation with the labour legislation (discussed in this paper primarily with focus on the situation in the public sector institutions and concerning master diplomas) represented additional constraints for conducting the changes implied by the spirit of the Bologna agreement. However, this uncertainty was used also to promote (via ASIAP, among others) solutions aiming to preserve the interdisciplinary philosophy of the program and to direct it towards promoting change within the public administration higher education programs.

Looking to the Process and to its intermediate results, one can conclude that there were two major dimensions of the implementation of the Bologna Process requirements: criteria for change and conditions of success.

Criteria for change:

- Maintaining the interdisciplinary character of the curricula;
- Maintaining the high degree of compatibility to international standards, with reference to the EU and North America;
- Shifting some of the more difficult courses at master level;

²⁷ For instance, introductory courses at master level were designed to appeal both to students from a different educational background than public administration and students with a PA bachelor degree.

- Accepting and implementing the requirements included in the law, but developing personal initiative specific characteristics of Public Administration;
- Shifting the qualitative focus on the master program;
- For the time being, the programs coordinated by DPA maintain their unity, with perspectives for diversity for the future, according to the needs of the branch campuses.

Conditions of success:

- Maintaining the profile of the graduate as defined by the previous curricula: a graduate with an interdisciplinary background, able to adjust to a dynamic environment (this was confirmed by the feedback received from successful graduates currently working in public institutions);
- Distribution of current resources support this change process (financial, personnel, etc);
- Willingness of faculty members to develop the curricula and restructure the program according to the BP;
- Future developments towards developing a doctoral program.

The process of restructuring seemed to be dominated by openness on one hand and by concern on the other. Among the elements that facilitated the process are: the openness of faculty members, even when the courses they had developed and were teaching were at stake, and the fact that the financial status of the department was good, even with the financial strains caused by the restructuring of the funding procedures. However, one missing element in discussions concerning restructuring of the curricula was student involvement. Student involvement is to be foreseen in the necessary steps related to monitoring and fine-tuning during the coming years.

Coordination with other schools of public administration in Romania was important in order to develop a joint point of view about the requirements of the Bologna Process. A meeting of the Romanian Associations of Schools in Public Administration (ASIAP) was held in December 2004, shortly before Law no. 88/2004 established the duration of three years for the programs in Public Administration, and a second meeting on 30 March 2005 reinforced the interdisciplinary character of the curricula and the right of the departments to establish their own curricula.

Two years after the Bologna process began, the image of the implementation of the BP is still mixed, as the effects of the BP upon the education process are manifested at multiple levels.

There are some operational difficulties due to the change of structure:

1. Due to curricula change, some courses were either not held in one year or held for two cohorts at the same time (one pre-Bologna and one Bologna), or they were held twice during the same academic year. As a result, some members of the department were under significant stress due to an increased workload.

2. Finding professors for branch campuses for the newly introduced courses is difficult. In many cases faculty members from Cluj-Napoca had to commute in order to teach those courses, an aspect that involved additional resources (time, financial, human effort).
3. In 2008, the number of DPA graduates will reach a peak because both the first Bologna cohort and the last pre-Bologna cohort will graduate. This will involve additional organisational effort (ranging from teaching load to supervision of graduation papers), given the size of the two cohorts, resulting in additional strain on personnel;
4. The massive class of 2008 has the potential to place pressure upon the master program; the demand will increase, since the bachelor program provides half of the MPA students.
5. The status of the professional master program is still unclear; a one year- program does not fit the Bologna framework, and all regulation regarding professional master's (corresponding to ISCED 5B) was abolished, leaving this type of study in a legislative void.

The long-term effect of the evolution of the strategic components is more difficult to anticipate. The restructuring of study-cycles at the bachelor level has the potential, at least in the short term, to lead to a lower quality of graduates²⁸. Moreover, operational difficulties have the potential of impinging upon the quality of the program. The pro-active approach of the Department helped identify possible gridlock points and design solutions. However, the question of the impact of the graduates remains a valid point in the long term; dedicated attention is needed to address this issue.

Some benefits may appear at the master level, mainly psychological, due to the Ministry of Education's emphasis on master programs. Better coordination between the education legislation and labor legislation has the potential to increase the interest for the second (master) cycle.

Increased student mobility was another goal for the Bologna Process. However, due to mechanical implementation of ECTS, there are still difficulties in mutual recognition of courses taken in universities abroad. ECTS is a tool which needs serious improvement in Romania. It is not yet functioning between cycles of studies and, in the case of educational experiences, outside the formal higher education system. More information and attention for educational choices is needed in order to obtain full recognition of courses taken abroad (i.e. in programs such as Erasmus). Both students and selection committees should be more careful; students to

²⁸ For instance, more difficult courses offered previously in the fourth year would be automatically transferred to the master level without restructuring the content and approach in order to suit master level skills; thus, the competencies expected from a bachelor graduate would be automatically transferred upon a master graduate.

choose more carefully what they want to study, selection committees to recommend students with better educational choices.

Quality assurance is another chapter which needs improvement. The actual system still places emphasis on input measures (i.e. the number of faculty members, rooms, equipment, number of books in libraries), neglecting outcome measures (the quality of graduates). The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education still has to work in order to clarify its accreditation standards. The current ones are unclearly formulated, thus making it difficult to reject poor programs and creating problems for well structured ones.

6. Conclusion

The current paper discussed a case study of the implementation of the BP within the Department of Public Administration of the Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. The public administration reform and the policy background of the BP drew the framework for analysis. The implementation process was examined along the following dimensions: curriculum restructuring, personnel and international co-operation. After the first two years of implementation, the results are mixed. The tortuous evolution of the public administration reform, together with the lack of clarity of the policy framework of the Bologna Process did not help Romanian schools of public administration structure a clear approach for the implementation of the Bologna provisions. However, sharing experiences with domestic and international partners helped these schools, united within their professional association, to develop a professional view about the modernisation of higher education in the field of PA. Such exchanges led to devising and promoting answers to the challenges faced during this process, answers that sought to address the particular needs of the schools.

Without a clear vision from the universities and departments and without support from society as a whole, the Bologna Process will not reach its objectives. Rapid and incoherent changes in the pre-university education system and inequalities between rural and urban schools lead to differences in terms of pre-acquired skills of candidates to university programs. Recent research results indicate that 81 per cent of the teaching staff and 72 per cent of the students themselves²⁹ consider that students come unprepared from high-school. Further, the trust at the social level in education registered a strongly decreasing trend; to the point that only 9 per cent of the population believes that education is the main driver of success³⁰. Such results are extremely worrisome for the evolution of the reform and of the

29 Coșea, Mircea, Claudiu D. Tufiş, Bogdan Voicu. 2007. Sistemul universitar românesc. Opinile cadrelor didactice și ale studenților (Romanian university system. Opinions of teaching staff and students.) Fundația Soros România.

30 Open Society Institute, Public Opinion Barometer, May 2007.

education system in general. Adding them to the lack of legislative coherence, to the discontinuities between higher education and pre-university education, and to the disconnection between education and the labour market (manifested in the differences between the degrees offered within the education system and what is being required by the market, the differences in terms of the required and expected competencies, to name only few), they should represent a serious alarm signal for the policymakers. These issues need to be addressed in a strategically structured manner, especially considering the long-term damage that they can provoke.

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The Development and Role of Specialised Education in Public Administration for Public Sector Transformation: The Case of Slovenia

Janez Stare and Mirko Vintar

1. Introduction

In contrast to some central and eastern European countries, which had practically no specialised education programmes in public administration until 1990, public administration education has existed in Slovenia for over fifty years. As early as 1956, a College of Public Administration was established, which began offering a two-year programme in 1957; this was the predecessor of today's Faculty of Administration. Initially the programme focused primarily on administration and law courses. This institution was one of three institutions in the former Yugoslavia that paved the way in educating and training civil servants against the backdrop of the single-party political system, planned economy, and predominantly state ownership. From its beginnings until 1990, the programme gradually changed; new courses were added, based on the needs of the profession, practice, and relevant findings. In terms of its features, however, it had resembled the programmes that continue to be offered today by German technical colleges of public administration (*Fachhochschulen*), whose main feature is their clear focus on administrative law in terms of content and their close connection with practice in terms of implementation.

In 1991, Slovenia became independent and entered a transition period in a considerably different situation than the majority of the countries to the east. Its administrative system and tradition were based on the Yugoslav administrative system, which differed significantly from the systems that developed east of the "Iron Curtain" after 1945. In addition, upon its transition to the new system, Slovenia already had a relatively well-developed administrative discipline and profession that were predominantly developed within two institutions at the University of Ljubljana: the University College of Public Administration (the forerunner of the Faculty of Administration) and the Faculty of Law.

After 1991, Slovenia rapidly started down the path of transition, which in the majority of central and eastern European countries cut deeply into not only their political systems, but also their social and economic systems. In addition to the legislative and judiciary systems, a key role in directing this transition was played by administrative systems and their development, maturity, and independence from politics. To a large extent, also owing to the poor development of their administrative systems, certain eastern European countries experienced social and economic collapse, from which some have not yet recovered. However, in other countries the entire process of introducing changes was less painful.

Despite the fact that it became independent quite unexpectedly and despite its small size, Slovenia followed the path of transition with the greatest of ease amid all the transition countries and was amongst the first to adapt to EU standards and norms, and the principles of a market economy. This is substantiated by the following facts: Slovenia was among the first EU candidates to conclude accession negotiations; in 2004 it entered the EU together with other accession countries; in 2007 it was the first new accession country to introduce the Euro and in the first half of 2008 it is presiding over the EU, again as the first new accession country to do so. This last task represents a special challenge to the administrative system of any country.

Here, we dare to suggest that it was precisely the successful development and adaptation of the administrative system to the demands of modern society and EU standards that contributed to this relatively successful integration with European institutions. If this hypothesis is true, this was also partly achieved thanks to the administrative profession and the education and training of civil servants, which is discussed below.

This article primarily seeks to analyse and clarify in greater detail the following, closely interconnected issues:

- To present some of the most important features of Slovenian public administration development from 1991 onwards;
- To present the development and state of specialised education and training in public administration to date in light of the Bologna Reform;
- To critically evaluate to what extent the Bologna Reform carried out to date in this area has been successful and satisfactory in terms of human resource demands on the modern administration of an EU member state.

2. Brief Overview of the Development of Slovenian Public Administration after 1991

In 1991, after seceding from Yugoslavia, Slovenia awaited its independence, relatively well-prepared in terms of its administrative system. It established all the func-

tions of a state relatively easily; it introduced its own currency, established its own customs system, diplomacy, and other matters that had previously been handled by the former Yugoslavia. It is interesting that Slovenia concluded its first fiscal year, as well as the following few years, without a budget deficit. Despite considerably higher economic growth, this has proven to be an unrealistic dream of financial ministers over the last few years. Developments and reforms in public administration from 1991 onwards can be divided into three thematic periods (see: Kovač 2006; Kovač 2002):

- Building the administrative system (1991 to 1995),
- Preparations for entering the EU (1996 to 2003), and
- Consolidation and optimisation of the administrative system (2004 onwards).

2.1 Building the administrative system (1991 to 1995)

As already highlighted above, the first developmental period after the declaration of independence was undoubtedly the most important for the young state, with its administrative system facing the most difficult tasks and challenges. The administrative system – which was developed within the framework and at the level of a single federal unit of the former Yugoslavia and for the needs of a single-party political system, state ownership, and planned economy – had to be transformed into a system to support the operation of an independent democratic state with a market economy and predominantly private ownership. At the same time, operation of the state in as normal a way as possible had to be ensured. In 1991, a new constitution was adopted for the establishment of a state based on the rule of law. To a great extent, this constitution followed the German example (the *Rechtsstaat*), upon which the Slovenian administrative tradition has been based since the time of the Habsburg monarchy. This also determined the key parameters of Slovenian administrative organisation. Given the difficult situation of that time, it seems this period was the most successful for Slovenian public administration: despite the privatisation and denationalisation processes, Slovenia did not experience an economic collapse or a collapse of the welfare state because all of the key systems handled the change relatively well, including healthcare and education. This was also the period in which a local government system was established in addition to the comprehensive state administration system.

2.2 Preparations for Entering the EU (1996 to 2003)

The second period, from 1996 to 2003, was almost entirely characterised by the process of adapting the entire public administration to EU rules and standards, as well as adopting the *acquis communautaire* and incorporating it into the Slovenian legal system. During this time several other projects connected with Slovenian public administration reform were initiated; their goal was to streamline this administration. The most extensive programme of reforms was presented in 1997, but all of

these projects failed almost completely. Furthermore, adapting the administrative system to EU norms was frequently used as an excuse for very extensive development of public administration, introduction of a multitude of new offices and agencies, great over-standardisation on the one hand, and increasingly less efficiency on the other. All this meant that in 2003, Slovenia was formally prepared to enter the EU, but the cost of this was relatively high. From 1991 to 2003, the increase in state administration staff was threefold (300 %); nonetheless, its efficiency fell considerably and numerous systems, such as judiciary, healthcare, and education lowered their operating standards. Court backlogs increased dramatically and began to seriously threaten the due process of law. In addition, the quality of the public healthcare system continued to fall and rapid privatisation of higher education in particular began, which, despite increased competition, did not really provide any additional quality.

2.3 Consolidation and Optimisation of the Administrative System (2004 onwards)

After 2004, the current government was forced to begin consolidating and streamlining the administrative system because public expenditure as a percentage of GDP started approaching 50 %, the increase in the budget deficit could have threatened Slovenia's entry into the Euro-zone, and the competitiveness of the Slovenian economy was increasingly at risk. This process is still in its initial phase and, at the time of writing this article it has not yet shown any tangible results.

As can be seen from this brief presentation of the development of Slovenian public administration over the last fifteen years, public administration has experienced radical systematic, organisational, and conceptual changes. At the same time, state administration in particular has continued to increase its staff (from approximately 10,000 employees in 1991 to over 34,000 in 2008). During this period, the public sector has become the biggest and most attractive employer, and unfortunately also the biggest job creator in Slovenia. It cannot be overlooked that in Slovenia, the average salary of a public-sector employee is much higher than the average private-sector salary. Changes in the public sector and especially in state administration required new personnel and new expertise, which also should have been reflected in developing new education programmes and expertise in public administration. Interest in academic programmes offering the knowledge required for public administration work has substantially increased among young people and those already employed in the public sector. All of this must have directly and indirectly influenced the availability of these programmes, which is discussed in greater detail below.

3. Modernisation of Public Administration as a Challenge to Education

Despite its seventy years of development within the two Yugoslav states established after both world wars (royal Yugoslavia after 1918, and communist Yugoslavia in 1945), Slovenian public administration managed to retain several elements of the administration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until its independence. Adoption of a new constitution in 1991 further strengthened the “Germanic” administrative model and constitutional state (*Rechtsstaat*). Following this model, the entire operation of public administration is based on legal acts and the main task of “bureaucrats” is primarily to implement the laws as carefully as possible. However, the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of procedures was usually completely ignored. Based on such a perception of the administration’s mission, a belief also developed that the most appropriate profession for working in public administration was that of a lawyer. Such an administration might be called a “legal” administration because lawyers write the laws, implement them as officials, and also supervise their implementation. The result of such an understanding of public administration’s function in the 1990s was also a human resource policy, according to which, practically all key positions in public administration were occupied by legal experts.

Only after 1995 did the concept of “new public management” finally start penetrating the Slovenian administration through the introduction of entrepreneurial management principles, management, privatisation, the concept of public-private partnerships, and so on. Parallel to these processes, it became increasingly clear that, in addition to legal expertise, administration experts also require an equal portion of managerial, economic, organisational, and of course technical expertise. At the same time, society as a whole adjusted to democratic principles and standards and thus increasingly expected public administration to operate according to the principles that had already been enforced decades earlier in western European countries (e.g. decentralisation, transparency, openness, participation, balance between politics and discipline, and so on). However, understanding and implementing these principles in administration requires a thorough knowledge of political science and sociology.

The second half of the 1990s was characterised by rapid technological development and the emergence of the Internet, which inevitably entered public administration and led to the development of a new concept in the operation of public administration, which today is internationally known under the popular name of “e-government.” Although it was often overlooked by traditional administrative theorists, the rapid development of e-government brought about a series of radical changes and started changing many fundamental organisational principles that administrative operation had relied on for decades. The use of electronic instead of paper documents, electronic signatures instead of handwritten ones, online services, the use of ICT at all levels of management and decision-making, e-democracy,

and e-participation are only some of the most obvious aspects of these technological changes that are still in their initial developmental phase. Today it is therefore still not possible to comprehensively evaluate how this will influence the principles, methods, and solutions of administrative systems in the future. However, there is no doubt that efficient use and management of modern technologies requires a great deal of new expertise, which current administrative experts perhaps lack the most.

In 2004, Slovenia entered the EU and a new development period thus began for Slovenian public administration; there is hardly any segment in which the presence of the Brussels regulations is not felt in one way or another. The success of individual countries within European integration, the implementation of directives, utilisation of EU funds, and so on requires a broad range of completely new and very specific expertise, the majority of which Slovenian universities did not even develop in the past and which had to be (or will have to be) developed completely from scratch.

Only some of the most important factors have been discussed here that caused the dramatic changes in Slovenian public administration in just over a decade and require a multitude of completely new professions, expertise, and skills. This also undoubtedly represents a great challenge to educational service and training providers. Unfortunately, there seems to be a considerable gap between these new human resource demands and the knowledge available on the Slovenian market.

4. The Development and State of Public Administration Education in Slovenia to Date

Until 1995, there was only one specialised public administration education programme in Slovenia – that is, the higher education programme offered by the predecessor of today's Faculty of Administration, mentioned above. Within this programme, administrative officials had been trained to perform mainly administrative, technical, professional, and law-level managerial tasks. However, in the second half of the 1990s, public administration education and training began experiencing a boom of sorts, which is still underway; over a period of ten years, a series of new education programmes was established, at first within already established educational institutions and, after 2001, also as part of completely new institutions. A more detailed overview of the Slovenian situation has demonstrated that there are currently at least seven institutions of higher education in Slovenia that offer independent programmes, individual tracks within other programmes, or at least groups of courses to teach students to understand and work in public administration. These include the following:

- The University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Administration, which offers an entire range of undergraduate and graduate programmes in public administration;

- The University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Economics, which offers a public sector track as part of the university programme in economics as well as the Business School;
- The University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Social Sciences, which offers a track in policy analysis and public administration within the undergraduate programme in political science, and a track in public administration within the master's programme in political science;
- The University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Law, which offers individual courses in public administration;
- The University of Maribor's Faculty of Economics and Business, which offers a track in economics and public sector management within the business economics programme;
- The University of Maribor's Faculty of Law, which offers an elective course in public administration as part of the undergraduate law programme;
- The Faculty of Graduate, National, and European Studies, which offers a graduate programme in public administration;
- The School of Business and Management, which offers individual courses in (public) administration.

As can be seen from the above list, the strongest provider of academic programmes in public administration in Slovenia is the University of Ljubljana, which offers these types of programmes at four faculties. The Faculty of Administration is currently the only institution in Slovenia that covers the entire area of public administration education at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Because of the transition from the old programmes to the Bologna system, the current situation is somewhat specific because both types of programmes have been carried out in parallel since 2005. However, the old programmes are being phased out, which is why the following sections will focus on a more detailed presentation and analysis of, as well as experience with, the Bologna programmes introduced in 2005:

- At the first (Bologna) level, a three-year higher education professional programme in public administration and a three-year university programme in public administration are available in the form of full-time and part-time study;
- At the second (Bologna) level, a two-year master's programme in public administration is available (for now, only as part-time study).

A doctoral programme in public administration following the "Bologna principles" is currently in preparation, which is why doctoral study at the faculty is still carried out as part of the old graduate programme. In addition to the programmes listed above, the Faculty of Administration began implementing a joint master's programme in administration management (in cooperation with the Faculty of Organisational Sciences in Belgrade) and the master's programme in "Finance and

Accounting for Common Europe” (the FINAC joint programme) together with two other universities.

The information above demonstrates that the range of programmes and tracks available in Slovenia is fairly broad given that the country has a population of only two million; however, the question here is to what extent this seemingly diversified range actually meets the demands of modern administration, which operates as part of and under the conditions of the EU. It must not be overlooked that, in addition to the educational institutions mentioned above that focus fully or only in part on public administration, another institution operates in Slovenia in this area within the Ministry of Public Administration – that is, the Academy of Administration, which offers additional education and training programmes for public administration employees.

It is well-known that there is no uniform approach to educating civil servants around the world let alone in Central and Eastern Europe (Connaughton and Verheijen 2000). Specialized public administration education has had the longest tradition in the US, where large numbers of these types of programmes started emerging after World War II and as a rule were developed as part of political science or sociology programmes. A little later, especially in the 1960s and 70s, at least three approaches were established in Western Europe; the first (or the Anglo-American) approach was developed predominantly in Great Britain and the Netherlands, where, similar to the US, these studies are predominantly based on political science and sociology. The second typical approach is the continental approach; the best example of this is Germany, where administration studies are, however, based on law. In addition, there is a series of public administration education programmes known across Western Europe that are based on business studies, economics, and management, and could be classified, in part, as a third approach.

Despite its small size, Slovenia also has not developed a uniform approach; the programmes listed at the beginning of this section contain elements of all three approaches. The programmes offered by the Faculty of Administration, on which the following analysis is based, would best fit into the third category.

5. The Bologna process in Slovenia with an Emphasis on Public Administration Education

The Bologna process, as it is generally known today, denotes the activities initiated by the Bologna Declaration in June 1999.¹ The ministers of education from 29 European countries agreed that the signatory states would reform their higher education

1 The activities connected with the Bologna process were also influenced by other documents that were adopted by the European ministers of higher education on the basis of the Bologna Declaration. Among these, the best known are the Prague, Berlin, Bergen, and London communiqués. Cf. Ministers Responsible for Higher Education (2001, 2003, 2005, and 2007).

systems. The main idea behind this was to ensure the comparability of academic programmes, which would enable appropriate recognition and evaluation of both undergraduate degrees and graduates' knowledge and thus also the mobility of employees and students. The Bologna process is based on the heritage of European universities, part of which is also the ability to adapt to ever-changing conditions (Bergan 2005, pp. 25 – 27).

Slovenia was among the first countries to sign the Bologna Declaration; however, in terms of normative regulation, things did not begin to change until 2003 in Slovenia (Decree on Budgetary Financing of Higher Education and Other University Member Institutions from 2004 to 2008). In 2004, this decree, which increased the financial autonomy of universities (independence in allocating funds, human resource management, establishing norms, and quality assurance), was followed by the Act Amending the Higher Education Act (Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology), which:

- Introduced a higher education system with two or three main levels: the first or the undergraduate level (university and professional higher education programmes), the second or master's level, and the third or doctoral level;
- Outlined a system of easily recognisable and comparable degrees, which is demonstrated by accelerated implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and issuing a diploma supplement (automatically and free of charge in Slovenian and one of the official EU languages). This constitutes a national framework of higher education qualifications, which determines in greater detail the goals and premises for developing academic programmes, and the main features of individual types of programmes; for the first time, it is also possible to develop and offer joint degrees;
- Established a national quality assurance system; the Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Higher Education and the Public Agency for Higher Education were defined as the system implementers. The former is responsible for the accreditation of higher education institutions and academic programmes, whereas the latter is to become a national professional service that will assist with higher education developmental tasks and the management of accreditation procedures and, most importantly, will serve as an "external" evaluator of higher education following the principles adopted by the Council for Higher Education Evaluation as the agency's body.

In Slovenia, the first accredited Bologna programmes began being offered in the 2005/06 academic year, with six higher education institutions acquiring accreditation during the first year, including the Faculty of Administration. In the 2007/08 academic year, only 25 of 62 higher education institutions are offering undergraduate or graduate programmes harmonised with the Bologna Declaration in addition

to the old programmes. 14.7 % of undergraduate and 25 % of graduate students² are currently enrolled in Bologna programmes (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, 2007).

5.1 The Bologna Programmes at the Faculty of Public Administration

5.1.1 *First-Level Programmes*

Meeting the demands of the Bologna Declaration led to the preparation of new academic programmes, including two first-level programmes: the university and professional programme. Distinguishing between the programme types was to contribute to forming to graduate profiles. Graduates of the university programme should primarily master theoretical and analytical skills and effective (professional) management of organisations or public sector organisational units. In contrast, graduates of the higher education professional programme should be capable of performing very diverse professional (as well as some less demanding managerial) tasks in public administration. The university programme's goal is (or should be) familiarisation with and encouragement of fundamental or theoretical development, whereas the main goal of the professional programme is to gain applied practical knowledge. A more detailed presentation of both programmes can be found at the faculty's website (www.fu.uni-lj.si) and therefore will not be provided here due to space limitations.

Both programmes follow the basic educational idea practiced at the Faculty of Administration, which is reflected in their interdisciplinary approach. Because the main goal of first-level programmes is education and training to develop and acquire the skills that will enable graduates to work at the most diverse levels of administration (both public and business), this kind of approach is vital. In terms of content, both programmes reflect the interdisciplinary nature of administrative operation because they combine an equal portion of administrative-legal, economic, organisational, and IT material.

In addition, the programmes follow the basic idea of the Bologna study, which is reflected in the programmes' duration (3 years, the 3+2+3 model), the selection of core and elective courses (whereby students form the curriculum themselves), the fact that individual courses conclude at the end of each semester (which enables mobility), and primarily in the greater possibility of transferring between both programmes and to other programmes (vertically, horizontally, and diagonally). The programmes enable students to advance faster or enter another programme

2 In Slovenia, over 100,000 students are enrolled in higher education programmes at four universities, of whom 91,426 are enrolled in undergraduate programmes and 8,687 in graduate programmes. Two-thirds of all the students are enrolled at the University of Ljubljana. The number of students that attend programmes offered by independent higher education institutions already exceeds 5,000. The most popular programmes are those in social science, business studies, and law, in which 40,986 students are enrolled.

through additional content (programmes), as well as increase student mobility and international comparability (ECTS evaluation).

The university programme in administration provides the required theoretical, methodological, and research knowledge for continuing study at the second level, as well as practical knowledge and qualifications for applied work. The university programme is intended to train experts for the widest range of positions in public and business administration, public enterprises, and private firms – especially those co-operating extensively with the public sector. The programme is distinctly interdisciplinary and provides in-depth theoretical administrative, legal, economic, organisational, and IT knowledge required to understand the operation of public and business administration, as well as for successful independent research, professional, or managerial work in the most demanding positions, and solving demanding problems. After completing this programme, students can continue their studies at the second level.

The higher education professional programme is characterised by its applied orientation, which provides all the required professional, organisational, and methodological expertise and skills. The programme's special feature is that in the third year students can select the track of their future study – that is, public or business administration.

In both first-level programmes, over one-fifth of the courses are elective, which means that students can shape more than 20 % of their curriculum. Elective subjects can be selected from the courses offered by the Faculty of Public Administration as well as other faculties in Slovenia and abroad. In addition to a transcript of the fulfilment of other requirements, a transcript of the achievements or activities mentioned above is inserted in the diploma supplement, which is an obligatory component of the diploma.

An important component of both programmes is (obligatory) on-the-job experience. In the university programme, this is carried out during the third year, whereas in the professional programme it is carried out in the first and second years. It is based on the idea of approximating the programme to the needs of the practice and graduates' employment. On the basis of practical training designed in this way, the faculty develops a partnership with students and employers to increase the employability of graduates and adapt the programme to the problems of the profession. Practical training is designed as a form of teaching that enables students to become familiar with professional problems and methods for solving them, as well as ways of solving problems connected with acquiring information and other material for solving specific tasks. Students familiarise themselves with the importance of solving specific tasks as problems that they must solve in the unknown environment of acquiring data and material within a defined time limit.

Such an approach contributes to more practically oriented and interconnected education, an increase in students' freedom in determining their course content

(also with regard to the curriculum and elective courses), as well as an increase in skills, which provides greater independence in professional work and in making business decisions.

5.1.2 Second-Level Programmes

The idea of an interdisciplinary approach is also represented in the second-level programmes. Two programmes are currently underway:³ the master's programme in administration and the joint programme in administration management, which the faculty prepared in co-operation with the Faculty of Organisational Sciences in Belgrade. The programmes follow modern developmental trends in administration and the profession, in which students acquire all the necessary theoretical knowledge in closely interconnected areas of administration operation (the administrative, legal, economic, organisational, and IT areas) and thus increase and expand their administrative knowledge and skills gained at the undergraduate level.

The master's programme in administration is designed such that in the first part of the programme, students attend compulsory or core programme courses, whereas the second part of the programme is divided into three tracks: the administrative-legal, administrative-economic, and administrative-IT tracks. Eight core subjects provide the required fundamental and methodological knowledge that each student must acquire and master. The programme is designed such that it introduces students to in-depth independent research and independent solutions to demanding professional and scholarly problems. This is also supported through the research seminar as the ninth compulsory programme requirement. Students fulfil their requirements in various ways: by participating in research projects of the Faculty of Public Administration, through individual research work with one of the course directors at the graduate level, or through publications in established journals. Students continue their studies by selecting four track subjects (specific track) and two elective subjects. This approach enables second-year students to expand their knowledge in the specific area selected, based on practical experience already acquired or planned future employment.

In contrast to the programme in administration presented above, the joint programme in administration management primarily focuses on public sector management, in which the demands for professional and managerial skills are closely interconnected.

6. Analysis of Experience in Introducing the Bologna Programmes to Date

The concept of a uniform higher education area opens up new opportunities for the movement of knowledge, ideas, and especially people (the mobility of teachers

³ For more information, see www.fu.uni-lj.si

and graduates) but, precisely due to unification, it expects (or demands) adherence to the agreed-upon standards and orientations of the Bologna reform. A more frequently expressed demand refers to enabling international comparability (ECTS) and primarily the time required to conclude studies, a demand for graduates' broad basic knowledge, and greater employability. The Slovenian practice of introducing the Bologna programmes reveals the following weaknesses of these programmes (Kristl 2006): the programmes are too broad and too fragmented, they allow too little exchange and insufficient practical training, and so on.

The above is also true for the Faculty of Administration, which was among the first in Slovenia to start introducing the Bologna programmes. The first enrolment in these programmes took place in the 2005/06 academic year simultaneously at the first and second levels following the 3+2 principle. This means that in the 2007/08 academic year, the most successful students will have already concluded their studies at both levels (at the second level this has already happened). In the third year of carrying out these programmes, one can already talk about the first concrete experience with the Bologna reform. The following sections discuss some of the key open questions or, in our opinion, poorly solved issues of the Bologna reform in Slovenia:

- Systemic solutions

Slovenia was among the first countries to join the Bologna process in 1999; nonetheless, we had to wait a relatively long time for the appropriate systemic solutions. As late as 2004, the Act Amending the Higher Education Act was adopted, which enabled the first accreditation of Bologna programmes. The Higher Education Act thus stipulates that degree programmes be classified into three levels (ZVŠ, Article 33): the first level (undergraduate and higher education professional programmes), the second level (master's programmes, uniform master's programmes), and the third level (doctoral programmes). The amending act, according to which Slovenian higher education was to be harmonised with the requirements of the Bologna process, has left quite a few questions unanswered; these questions are connected with both the definition of (especially graduate) academic programmes, funding, and the ranking of degrees, which was most frequently addressed in public. As part of the two-level system, the Master of Science programme was replaced by the Professional Master's programme. The systemic definition of the education level (2006), which was the basis for ranking the "old" and "Bologna" programmes, as well as educational levels, was heavily criticised in public because, given the same types of programmes, the old programmes (the master's, as well as the undergraduate and professional) were ranked higher than the new programmes. Despite the generally larger number of subjects in the new Bologna programmes – that is, a wider scope of these programmes – an even more unpleasant surprise was the fact that the new undergraduate programmes (or first-level programmes) were ranked lower than the old programmes.

- **New structure of university study**
Before the introduction of the Bologna reform, Slovenia had only four- or five-year undergraduate university programmes that generally continued in a two-year master's programme; this is why the transfer to new programmes that are considerably shorter has represented a major problem from the very beginning. In contrast to many other small countries, which decided on a uniform formula at the national level, the decision on selecting the 3+2 or 4+1 Bologna formula was left to individual faculties. Given the small size of Slovenia, this decision is disputable, especially in terms of implementation. The Faculty of Administration selected the 3+2 formula (plus an additional 3 years for the doctoral programme), which made sense with regard to the concept of the Bologna process (faster inclusion in the labour market). However, in practice this turned out to be exactly the opposite. It turned out that formally the first level indeed represents an exit to the labour force market but, because of the legal requirements in public administration, which demand the second level of education, it in fact represents only an intermediate level of education. Given everything said, it seems that a 4+1+3 model would be a more appropriate solution (especially for the undergraduate university programme). It must not be overlooked that on the labour market, graduates from this programme primarily compete against lawyers, who traditionally complete at least four years of study. It is obvious that the consequence of the selected 3+2 formula will be large numbers of students continuing their studies at the second Bologna level and thus a significant "inflation" of these diplomas. It must be acknowledged that the "market" has not yet accepted the work of graduates of three-year undergraduate programmes as equal to the old undergraduate programmes, which lasted at least four years, and therefore employers give priority to graduates from the four-year programmes.
- **The same duration of the university and professional undergraduate programmes**
The selection of the 3+2+3 formula means that both the university and professional undergraduate programmes last three years. Although they should differ significantly in terms of content and implementation, and are carried out separately, in practice their implementation is combined (also for economic reasons), which basically nullifies the concept of two types of programme at the first Bologna level itself. The reasons for this are connected with both the "identical" definition of the curriculum at the university and professional levels, and the instructors, who teach the "identical" subjects on the basis of the same or very similar literature in both programmes. The conceptual line between university and professional undergraduate education is also being "erased" because of elective subjects that generally contribute to higher quality of the new programmes but, at the same time, the same subjects are classified as electives for both programmes or as compulsory in one programme and elective in the other.
- **Equalising the requirements for advancing to the second level of studies**

Although the entrance requirements for the first-level programmes differ according to the type of programme (more demanding entrance requirements for the undergraduate university programme), this is no longer an entrance or a selection criterion at a higher level when advancing to the second level. All graduates have the opportunity to advance directly to the second and third levels of studies, which seems a great systemic deficiency that cannot be supported by serious professional evaluation.

- **The European credit transfer system**
The concept of the credit transfer system is one of the basic concepts of the Bologna reform; unfortunately, this has been poorly implemented in Slovenia. A well-planned and if possible to some extent standardised credit transfer system, at least within individual countries, should facilitate student mobility between faculties, universities, and even within an international framework. Unfortunately, in Slovenia this has not happened even within the central University of Ljubljana, which is the largest Slovenian university and offers several hundred academic programmes. Because individual faculties interpreted the credit transfer system in their own way (with the exception of the standard of 60 ECTS per academic year) and evaluated even very similar subjects with a significantly different number of points, so far there has been no notable mobility between programmes even within the same university, despite the Bologna programmes already implemented.
- **Elective subjects**
The Bologna programmes envisage the availability of elective subjects, which means that students must have the opportunity to shape more than 10 % of their curriculum by themselves. At the Faculty of Administration, this proportion amounts to 20 %; students can attend these subjects at their faculty or as part of other accredited programmes in Slovenia and abroad. The experience of the first three years demonstrates that, due to time constraints or work schedules, the majority of students select subjects that the faculty itself offers as electives, and taking elective subjects at other faculties is still extremely rare.
- **Practical training**
The student practical training in the new Bologna programmes in administration is compulsory in the first and second years of the first-level higher education professional programme, and the third year of the first-level university programme in administration. It is based on the concept of approximating the programme to the needs of the practice and graduates' employment. On the basis of practical training designed in this way, the faculty develops a partnership with students and employers to increase the employability of graduates and adapt the programme to the problems of the profession. Practical training is designed as a form of teaching that enables students to become familiar with professional problems and methods for solving them, as well as ways of solving

problems connected with acquiring information and other material for solving specific tasks. Students familiarise themselves with the importance of solving specific tasks as problems that they must solve in the unknown environment of acquiring data and material within a defined time limit. The new programmes have enabled the implementation of practical training in a much more authentic form than previously.

- **Horizontal and vertical transfer between programmes**
The new programmes enable both horizontal transfer (between the university and professional undergraduate programmes) and direct vertical transfer between the programmes (from the first to the second or third levels). The dualism or distinction between the university and professional undergraduate degrees, which was introduced in 1994 in Slovenia, is thus eliminated, although it was received well by the public. The logic of distinguishing between the university and professional undergraduate education was also reflected in the old programmes of the Faculty of Administration. Both horizontal and vertical transfer were generally possible, but in making the transfer, entrance requirements were taken into account (finishing secondary school with or without a leaving exam), as well as the difficulty-level of the programmes (specific placement requirements when enrolling in the master's programme).
- **Transfer between faculties/institutions**
With their interdisciplinary approach, the Bologna programmes enable adaptation (changing) of tracks or a type of study according to individual students' desires or expectations. Students can take the same courses at various faculties and, if they wish to continue their studies at another faculty, they are allowed to take specific exams even before they transfer. In this regard, a question arises in practice about the level of individual course loads both in terms of ECTS and actual exam requirements. The non-uniform definition of course content (especially basic content) and great differences between the requirements of individual faculties or instructors in Slovenia and abroad have already led to well-considered decision-making on the part of students. On the other hand, students are also sometimes unpleasantly surprised when, due to "overly complicated" and "notable special features" of practically identical courses, individual instructors do not fully recognise (or only partially recognise) the courses they have passed in other programmes.
- **Joint programmes**
This is a new feature that the old legal regulation of the Slovenian higher education was unfamiliar with. Joint programmes generally require a great deal of adjusting to both legal and cultural demands or expectations but, in addition to the programme itself, open numerous other opportunities for co-operating in developmental research, consulting, and the development of the profession itself. The joint master's programme in public administration management of-

ferred in cooperation with the Faculty of Organisational Sciences in Belgrade was also the first Bologna joint programme at the University of Ljubljana. An added value of a joint programme is student mobility and the joint work of students and teaching staff of the partner faculties, which provides a multicultural dimension and raises the international value of the teaching, development, and research, and also increases international graduate employability. Specifically, the public administration programme demands that students acquire at least 30 ECTS at a partner university abroad.

7. Conclusion

The creation of an independent Slovenian state introduced numerous changes to all segments of society. Many of these were connected with forming and developing the administrative and legal system or, in other words, the public administration system. The belief is frequently encountered among the Slovenian public that the accelerated modernisation of public administration and a constant increase in the knowledge and skills of public sector employees contributed a great deal to the successful development of Slovenia and above all to its relatively fast and successful inclusion in European integrations. In recent years, survey has suggested that the public image of civil servants is improving; undoubtedly, this has also been stimulated by better education and skills among the new generation of “bureaucrats.” However, the majority of civil servants, who bore the main burden of administrative reforms in the last decade, were educated in old, pre-Bologna programmes.

The decision to shape and offer the Bologna programmes in public administration has been revealed as a great potential both in terms of the profession’s development and interconnectedness in Slovenia and abroad; however, the process itself will demand a great deal of hard work, especially in defining and carrying out these programmes in a manner that takes into account both the horizontal and vertical distinction between programmes, the level of programme difficulty (ECTS), and the anticipated effects of education on the future development of the public sector.

It will take a few more years to make a realistic assessment of the extent to which the new Bologna programmes in specialised public administration education will accelerate further modernisation of public administration in Slovenia. Hopefully, they are not a step backwards.

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A Plea to Include Change Theory in a Curriculum of PA Studies

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1. Introduction

Civil servants have to work in a world dominated by concepts such as reform, transition, transformation, reconstruction, implementation, strengthening, modernisation etc. Each of these words has something to do with changes in the system of public administration although it is often not clear what the differences between them are, if any. During the Nispacee conferences of 2006 and 2007 more than 60 % of the papers dealt with reform processes, nearly all of them case stud-

ies. What is missing is a theoretical framework which helps us to select methods and to evaluate effects.

In terms of the well-known article of Lester and Goggin (1998) “Back to the Future: The Rediscovery of Implementation Studies” my position towards implementation theory is reformer. That means that I believe that implementation theory is relevant for public administration and at the same time I believe that modifications of the existing opinions on implementation and reform are necessary.

In this article I will try to show that policy-implementation and reform-processes can be better understood by applying change theory as developed in the more advanced literature on management consultancy. Quoting Kubr (1996; page 71) in his standard book on management consulting: “Change is the *raison d'être* of management consulting”. So it is not surprising to find in the world of management consultancy theories on change.

It seems to me that the exchange of theoretical insights between consultancy-theory and public administration theory are underdeveloped. Of course, there is a long tradition of importing ideas from management theory into the public sector (and the other way round). However this concerns mostly management-skills, management-instruments, good governance, leadership and ethics, not the theories of consultants on change.

Both implementation and reform can use the same strategies because from the point of view of change-theory, they are more or less identical processes. As stated in the famous book of Peters and Waterman (1982) policy or strategy and structure are two of the seven critical characteristics of a system and they influence each other strongly. To be effective, the two of them must fit each other. A new policy can hardly be implemented without some sort of reform of the public sector and reform processes are driven by new policies, for example concerning the preferable arrangement of the public sector.

I will use the word “implementation” for the realisation of a new policy on transport, education, public health, and so on. With “reform” I am referring to activities related to restructuring a system including self-government, deconcentration, privatisation, and introducing criteria for good government such as Openness, Participation, Accountability, Effectiveness and Coherence (see EU (2001))

The central thesis in this article is:

Change theory and change strategies are relevant for better understanding and designing policy implementation and reform processes and should therefore be included in the curriculum of PA studies.

My argument for this thesis depends on the following reasoning:

1. Civil servants are often engaged in reform processes and policy implementation.

2. Implementation and state reform can be characterised as changes of a multi-level system or configuration.
3. The theory of quantum change can explain some of the processes during a configuration change.
4. Different elements of a configuration require different change strategies. In management consultancy these strategies are identified.
5. With the help of change theory there is sufficient understanding of reform-processes and policy-implementation to include them in a PA curriculum and improve in this way the professionalism of civil servants.

In the last chapter of this article I describe shortly my own experience with including change theory in an intensive MA course on policy implementation.

2. Implementation in the received theories on public administration

In a highly interesting and challenging article, Jocelyne Bourgon (2007; page 10) states

“One of the fundamental principles of the Classic public administration theory holds that politicians make policy decisions, which public servants execute”.

And later (page 18):

“In the early days of public administration, service delivery (i.e. the implementation of public policies) was not considered a distinct function of government. It was the whole of public administration. The purpose of public agencies was to implement politically determined policies and programmes. The process of policy implementation was top-down, hierarchical and unidirectional”

I would add to the observations of Bourgon that in the classical view on public administration, implementation was considered as unproblematic. The opinion was that in the worst case there is a problem of enforcement. A different question is whether, in practice, policy implementation was unproblematic in the age of the classical theory.

In the new public management theory, implementation of a policy is considered to be the responsibility of civil servants. They “manage” the change needed for an already chosen set of measures. This approach has in common with the classical theory that policy formulation and policy implementation are steps in a policy cycle; a cycle which can be **consecutive** followed. Again one might wonder how close to daily practice these ideas are. Using Bourgon’s words (page 20):

“Today, no government can claim to have all the tools or all the power necessary to effect a complex policy outcome. Certainly, government is an important player, but one that must work with others to move society in a certain direction. Increasingly, government’s role is to set the agenda, bring the appropriate players to the table, and facilitate and broker sustainable solutions to public problems”

The consequence is that, at least in most cases, an interactive approach is needed.

Public administration specialists, including civil servants, have to apply a broad range of instruments for policy implementation, given the wide variety of policies and reforms. Neither Lewins **unfreeze-move-freeze**, Procis’ **ADKAR** nor the expression **change management is just an example of project management** are sufficient for the complexity of modern society. Practitioners will benefit from a more sophisticated theory, a theory which can be included in their education..

3. Reform as a process in a multilevel system

To show which contribution change theories can have to understand better reform processes, I begin by describing reform as a multi-level arrangement.

- 1) First of all there is the level of the distribution of tasks and responsibilities between public administrations, private sector, civil society and citizens. Changes at this level will be indicated as **state reform**.

A process of state reform has immediate consequences for the structure of the public sector.

But the private sector, civil society and individual citizens have to adapt to a new situation, before results can be expected. In Central and Eastern Europe, we see extensive projects for privatisation, liberalisation, self-regulation and strengthening NGO’s. Projects which influence the private sector and civil society directly. If one of the sectors does not adapt to a new role, state reform will not be successful. However, in this publication, I will concentrate on the consequences of state reform for the public sector.

- 2) Second, there are the changes in the distribution of tasks and responsibilities within the system of public administration. These changes are referred to as **public administration reform**. For this level, the results of an ongoing state reform creates new contingencies. The public sector must accommodate the new situation, for example, following the rules of subsidiarity, to introduce procedures for accountability or other elements of good governance.

Examples of these changes are self-government, decentralisation, deconcentration, reduction of the number civil servants, creating new agencies and so on.

- 3) Third, we see **organisation development of governmental bodies**, which we can describe as changing one or more of the design variables mentioned in the 7S model of an organisation as introduced by Peters & Waterman (1982). In their book on excellent organisations, they mention as design variables of an organisation: strategy, structure, system, staff, skills, style of management and shared values. This model explains that changing one element is not effective if the elements are not in balance with each other.
Public administration reform will only be successful if the individual organisations adapt themselves to their new tasks. This might be new goal-setting, executing new tasks, changes in the system of financing, rearranging authorities and responsibilities, new information-system and so on. Organisation development is a condition for realising public administration reform.
- 4) The fourth level is **adjusting the human capital of governmental organisations**. A process of organisation development can only be successful if civil servants are willing and able to perform well in the new setting. This can be realised by recruitment of new staff, training of present staff, job rotation and so on.
Each level creates contingencies for and depends on its success at the other levels. Only if all levels are changed in such a way that they are in balance with each other, good performance of the whole system might be expected. In a later chapter I will introduce the concept “configuration” and explain that the 4 levels mentioned above form a configuration. This opens the possibility to declare the theories on configuration change applicable for reform processes.

4. Example of policy-implementation in a multi-level system

The multi-level character of policy implementation can be illustrated with the EU regulations on the export of cultural heritage in the new member states.

State reform

The new member states of the EU accepted the *acquis communautaire*. Accepting the *acquis* results in a change of the contingencies under which a country has to operate. In daily life this can be seen by the introduction of a great number of new policies.

An example is the regulation on the export of cultural heritage of the member states to countries outside the EU (see regulation 3911/96). Member states have to implement the regulation in order to prevent illegal export at the external borders of the EU. In practice, this is carried out by changes in the public administration but also by introducing procedures for co-operation with museums, art insurance companies, transport enterprises, auctioneers, art dealers and private art collectors.

Public administration reform

Within the public administration implementation of regulation 3911/96 requires co-operation of departments of a ministry of culture, customs office, policy departments and prosecutor's office. For example by covenants which regulate the contribution of each party.

Organisation development

The Ministry of Culture needs a department, which is responsible for export licenses, for registration of objects which belong to the cultural heritage of the country, for giving information to customs about the value of items, for informing art collectors about the regulation and so on.

Customs-office needs a specialized group of experts on the export of cultural heritage, like there are specialists needed for export and import of weapons, protected animals and so on. Mostly customs are oriented towards cases of import with tax consequences. For implementation of the regulation on export of cultural heritage (export and non-fiscal) a change in work processes and attitude is often needed.

The prosecutor's office need to find capacity for legal actions in case of an offence.

Human resources

Custom officers need training in recognizing objects which belong to the cultural heritage of any member state. A group of civil servants of the Ministry of Culture must specialize in registration procedures for art. Prosecutors have to understand the new regulations and need more information on the cultural heritage of all member states.

Even in this simple example we can see that implementing a new policy results in the same type of processes as described before for reform. However the example can also be seen as a situation in which a reform process (entering the EU) results in implementing a new policy

5. Theory on quantum change

We can understand state reform better as we see a state as a configuration (See also Van den Berg (2006) and (2007)). Sluisman (2003) gives a summary of the definitions of a system seen as a configuration:

The overview leads us to our conclusion that organizational configurations involve a unique combination of different elements which appear simultaneously. This combination is characterized by the specific external and internal context in which the configuration of an organization operates. In addition, the different elements interact with each other: They are interrelated and mutually dependent and

reinforcing. To put it differently, the different elements form a synergy in configurations.

Henry Mintzberg developed in his well known book “Structuring of Organizations” (1979) a theory on configurations. He calls the elements or parts of a configuration **design parameters** and the external context the set of **contingencies**. With these concepts, he formulates three hypotheses. The first two are explicitly presented (page 219); the third one is implicitly given.

1. *The congruence hypothesis*: Effective structuring requires a close fit between the contingency factors and the design parameters
2. *The configuration hypothesis*: Effective structuring requires an internal consistency among the design parameters
3. *The convergence hypothesis*: Only a limited number of natural clusters of design parameters, the so-called configurations are effective and can survive.

Miller [1984] developed a theory on organizational change by using Mintzberg’s concept of configurations. He argues that because systems can be only effective if they are arranged in a way close to a configuration, changing organizations must be leaping from one configuration to another. This process of leaping is called by Miller “quantum change”. He formulates his theory on configurations in the following sentences (page 211 – 218; bold printing is mine).

1. Structural elements must be combined in a **harmonious** manner. Most combinations should not and do not occur, because they will hurt performance
2. The organization must **match** its structure to its environment and its strategy: The better the match, the higher the performance.
3. It follows from 1 and 2 that sometimes the organization will face the dilemma of whether to change an element of structure to adapt to environment, or to do nothing and **avoid destroying** the complementarity among structural elements
4. Some firms should behave like **sluggish thermostats**: they must alter structure only after a substantial and long-term level of dysfunction is anticipated
5. Eventual changes in structure must often be **dramatic and revolutionary**.

Presuming that countries can be described as configurations, we can reformulate this theory for reform processes as follows:

1. The division of tasks between public sector, private sector, civil society and citizens, the arrangement of the public sector, the internal structures of organizations in the public sector and knowledge/skills of civil servants (the set of elements) must be combined in a harmonious manner. Most combinations should not and do not occur, because they will hurt performance.
Elements which are in itself well designed may not satisfy only because they do not fit with other elements.

2. The chosen set of elements must match with the political, historical and cultural environment of the country: the better the match, the higher the performance.
3. It follows from 1 and 2 that sometimes a country will face the dilemma changing an element to adapt to the environment or to do nothing and so avoiding to destroy the complementarity among the whole set of structural elements.
4. Some countries should behave like sluggish thermostats: they must alter structure only after a substantial and long-term level of dysfunction is anticipated.
5. Reform processes are often dramatic and revolutionary.

This theory gives us general principles for changing a configuration. But it does not describe **how to change** each of the structural elements. In the following chapter I will give examples of strategies for creating change.

6. Strategies for change

Changes are created by adequate strategies or interventions. I will give examples of a set of interventions, adapted from a model presented by J. Boonstra (2005). He describes different strategies of change. What they have in common is not more than the hope that applying a strategy will result in a desired new situation.

Four Strategies for Change

Aspects	Power Strategy	Planning Strategy	Negotiation Strategy	Interactive Strategy
Actors	steering of the top	initiative of the top	multi-party	interactive groups
Orientation	goal	goal	result	future
Power	hierarchy	expert	position	imagination
Contribution of	controlling departments	consultants	stakeholders	all together
Motor	power	rationality	negotiated results	dialogue and conflict
Resistance	ignore	convince to overcome	re-negotiate	appreciated
Planning	discretion	CPM	contingent	irrelevant
Absorption Capacity	low	medium-high	medium-high	medium-high
Types of interventions	instructions	Documents and systems	compromises	exchange of visions

In complex situations, as configuration switches, all these strategies are relevant for changing the different structural elements. However there is no central

unit possible which can co-ordinate or even integrate all types of activities (see for example the lines on actors and instruments for planning). Still we want to safeguard as much as possible the internal consistency among the elements as this is the main condition for a good performance of the state. Only an incremental approach with a high level of flexibility might have results. But even then it might be the case that during the process of reform inconsistencies occur, because of difference in pace which thwarts the performance of the country temporarily.

7. Revisiting the example

I return to the example of implementing the regulations of the *acquis communautaire* on the export of cultural heritage and pay attention to the change strategies. Not for all changes the same strategy is adequate.

State Reform

The directives and regulations of the *acquis* dictate what must be implemented. This can be characterised as a power strategy.

National government has to translate the *acquis* in procedures, assigning responsibilities etc. A part of the work cannot be done by the public sector. Co-operation with enterprises (for example carriers, art-dealers) and NGO's (museums) is needed. Of course this needs national legislation. However, only legislation is not enough to let the system work. The number of situations of export of cultural heritage is too great to enforce legislation without compliance in society. That is why convincing other parties of the relevance of the regulations are needed. In terms of the strategies an interactive approach is required..

Public administration reform

The capacity of all involved parts of the public administration (Ministry of culture, customs, boarder policy, prosecutor's office) is limited. As often is said, nobody is waiting for more work. That is why all stakeholders have to agree on the effort they will spend on the execution and enforcement of the regulation. An agreement on the communication between the organisations is needed. A body for reporting on results of enforcement and for further systems care should be established.

This public sector reform is created mainly by negotiations.

Organization development

The ministry of culture and the customs office have to develop automated registration systems. This can be regulated by planning instruments. But perhaps new departments for the work have to be created. That would require negotiations with other departments about reshuffling budgets and office-space.

Beside that the organisation must plan the recruitment, internal or external, of staff which will be involved in executing the work, participating in discussions on at EU level and so on. For this work a planning strategy is likely

Also changes in what Peters and Waterman called “shared values” are needed. Traditionally customs are orientated towards import duties. The culture of the organisation is highly influenced by the values related to these processes. The new task, however, is non-fiscal and export oriented. The value of this type of work has to be recognized in the organisation. Changing shared values needs an interactive strategy.

Human capital

New work requires new skills and knowledge. Training courses can be planned. But, as all teachers know, you can bring a horse to the water, but you cannot force him to drink. The analogy can be said about processes of learning during courses. A mix of planning and interaction is required.

8. Absorption capacity and planning as limiting factors for success

Besides the theories of quantum change and the change-strategies there are two other factors which influence the success of a policy-implementation and reform: absorption capacity and planning.

From case-studies we know that the absorption capacity of a system, needed for implementation of new regulations, responsibilities, training programs and so on, is often a bottle-neck. This because in practice different projects are going on at the same moment in the same part of the public administration (see for example section IV of Jenei, Barabashov and Van den Berg (2005)). Problems with insufficient absorption capacity are not due to the quality of an individual project, but to the conjunction of different projects in the same system.

The example on cultural heritage in this article seems to demonstrate a reform, which can easily be handled. However, in practice the set of needed changes is only one out of a whole list of reform projects in the ministry of culture, in customs office and so on.. The absorption capacity for changes processes is addressed by all ongoing projects. The responsible change agent must try to get enough attention for his project. If he is not successful, the policy implementation might fail.

A second condition for success is the quality of the planning of the project. All activities have their own pace. Changes in the distribution of tasks within the public sector are the results of negotiation processes and it is difficult to predict when such a process is finished. Training activities can be planned, but there is always a minimum of time of preparation needed. The design and implementation of a reg-

istration system for objects of cultural heritage will have its own planning. Creating compliance in society is an interactive process without a given deadline.

However all the activities are related and, as the configuration theory predicts, only if all of them are changed and in balance again the implementation might be successful. Only an incremental way of planning (a planning from moment to moment depending on what is realised and which resources are available in the next period) might be helpful to manage the implementation.

9. Some theorems on reform and implementation

Given the theory we developed until here we can formulate some statements about reform and implementation processes:

1. The success of reform processes does not only depend on the quality of the design of the solutions for the different levels, but also whether the different solutions fit with each other (configuration theory and quantum change).
2. There is not one best way of organizing reform. In practice a whole set of strategies have to be applied simultaneously, depending on the type of activities.
3. Different change strategies have different types of planning. The overall planning can only be incremental.
4. Each reform project is in competition with other reform projects. Whether a project get enough attention does not only depend on its quality but also on the urgency of competing projects.
5. During the period of implementation there might be an unbalance in the system which results in a low level of performance, even lower then before the reform started. But this is not a prediction of the final result of the project.

The main conclusion is that on the one hand the design of the changes at the four different levels must fit with each other and on the other hand the implementation of these designs can only be incremental and can be accompanied by periods of low performance.

10. Change theory in a curriculum of a master program in public administration

Since the first draft of this article about two years ago, I have had the chance to test the ideas about change theory in the curriculum of the MA program in public administration of the Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

We included the ideas in an existing course on implementation and evaluation of public policies. This course is an intensive one, which means that the students follow lectures and work on cases under supervision during 4 hours a day (or more if needed), 5 days a week, 4 weeks in succession. The didactical approach is learning

about public policies by analyzing and reflecting real life cases. Students and teacher are jointly responsible for the process of learning. After a short introduction of the policy cycle and the change theory small groups of students are asked to describe and analyze each week a different example of a public policy. In general 8 hours a week are spent on figuring out with the help of internet what the policy is about, 4 hours a week on analyzing and giving power point presentations on some specific questions about the policy, 8 hours a week on theory, reflection, introduction of instruments for evaluation and so on.

The cases concern mainly fields in which EU policies are dominant. For example the policy on the delivering services in all member states, the policy on compensation for refused boarding of an airplane, the policy on archives and the regulation of export of cultural heritage. This give the opportunity to compare change processes in different member states. Students have to search on internet for the policy documents (green papers, white papers), regulations and directives, evaluations, publications of lobby groups, relation with structural funds, publications in newspapers and anything else they consider relevant to understand the ongoing processes. For each case the students receive in advance 3 – 5 questions which should be answered during the power point presentation. One of the questions is mostly related to the use of change strategies in practice and the prediction of the appropriateness of these strategies at the different levels of reform.

The research and preparation of the presentations are done by 3 or 4 groups of about 6 students. During the research phase the teacher is in the classroom as a resource person. Each group can organize its own way of working as long as the presentations are ready in time. The groups do not know in advance about which of the received questions they have to report. So, they have to prepare answers about all questions However they know that their audience (their colleague students) studied the same situation. A weak analysis or presentation is recognized immediately. The groups are different each week which helps to exchange information on different models of co-operation. A positive aspect of the Ba-Ma structure is that students from different bachelor programs can contribute in different ways during the analysis of the policies.

After the course students have to prepare individually a logical framework for two of the cases they studied before. The conversion of the materials into logical frameworks is part of the process of the learning. The teacher assesses the quality of these logical frameworks If the quality is insufficient a revision is required.

Students could easily recognize the four levels and the need for consistency among the changes of each level. Also the four strategies of change could be related to the situation in the case. Less clear was the influence of insufficient absorption capacity, because they analyzed the situation from the point of view of policies and not from the point of view of an organization which has to deal with several change processes at the same time.

Student's evaluations of this course are positive. In particular the integration of all kinds of aspects of the functioning of government and the fact that they are dealing with policies they also recognize in daily life is considered attractive.

11. Summary

I started with the observation that implementation of policies and reform processes get traditionally not much attention in the theories on public administration. A consequence is that there is neither much attention for these subjects in the curriculum of PA-study-programmes. On the other hand the series of case studies which appears during conferences show how important reform and policy implementation are in daily practice. That is why we might expect that students of public administration will be confronted in their work with questions on policy implementation and reform processes.

As long as the theoretical framework to describe and design these processes is weak in public administration, it is recommendable to use parts of the theories developed on change by management consultants, although these theories require adaptation to the specific characteristics of public administration. I presented the idea of quantum changes of configurations and the idea of different strategies for creating change.

In the last chapter I described shortly how these theories can be included in a course on implementation and evaluation of public policies of a Masters program in public administration.

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Public Administration and Public Policy in Armenia: Past and Future

Gayane Selimyan and Diana Danielian

1. Country Profile

Armenia is a landlocked country, with Turkey to the west and Georgia to the north. It boasts striking scenery with high mountains and caves, lakes and hot springs. Situated along the route of the Great Silk Road, it has fallen within the orbit of a number of empires and come into contact with many cultural influences throughout its history. An independent Republic of Armenia was proclaimed at the end of the First World War but was short-lived, lasting only until the beginning of the 1920s when the Bolsheviks incorporated it within the Soviet Union.

Armenia regained independence when that empire, in turn, collapsed in 1991. In the mid-1990s, the government embarked on an economic reform programme, which brought some stability and growth. The country became a member of the Council of Europe in 2001.

Unemployment and poverty remain widespread. Armenia's economic problems are aggravated by a trade blockade, imposed by neighbouring Turkey and Azerbaijan since the dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh. The conflict over the predominantly Armenian-populated region in Azerbaijan overshadowed Armenia's return to independence in 1991.

Armenia has a huge Diaspora and has always experienced waves of emigration, but the exodus of recent years has caused real alarm. It is estimated that Armenia has lost up to a quarter of its population since independence, as young families seek what they hope will be a better life abroad.

Armenia has recently celebrated its sixteen years of independence and can be proud of a number of achievements. The country's progress in macroeconomic stabilisation has been relatively successful. The Armenian economy has shown positive signs of macroeconomic change. According to the National Statistical Service (NSS), real GDP grew by 12.1 % in January – July 2007 compared to January – July

2006. Fiscal policy remained steady in 2005, with an overall deficit of 2.6 % of GDP. Democratic freedom reforms are steadily improving and civil society groups are becoming more active in public life (Freedom House, 2006), although the level of public participation in decision-making is still low.¹ International observers proclaimed that the recent parliamentary elections in May 2007 were improving.

Yet, Armenia faces major drawbacks. The country's democratic development has been exacerbated by the "close links between the country's political and business elites, who have impeded the development of a more transparent political system" (Freedom House report on Armenia, 2006). Corruption remains a substantial obstacle to Armenia's political and economic development. According to the Freedom House 2006 report on Armenia, the country's rating for corruption remains at 5.75 on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing the highest level of corruption and 7 the lowest (Freedom House, 2006).

The importance of having a healthy government and efficient and more market orientated public sector underlined a tremendous need for an effective and rational public management structure, which is an essential prerequisite for good governance. Under the Soviet regime, the Armenian civil service was in full subordination to the political structures. After gaining independence in 1991, the idea of the creation of a professional civil service, impartial to politics, with the main goal to serve its citizens has become crucial. The main drive behind the reforms was to fill the state administration with well-qualified, competent individuals with high moral values who are not dependent on changes in the country's political situation. The idea of the public administration reforms was to make the public system function like the private sector as the main principles of New Public Management (NPM) suggest (Borins, 2000).

Although the concept of public administration is a relatively new phenomenon for Armenia, considerable changes have occurred in this field. Analyses of the efforts that Armenia has been making to reform its public administration apparatus leads to the conclusion that positive transformations have been made in recent years. The adoption of the Civil Service Law at the end of 2001 contributed to Armenia's successful transition to democratic practice. The importance and necessity of a merit-based civil service system was recognised in these new reforms, which were aimed at establishing a functioning legal framework for the development of the civil service and for implementing the institutional changes required for this development.

The Civil Service Law focuses on the regulation of government to meet the main principles of a modern civil service; creates job classifications and grades; creates a system of appointments to civil service posts; provides guidelines for attesta-

1 UNDP/Armenia and "Sociometr" Sociological Center. Country-Wide Survey/ Opinion Poll 2006 on Public Perception on Public Services/MDGs at local level (<http://www.undp.am/?page=2007Publications>).

tion and the training of civil servants (both new and in-service); creates personnel reserves through databases of applicants, and provides for the legal status, organisation and administration of the Civil Service of the Republic of Armenia.

The Law creates a new Civil Service Council and requires that heads of staffs be responsible for the organisation and management of the Civil Service. The Civil Service Council consists of seven members: a Chairman, Deputy Chairman and five members. Members of the Civil Service Council are appointed and removed by the President of the Republic of Armenia upon nomination by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia. Members of the Civil Service Council are appointed for six years and must be citizens of the Republic of Armenia who have a higher education, work experience in state administration, and master the Armenian language. Civil Service Council members themselves are considered civil servants.

In 2002, the Civil Service Council enacted regulations covering the charter of the Council, various decisions on the main aspects of the Law on the Civil Service, and completed the first competitive recruitment for the Chiefs of Staff of Ministries of the central Government. Any person working as of December 31, 2002, automatically became civil servants under the new classification scheme.

The Armenian Government received assistance from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) with its Public Sector Reform Project during the years 1996 – 2003. The Project provided extensive support in the areas of public sector reform, civil service legislation, and human resource management policy and practice. Structural reviews across Ministries and project management were implemented by DFID. DFID's largest involvement in public sector administration is through the Public Sector Reform Programme (PSRP). Under the PSRP, a Public Sector Reform Commission Secretariat was established. The overall goal of the project, as defined by DFID, was to "introduce a modern, professional civil service that is highly skilled and effective, and reform the functions of the State to ensure that they are aligned with the changing role of the public sector in a free market economy."

As far as the public management reform process "consists of deliberate changes to the structures and processes of public sector organisations with the objective of getting them...to run better" (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000), long-lasting structural reforms in Armenia began with the improvement of the machinery of government. The idea was to align the performance of the Armenian government to the principles of New Public Management and improve it as an employer. A newly created position of chiefs of staff was introduced in the public sector as the highest civil service position holders. The intention to depoliticise top-level positions were strong and, in order to protect civil servants from political changes and against arbitrary dismissals, functions of heads of staff were diverged from the head of state body in all ministries. There was an enormous opposition to the civil service system development. None of the top public officials was willing to give up their power "bridles" and were

not prepared to accept this “devolution of power” (Hovsepyan and Khudaverdyan, 2006, p. 17). Reforms were carried out in three directions: structural and functional reforms of the public administration system, establishment of a civil service, and financial management reform. The first two tasks included restructuring the ministries, departments, territorial administration, and local self-government bodies and were carried out by the PSRC, while the financial management reform came under the auspices of the Ministry of the Finance and Economy.

The process of transforming an old Soviet administrative system into a new market-oriented managerial administration required a re-training of the existing government officials and formation of a new generation of creative civil servants. A compulsory training of all civil servants on public governance and public administration is carried out by the Public Administration Academy, which is a primary provider of civil service training through a variety of educational entities². Attestations of civil servants for professional competency are held every 3 years by the Civil Service Council.

The following will discuss the history, current state, and accomplishments of the public administration and public policy education in Armenia.

2. Public Administration and Management – Present curricula and methods of teaching

Public administration as an independent subject is relatively new in Armenia, and its introduction is directly connected to the 1991 proclamation of independence and the founding of the Armenian School of Public Administration in 1994. The new system of public administration in Armenia was formed in the context of the establishment of independent statehood and the transition to a market economy. In the new system, the role of the state gains new meaning. It changes from being a body, which dictates its will without restrictions to an assisting partner that takes on a more regulatory function. Changes in functional administration have been implemented by transforming Soviet administrative functions and by creating additional mechanisms to deal with new conditions. The preparation of highly qualified public management professionals that would carry out reforms in the public administration sphere became a prerogative for Armenia.

This section will present the current state of public administration education in Armenia.

Currently public administration is taught to various extents at the Armenian Academy of the Public Administration, American University of Armenia, Yerevan State University, and Armenian State University of Economics.

2 In addition to the PAA, public administration as a subject is currently taught in several higher education institutions such as the American University of Armenia, Yerevan State University, Armenian-Russian (Slavonic) University, and Yerevan State Institute for the National Economy.

The Armenian School of Public Administration was established by the Government of the Republic of Armenia for compulsory training of all civil servants on public governance and public administration and preparation of new cohorts of specialists for the staff of the President, RA Government, republican and local executive bodies. The Academy now operates under the aegis of the Civil Service Council and has the extensive mandate of civil service training and the organisation of this training through a variety of educational entities. The Academy provides a two-year master level programme. The mission of the Academy is to train highly qualified administration officers in accordance with modern requirements, who are able to work in conditions of political democracy and transition of economies to market relations. The Academy employs a variety of education schemes such as full-time study, correspondence courses, evening classes, external, and short-terms studies. The education is carried out by the following chairs: Public Administration and Local Government, Political Bases of Public Administration, Law and Legislative Process, Public Regulation of the Economy, Applied Psychology and Social Development, Informatics and Information Technologies. The education is based on theoretical and practical training.

The Government of Armenia recognises the importance of education for public administrators and with the introduction of the 2001 Law on Civil Service introduced requirements for in-service education of civil servants, which will lead to new education programmes. The Academy's Department for Improvement of Professional Skills and Retraining of Specialists provides in-service training for members of the Armenian Government. The Academy prepares tests for the attestation of civil servants. According to a recent Academy report, more than 2,000 civil servants at central and local levels have been trained.

The American University of Armenia was established in 1991 at the same time as Armenia gained independence and is an affiliate of the University of California system. The University is a joint undertaking of the ROA Ministry of Education and Science and the American University of Armenia Corporation (AUAC). AUA is the first university located outside of the United States and its territories to be granted accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, one of the U.S. Department of Education's six accrediting associations for higher education. The American University of Armenia is a university, where students are introduced to an educational approach based on merit and student-centred learning modelled on graduate education in the United States. Public Administration and Public Policy courses at AUA are taught in the Graduate School of Political Science and International Affairs. The programme's goal is to equip students with knowledge and perspectives needed to function effectively and responsibly in public service, the private sector, and the non-governmental sector. The School offers a comprehensive set of courses with primary focus to provide students with analytical, reasoning, and problem solving skills through the study of international, comparative, and domestic institutions in governance and of political systems and processes.

The School's curriculum comprises the following courses: Introduction to Public Administration, Public Administration in Central Europe, Public Finance and Budgeting, Public Personnel Administration, and several courses on Public Policy and Analysis. Moreover, students are taught democratic theory, economic theory, Armenian legislative processes, and Armenian Government structures and processes. Research methods in political science and the major quantitative and qualitative data collection methodologies and policy evaluation are covered. Some courses require prerequisites and have a strong emphasis on comparative analyses and on bringing practical applications of theory into the classroom.

The School of Political Science and International Affairs has endeavoured to link its competencies primarily to the public sector, although many graduates have found employment in the private sector and the para-public sector. In providing education to its students, the School has experimented with a capstone experience, which requires completing a Master's Essay or a Policy Internship Project, which give students the opportunity to employ received knowledge and skills in their course work. The Policy Internship Project offers students the opportunity to participate in the functions of a government or non-governmental agency and to write a policy paper.

In addition to its primary goal of preparation of future agents of change of the society, the School assisted Yerevan State University in the design and implementation of its first graduate degree programme in public administration.

Aspects of public administration are taught at the Yerevan State University. Since Public Administration and Public Policy are relatively new subjects to the Armenian educational system, the educational programmes that train specialists in these fields are scarce. There is no separate department at the Yerevan State University and Public Administration as a subject on the undergraduate level is taught under the aegis of the Faculty of Economics. Since 2005, the University's Faculty for International Relations has also introduced a Master degree programme. The programme was developed with the assistance of the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, which funded a three-year project on "Refashioning the Social Sciences and Practitioner Training in Public Administration: International Collaboration. The project was a result of collaboration between Arizona State University (USA) and Yerevan State University. Visiting scholars and university administrators from YSU visited the U.S. to participate in the development of the curriculum for the new degree programme through meeting with faculty in the School of Public Affairs of Arizona State University, auditing classes, developing syllabi, and interacting with public and private sector colleagues.

Currently, courses include administrative law, comparative administrative law of foreign countries, the political system of the Republic of Armenia, authority, government economic regulations, and principles of management and budgeting. The goal of the programme is to prepare highly qualified public administra-

tion and public policy specialists for governmental bodies of the republic, as well as for the analytical and research departments of non-governmental organisations. Some aspects of public administration are taught at the Armenian State University of Economics. There is no separate department on public administration in the University and subjects are spread over the curriculum of several departments. Most of the courses are taught by the Department of Management, which was initially established on the basis of the Yerevan State University. In the beginning, it was known as the Department of Labour Economics and Organisation and included two specialisations: Labour Economics and Organisation and Normative of Labour.

Currently, the Department has over one thousand students who receive specialisations in Management, Theory of Economics, Economics of Labour and Sociology, State and Municipal Management. The following Bachelor's Degree programmes are offered at the Armenian State University of Economics: Theoretical Economics, Economics of Labour and Sociology, Environmental Economics, Finances and Credits, Accounting and Audit, International Economics, National Economics, Economics and Management of Enterprises, Public and Municipal Management, Management, Trade (Commerce), Marketing, Goods and Commodity Expertise, Statistics, Mathematical Methods in Economics, Customs, Insurance, Analysis and Management of Securities Markets, Business Management, Information Technologies, Standardisation and Certification. Courses taught by the Faculty of Management include administrative theory, organisational theory, public and municipal administration, financial management, organisation of administrative decision-making processes, personnel management and strategic management.

Since November 2004, the Department has also offered a Master's degree programme in Management. The objective of the Department is the preparation of high quality public management specialists for state and municipal organisations. To achieve this objective the following subjects are taught: State and Municipal Management, Current Issues of Investment and Urban Planning, System of Public Management, Management of State and Municipal Property, History of State Management, System of Civil Service, Administrative Theory, Organisational Theory, Financial Management, Organisation of Administrative Decision-Making Processes, Personnel Management, and Strategic Management.

Methods of teaching include lectures, seminars, and active engagement on scholarly research. In addition to the full-time studies, the Department employs distance-learning schemes and offers correspondence courses to provide interested individuals with second speciality opportunity for satisfying the country's needs in highly qualified specialists. Florida State University provided the Department with teaching-methodical guides, which have been translated and are used during seminars.

3. Accomplishments in the field

Since gaining independence, Armenia has made significant steps towards full integration of European structures, most notably with their accession to the Council of Europe. The reform of Education systems has been an important part of this process, to the benefit and credit of Armenia, as well as to individuals. Education continues to play an important role for sustainable development, since all societies, in particular those in transition, such as in Armenia require the participation of informed and well-educated members or citizens in order to build stable democracies based on respect for human rights and the rule of law.

In the last few years, the European process has become a tangible reality for European Countries and their citizens. The Republic of Armenia, by joining the Council of Europe, has stated its commitment to the European Processes and its willingness to undergo all the necessary reforms to become a fully-fledged member state. The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, being aware of the crucial role of education and co-operation for strengthening peaceful and stable democratic societies has embarked on the all-encompassing reform process of education and more specifically the reforms of higher education.

Clearly understanding that the Europe of Knowledge is acknowledged as an influential factor for human, social and economic development of society and being governed by the determination to meet all the requirements of the Lisbon Convention and Bologna Process and to join the European Higher Education Area, the Law on Higher and Post Graduate Professional Education of the Republic of Armenia has envisioned a central role for the universities, which, by assuming the responsibility for quality assurance, respecting the academic freedoms and institutional autonomy with fully developed self-governance, student participation in the governance of higher education, public responsibility for higher education, assuring the inseparability of teaching and research, affirming the European humanist tradition and supporting a closer co-operation with their counterparts in Europe will come to the doorstep of belonging to a common social and cultural European space.

Armenian universities are moving towards the creation of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). Nowadays, in Armenia, the credit system is fully implemented at the American University of Armenia, which is, however, solely a master's programme university, established jointly by the RA government and the US founders, and with student enrolment of about 300. This is a good example of the partial adoption of the credit system at the institutional level. On a pilot basis, the system of academic credits was also introduced at the State Engineering University of Armenia for the two main majors (specialities) in its master's degree programme in 2002/03 (with the enrolment of some 200 students) and in its doctoral programme in 2003/04 (with the enrolment of about 100 students). This is another example of the partial adoption at departmental level. In both cases, as a

model an American model commonly used has been introduced, which is based on student contact hours³.

4. Obstacles, problems and difficulties

The education system of Armenia has 1600 years of history and has traditionally been highly rated. Yet, the system has not acquired sufficient experience in regulation under a market-driven economy and this is equally true for the entities providing Higher Education services. The Government issues a state order for enrolment by specialities and by institutions, as well as the appropriate funding. The higher education institutions can establish quotes for free tuition and paying tuition for the enrolment of students based on the total quotas for academic admissions allocated by the Government, providing unpaid education for at least 10 % of the admission figures for each major. The Government approves the state educational standards and their formation mechanisms; the fields of study and the list of specialities to be taught; the state order for higher education institutions.

The Ministry defines state educational standards, issues licenses; produces a list of the specialities provided; develops the state order for colleges and universities; approves the admission rules for the state and private accredited higher education institutions and supervises their implementation; conducts state accreditation for the institutions and their programmes with no regard to the organisational-juridical and ownership form of the institution.

Nowadays, there are 18 state higher education institutions (excluding regional campuses of some universities) providing higher and postgraduate education to more than 57,000 students of which 1,900 are in master programmes and 1,300 in postgraduate (aspirantura) programmes. With about 6,300 tenured teaching staff, the average student/teaching staff ratio in the state-owned Higher Education Institutions is about 8 to 9.

Over the last decade, the number of non-state higher education institutions has increased substantially and reached 72, with approximately 18,000 full-time students in the diploma specialist programme only. The number of tenured teaching staff is approximately 1,800 and the student/teaching staff ratio is about 9 – 10.

Non-state higher education institutions totally depend on tuition fees (90 % of revenues) while state higher education institutions have more diversified sources of funding: the state budget (almost 30 %), tuition fees (50 %), and other sources (20 %) such as renting premises and Research and Development.

The number of state higher educational institutions has increased by 14.2 % compared to the level in 1991. Despite the economic and social crises that followed

3 ECA TEIS analytical and policy issues 13.

independence, numerous private schools have been established and the number of state schools has also grown.

However, this growth in the number of schools should not be considered a positive phenomenon, taking into account the efficiency of education in a small student body and small departments. For higher professional education, the following types of institutions are operational:

- 1) University – provides higher, postgraduate and supplementary education in Multi-disciplinary fields of natural sciences and humanity, technology and culture, and also provides opportunities for scientific research and research studies.
- 2) Institute – conducts specialised and postgraduate academic programmes and scientific research in a number of scientific, economic and cultural disciplines.
- 3) Academy – an educational institution of which the activities are aimed at the development of education, science, technology and culture in a specialised field of study; it conducts programmes preparing and re-training highly qualified specialists in a special field, as well as postgraduate academic programmes.
- 4) Conservatory – prepares specialists in the field of music, provides qualification development and postgraduate academic programmes.

The following degrees of higher professional academic qualifications are established:

Bachelor (4 years) and Master (1 – 2 years).

Postgraduate professional education is conducted in postgraduate divisions (aspirantura, ordinatura) of Higher Education Institutions as well as in Scientific-Research Institutions of the Academy of Science of Armenia if allowed by the state authorised body (Ministry of Education and Science). The following qualification degrees of postgraduate professional education are established: Researcher and Clinical Ordinator (2 years).

Also, two scientific degrees Candidate of Science (equivalent of PhD) and Doctor of Science are established.

The formal weekly workload (contact hours) that students are expected to carry out depends on the programme type and differs considerably from institution to institution within the country, but the practices are as follows: for bachelor and diploma specialist: 28 – 32 hours per week (sometimes up to 36), for master's programme students: 16 – 18 hours and for postgraduate (doctoral) students: 4 – 8 hours.

In terms of study modes, presently there are only two types of student in the Higher Education sector: full-time and correspondence (combining job with edu-

cation). The latter have a considerably small workload (approximately 50 % of that of full-time students) in terms of contact hours.

Although the two-cycle degree system in Armenia was assigned by the Law on Education as early as in 1997, up until recently, only 4 higher education institutions have introduced two-tier degree structures (bachelor-master): the State Engineering University of Armenia (1992), the Armenian Agricultural Academy (1999), Yerevan State University (2000), and the American University of Armenia (which is solely a master's programme university established jointly by the Armenian government and the US founders). Other higher education institutions, until recently, retained the one-cycle degree structure of Higher Education which was formed as far back as Soviet times, awarding only diploma specialist qualifications (5-year study programme).

5. Conclusion

Despite a difficult transition history, the Republic of Armenia is committed to democratic development. The country has openly demonstrated its willingness to undergo all the necessary reforms to become a fully-fledged member state by joining the Council of Europe to align with European processes. The country has demonstrated its commitment to excellence in its educational programmes. In terms of public administration and public policy education, the commitment of the government and public to advance with the public administration system is high and that is essential for the successful implementation of future projects anticipated in the field. A number of higher educational institutions have established Public Administration degrees, both in undergraduate and graduate levels, for training a new generation of highly qualified professionals, which would function effectively and responsibly in public service, the private sector, and the non-governmental sector.

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Context and Self-Sustainability in Public Administration Education: The Macedonia Graduate Centre for Public Policy and Management

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Abstract

This paper is a case study in establishing the Graduate Centre for Public Policy and Management (GCPPM) in Skopje, Macedonia. The case of the GCPPM addresses several problems created in the wake of efforts to globalise higher education. The first is the problem of adapting institutions and programmes of higher education which originate outside the region to specific national contexts in Central and Eastern Europe. This problem—the problem of contextualisation—is intimately related to a second problem, which is that of achieving self-sustainability in the human and financial resources required to maintain successfully contextualised programmes. Self-sustainability is part of the very context to which international programmes must adapt, a context involving post-socialist institutions with poorly defined public missions, educational systems preoccupied with business education at the expense of public administration education, and a paucity of financial and human resources required to sustain high-quality education in public administration.

On September 9, 2003 the Graduate Centre for Public Policy and Management (GCPPM) opened its doors to the first class of students in the Master of Public Policy and Management (MPPM) degree programme. The opening of the GCPPM marked the end of a decade-long process of negotiations with Macedonian educational, business, and governmental communities and the U.S. Department of State. The GCPPM was the first graduate institution of its kind in Central and South Eastern Europe, and the first foreign institution accredited by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. The GCPPM represents a joint effort of Macedonian universities, the Macedonian Government, the U.S. Department of State, and the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. Together, these parties were responsible for funding, designing, and implementing an innovative graduate professional¹ programme in public administration and policy.

Globalising Higher Education

The establishment of the GCPPM is part of a worldwide process of globalising higher education. Globalisation, which has avid proponents and passionate critics, is a way to think about and describe in general terms efforts to develop market economies, new patterns of trade and commerce, and democratic institutions after the collapse of the Soviet Union and its own unsuccessful attempt at globalisation—the failed effort to globalise communism. Given the failure of this and other global efforts, including earlier attempts to globalise Christianity and Islam, it is doubtful that the globalisation of higher education will survive without adapting to the same powerful national forces that for centuries have contextualised other global movements.²

The process of contextualisation in higher education is motivated in part by the desire to reduce the costs of graduate education by offering in-country programmes and achieve efficiencies through new communications technologies, including distance learning. For these and other reasons there is a growing demand for the delivery of

in-country and regional programmes in public administration and policy. So far, efforts to globalise graduate management education have been dominated by MBA programmes. This domination is a product of the commonly accepted, but

1 The term “professional” refers to graduate programmes which, based in several social science disciplines, are specifically designed for mid- to higher-level professional managers in the public and non-profit sectors. Professional programmes like the GCPPM are problem-solving and applied in nature; they are not traditional academic institutions dedicated to the development and testing of theory.

2 These include the secularisation of religious authority by the Treaty of Augsburg and the process of nationalizing communist parties and programmes. The latter process is best represented by Yugoslavia's “separate path to socialism.” The latest significant example of contextualisation is the adaptation of the European Union to national contexts.

mistaken belief, that the best way to develop market economies and democratic institutions is to focus on managerial reforms in the private sector.

The focus on business management and the private sector obscures the central role of governments in maintaining conditions required for investment, trade, and commerce. These conditions include political stability, predictable legal processes, control of graft and corruption, efficient public services, maintenance of personal security, and establishing a favourable environment for businesses—all of which are responsibilities of governments, not the private sector. The near exclusive focus on the private sector appears to be based on a confusion of economic and political systems, specifically, the mistaken belief that a healthy capitalist economy guarantees democratic governance and public accountability.³ This confusion leads to the view that the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and behaviours in the “successful” private sector can automatically solve problems in the public sector.⁴

If the history of other global movements is any guide, the new educational global reach—whether originating in the United States or Western Europe—is likely to exceed its grasp. In this context, a key question arises: *How should professional degree programmes in public administration respond to the growing global demand for contextually relevant and self-sustaining public administration education?* This general question is related to a several specific concerns:

- *Contextually Relevant Faculty Expertise.* The scope and complexity of the process of transferring knowledge and skills requires substantial in-country practical experience, including the acquisition of a foreign language and knowledge of the cultural, political, economic, and legal contexts in which education is delivered. Although educators and educational administrators are experts in their own fields, it is relatively rare that they have significant expertise in managing or teaching in foreign contexts. Among other things, this kind of practical expertise is essential for choosing local partners who are academically credible and sufficiently influential to set local agendas and adopt and implement collaborative educational innovations.
- *Appropriate Educational Technologies.* Technological solutions in the domain of distance learning and interactive telecommunications—along with specialised knowledge of managerial accounting, tax laws, rental agreements, and a host of other subjects—appear to be widely available from U.S. vendors, consultants, and foreign area experts. In fact, however, the knowledge and expertise needed to choose and use appropriate technologies—for example, instructional technologies that permit trans-national lectures based on interactive video, audio, and data transmission—usually must be developed in conjunction with experts

3 Most freshman courses in politics and government rightly teach that capitalism in its several forms is a kind of economic system, while democracy is a kind of political system.

4 Approximately 70 – 80 percent of small businesses in the United States fail within two years of their establishment.

in the countries in which education is delivered. The same is true of essential managerial, fiscal, accounting, and legal expertise.

- *Scale of Educational Operations.* There is a huge difference between the typical academic exchange project, which often represents little more than academic tourism, and university degree programmes abroad, where the order of complexity is far greater and the range of challenges far wider. Although such programmes appear to be “field” offices of “headquarters” in the home country, they are and must be based on local expertise in areas of student recruitment, admissions, student advising, public relations, building and grounds, security, banking, accounting, personnel management, academic support, fund raising, and other essential operational areas. Although the “headquarters” university has an essential role in assuring compliance with academic standards and university regulations, essential management functions must be performed in the local context.
- *Overcoming Resistance to Change.* Although we are not proponents of this point of view, American and European programmes are often expected to offer courses taught primarily or exclusively by U.S. faculty, not by local faculty. This raises difficult problems of recruiting competent faculty in home-countries, problems that do not occur in exchange programmes or cooperative agreements involving technical assistance and ad hoc teaching within local universities. If faculty recruitment draws on established local professors, many may be unfamiliar with pedagogical and curricular innovations from degree programmes in home-universities. Unfortunately, when there are in-country attempts to recruit younger faculty, they are often blocked by traditional academic hierarchies that resist innovation.
- *Achieving Financial Self-Sustainability.* Without government support, financial self-sustainability is often unrealizable. If financial self-sustainability depends on students whose government salaries cannot cover more than a small fraction of tuition and fees, there is no alternative to governmental and foundation support. For example, in January 2007, the median salary of government employees in Macedonia was less than \$300 per month. Practically speaking, this means that government employees are unable to pay more than a small percentage of already significantly reduced tuition costs. For most MBA programmes the situation is often different, because such programmes are funded primarily by companies which can afford to pay for high-quality graduate management education. In addition, the expected increase in the lifetime earnings of a business manager who attains an MBA offered by a western institution is often large enough to justify the high up-front tuition cost of enrolling in the MBA programme. This explains in large part the popularity of the executive MBA programmes.

Practically relevant, high-quality American and European graduate programmes in public administration appear to be unsustainable without donations and

grants from governments and the private sector. Throughout Central and Eastern Europe, however, most governments are unwilling to support academically sound and professionally competent public administration and policy programmes. One of the main obstacles to foreign investment and economic development is incompetence, corruption, and very limited administrative capacity that otherwise would translate into the efficient delivery of services and the enforcement of contracts. Although quality public administration is one of the solutions, the value attached to professional education in public administration is low. Regrettably, although financial self-sustainability is impossible without government support, local and foreign governments continue to demand financial self-sustainability.

The Macedonia Graduate Centre for Public Policy and Management

The GCPPM is an extension of the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. The GCPPM is registered under Macedonian law as a non-profit foundation and accredited by the Inter-University Accreditation Board and the Ministry of Education and Science. The programme is also accredited in the United States by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA). The GCPPM is a well-known and respected member of the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee). Increasingly, the GCPPM is recognised in Central and Eastern Europe as a Centre of excellence in public administration and public policy education.

In 2006, entering its third and final year of support by governments, the only significant problem facing the GCPPM was achieving full financial self-sustainability. The Centre was able to cover almost one-half of its costs through modest tuition payments from students, scholarships from governments, foundations, and local universities, a few business sponsors, and rental income from distance education equipment and space. Full self-sustainability, however, is a goal that could not be reached without additional support.

Vision and Mission of the Centre

The vision of the GCPPM is that of a practically relevant, multi-ethnic Centre of excellence providing Macedonia and the region with world class graduate education in public administration. The mission of GCPPM is to build a critical mass of public servants with the professional knowledge, skills and behaviours required for the design and implementation of national and local public administration reforms.

The GCPPM has made significant strides towards the creation of a distinguished and influential group of graduates—a critical mass—that seems well placed

to shape the direction and pace of public administration and other reforms in the country. Thus far, among 101 students admitted to the programme, 53 students have graduated with the MPPM degrees and one with the Certificates in Public Policy and Management (CPPM). A GCPPM-Pittsburgh Alumni Association has been formed and officers have been elected. There are ongoing discussions about a formal partnership with leaders of the Ron Brown Graduate Association, who have MBAs and MPAs from American universities. Approximately one-half of the graduates of the programme work in government ministries, including Finance, Economy, Justice, Ecology, Agriculture, Internal Affairs, Office of the President, Office of the Prime Minister, Office of the Vice President of Parliament, City of Skopje, and the municipality of Karpos. Students also work in NGOs and international governmental organisations which provide technical assistance and training in public administration. These include DFID, DAI, Bearing Point, USAID, the Open Society Institute, the Macedonian Centre for International Co-operation, Studiorum, the Association of Consumers of Macedonia, OECD, UNICEF, the World Bank, and companies such as Komercijalna Banka, Stopanska Banka, Eurolink, and Pivara Skopje. Fifty-three members of the first, second and third classes received their degrees in the graduation ceremonies of May 2005 and May 2006.

Since entering the programme and receiving their MPPM degrees, students have attained positions of strategic importance in public administration reform at the municipal, national, and international levels:

- Director of Public Administration Training, World Bank-Macedonia
- Director of Public Administration Programmes for the Organisation for European Cooperation and Development (OECD)-Macedonia
- Director of Public Administration Reform for the European Agency for Reconstruction, European Union-Macedonia
- Chief of Staff for the Minister of Foreign Investment
- Director, Department for International Relations, Southeast European University
- Executive Assistant to the Rektor, Southeast European University
- Assistant Professor, Faculty of Public Administration, Southeast European University
- Chief Financial Advisor, Mayor of the City of Skopje
- Chief Executive Officer, Eurolink Insurance Company
- Country Director, International Union of Local Authorities
- Director, Idea Plus Marketing—Pristina, Kosovo
- Head of Public Administration Reform, General Secretariat
- Specialist on Macedonian Integration in the European Union, European Training Centre, European Union, Turin, Italy

The Instructional Programme

Two graduate programmes are offered at the Centre. One programme, the Certificate in Public Policy and Management (CPPM), requires six courses (18 credits). Although the CPPM was specially designed for students with the equivalent of BA degrees, but who are younger and without significant professional work experience, it has attracted few students. Changes in the programme in June 2004 made it possible for these younger students to gain sufficient practical experience while completing their studies, thereby enabling them to qualify for admission to the Master of Public Policy and Management (MPPM) degree programme. Under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Faculty of Public Administration at Southeast European University, younger faculty who fit this profile could earn their MPPM degree while serving as assistant professors of public administration. The MPPM degree, which requires 10 courses (30 credits), is the degree of choice for all but one student.

The ten-course curriculum is highly structured, analytical, and practical. One-half of the 10 courses cut across public, non-profit, and business management; these five courses are essentially the same as those required in good MBA programmes. The remaining five courses focus exclusively on the public sector. The courses are:

GSPIA 2000	PUBLIC MANAGEMENT
GSPIA 2004	MICROECONOMICS FOR PUBLIC POLICY
GSPIA 2007	QUANTITATIVE METHODS
GSPIA 2006	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR MANAGEMENT
GSPIA 2009	PUBLIC POLICY ANALYSIS
GSPIA 2114	FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
GSPIA 2117	PUBLIC PROGRAMME EVALUATION
GSPIA 2120	STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT FOR PUBLIC AND NONPROFIT ORGANISATIONS
GSPIA 2200	EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION AND MACEDONIAN PUBLIC POLICY
GSPIA 2099	CAPSTONE SEMINAR: MACEDONIA MANAGEMENT AND POLICY ISSUES PRACTICUM

In each course, students attend regular, face-to-face lectures by University of Pittsburgh faculty. In addition, they attend distance learning classes delivered from Pittsburgh. Distance learning makes efficient use of some of the best faculty in the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA), while still requiring that these faculty offer at least one-third of each course in Skopje during the months of September, December, January, April, and July. Standardised evaluations of teaching effectiveness are required in each class. Student evaluations delivered via

the GCPPM-GSPIA distance education system show that students rate the quality of these lectures almost as high as traditional face-to-face lectures.

A number of GCPPM students concurrently attended distance education lectures at the World Bank delivered via the World Bank Global Distance Learning Network (GDLN). Their assessment was that the GCPPM distance education system exceeds the GDLN in clarity and overall quality, and at a small fraction of the cost. The GCPPM distance learning technology is a unique solution developed in partnership with the first Macedonian internet service provider, UNET, and the University of Pittsburgh's Centre for Instructional Development and Distance Education (CIDDE). Real-time distance learning lectures can be viewed from remote learning sites, or in recorded form at a special website (<http://mediasite.cidde.pitt.edu>). This human-scale technology is increasingly recognised as one of the more innovative distance learning technologies used today. After testing the system by linking Pittsburgh and Skopje with Tetovo, Budapest, Bucharest, Bratislava, and Atlanta, Georgia, it became possible to extend regular instruction and training to the region.

Classes and Teaching Faculty

All classes at the GCPPM are held from 1800 – 2100h during weekdays and on Saturdays from 0900 – 1200 h. This enables fulltime employees to attend classes and earn the MPPM degree. The MPPM degree earned in Skopje has the same requirements and professional standing as the MPPM degree earned in the United States at the University of Pittsburgh.

The quality of teaching faculty from Pittsburgh is outstanding. Every GSPIA faculty member from Pittsburgh has at one time or another been awarded the Teaching Excellence or Teacher of the Year award. This is particularly noteworthy, considering that evaluations of the majority of classes were higher than 75 percent of classes taught in Pittsburgh. On a standardised evaluation instrument used in Pittsburgh, faculty teaching at the Centre achieved outstanding evaluation scores (average 4.6 on a 5-point scale), which is above the threshold required for Teaching Excellence Awards at GSPIA. Teaching evaluation scores among local faculty have tended to be below those of the Pittsburgh faculty.

All faculty members teach their respective courses from a practice-oriented standpoint. The focus on practical problem solving is enabled by partnerships involving local practitioners. The Centre has worked closely with the “Make Decentralisation Work” project, which is funded by USAID and awarded to Development Alternatives Incorporated (DAI). Other partners include the Macedonian-American Chamber of Commerce, which supports two legislative internships; the Royal Dutch Institute of Public Administration (ROI), which cooperates with the Centre in training workshops; the British aid and technical assistance agency (DFID); the

Macedonian Agency for Civil Servants, the Vice President of the Parliament and her legislative staff, ministries including Finance, Ecology, Transportation, Agriculture, Justice, and Local Government, the Vice Presidency and Sector for European Integration, and the Centre for International Management of the Pivara Skopje. Formal university partnerships include Sts. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje and Southeast European University in Tetovo. The above institutions provide advice, expertise, access to government, potential students, and some support in kind.

Research and Consultation

The Pittsburgh faculty has provided pro bono consulting, research, and policy advice to the offices of the President and Prime Minister of Macedonia. For example, an analysis of the effects of the VAT on economic policies was presented to the former Prime Minister and his advisors in an oral briefing and policy paper. GCPPM faculty analyzed for the first time an Input-Output Matrix for Macedonia. The data from the matrix were used as a basis for a policy project on alternative taxation schemes which was submitted to the Prime Minister and advisors. Under a grant from UNDP, the Centre also performed a significant role in providing training in policy analysis and evaluation to the General Secretariat and the Sector for European Integration of the Vice Presidency. With support from World Learning, the Centre also designed and offered a 6-week course in debt management for staff of the new Debt Management Unit of the Ministry of Finance and the National Bank of Macedonia.

Thus far, faculty, staff and students have published book chapters, articles, case studies, and policy papers on the following subjects. All these are products of teaching, advising, and applied research in Macedonia and the region.

- A volume on the implementation of public policy in Central and Eastern Europe (Dunn, Staronova, and Puskarev 2006);
- Conference papers on public administration education in Macedonia were delivered at the 12th NISPACE Annual Conference, Vilnius, Lithuania (Murphy, Saslawski, Kreci, and Bocevski 2004);
- The case for a New European Public Administration (NEPA) in Central and Eastern Europe (Dunn 2006);
- Working papers and policy briefings including an analysis of Input-Output data and the implications for Macedonian tax policy (Chandra 2003, 2006);
- The critique and reformulation of New Public Management and European Public Administration drawing on the critical social theory of the Frankfurt School (Miller and Dunn 2007);
- An analysis of the strengths and limitations of New Public Management (NPM) and the Neo-Weberian State (NWS) as models of administrative reform in Central and Eastern Europe (Dunn and Miller 2007); and

- *Local Case Materials.* Cases on Macedonian management and policy issues are difficult to find or develop. To fill this gap, more than 150 cases in Macedonian public policy and management have been developed to address practical problems facing managers. All cases were produced by students under faculty supervision, as part of course requirements.

The cases described above required an average of 50 hours of professional work by students—all of whom were mid- to senior-level public servants and professionals in non-profit organisations and companies—who worked under the direction of faculty. Cases, which included policy analyses, programme evaluations, and management reports, are not based on superficial work and quick but inadequate analysis.

Educational Innovation and Knowledge Transfer

The Centre has been a source of educational innovation and knowledge transfer in areas ranging from language instruction, junior faculty development, case study development and writing, distance education, and curriculum development. Innovations fall into several areas:

Building Specialised Language Proficiency. Soon after the Centre began receiving applications it became evident that some otherwise highly qualified applicants did not have sufficient English-language competency to obtain minimal scores on the TOEFL or IELTS. Rather than rejecting these applicants—most of whom were otherwise highly qualified—we arranged language instruction under contract with the Centre for Foreign Languages in Skopje. Later, we created our own language workshops that emphasised public administration and policy terminology as well as more traditional instruction in English. A special new position (English-Language and Communications Specialist) was created to ensure that this new activity was effectively carried out. As a result of this effort, at least six highly qualified students passed the TOEFL or IELTS examinations and were admitted to the MPPM programme.

In our experience, specialised language training should be an integral part of such programmes. Otherwise, good applicants are lost. At the GCPPM we decided early on to enforce the same language standards as those required in Pittsburgh, rather than admit students who might be unable to follow lectures, read materials, and prepare written work in English. Regrettably, most students in other Macedonian universities, colleges, and training programmes do not have these minimum capabilities in English, although this may change as a result of globalisation, EU accession, and self-initiated learning in English.

Building On and Developing Local Faculty Talent. The GCPPM has targeted talented, young faculty with European or American graduate degrees to be-


come members of the Adjunct Faculty. We found this to be particularly important, given that most local faculty, whatever their faculty ranks and country experience, were not prepared to offer courses of the quality required. Junior faculty assisted in and co-taught courses under the guidance of Pittsburgh faculty. Many of these junior faculty were drawn from existing or previous programmes such as the Civic Education Project, the Junior Faculty Development Programme, the Ron Brown Fellowship Programme, and the Fulbright programme. One of the more innovative GCPPM programmes was the special Junior Faculty Development Initiative with Southeast European University (SEU). This programme was designed to prepare junior faculty at SEU—most of whom had not yet earned graduate degrees in Public Administration—by providing them with the Master of Public Policy and Management degree. This programme also served as a vehicle for integrating ethnic Albanian and ethnic Macedonian students in one common educational setting.

Local Case Materials. Worthwhile cases on Macedonian management and policy issues are difficult to find or develop. To fill this gap, cases in Macedonian public policy and management have been developed in the courses in public management, policy analysis, programme evaluation, applied economics, strategic management, and the capstone seminar in Macedonian management and policy issues. As noted above, more than 150 cases—policy papers, research reports, programme evaluations, management analyses—have been developed to address practical problems facing national agencies and local governments in Macedonia.

Human-Scale Distance Learning. In collaboration with one of our resource partners, UNET (the first ISP in Macedonia) and Pittsburgh's Centre for Instructional Development and Distance Education (CIDDE), the Centre has developed an innovative human-scale distance learning technology that enables broadcasts of faculty lectures from Pittsburgh. Using a high-bandwidth public Internet connection ("pipe"), this technology combines chroma-key technology to project graphics behind the lecturers as they speak. Graphics include Power Point slides, Excel graphs and spreadsheets, and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) analyses. The audio and visual quality is excellent. Lectures are accessible in real-time and asynchronously at a site called Media Site Live (see <http://mediasite.cidde.pitt.edu/catalog> and Table 1).

Outcome-Based Education. Most courses are designed in accordance with methods of outcome-based teaching. Course lectures are accessible through an electronic course information system at the University of Pittsburgh called Courseweb. This system is structured in accordance with outcome-based learning principles, including behaviourally defined learning objectives. Special workshops for Macedonian and Pittsburgh faculty have been held in Pittsburgh and Skopje. The use of outcome-based education means that most courses at the GCPPM fulfil requirements of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the Bologna Process.

Figure 1
Distance Learning Webpage



MACEDONIA UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
GRADUATE CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

DISTANCE LEARNING

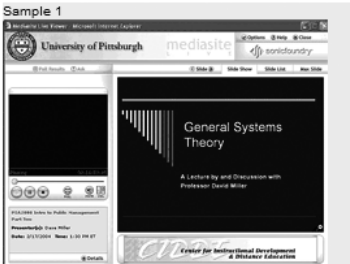
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The Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA) and the Graduate Center for Public Policy and Management (GCPPM) integrate a versatile system of existing and cutting edge technologies to provide live interactive lectures from Pittsburgh to Macedonia .

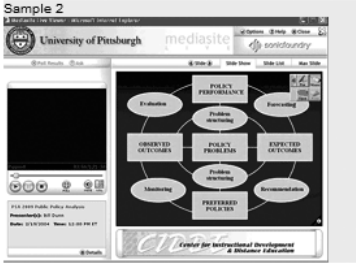
Students and visitors of this website can get the full multimedia experience of the Fall 2003, Spring 2004, and Fall 2004 distance education lectures:

<http://cidde-msl.cidde.pitt.edu/mediasitelive30/liveviewer> and go to "Macedonia Project."As the semester progresses, lectures in Policy Analysis, Public Management, Economics, Statistics, and Information Technology, Financial Management, and Program Evaluation are added as they take place.

Sample 1



Sample 2



University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public & International Affairs (GSPIA) Find People at Pitt

Curriculum Development Workshops. The Centre has sponsored and delivered curriculum development workshops in Pittsburgh, Skopje, and in Bratislava at Comenius University. The first on-site, three-day workshop was held at the GCPPM facilities in Skopje. The Pittsburgh workshop involved ten American and Macedonian professors who developed courses taught at the Centre. The second workshop, in Skopje, focused on the development of courses designed in accordance with outcome-based design principles used to develop GCPPM courses. The other part of the workshop focused on methodologies for the development of case studies, using some of the GCPPM cases as examples. The third part of the workshop focused on distance learning technologies, using a live broadcast from Pittsburgh via the distance learning technology. The third workshop, held in Bratislava, was co-sponsored by GCPPM and the Royal Dutch Institute of Public Administration. The focus was on principles and procedures for developing case studies as parts of courses in public administration and policy.

Student Diversity

The student body is ethnically, geographically, and gender-wise diverse. Among the graduates of the first three classes, there are 8 Albanians and 1 Roma out of a student body of 53. The remaining students are ethnic Macedonians. More than 70 percent of all students are women. The average age is 34 years, and more than 95 percent of students have at least five years of professional work experience in government, government-related NGOs, and the private sector. Of all 101 students—graduates and students admitted to the GCPPM—twenty-seven are Albanians or Roma. As already stated, the programme has served as an unexpectedly powerful vehicle for integrating ethnic Albanian and ethnic Macedonian students in one common educational setting.

Financial Self-sustainability

Although the GCPPM is a proven entity, it is not now nor is it likely to be fully self-sustaining. Although the Centre has proved that it can be *partially* self-sustaining, full self-sustainability cannot be achieved without additional government and foundation support. Because programmes of this nature are dependent on students whose government salaries or expected increments in these salaries cannot hope to cover more than a small fraction of tuition and fees, there is no alternative to public funding for this and similar public administration programmes in Central and Eastern Europe. In January 2007, the average (median) salary of government employees in Macedonia was less than \$300 per month. Practically speaking, this means that few government employees can possibly pay the substantial but already significantly reduced tuition (\$14,000 per year for two years). Under these con-

straints, and despite substantial in-kind contributions and tuition reduction by Pittsburgh, the GCPM does not have sufficient revenue to pay expenses.

Conclusions

The Graduate Centre for Public Policy and Management has successfully met most of its goals. One reason for this success is that there was a lengthy period of planning and negotiation preceding the submission of a proposal to the U.S. Department of State and the Government of Macedonia. Some five years were needed to solidify the base of political and educational support needed in Macedonia to create a demand for the programme. Without this planning and negotiation it is likely that the programme never would have been established.

A second reason for success was the recruitment of the best GSPIA-Pittsburgh faculty to teach courses. It is largely because of teaching excellence and a strong commitment to the programme that the courses, and the programme as a whole, succeeded. Nevertheless, without the distance education system, these talented faculty could not have spent sufficient time—at a distance—with students to maintain a quality programme. Despite distance education, it is essential that faculty from abroad spend at least 20 percent of time during the semester on site. This enables strong relationships with students, local staff, and government officials.

A third reason for success is was visible, committed, senior managers who not only know the country, but are well-established and respected as academics in their own fields. If such leadership is not present locally for significant periods of time, the design and implementation of programmes are at risk. Programmes such as this cannot be managed from a distance in a “headquarters-field” relationship, or run solely by locals who may not have sufficient scholarly credibility and political autonomy. Many of the most important decisions were made in country by the director and staff—who were in a position to know how to make the right choices—in consultation with Pittsburgh.

Finally, there is little likelihood that contextually relevant and high-quality graduate professional programmes in public administration will be financially self-sustaining without international and national government financial participation. By quality education we do not merely mean the pedigree of a programme or its international standing among academics. We rather mean education that provides knowledge, skills, and behaviours that promote effective public administration reform and practical problem solving in specific contexts. Ironically, it is the successful adaptation to this very context—a context involving post-socialist institutions with poorly defined public missions, educational systems preoccupied with business education at the expense of public administration education, and a paucity of financial and human resources required to sustain high-quality education in public administration, international agencies guided by the mistaken belief that education

can and must be self-sustaining—it is this context that threatens to undermine the success of international educational programmes such as the Macedonia Graduate Centre for Public Policy and Management.

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Professional Education for Civil Servants in Russia

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This paper is dedicated to the analysis of the evolution of training, re-training and internship educational programmes (also known as professional education) for civil and municipal servants in Russia. The system of education for students in the area of public administration, which concentrated on their preparation for future jobs in governmental and municipal bodies and which is developed simultaneously in Russia with educational programmes for civil and municipal servants, is outwith the scope of this article.

The authors review three periods during the evolution of professional education for civil and municipal servants in Russia: from 1991/92 when the first attempts to launch a system of education for civil servants was produced by the newly established Government Agency ROSKADRY; from 1995 to 2004 when the system of education for civil and municipal servants grew on the basis of the Federal Law “About the Foundations of the State Service of Russian Federation” (1995), and from 2004 until the present when new Federal legislation appeared, including the Federal Law “On the Civil Service of the Russian Federation” (2004), the Federal Law “On the Municipal Service in the Russian Federation” (2007), the Presidential Decree “On the System of Professional Re-training, Training and Internships for Federal Civil Servants of the Russian Federation” (2006).

The authors concentrate mainly on the 3rd (contemporary) period in the evolution of professional education for civil and municipal servants. The trends and the main features of professional education, the duration and types of programmes, the participation of various educational centres in professional education activities are discussed. Statistical data is presented to illustrate the situation. The authors also describe the key problems and prospects for the future development of education for civil servants in Russia, including establishing relevant MPA programmes.

The analytical part of the article, based on data for 2006 – 2007 research strives to answer several key questions:

What are the most urgent problems in the professional education system for state and municipal servants?

What are the most promising directions for developing professional education for state and municipal administration?

The methodology of the research is combined of statistical analysis, of a description of legislation which has already been introduced and legislation preparation regarding the civil service of the Russian Federation and an evaluation of its implementation and content analysis of educational programmes (disciplinary orientations and groups of disciplines, elaborated professional competencies for different categories of civil servants, educational methods and innovative programmes, capacity of educational community, trends etc).

1. Establishing professional education for civil servants in Russia (1991/2 – 1995)

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and establishing the Russian Federation as one of the Newly Independent States (NIS), the problem of maintaining a professional civil service arose as one of the vital issues for the future development of the state. It was necessary to transform “the state service of a totalitarian state into a civil service for a democratic Russia”¹. The previous conditions of the state apparatus can be described as the existence of an ideologically oriented party-state bureaucracy, with its massive upper level, so-called nomenclature, that was occupied by responsible managerial work at all Union and republican levels². If one looks at the formal foundations of the soviet bureaucracy, the legislative ground for such bureaucracy (special legislation about the state apparatus and its functioning) was absent.

Professional education for the apparatchiki³ did not exist and instead, ideological training in some fields such as scientific communism and the history of the communist party, dialectical and historical materialism occurred. Of course, it has no common ground with a professional disciplinary-educational approach. The specialised legislation for a professional civil service as a social institute was only established at the beginning of the nineties – mid-nineties and greatly differs from soviet non-legislative, ideological (communist party) regulations of bureaucracy⁴. It

1 Реформа государственной службы России. История попыток реформирования с 1992 по 2000 год. Под ред. Т.В. Зайцевой. М., 2003, с. 94. (Reform of the State Service of Russia. The History of the attempts to reform from 1992 to 2000. Ed. by T.V. Zaytseva. Moscow, 2003, p. 94 – in Russian).

2 Государственная служба (комплексный подход). Под ред. А.В. Оболонского. М., 1999, с.93. (State Service. (Complex approach). Ed. by A.V. Obolonsky. Moscow, 1999, p. 93 – in Russian). See also: Восленский М.М. Господствующий класс Советского Союза. М. 1991 (Voslensky M.M. The Ruling Class of the Soviet Union. Moscow, 1991 – in Russian).

3 Those bureaucrats belonging to the apparatus.

4 Реформа государственной службы Российской Федерации (2000 – 2003 годы). Предс.редакционного совета Д.А. Медведев. М., 2006, с.103. (Reform of the State Service of the Russian Federation (2000 – 2003). Chairman of the Editorial Board D.A. Medvedev. Moscow, 2006, p.103 – in Russian).

was only with this new era of Russian history that professional education for civil servants began.

Some Russian authors take the position that the state apparatus for the Russian Federation was constructed practically 'from zero'⁵ but this opinion is far from the reality of the "cadres population" transformation. More than 70 % of bureaucrats at the beginning and up to the middle of the 1990s continued to remain in the old soviet time apparatus and most of them had not represented the level of central (Soviet Union) bodies⁶, but that of 'second level' ministry governmental bodies of the former Russian Socialist Republic. Fortunately, this became the only formal heritage for the newly constructed Russian Federation government bodies and not that of the second order, the 'shadow' of the central Soviet Union apparatus which was evaluated in the USSR as a place for 'losers'.

To begin the professional education of civil servants under the difficult conditions of opposing educational traditions was a challenge. First of all, it was necessary to not destroy completely the 'material basis' for education and to keep the former property of party schools for new educational organisations⁷. Second, new types of programmes had to be introduced. And, last but not the least, the new cadres of teachers had to be prepared for programme implementation. Of course, it was impossible to solve the aforementioned problems immediately, but due to the efforts of the newly established governmental body ROSKADRY (State Committee for Managing of the Cadres for Civil Service)⁸, the former system of the Academy of social sciences, under the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR (ЦК КПСС) and its regional branches, was transformed into the system of Academies for civil servants (The Russian Academy of State Service under the President of Russia, and the regional Academies)⁹. The educational programmes for civil servants during this period were not aimed at the professional competencies and needs of the civil service and simply introduced international education materials with no changes relevant to the Russian conditions of transitional country governing. They applied to other kinds of state history and relations with citizens and other cultural

5 *ibid*, p. 28.

6 Государственная служба (комплексный подход). Под ред. А.В. Оболонского. М., 1999, с.93. (State Service. (Complex approach). Ed. by A.V. Obolonsky. Moscow, 1999, p. 100 – in Russian).

7 See: Беков Х.А. Опыт работы Роскадров. М., 2001 (Bekov X.A. The History of the ROSKADRY Work. Moscow, 2001).

8 The history of establishing of this Agency and of its future elimination from the structure of Russian State is described in the book: Реформа государственной службы России. История попыток реформирования с 1992 по 2000 год. Под ред. Т.В. Зайцевой. М., 2003, Глава 1 (Reform of the State Service of Russia. The History of the attempts to reform from 1992 up to 2000. Ed. by T.V. Zaytseva. Moscow, 2003, Chapter 1 – in Russian).

9 The Decree № 73-рп from November 5, 1991 of President of Russian Soviet Federative Republic (RSFSR) about Russian Academy of Governing and educational and scientific organizations formerly belonged to Central Committee of Communist Party of USSR and Central Committee of Communist Party of RSFSR.

and social traditions. The educational “strategy” applied was simply to: borrow cases, methods and approaches and try to apply them directly to Russian bureaucracy education. At the same time, the traditions and essence of the educational methods were not that far removed from the previous ones (mostly lectures and seminars and not case-oriented interactive classes). The descriptions of borrowed cases, as a result, were “in favour”, instead of discussions in the classrooms about cases adapted to Russian conditions.

2. Professional education for civil servants in Russia from 1994 to 2004 and the present situation (normative aspects)

In order to describe the process of the development of the system of professional education for civil servants in Russia, one should begin by establishing a legislative base for this education.

A legislative foundation for the professional education of civil servants was required; first of all, to be introduced in order to put in place a new practice of realisation of educational programmes, and second, to provide the appropriate budgeting for the education of civil servants. So far these goals have not been achieved.

The civil service legislation in Russia was introduced twice: first there was the Federal Law “About the Foundation of a State Service for the Russian Federation” (1995), and over a period of time it was replaced both conceptually and technically by 3 basic legislative acts: “Concept of the Reforming of the System of State Service of the Russian Federation” (2001), the Federal Law “On the System of State Service of Russian Federation” (2003), and the Federal Law ‘On the Civil Service of the Russian Federation’ (2004) which came into action in February 2005). The above mentioned legislative acts include the components that regulate the professional education of state (civil, law enforcement, military) servants.

With the Federal Law “About the Foundations of the State Service of the Russian Federation” (1995) an attempt was made to create a system of professional education for civil servants which was provided by the introduction of the following norms:

1. **Selection and professional education.** Evaluation of the levels of professional educational background of candidates to become state servants was recognised as part of the selection process (Article 5 introduced the principles of merit in the selection of candidates for certain positions and professionalism as the main criteria for selection);
2. **Levels and professional specialisations in professional education.** Professional education of state servants should be constructed on the basis of the different educational levels (duration of programmes) and in relation to the professional specialisations (content of programmes) of civil servants (Article 6, Article 9);

3. **Government responsibility for professional education of civil servants.** The governmental bodies are responsible for the evaluation of professional skills, educational levels of civil servants and to organise civil servants' training (Article 28).

However, in the Federal Law "About the Foundations of the State Service of the Russian Federation" there were no norms specifying the details of educational programmes for civil servants (types of diploma, duration – long-term, short-term, mid-term programmes and the educational directions of these programmes, etc.). There were no financial mechanisms for the implementation of educational programmes. As a result, the system of professional education for civil servants was not complete in two main areas: the introduction of standards of professional educational programmes and their financing.

During this period, the situation in the education of civil servants in Russia can be described as a transition from the old Communist party education system to the new principles and practices of professional training. Additionally, during this period, the master degree programmes in Public Administration had not yet been introduced because Russia had not yet joined the Bologna Declaration regarding two levels of professional education (bachelor and master degrees).

The new legislation on the entire system of the public service of the Russian Federation was introduced in 2003 – 2004 when the implementation of the Concept of Reforming Public Service that was issued by President V.Putin in 2001 took place. Among the general reasons why new legislation was required are the following:

1. In the previous Federal Law 'About the Foundations of the State Service of the Russian Federation' (1995) certain types of public service (including the civil service, law enforcement service and military service) were not introduced. This caused problems when it was necessary to specify various regulation norms. Also, a correlation of positions in the different types of public service was absent. From an educational perspective, it became clear that the education of civil servants should be different from the education of military and law enforcement servants.
2. The job relationship between the state, as an employer, and state servants were described in terms of labour legislation. However, this did not work properly because of the many limitations for public servants in their professional behaviour. It could only be done in terms of administrative legislation. Also, in the previous Federal Law, the employer of public servants was nominated as a separate government body which led to the fragmentation of the service. From the positions of educational organisations this meant that the content of the education had to be transformed into a description of administrative procedures, organisational mechanisms, ethical behaviour and conflict of interest resolution.

3. The principles of a merit system were introduced into the 'old' legislation, mostly as blanket norms with several gaps, and consequently it was impossible to put into practice competition for jobs, attestations, and other procedures of merit in the civil service. The procedures of attestation and competition were also not clearly elaborated upon. This created several possibilities for avoiding the merit principles in the nomination of civil servants to certain positions. The educational level of servants became critical for the selection and promotion (attestation) of state servants.
4. The part of the Law 'About the Foundations..' that was devoted to the education of public servants was not elaborated upon in a systematic form; it was fragmentary and with many gaps in the regulations (only a few regulations about the necessity of professional education and its correlation with job positions were introduced in Articles 6, 9, 28).

After the new Federal Law 2004 came into action, its norms should have been supported and specified by second-rank legislation (mostly Decrees of the President, and Orders of the Government). As far as the education of civil servants is concerned, the system of education was clarified and specified in the procedures and in the ways of its management by the Presidential Decree 'On the System of Professional Re-training, Training and Internships for the Federal Civil Servants of the Russian Federation' (№ 1474 from December 28, 2006).

In this Decree the following norms and procedures were introduced:

- The distribution of managerial functions under the regulation of the professional education of federal civil servants was introduced (international educational programmes abroad are managed by the Administration of the President of Russia, and all other educational programmes for civil servants are the responsibility of a federal body which is nominated by the Government of Russia);
- The special financing of the programmes for professional education of federal civil servants (including its research and methodical supplement) should be included in the federal budget (from the 2008 fiscal year onwards);
- The funds for the implementation of educational programmes are distributed on the basis of open competition of educational organisations, according to the directions and list of programmes put forward by the federal government body among the requests of all federal bodies for their civil servants' training needs assessments for the coming year;
- The norms for paying for educational services, the forms of statistical monitoring of educational programmes, the state requests for the quality of education, the form of contract between the educational organisation and the approved government body should be prepared by the Government of Russia in a 3-months period after the issuing of the Decree.

- Three different kinds of educational programmes were introduced and described (secondary education – over 1000 academic hours, short training programmes, and in-service training).

Table 2.1 shows the differences in principles and norms for the professional education of civil servants that were presented under the previous Federal Law ‘About the Foundations of the Public service of the Russian Federation’ (1995), which are now included in the current Federal Law ‘On the Civil Service of the Russian Federation’ (2004) which came into action in February, 2005), and introduced in the Presidential Decree ‘On the System of Professional Re-training, Training and Internships for Federal Civil Servants of the Russian Federation’ (2006).

Table 2.1
Progress in the professional education sphere for civil servants

Principles/Norms	Federal Law – 1995	Federal Law – 2004	President Decree – 2006
1. Principle of the necessity of professional education for civil servants.	+	+	+
2. Principle of taking into account the level of professional education (diplomas) during competitions for obtaining new job positions, during attestations and qualified exams.	+	+	+
3. Principle of responsibility of the departments evaluating professional skills and knowledge of civil servants to organise educational programmes for civil servants.	+	+	+
4. Description of the types of professional education for civil servants (duration, sphere, diplomas, etc).	-	+	+
5. Description of the mechanisms of open competition between educational organisations for providing education programmes for civil servants.	-	+/-	+
6. Description of the mechanisms of financing educational programmes according to the types of programmes.	-	-	+
7. New distribution of the management functions for the professional education of civil servants among governmental bodies.	-	-	+/-
7. Re-shaping of the types of educational programmes on the basis of the Bologna Declaration.	-	-	+/-

3. Current practice of professional education for civil servants

The purpose of this article is to show how this new legislation works in practice in the current situation in Russia, and how to evaluate the effectiveness of the existing practices of professional education for civil servants.

The research conducted in Russia is supposed to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent can the present situation be considered balanced, taking into account the real needs of the Russian public and municipal administration?
2. What are the most urgent structural problems of the professional education system for state and municipal servants? Difficulties in the spheres of educational process organisation and educational programmes formulation are not covered in the research because of the necessary research limitations.
3. What are the most promising directions for developing professional education for state and municipal administration?

The authors encountered several obstacles and limitations when planning and arranging the research. Unfortunately, it transpired that no unified database of the various professional education programmes (including training, re-training and internship educational programmes) exists. Moreover, there is no sole registry of educational institutions that provides such services to the public administration system. All this significantly complicated the research.

It is important to mention that HR departments in the Russian state and, to a lesser degree municipal administrative bodies, arrange courses in professional education on their own. It is virtually impossible to analyse such activities because information about them is considered internal and commonly not easily available to the public. The tutors are frequently invited from Russian educational or research institutions. Often they act on their own and not as a representative of their institutions. Thus it is also impossible to obtain information about tutors and the educational courses from the corresponding institutions.

Because of the above mentioned difficulties in the research, the only possible decision was to exclude from the analysis issues related to the activities of such HR departments. The authors analysed professional education programmes of training, re-training and internship offered by the leading Russian higher education institutions.

There were also difficulties related to the evaluation of the number of attendees of the programmes. In the majority of cases, Russian educational institutions do not publish exact facts of this kind – probably due to an unstable load. This is another reason why it was impossible to evaluate the capacity of some educational programmes – the number of attendees varies from year to year. Furthermore, in some cases, an institution can easily increase the capacity of its educational pro-

grammes. In others – the capacity is at its limits. This is why it is impossible to make precise judgments. Thus this parameter was not at all used in the analysis.

The analysis presented here concentrates fully on courses and programmes offered by Russian higher education institutions in the 2006 – 2007 educational period. The research summarised data about 327 educational programmes by 17 of the largest educational institutions. The list of these institutions, with some key facts, is presented in Table 3.1.

This list is far from complete as new educational programmes appear every year. The leading institutions generate new ideas and new courses while the institutions on the “second echelon” do their best to catch up and introduce new techniques already tested by the leaders. Still, this list provides an opportunity to adequately evaluate the situation in the sphere of the professional education of civil servants.

The result of analysing available data about the courses of the 17 institutions was the construction of complex database. Later, this database was used for statistical analysis of the situation.

It is also important to clarify several terminological matters relating to higher education in Russia in general and professional education for civil servants in particular. Further analysis of the situation in Russia is based on the typology provided by the federal laws about the civil service (discussed above) plus the Federal Law “On Education”.

According to recent legislations, the system of higher education in Russia consists of 3 types of educational programmes: 5-year specialist programmes, 4-year bachelor programmes, 2-year master programmes. When a person begins a professional career there are several options for raising professionalism, e.g. professional education: secondary higher education, training, re-training, and internship programmes. Secondary higher education is targeted at people who either wish to switch specialisations or to obtain higher education in the sphere of their professional activities and who already have work experience. A detailed description of the difference between secondary higher education and master programmes is discussed in Chapter 4. Training programmes are provided by employers and constitute a system of raising the professionalism of their employees. Re-training programmes are usually arranged by employers or specialised organisations to help people to find themselves in some other sphere of activity. Internships as a form of professional education programmes are usually arranged by employers under various exchange programmes. Additional explanations will be provided where needed.

3.1 Analysis of the influence exerted on the Russian system of training, re-training and internship for civil servants by educational institutions.

First of all the, authors analysed the role of various educational institutions in the general “landscape” of the Russian professional education system.

As can be seen from Table 3.1, there are several leaders among the institutions. The Russian Academy of State Service under the President of the RF is far ahead of any competition with its 69 courses, which constitutes 21.1 % of all educational programmes covered by the research. The second place goes to the Financial Academy under the Government of the RF with 45 courses (13.8 % of the total).

Table 3.1

The rating of educational institutions offering training, re-training and internship educational programmes for state and municipal civil servants

Name of institution	Rating	Number of programmes	%
Russian Academy of State Service (RASS) under the President of the Russian Federation	1	69	21,1
Financial Academy under the Government of the Russian Federation	2	45	13,8
Povolzhskaya Academy of State Service (subsidiary of RASS)	3	34	10,4
State University – Higher School of Economics	4	32	9,8
North-Western Academy of State Service (subsidiary of RASS)	5	31	9,5
North-Caucasian Academy of State Service (RASS)	6	28	8,6
Academy of People’s Economy under the Government of the Russian Federation	7	24	7,3
Ural Academy of State Service (subsidiary of RASS)	8	18	5,5
Orel Regional Academy of State Service (subsidiary of RASS)	9	16	4,9
Moscow Academy of State and Municipal Administration RASS under the President of the Russian Federation	10	10	3,1
State University of Management	11	7	2,1
Siberia Academy of State Service (subsidiary of RASS)	12	5	1,5
Moscow State University named after M.V.Lomonosov	13	3	0,9
Russian Customs Academy	14	2	0,6
All-Russian Academy of Foreign Trade under the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Russian Federation	15	1	0,3
Kuban State University	16	1	0,3
Russian University of People’s Friendship	17	1	0,3
Total:		327	100

If we take into account that 7 out of the 17 institutions considered in the research are associated with RASS, we will end up with a very picturesque situation: RASS system provides 211 educational programmes, which constitutes more than 64.5 % of the total number of educational programmes in the database. In this case, the third place goes to the State University – Higher School of Economics, which offers 32 educational programmes.

The situation with the leading role of RASS is, on the one hand, quite predictable. On the other hand it is somewhat disturbing. Historically, for many years, the government has been investing in the RASS system for the purpose of training and re-training of civil servants. This “monopoly” was viewed as something positive. However, the market tends to stagnate without competition, and this is what may happen in this sphere unless certain efforts are made to support the de-monopolisation and diversification of activities of educational institutions.

It is worth mentioning that the suggested rating of higher education institutions is based on formal criterion, which does not allow for “influence” of educational programmes. For example, the database includes short courses and full academic programmes of secondary higher education. Since it would be very disputable to weigh the programmes by the duration factor, all of the programmes were considered “equal” in “influence” and output. The rating also does not take into account the number of graduates of the programmes because this variable is very unstable.

3.2 Distribution of Educational Programmes by Type

Let us consider in more detail the distribution of educational programmes by type. First of all, only 2 programmes out of 327 have the status of secondary higher education programmes. All the others, whatever their duration, have the status of either training or re-training. Secondary higher education for civil servants is provided by the State University of Management and the Moscow State University (Table 3.2).

It is interesting to observe what approaches to professional re-training are used by the main educational institutions. For example, several organisations obviously consider re-training one of their key specialisations. Their activities include a larger share of re-training programmes than is the case in other educational institutions. These organisations are as follows:

- 1) Russian Academy of State Service (RASS) under the President of the Russian Federation;
- 2) Siberia Academy of State Service (subsidiary of RASS);
- 3) Academy of People’s Economy under the Government of the Russian Federation.

Table 3.2
Distribution of Educational Programmes by Type

Name of institution	Training	Re-training	Secondary higher or professional education	Total
Academy of People's Economy under the Government of the Russian Federation	16	8		24
All-Russian Academy of Foreign Trade under the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Russian Federation	1			1
State University – Higher School of Economics	32			32
State University of Management	6		1	7
Kuban State University	1			1
Moscow Academy of State and Municipal Administration RASS under the President of the Russian Federation	8	2		10
Moscow State University named after M.V.Lomonosov	1	1	1	3
Orel Regional Academy of State Service (subsidiary of RASS)	15	1		16
Povolzhskaya Academy of State Service (subsidiary of RASS)	30	4		34
Russian Academy of State Service (RASS) under the President of the Russian Federation	43	26		69
Russian Customs Academy	2			2
Russian University of People's Friendship	1			1
North-Western Academy of State Service (subsidiary of RASS)	31			31
North-Caucasian Academy of State Service (RASS)	28			28
Siberia Academy of State Service (subsidiary of RASS)		5		5
Ural Academy of State Service (subsidiary of RASS)	18			17
Financial Academy under the Government of the Russian Federation	40	5		45
Total	273	52	2	327

It is also important to note that of the total number of educational programmes only 15.9 % of programmes are re-training. This is a relatively low share, which is evidence of the low flexibility of public administration and HR system. However, additional research is required to come to any conclusions about this problem.

3.3 Specialisation Analysis of Educational Programmes

Another aspect which deserves attention is the specialisation of educational programmes by subject. The high importance of this parameter is caused by potential practical implications.

To explore these questions, the authors conducted a special expertise of the educational programmes from the database. The expertise divided the programmes into 46 groups. After statistical analysis of the data, the authors identified 15 thematic groups that had very few programmes in them (one or maximum two). Such “unrepresentative” groups were again united into special composite categories if their respective subjects were somehow close to each other. For example, “Management in different spheres of industry”, “Management in the sphere of foreign/domestic politics, religion, ethno-politics”, or “Information technologies and circulation of documents” represent such categories. This was carried out mainly for the purposes of group consolidation and also to exclude from the analysis, any insignificant or poorly represented subjects. As a result, the number of groups was reduced to 28, almost all of which are well represented in the database. The results of grouping are presented in Table 3.3. Obviously some interesting points can be seen there.

The majority of educational programmes deal with general public administration disciplines. The thematic group “State management” takes second place with the absolute number of observations. If we sum up observations for this group with the group “State and municipal management” we have 43 programmes (or 13.2 % of the total number of educational programmes). Municipal management is also quite widely represented – 27 educational programmes or 8.3 %. In second place is the group of human resource management. 34 educational programmes (more than 10 %) are devoted to HR issues. Such large numbers obviously relate to the existing problems of the civil service in the sphere of HR (efficient hiring, educating, motivating, etc.).

It is remarkable that close to the leaders are the group of financial programmes (25 programmes or 7.6 %), management of state or municipal property (22 programmes or 6.7 %), and information technologies group (also 22 programmes). The last group incorporated programmes on the introduction of information technologies in public administration and document circulation. Relatively, many programmes are devoted to the problems of law regulation of state and municipal management (16 programmes) and public relations (13 programmes).

Table 3.3
Grouping of educational programmes according to the generalised subjects

Group of educational programmes	N° of programmes	%
Anti-crisis management	6	1,8
Safety	7	2,1
Accounting	7	2,1
Civil service	11	3,4
State and municipal management	16	4,9
State management	27	8,3
State and municipal purchases	9	2,8
Investments and innovations	3	0,9
Information technologies and circulation of documents	22	6,7
Control	12	3,7
Marketing	1	0,3
Municipal management	11	3,4
Taxation	7	2,1
Education for public administration	7	2,1
Law	16	4,9
Psychology	10	3,1
Public relations	13	4,0
Sociology	2	0,6
Strategic management	5	1,5
Administration in social sphere	8	2,4
Management in the sphere of foreign/domestic politics, religion, and ethnopolitics	12	3,7
Management of state or municipal property	22	6,7
Human resource management	34	10,4
Management in different spheres of industry	14	4,3
Nature management	6	1,8
Development management	6	1,8
Finance	25	7,6
Economics	8	2,4
Total	327	100

3.4 Analysis of the Duration of Educational Programmes

The duration of educational programmes varies considerably. To simplify the analysis, the authors formulated criteria and divided all the courses from the database into five categories described in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4
Categories of educational programmes by duration

Category of educational programme	Number of programmes	%
Full cycle programmes (over 1000 hours)	2	0,6
Long-term programmes (from 500 to 1000 hours)	52	15,9
Medium-term programmes (from 100 to 500 hours)	27	8,3
Short-term programmes (from 70 to 100 hours)	172	52,6
Brief courses (less than 70 hours)	74	22,6
Total	327	100

The brief courses category is mainly comprised of one three-day educational seminars either in or out of the office. Such seminars are usually highly specialised and do not provide any additional general training. Short-term programmes are equal or close to standard university modules or an optional half-semester (2.5 – 3 months) academic course by duration. Such programmes have some potential for combining various topics, disciplines, or courses. Medium-term programmes are full academic courses or a set of shorter courses. Long-term programmes almost always provide a combination of thematic blocks because de facto they have a wider focus than shorter educational programmes. Various certificates and diplomas (including certificates and diplomas of the state approved kind) can be issued at the end of such long-term educational programmes. Programmes of full cycle represent secondary higher education or additional technical education with the issuing of official higher education diplomas.

The results of the analysis demonstrate that short-term educational programmes dominate the market of training, re-training and internship educational programmes. The lack of full-cycle programmes really draws attention to the problems of obtaining systematic fundamental education for civil servants. This problem can be solved by the introduction of master programmes as described in Chapter 4.

3.5 Geographical Distribution of Educational Centres

The geographical distribution of educational centres in Russia is also a very important factor influencing the general efficiency of training, re-training and internship educational programmes.

The regional distribution of educational programmes is presented in Table 3.5. There are also corresponding quantities of civil servants in the regions for reference purposes (data for 2005).

The numbers speak for themselves. The situation is not bad in Saratov, Orel, Rostov-on-Don. The courses/civil servants ratio are above average. In general, the situation worsens beyond Ural, where only Yekaterinburg is better.

Moscow, as might be expected, is the main educational centre of Russia, which provides a base for training, re-training and internship educational programmes for state and municipal servants from all other regions. Saratov, Petersburg, Rostov-on-Don, and Yekaterinburg are also educational centres but on a smaller scale.

Table 3.5
Number of educational programmes and number of state and municipal servants (2005) by region

Region	Number of educational programmes	Number of state and municipal servants	Region	Number of educational programmes	Number of state and municipal servants
Moscow	158	118207	Abroad	20	--
Toliatti	2	29015	Cheliabinsk	5	30087
Orel	8	10905	Kaluga	1	12475
Belogorod	8	17320	Penza	1	14545
Saratov	34	24126	Smolensk	1	12822
Novosibirsk	5	26895	Tomsk	5	12522
Petersburg	31	48646	Vologda	2	15088
Rostov-on-Don	28	38522	Krasnodar	1	41317
Yekaterinburg	18	38258			

4. The Programmes “Master of Public Administration – MPA”

The programmes of professional re-education for civil servants (level of master degree programmes in Public Administration) should occupy a leading place in the system of professional education for civil servants because of its duration (one year and more), of the number of disciplines in the educational plans, and of the fundamental nature of the disciplines and variety of methodical approaches to its implementation. The financing of such programmes cannot be realised only on the base of mechanisms used in short-term programmes of training courses and seminars, because the expenses for one participant are much higher here. The specific auditorium of the master degree programme in public administration should first of all be the civil servants who occupied the positions in the civil service at managerial

levels (categories of ‘managers’ and ‘advisors’; category of ‘specialists’ – senior group of positions; civil servants who are included in the cadres reserve group for nomination to the mentioned above positions).

However, at present it is the so-called programmes of “secondary higher education” that exist, instead of master degree programmes in public administration for civil servants. These programmes repeat in a compressed form the 5-year programmes for specialists in state and municipal governing. The education process in such programmes has some imbalances that are not acceptable for the purposes of the civil service:

1. Specialisation ‘State and Municipal Governing’ exists at the present time in the framework of a more general educational specialisation ‘Management’, which objectively establishes the priority of business-oriented disciplines in the educational plans. As a result, master degree programmes function only in the area of the MBA because the State Regulations for MPA programmes are absent. Their place is occupied by a few programmes of secondary higher education in state and municipal governing that duplicate specialist programmes in key aspects.
2. As far as the juridical programmes for civil servants are concerned, they are also realised in the form of ‘secondary higher education’ that, again, duplicate the programmes for specialists’ preparation.
3. The general specialisation ‘Management’ consist of two levels – bachelor and master degree programmes – so it is already transformed from the previous system of 5-year educational programmes (specialists) and ‘secondary education programmes’. Master degree programmes in management existed in the form of an MBA that is constructed on the basis of business-oriented State Regulations for the MPA.
4. In sociology and politology the process of transition from 5-year programmes to 4+2 year programmes (bachelors and masters) begins, but these programmes are pointed at the elaboration of professional competencies which are not relevant for the needs of the system of civil and municipal service.

In summary, the general conditions of the system of professional higher education for civil servants (MPA programmes) can be evaluated as unsatisfactory. The experience in MPA programmes from countries with an elaborated system of civil service is not absorbed properly. The existing State Regulations for specialists’ preparation in ‘State and Municipal Governing’ does not correspond to international standards, both from the viewpoint of the educational plans and methodical support of those disciplines, and from the position of the practical needs of government and municipal bodies (i.e. elaboration of the competencies that are necessary for the implementation of professional activity according to the positions of civil servants).

Due to the above, the contrast between the quality of management in private companies and in government bodies/state organisations is clearly visible. The majority of civil servants (especially at the level of top managerial positions), including managers and civil servants from financial and economical branches of these organisations, have no adequate education and contemporary innovative practical skills.

The process of the preparation of Master Degree Programmes in MPA for civil servants in Russia is only beginning. We believe that this process will be completed and will not be reversible because the introduction of such programmes is proposed by Russia's participation in the Bologna Process. This is crucially significant for the evaluation and comparison of the level of civil servants' professional education in Russia with the level of professional education of civil servants in other European countries (the relevance of job positions from the prospect of qualification requests; comparisons of the functioning of the merit system; the comparison of deontological classifications and last, but not least, the comparison of the principles of paying according to the efficiency and effectiveness of the job that includes a correlation with the level of education of civil servants).

The elaboration of master degree programmes in Public Administration at the present time is already under way and is coordinated by the Russian University of People's Friendship (Moscow). The participating universities are the State University – Higher School of Economics (Moscow), Moscow State University, Saint-Petersburg State University, Academy of People's Economy (Moscow), and Academy of State Service under the President of Russia (Moscow).

The elaboration of master degree programmes in Public Administration, coordinated and executed by a group of Russian universities, is being realised in the form of preparations for the new project 'Transient State Regulations for the Minimum Content of the Educational Programme and for the Level of Requirements for Specialists for Receiving Additional Qualifications' Specialist in State and Municipal Governing – Master of Public Administration (MPA)' (TSR for MPA). The acceptance of TSR for MPA as the regulative act by the Russian Ministry of Education and Science is a key condition for the future development of MPA programmes for civil servants because it provides the possibility to allocate funds in the State budget for implementation of such programmes. Only if acceptance of TSR for MPA happens can we have a general transition from specialists' preparation to the new system of master/bachelor programmes because in the old system of standards, the existence of MPA programmes was impossible.

The content of TSR for MPA at present can be described by several key aspects.

Mission of the programmes, the target participants, duration of the programmes and their financing:

- 1) Assignment of the mission (through the description of the key professional competences that should be elaborated during the MPA programmes' realisation), the target participants (with the accent on the education of state and municipal servants who are in managerial positions, and positions of advisers, and also of those civil servants who are included in the cadres reserve for those promotions);
- 2) The limitations for the admission in MPA programmes of persons who have a length of state and municipal service less than 2 years or length of work in managerial positions in business companies of less than 4 years;
- 3) The announcement that the selection for participation in MPA programmes will be provided on the basis of competition by the applicants;
- 4) That any MPA programme can be executed not only in-presence form, but also in a distant form, or in a mixed distant and in-presence form;
- 5) The minimum volume of the MPA programme is not less than 1000 auditorium hours;
- 6) In MPA programmes different functional and specialisations are possible (for example, in public finances, in municipal service, etc);
- 7) The financing of the MPA programmes is possible, not only from the appropriate budgets of the governmental bodies in the form of State Grants on the basis of competition procedures, but also from other sources (including the personal paying of tuition fees);
- 8) The participants who receive an MPA diploma are shown preference in nominations to managerial positions, and positions of advisers in governmental and municipal bodies, and also are shown preference to be included in the cadres reserve for those promotions.

The requirements for the content of the MPA programme include:

- 1) The composition of separate educational and thematic plans that should be elaborated by the educational organisation and that should be approved according to the general rules of approval of the educational programmes in Russia;
- 2) The cycles of disciplines as legislative foundations of civil and municipal service (with the list of those disciplines), as the basic professional disciplines proposed by the educational organisation itself, the cycle of special disciplines that is selected by participants themselves from the provided optional list of disciplines and the internship and final attestation procedures (exams) should be included in any MPA programme;

- 3) The distribution (minimum) of the hours for each of the cycles of disciplines and for the internship should be proposed according to the established proportions.

The conditions for MPA programme realisation include:

- 1) The minimal conditions for the level of professional qualifications of trainers and teachers who participate in the education (the percentage of trainers and teachers who have a doctor's degree in science and a Ph.D. in the named area, and the minimal percentage of trainers and teachers who work in the educational organisation on the basis of a constant job contract);
- 2) The necessity to include practitioners as trainers and teachers (including the master-classes), their participation as consultants, as advisors of internships and of attestations, according to the mission of the programme. The minimal percentage of such practitioners is limited by the TSR for MPA;
- 3) The educational organisation should have the appropriate scientific-educational supplementary funds, including a library of printed textbooks and other materials for every educational course and discipline for the MPA programme and should provide easy access to those materials for participants of the MPA programme;
- 4) The equipment (computers with the required software, audio and video equipment) should be provided by the educational organisation according to the standards of educational process provision, including the new educational technologies' application;
- 5) A system of control on the quality of education (quality assessment procedures) should be provided by the educational organisation;
- 6) Previous experience in the education of civil and municipal servants in other programmes is a pre-condition of participation by the educational organisation in the implementation of the MPA programme;
- 7) A limitation of the number of participants in one group;
- 8) A description of the results of previously passed courses in other programmes should be presented;
- 9) The criteria of knowledge control (exams and other forms of control) should be introduced and the knowledge control should mostly be presented in written form;
- 10) Any MPA programme should provide the opportunity for international internships and short-term courses abroad as part of the MPA programme.

The requirements for a level of knowledge and skills for participants who receive an MPA diploma should include the description of key professional competences.

The requirement for the final State attestation includes the existence of a final State attestation, including an interdisciplinary exam, State exam in a foreign language and a diploma thesis defence procedure. It also requires the existence of the programme and a description of the procedures for the final interdisciplinary exam and State exam in a foreign language, a requirement for the content, volume and structure of the final written qualification work and for the criteria of evaluation of the knowledge of the students.

At present, the TSR for MPA are in the process of final approval by the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia and are in the process of coordinating positions with the Department of State Service of the Administration of the President of Russia.

5. Conclusion

The present situation in Russia is of a transitional nature. The system of higher education, in general, and of professional education for civil servants is rapidly changing. The fact that Russia joined the Bologna Declaration means that sooner or later many of the described peculiarities of Russian education will disappear. Professional education and higher education are to become more unified and clearer in comparison with other countries. For example, in 2008, the process of the replacement of specialist programmes with the bachelor plus master scheme will begin.

In this respect, MPA programmes are to become the new reality and the new standard of professional education for civil servants. However, at present, the situation is remarkable and controversial in many respects. Hopefully the presented review and analysis of professional education have demonstrated both the starting point and the key processes in this sphere. As always it is worth analysing the old because the new is built upon the structures that can be observed now.

The Bologna Process and the Development of Public Administration Education in Ukraine

Natalya Kolisnichenko and Allan Rosenbaum

Just as Ukraine as a country has been in a state of transition for the past two decades, so too has public administration there. The fall of the Soviet empire meant that the responsibility for managing the government transitioned from a party hierarchy to a newly created administrative officialdom. At the same time, the education and training of those who were being prepared to manage the government was also in a state of transition. It went from being provided at the Higher Party School to being the province of a newly created Institute for Public Administration and Local Government which was ultimately to become the National Academy of Public Administration. More recently, the National Academy of Public Administration has again been undergoing significant transformation as it has sought to simultaneously reform itself while at the same time implementing the mandates of the Bologna Process. We shall in this paper examine various dimensions of these transitions with particular emphasis upon the implementation of the Bologna Process.

Introduction

Ukraine's development as an independent, democratic state certainly requires the existence of a strong and effective public sector which functions through national, regional and local governmental institutions. The very dramatic changes that have occurred in Ukrainian society and government and, in particular, the very important political, economic and social transitions which have taken place over the past few years, clearly require the development of very strong, honest and able civil servants. This requires serious reflection and continuing change in order to adjust the balance between the various elements of the current programmes for training them and the introducing of new approaches and techniques into the existing public administration education programmes within the country.

In Ukraine during the Soviet period, there was only one place where government administrators were trained, the Higher Party School. It, however, was not

open to the public, and obviously was a highly ideologically oriented institution where administration was equated with following party directions. In the aftermath of independence from the Soviet Union, there has been a very significant increase in both the number of general civil service and local self-government workers. However, simply increasing the number of those managing the government does not ensure good public administration. Rather, the realisation of successful measures in the field of public administration requires an increase in the level of qualification of, and the consequent quality of work of civil servants. Thus, the necessity of effective management by civil servants who have proper experience, professional and personal qualities is critical to the development of a democratic Ukraine.

The need to supply the government with new and more qualified civil servants in the aftermath of the transition to an independent Ukraine called attention to the very real need to improve the skills of existing government workers in order to enable them to engage in effective decision-making for social and economic development. Thus, a new approach to the civil service and its education and training was developed. Three specialties of education for government employment (social development management, public administration and the civil service) were defined and varying types of educational programs were established for individuals entering into each of these three types of government employment. Guiding the development of these curricula was the premise that the public administration system forms the basis for the effective management of the socio-economic processes that are necessary for the steady development of the regions of Ukraine.¹

Diversity in the Provision of Public Administration Education and Training

There are three primary government providers of public administration education and training in Ukraine: the National Academy of Public Administration, Office of the President of Ukraine (NAPA) with its four regional institutes is the primary organisation responsible for educating and training top level administrators and civil servants; the Main Civil Service Department (MCSD), which together with the oblast administrations and the Ministry of Education and Science operates in-service training centres in each of the 24 oblast (regional governments) in Ukraine, as well as in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the two cities of national significance, Kyiv and Sevastopol and the various ministries and departments that provide specialized training for their own employees.

1 Although in the Message of the President of Ukraine to the Supreme Council (Verkhovna Rada) of Ukraine, "the European choice: Conceptual principles of strategy of economic and social development of Ukraine in 2002-2011," the main priority is given to the model of innovative development of the economy, in practice, perceptible changes in training are do not seem to be in this direction.

The in-service centres carry out a large part of the Ukrainian government's training activities. Formally, they report to the oblast governor (who is appointed by Ukraine's President) and the elected oblast council. In fact, their activities are closely overseen by the Main Civil Service Department and the Ministry of Education and Science has significant authority over program content. Nevertheless, despite great budgetary limitations, they do provide a wide array of training programs for both national government and local authority administrators with a focus upon mid and lower level public sector employees. There is some debate about the relevance and effectiveness of the training they provide and certainly there is significant variation among oblasts in terms of the quality of training services.

In addition, since independence, more than 60 higher education institutions (universities and institutes) have begun to provide a variety of public administration courses and degree programs and various management training courses. While several institutions of higher education are now playing a modest role in education for public service, particularly at the masters degree level, there is increasing discussion that their roles could be expanded to take on a greater share of the responsibility for providing education in public administration at the bachelors, masters and doctoral levels. In addition, some recent reports have suggested that they could expand their applied research programs to support capacity development and administrative reform in Ukraine's public service and that they should significantly expand their short-term training activities.

There are also a small number of non-governmental organizations, which provide public administration education/training on a more selective and targeted basis. Some of these non-governmental organizations operate programs supported by international development organizations (e.g. the United States Agency for International Development). These organizations have served major providers of practical skill-based training at the level of local self-government.²

The Emergence of the Masters Degree

During the last 10 years in Ukraine, a system of civil service training has developed which focuses on the Masters degree for the training of specialists in "public service" and "public administration" – specialties of the educational branch, or field, designated by the Ministry of Education and Science as "public administration". The mission of the educational field of "public administration" involves the training and post-graduate education of state, local government and public sector officials corresponding to the needs and demands of the consumers of public services and in accordance with international educational standards shaped on the basis of the

2 Strategic Assessment of the Present State of Public Administration Education and Training in Ukraine and Prospects for Launching a Capacity Building Institution for Public Officials. Final Assessment Report Conducted by Indiana University

best practices of western schools of public administration. The requirements for the organization of training and postgraduate education in the area “public administration” include: lifelong education; education without borders based on new information technologies; education using creative models of training and individual educational trajectories; and education based on the fundamental knowledge of the field.

The awarding of the degree, master of public administration, is and has been limited to the National Academy of Public Administration which operates through its central institutional presence in Kiev and its four regional institutes located in Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Lviv and Odessa. Each of these institutions enrolls 400 MPA students in their daytime national government funded MPA programs. However, they each may enroll as many as 2,000 additional students in various related, evening and distance learning programmes. Enrollment in the Academy’s MPA programme is limited to government supported employees in grades I to IV, the highest levels of Ukrainian public employees, or those on the reserve list seeking to achieve such a level.

In order to provide educational opportunity in public administration for lower ranking public employees, initially nine, now fourteen, universities were given authority by the Main Civil Service Department, and approved by the Ministry of Education and Science, to award the Master of Public Service Degree. These degrees are in some cases awarded through law facilities and often rely on teaching faculty drawn from other departments of the institution. Nearly 50 other higher education institutions now offer some training or related courses in public administration but do not have the authority to offer degrees.

Since its establishment in 1992 as the Institute of Public Administration and Local Government, the National Academy has established a substantial PhD programme, organized numerous centres and departments and has even at some of the ten regional centres, now regional institutes, initiated related bachelor degree educational programmes. As a result, the Academy, over the years of its development, has focused on degree programs and developed a University-like character. Recent years have seen the emergence of considerable debate about its future which has involved both the Academy’s leadership and government leaders concerned with public administrative education and training.

One result has been some criticism of the Academy for alleged failure to place more emphasis upon short term training activities. Appointed by the current President of Ukraine to reform the Academy (as part of the process of reforming Ukrainian government), the Academy’s current President has undertaken to refocus the organization more toward short term training activity and to “modernize” its curriculum. The latter has involved seeking to move the curriculum and instructional orientation away from “state management” and more towards emphasis upon policy analysis and effective, participative public service delivery. The goal is to move the

Academy more in the direction of being a professional school rather than a University-like institution.

The National Academy, the MPA and the Bologna Process

Ukraine signed the Bologna Declaration in 2005. Since then, serious efforts have been made to introduce Bologna principles into Ukraine's education system. The Bologna process, which has been developing dynamically in Europe, has not hindered the development of civil servants professional training systems in Ukraine. Rather, it has oriented them towards the strengthening of what are the key characteristics of the European Higher Education Area: degree focused professional training, priority for the academic component of professional training (together with strong research), increasing of university (and other education institutions) autonomy in the training of specialists, mobility of higher education process participants, quality assurance and the development of conditions for life-long learning.³

The Bologna process aims at creating a highly-competitive but coordinated European Higher Education Area by 2010. The main directions of the process will include:

1. Creating a multi-level degree structure, based on three cycles: bachelor degree, master, and doctorate;
2. Ensuring and encouraging mobility programs for students, teaching, research and administrative staff;
3. Institutional use of course units based on the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS);
4. Quality assurance by assessment and accreditation of institutions and academic programmes based on common quality standards and procedures.

The National Academy of Public Administration offers 14 programs (4 of which are at the Academy in Kyiv), has 57 departments/chairs (17 of which are in the Academy in Kyiv). Among the principal programs are Public Administration and Management, Economics and Finance, Law and Legislative Process, Political Science, Social and Human Development Policy, Urban Management, Information Technology (IT), Healthcare Management and Foreign Languages. Later new chairs were established (Philosophy and Methodology of Public Administration, Economic Theory and History of Economics, Education Management, European Integration, National Security, Informational Policy).

The MPA programme aims at mastering public administration as both an academic field and a governmental system. While the programme's major subject is

3 Luhovy V. Bolonsky Prozes I Pidgotovka Derzhavno-Upravlinskyh Kadriv (Bologna Process and State Management Cadres Training) // *Visnyk Derzhavnoyi Sluzhby Ukrainy*. - # 1. - 2005. - P. 13-19. - P. 18

public administration, it draws on numerous disciplines for curricula. The content of Public Administration and Public Policy Degree Programs in Europe: The Road from Bologna curricula (i.e. the skills and tools delivered) is approved through accreditation. The Academy's master's of public administration degree program is unique in Ukraine but it has much in common with similar programs at European universities and certain national institutions in terms of its organisational and content components. It is innovative in the Ukrainian context because:

- the program is realized on the module principle;
- there is no special time for exams other than the final state exam;
- current and final discipline/module control creates a unified system of students' study results and allows them to learn disciplines/modules more effectively;
- more time is devoted to self-education.

Since its start in 1995 the programme has been renewed and revised continuously, both in structure and in teaching. The changes in the curriculum are partly based on feedback from the profession; but also from key units of Ukraine's government, in particular from the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament of Ukraine), the Cabinet of Ministers, the Presidential Administration (Secretariat nowadays), and local governments. The development of the curriculum has also been shaped by the basic prior education and public service experience of academy students as well as, student expectations, outcomes of licensing and accreditation procedures, feedback from external examiners and feedback from organisations where students went for internships.

The main distinguishing features of the MPA programme are: a significant part of learning is devoted to self-education (self-study); priority is given to practical methods of training; application of the newest technologies and methods of training, such as interactive lectures, case studies, business games, project activity, individual and group presentations, scientific seminars; the possibility to have the significant amount of master elective disciplines; involvement of practitioners from executive authorities and local self-government as well as experts in public administration and business; involvement of foreign experts in the training process; and the possibility to have internship (practice) in public authorities and local governments, organisations of state-private partnership and also abroad.

The curriculum covers public administration in a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary programme. It has three basic components. There is a large set of *core courses*, various *specialisation modules* and a relatively wide range of *electives*. The normative or core courses respond to the education-qualification requirements and the standards established for effective public administration education. The elective disciplines and specialisations include those courses which provide the opportunity to gain training in some definite specialty of "public administration" and strengthen the training in a direction which is defined by the future professional activity of the Master student and his/her academic mobility.

The programme is built upon three fundamental elements: the *general* component – the deepening of knowledge in legal, economic, managerial, social-humanitarian issues which are characteristic for the professional activity of civil servants; a *functional* component – the gaining of additional knowledge and skills according to the requirements of civil service categories; and a *branch* component – the obtaining of additional knowledge and skills in various branches or spheres of civil servant activity. The MPA programme provides students with internships in the central and local governments. The internship allows students to link academic theory with real professional activities. The materials are further utilized in master's thesis writing and the publishing of articles which are offered to the central and local governments. Also the students can compete for and choose internships abroad.

Differentiation Between Bachelor and Masters Education: The Master's programme is a part of the multi-cycle degree structure (Bachelor-Master-Doctor) conforming to the Bologna system. The traditional specialist degree structure of higher education in Ukraine now has been replaced by the new multi-cycle structure. Regarding public administration education and training, the first cycle within the newly introduced system, which offers a bachelor's degree, is to be introduced.⁴ Masters degree courses are the higher level professional courses in public administration education/training. For those interested in a scientific career, the Ph.D. programme in public administration is available. PhD programs admit not only those who have a master's degree in public administration, but others as well.

The purpose for using the credit-module system for organizing the study process for the system of civil servants training is to increase the quality of Master degree student's education and the competitiveness of NAPA graduates, as well as to enhance Ukrainian higher education prestige in the international education area. The key objectives of the education provided through the credit-module system at NAPA are:

- to increase the quality of professional, practice-oriented training available to civil servants in the area of "public administration" and to provide the professional competencies needed by civil servants and local self-government body workers;
- to create conditions for enhancing the professional level of workers in government authority bodies by means of diversification of sources for the provision of education services to civil servants;
- to provide goal-oriented, variable and student-centered (individualized) professional training to meet the needs of executive and local self-government bodies and to realize the personal skill needs of civil servants and the ability to respond to citizen requirements under the conditions of a democratic society.

According to NAPA's "Temporary Regulations on Study Process Organisation", the full time student programme lasts 18 months which is equal to 90 credits,

4 Strategy of Modernization of the System of Civil Servants Training, re-Training and Upgrading, prepared by the MCS

i.e. 2700 hours (1 credit is 30 academic hours). Part-time study requires 30 months. The standard part of the curriculum constitutes 70 credits (professional and practical training).

Internship (practice) in executive and local self-government bodies is 8 credits, Master Thesis preparation is 8 credits, test passing – 2 credits, state attestation (Master Thesis defense and state exam passing) – 2 credits. In total, the day-time programme has 2100 hours (70 credits), including 1400 in-class hours and individual work, and 600 hours of self-study.

The amount of obligatory/compulsory/core and elective disciplines is to be no less than 60 credits per year of study. One ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credit consists of 30 academic hours which, as a rule, is divided as follows: 12 in-class hours; 8 hours of individual work with the lecturer; and 10 hours of self-study. The relationship between individual and self-study classes is expected to be a relationship of 40% : 60%.⁵

Recent efforts at curricula development have sought to utilize certain areas of competency as guides for indicating the skills that MPA students should acquire. These include:

1. Reproductive skills: Capability to reproduce the experience of practical activity by means of self-choice and to implement new methods (algorithms) of activity under standard conditions.
2. Algorithmic skills: Capability to solve typical professional tasks by means of self-choice and implementation of typical methods (algorithms) of activity under new conditions.
3. Creative skills: Capability to solve professional tasks by means of implementation of new methods (algorithms) of activity.

Administrative Arrangement of the Teaching Process: NAPA regards the institutional assessment and self-improvement which is encouraged by the Bologna process to be an on-going activity which includes both internal and external components. The internal component uses evaluation by students, the Dean's Office, the Study and Teaching Methods Department, and the Curriculum and Academic Standards Board. The external quality assessment of the MPA programme of NAPA is subject to general assessment and licensing as part of the Ukrainian educational system. NAPA also uses the feedback from employers, especially after internships, and the Academy's alumni.

5 It is indicated that there is a free selection of elective disciplines (modules) from the general list by the Master's degree student personally with the assistance of the tutor (and which is defined by the curricula and takes into account the future employment and personal preferences of the Master student), but, in reality, the education institution itself decides what elective disciplines and courses to teach.

An important part of the assessment process involved the assessment of NAPA's students. The assessment of students includes different types and levels of such activity including:

- continuous oversight of the education process;
- final control over educational disciplines/course control;
- practical training (internships);
- State Examinations and Masters' thesis defence.

Basically, continuous oversight assessment is realized at practical sessions and seminars. Usually, it takes the form of interviewing students for the purpose of checking on their mastering of learned material and also to assess the students' independent work. In some courses the process of assessment includes the preparation of abstracts and essays.

The objective of continuous control is achieved through the review of the programme material of the discipline (module) which is done in three ways:

1. check of theoretical knowledge;
2. participation of students in practical workshops and seminars;
3. check of Individual Learning Practical Task (ILPT).

Course control is realized through examinations during which the level of students' mastering of the MPA programme material is assessed. According to NAPA "Temporary Regulations on Study Process Organisation", these exercises include: presentation of individual work and in some cases, testing through task performance. As a rule, the test tasks are both closed and open questions that demand a certain problem definition and demonstration of knowledge in the public administration, legislative performance, economic policy, IT and European integration spheres.

Among the types of Individual Learning Practical Tasks are:

- a policy analysis paper in some definite area of public administration;
- development of draft normative-legal acts, and forecasting of implementation outcomes;
- formation of a strategic plan for some sphere of activity of the executive or a local self-government body;
- an effectiveness analysis of executive or local self-government body functioning;
- development of standards for administrative services provision;
- preparation of expert-analytical materials addressing some problem.

The individual learning practical task is a finished practical work done within the discipline/module programme on the basis of knowledge, skills and abilities obtained during lectures, practical workshops and seminars. Exams will focus on

and include the main issues of the discipline (module); typical and case tasks; tasks which require creative answers and synergy; ability to use theoretical knowledge in solving practical problems, etc. A student's final discipline grade (mark) consists of: up to 30% from continuous control assessment, up to 40% for the execution of the

Individual Learning Practical Task and up to 30% from examinations. Finally the student is assessed through the masters' thesis which is based on research and aims to solve a problem or combination of problems in public administration. The MPA thesis is defended in front of the final state examination committee.

Faculty Nucleus and Qualifications: The MPA programme is delivered by full-time faculty members, although, part-time experts are also invited to teach. Among the Academy's faculty members, women constitute 47 percent. Civil servants (mostly senior officials), central and local government leaders, academicians from other education institutions and foreign visiting lecturers are invited for lecturing, running workshops, practical sessions, and supervising master thesis. Most of faculty members who are involved in MPA programme delivery have an academic degree (doctor and candidate of science). While many faculties engage in traditional lecture methods in the classroom, efforts are made to encourage new approaches. The new trends in teaching are influenced by:

- New teaching philosophy (transfer from theoretical knowledge domination to practical skills based on a high level of academic knowledge);
- The need to improve the quality of professional education of civil servants (flexibility and innovation in program development and teaching methods utilization)
- A recognition that the lecturers role in the civil servants education is to give not only knowledge and skills but to encourage and support self-development and self-education.

The main tasks in implementing new modes of teaching and learning are defined as the following:

- The substitution of the individual traditional approach to civil servants learning with a problem-applied approach. That means changes in the study process organisation – not passive reproduction of information (retelling of lectures, textbooks, etc.) but mastering skills and capacities of creative solving of problems, independent search and the working out and implementation of new information.
- Learning oriented towards the formation and development of career-long learning and openness to changes.
- Subject-subject relations when those who study are the co-authors of study process.
- The concrete model of the specialist as the basis for learning/education (with defined content of learning, choice of forms and methods of teaching, system of assessment).

- Learning/education is an endless, life-long process focused on strong motivation to self-learning/education activity.
- Learning/education is to be oriented towards the development of those competences, which will strengthen the possibility to change.

With regard to the issue of faculty competency, the *EAPAA Accreditation Committee Evaluation Report* indicated that the formal assessment structure represents very high standards; however, the requirements to be promoted to higher grades (academic or scientific) are mostly below European standards. For example, no foreign publications are required for faculty promotion to the grade of Associate Professor (Docent).

Competency Based Accreditation: The launching of an education programme (bachelors and masters degree programmes) requires prior procedures of attestation, licensing and accreditation. During the process, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine examines whether the programme submitted by an institution of higher education is in accordance with the qualification requirements of the bachelor or master programme and whether the institution meets the staff and material criteria for launching a bachelor or a master programme. The Ukrainian national evaluation system, which is very comprehensive, does not imply any direct constraints on European accreditation. The Academy's MPA programme has been accredited by the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation.

Conclusion

Given that Ukraine has sought greater integration into Europe, and has declared its intention to enter into the unique European education area, it is significant that the professional education programme of master's degrees training of civil servants responds quite well to the requirements of Bologna process. Nevertheless, accumulated experience provides reason to conclude that it still is necessary to reform some of the content of programmes of civil servants training, namely - to orient Master students to mastering administrative functions in a more effective manner organisationally and in a way that will encourage government personnel to work more openly and responsibly with people.

At present, public administration programmes in Ukraine rarely have a clearly formulated mission statement and specific "philosophy" which would identify their general assumptions, guide specific programme contents and graduates profiles and specify particular objectives. Such a mission statement also facilitates efforts to improve programmes curricula, specialisation and teaching methods by adapting them to programme goals and objectives. In fact, the existing public administration training/education system still puts an emphasis on input measures (like the number of professors, rooms, equipment, number of books in libraries), neglecting outcome measures (like the skills and quality of program graduates).

The strategy of Ukraine towards the development of a national system of training, re-training and upgrading of civil servants and local self-government workers responds to the general goals, principles and priorities of Bologna process and the rich experience of the most developed regions of the world. Nevertheless much remains to be done. In order to raise the system of civil servants performance to European standards, it is necessary to provide high-quality work by public authorities, conduct attestation of officials at different levels based upon their real qualifications and to promote efficiency of the system of public administration. In so far as public administration education, the negative tendencies are: insufficient use of innovative technologies of study, disparity of education as to the best European standards, an inadequate level of individualisation of the study process and a lack of provision of the educational process on the internet.

In general, with regard to the total system of civil servants training, three main problems exist. First, the existing demand by administrative bodies for education and training services (re-training and upgrading) from Ukraine's education institutions does not respond to the real needs of citizens, state and society. The demand of administrative bodies for education services will need to grow increasingly rapidly with the need for greater civil servants professionalism.

Second, the still limited demand of administrative bodies for the education and training services of education institutions serves to narrow dramatically the provision of education services. The capacity of education institutions for civil servants training can be greatly widened by taking into account the professional qualification and labour needs in the sphere of the civil service, particularly for specialists with definite qualification levels and newer specialisations.

Third, the potential of higher education institutions, branch post-graduate (post-diploma) education institutes and regional in-service training centres is not fully utilized for the widening of education services and responding to Ukraine's training needs. The renewal of training-methods and the introduction of the credit-module system allows for the utilisation of higher education institutions, post-diploma branch institutions and regional In-Service Centres more fully and more rationally because it will open new possibilities for strengthening of fundamental and life-long basis of civil servants education and formation of skills for practical work. For this reason, it is planned especially at NAPA to place greater emphasis on in-service short term training and less on academic education. The intent of the plan is to shift the content of instruction offered from straight execution of top officials' decisions to democratic public administration, with the emphasis on problem solving, service to and involvement of citizens, and change management. It also is planned to enlarge the involvement of non-governmental organizations and practicing public servants in the educational process and to broaden activity by focusing additional activities on the needs of local self-government.

Fostering Higher Education Mobility in Europe: Challenges for International Programme Collaboration in the Post-Bologna era

A diagnosis by a 'European Master of Public Administration' programme¹

Marleen Brans – Valérie Pattyn

1. Introduction

Founded in 1990, as an international exchange programme for master students in public administration, the European Master of Public Administration Consortium (hereafter: EMPA) has a long experience in international collaboration between peer public administrations and public management programmes. Yet, the current transformation of the European educational landscape means that universities must rethink their existing schemes of international co-operation and, in particular, the organisation of student exchanges. Despite the harmonisation and simplification, the Bologna Agreement promised to bring, with the promotion of higher education mobility as one of its key objectives, new challenges for the practical operation of international exchanges have emerged.

This contribution presents the experiences of the K.U.Leuven Master of European Politics and Policies (MEPP) programme and the wider EMPA Network with the European higher education reform processes. After a description of the rationale and modus operandi of the EMPA network (section 2) and an analysis of the position of the MEPP programme vis-à-vis EMPA and international co-operation (section 3), the article discusses the implications of the major Bologna cornerstones

1 Several sections of this contribution were earlier presented as part of a discussion paper entitled '*Challenges and opportunities for international programme collaboration in the post-Bologna era. Experiences from the Master of European Politics and Policies programme (K.U.Leuven)*' at the Academy of Management Conference 2007, PDW Public Administration and Teaching, 5 August 2007, Philadelphia.

for the current organisation of student mobility (section 4). While the reform processes clearly aimed to create a more uniform educational structure, the European Higher Education Member States *de facto* differently implemented Bologna requirements, which have resulted in a still heterogeneous pattern of educational policies. This contribution highlights the most important obstacles perceived, linked to this divergence, which leads the authors to question the appropriateness of the widely claimed European ‘unity in diversity’ motto in this new educational context (section 4.1.). Besides the impediments originating from the absence of a real uniform European educational reality, new difficulties are also being faced in the organisation of student exchanges for two of the Bologna target groups, ‘lifelong learners’ and ‘non-EU students’ (section 4.2.). Given these setbacks, networks are increasingly tested to find a suitable formula to continue student exchanges. This challenge is even more pronounced in developing joint Erasmus Mundus Master programmes, the EU’s “flagship programme” for global academic co-operation (section 5) (European Commission, 2007a).

2. Milestones in the development of the EMPA Network

2.1 The establishment and widening of the EMPA Network

As stipulated before, the EMPA Consortium was established in 1990 – 1991 as one of the first pioneering exchange frameworks for master students in public administration, originally supported by the EC-Erasmus bureau.

In the first quinquennium of its existence, the EMPA network consisted of the following partner universities: Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam, Department of Public Administration (The Netherlands); Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, Department of Public Administration (The Netherlands); Hochschule für Verwaltungswissenschaften in Speyer (Germany); University of London, London School of Economics and Political Science, Department of Government (UK); University of Oxford, Nuffield College (UK); and Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium).

Students enrolled in the programmes of their home institutions, and had one semester abroad at a network institution, where they were fully integrated into the hosting programme. The EMPA exchange programme was finalised with a joint dissertation defence, during which all students were based in one place and examined by an international dissertation jury, consisting of representatives of the network partners. Leuven students, for example, who successfully completed their course work and exams at the home and partner institution, as well as the dissertation, received an EMPA diploma from K.U.Leuven, supplemented by an EMPA certificate signed by the participating institutions.

The different partner programmes were designed according to the standards agreed within the EMPA network. To guarantee the consistency of the different programmes, guidelines were set with regard to inter alia:

- Core course curricula
- Transferable credits
- Minimum course work requirements
- Annual exchange matrix
- Standards for student entry

Besides these criteria, every member programme obviously had to include core courses dealing with public administration, public policy and public management, which were supposed to incorporate a focus at the local, regional, national and European level and to include a comparative perspective (see later).

As a non-English speaking institution from a small language community, the Leuven Department of Political Sciences created a curriculum with master courses in English. Yet, other non-English speaking universities (e.g. Sciences Po, Paris and the Deutsche Hochschule für Verwaltungswissenschaften, Speyer) preferred to continue classes in their native language, which contributed to language diversity within Europe.

EMPA partner universities committed themselves to keep exchanges free of additional charges for students who were duly registered in their home university; a principle which still prevails (see below).

After several years of development and expansion, the constellation of the Consortium has been altered, and now represents a better European geographical balance. As of January 2008, the current partners were:

- Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam, Department of Public Administration (Netherlands)
- Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, Department of Public Administration (Netherlands)
- Hochschule für Verwaltungswissenschaften in Speyer (Germany)
- University of Liverpool, Institute of Public Administration and Management (UK)
- University of Vaasa, Department of Public Management (Finland)
- Corvinus University of Budapest, Faculty of Public Administration (Hungary)
- Tallinn Technical University, Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences (Estonia)
- Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (France)
- SDA Bocconi, Milan (Italy)
- University of Geneva (Switzerland)

2.2 A changing modus operandi

During its existence, the EMPA pendulum has swung frequently between ‘keeping the status quo’ and ‘more enhanced co-operation’. Especially, in the mid-90’s, there were intensive discussions to use the exchange programme and the joint certification as a step towards a joint degree programme. Even a format for the establishment of such a common degree was developed, outlining common standards on (amongst others) entry and recruitment; course content; number of courses and lectures; target group; course work requirements; student supervision; examinations and periods of attendance, etc.

Yet, the procedural and institutional organisation of such a joint degree proved to be impossible, not least because of legal impediments, hindering the issuing of an official joint diploma. Additional problems were linked to the unequal balancing of costs and benefits over the partners; complicated by the different tuition fee traditions prevailing in the different participating countries. Given these problems, it was considered more appropriate to proceed with the existing scheme of joint certification (Brans & Pelgrims, 2002).

Up until 1995 – 1996, the semester abroad was a mandatory part of the programme. In 1996 – 1997, it was decided to abandon the compulsory nature of the semester exchange, and keep it as an option. Two factors led to this decision.

First, European funding for student exchange had become scarce, and students’ willingness to participate in exchanges was hampered by financial considerations. Second, several EMPA consortium members, including the Leuven programme, increasingly attracted international students outside European borders.² Students from other continents seemed less willing to take a second semester abroad, after having familiarised themselves with the institutions and countries of a host university. Forcing them into a second semester in yet another country became a disincentive for students to register for the programme.

Financial impediments further led to the necessary abandoning of the principle of joint dissertation defences. But, this did not affect the idea of joint dissertation evaluation: a student would not be awarded the EMPA certificate without a positive co-evaluation of his/her thesis by the EMPA partner on the basis of the EMPA dissertation guidelines. The latter specify standards on the content and analytical maturity of the EMPA dissertations.³

Despite these structural changes, the main objectives of EMPA co-operation have not altered. The EMPA partners proceeded to work on the basis of commonly agreed standards (the so-called “Basic Charter”), which all new joining partners are

2 To illustrate: in the academic year 2006 – 2007, 19 different nationalities were represented within the Leuven MEPP programme

3 The EMPA dissertation guidelines were drafted along the model used at the Department of Government, London School of Economics.

requested to accept. As such, the EMPA Network has always been a major external stakeholder in monitoring the quality of the different partner universities. One can, in this regard, expect that the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA) will, in the coming future, also play a dominant role in the quality assessment of the different EMPA institutions, as well as in the selection of interested candidate universities. A substantial number of EMPA partners are currently already being given the EAPAA quality label.⁴

Besides student exchanges, the EMPA network still serves as an important arena for staff mobility, either in the short-term or longer-term format. The Faculty of Leiden, Budapest, and Tallinn have taught in Leuven, and the faculty of Leuven have taught in the Universities of Budapest, Tallinn and Speyer, either through the provision of a course, or the delivery of guest lectures.

3. The K.U.Leuven Master of European Politics and Policies (MEPP) programme within the EMPA Network

The MEPP programme has always been an integral member of the EMPA Consortium, having been simultaneously established with the founding of the network itself in 1990. While the Leuven programme during a long time operated under the name of the wider network, EMPA, it was decided in 2003 to change its name to 'Master of European Politics and Policies' to bring it in line with the research profile of the Institute for International and European Policy and the Public Management Institute, the two research units at K.U.Leuven, taking full responsibility for the programme. The Bologna reforms served as a catalyst and as an opportunity to revise all programme components.

The changes to the curriculum mainly comprised a reshuffling of electives and the addition of a number of new courses, to make the programme more attractive in a BaMa era. The name change and the restructuring of the curriculum notwithstanding, the programme objectives, programme structure, and educational philosophy have remained largely intact. The shift did not involve a different relationship with the larger EMPA network.

As outlined in the EMPA Charter, all participating programmes share the ambition to provide a "comparative understanding of and professional competence in public sector structures, policies and governance in Europe" (EMPA Basic Charter); an objective which is also explicitly reflected in the current MEPP mission statement:

The Master of European Politics and Policies' (MEPP) mission is to combine academic excellence in the comparative study of public sector structures, policy-making and administration within

⁴ The Leuven MEPP programme was awarded the EAPAA label in 2005 (www.eapaa.org).

Europe, with a continuing concern for the practical challenges professionals in policy, administrative and consultative functions face at the sub-state, state and EU level.

MEPP has an explicit European and comparative orientation, which includes the study of institutions, decision-making and policies of the European Union on the one hand, and the analysis of convergence and divergence of public sector problems and solutions in European countries on the other hand.

In promoting comparative approaches MEPP not only seeks to strengthen cognitive capacities and analytical skills, but also to foster an open-minded attitude to diversity.

The accentuation of the training of *comparative* skills and capacities, both in the EMPA Charter and in the MEPP mission statement, clearly emphasise the importance of international programme collaboration and the organisation of international student exchanges, in particular, to give students the opportunity to become even more acquainted with other public administration and public management traditions. Yet, the establishment of schemes of international co-operation and student exchange is increasingly challenged nowadays; this, despite the simplification that the Bologna reform process was supposed to bring.

4. Challenges for international programme collaboration and student exchange in the post-Bologna era.

The following section details a number of difficulties existing networks might currently experience in the concrete operation of student mobility. As outlined previously, the nature of the challenges identified is dual. The first difficulties emerged as a consequence of the variations in the implementation of the common Bologna framework across member states/universities of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) (section 4.1.). A second range of obstacles is linked to the new target groups the European Ministers of Higher Education explicitly aim to attract in the EHEA (section 4.2.).

4.1 Towards a more harmonious higher educational landscape in Europe?

4.1.1 The new structure of European higher education

In an effort to make the different European higher education traditions more compatible and comparable, the European Ministers of Education decided, with the Bologna Process, to establish one single European Higher Education Area. Besides reforms to improve the recognition of qualifications and periods of study in another EHEA country (see further) and to reinforce quality assurance, the Bologna

initiative involved the introduction of a three-cycle higher education system: Bachelor, Master and Doctoral level (European Ministers of Education, 1999). Existing programmes in countries where this three-level structure did not so far exist, were requested to reposition themselves in this new scheme. The Flemish Community, which operated under a different education structure until then, urged the universities to define their strategy in this respect.

While in the former Flemish educational system, a *kandidaats* degree ('candidate', traditionally after two years of study) could be obtained after 120 credits and a *licentiaats* ('licentiate', traditionally after 4 years) degree after 120 or 180 credits, in the new structure, a Bachelor's degree can only be obtained after 180 credits, and a Master's after 60 or 120 additional credits, the latter's length depending on the discipline. Deviating from the majority of EHEA countries, Flanders *de facto* opted for a four-tier structure, making a distinction between the two types of Master's programmes: initial (Master's after Bachelor's) programmes and post-initial (Master's-after-Master's) programmes (Verhesschen and Verburch, 2004).

The following figure shows the new educational structure, as applied at universities in the field of public administration/political science in Flanders.

Figure 1
The new structure of the Flemish university landscape

3-year academic Bachelor programme (Min. 180 ECTS)
Initial Master programme (Min. 60 ECTS)
Master after Master programme (Min. 60 ECTS)
Doctoral programme (Min. 120 ECTS)

Considering its advanced content, as well as the strategy of other (competing) programmes in the region, the MEPP programme opted to position itself at the 'Master after Master' level. The latter classification implies that, in principle, only students who have already obtained an initial Master diploma can be considered eligible for the programme. Yet, in the transition period to the full implementation of the Bachelor-Master (BaMa) structure in the entire EHEA, students who also have a four-year Bachelor's diploma can still be accepted to commence the programme. As an unfortunate consequence of this transition regulation, the profile of the student body is currently very heterogeneous, with students already in possession of a Master's degree and other students who have only a Bachelor's diploma. While this diversity is likely to diminish once the BaMa structure is fully in place, an appropriate selection strategy still needs to be developed for those students com-

ing from countries (i.e. some Asian and African countries) which do not apply the BaMa structure.

The transition to the BaMa structure also complicated the organisation of the EMPA programme collaboration.

As a result of different strategic choices of the various EMPA partners, a very heterogeneous pattern of programmes has emerged with universities who opted for a one-year initial Master's course; others for a two-year's Masters and the Leuven MEPP programme positioning itself at the post-master level. This is an unintended consequence of the Bologna implementation, which was supposed to make the European educational landscape more comparable and student exchanges hence easier.

In addition to the variation in study level and study duration of the different master programmes brought with the Bologna restructuring, legal impediments also often constrain international student exchange. The creation of a one-year master's course can, in some countries, not be legally reconciled with the organisation of student exchange within that year (as is the case in The Netherlands, for example).

Taking into account these difficulties, the EMPA network agreed on a common denominator defining the stage at which students could participate in the mobility. In order to retain the quality of student exchanges, it has been decided that students can only exchange after four years of university study. This implies that partner universities are considered to be developing flexible timeframes to allow continuing the EMPA exchanges. Programmes hindered by legal obstructions to exchange within one academic year, are encouraged to promote the extension of the study duration with a third semester abroad. The full impact of the BaMa restructuring for both MEPP and EMPA will only become fully clear when the new structure is fully implemented in the entire EHEA. But the question is whether students will be motivated to prolong their one-year master course with one semester simply for the benefits of the exchange.

4.1.2 A growing competitiveness of higher education in Europe

Influenced by market mechanisms, universities are increasingly dominated by a profit-logic. The implementation of the Bologna Agreement has led to the introduction of a significantly larger number of Master programmes in Flanders and in the EHEA in general. One can, in this regard, see a multiplication of often similarly oriented master programmes within a single region.

In addition to the increased quantity of master programmes, the improved convergence of educational structures has also resulted in higher competition for international students between master programmes, stimulated by economic and political reasons and an interest in the "best brains". In order to remain attractive, it is ever more important to elaborate a specific niche which offers an asset in com-

parison to other programmes, in and outside Europe. The organisation of student exchanges should, in this context, be considered a major advantage.

Besides the incentive for programmes to develop a distinct mission, the restructuring of the educational landscape in the EHEA also involved reflection on the financial allocation of means to educational programmes in many countries. Given the increased competition, universities carefully investigate which tuition fee they can charge in order to remain competitive and attractive, obviously conditioned by their national legislations. Flanders, until recently subsidising all categories of master programmes, decided in this respect to no longer subsidise any master programmes situated at the post-master level. Post-initial master programmes, including the MEPP programme, are consequently considered to become self-sustainable, and are, as such, in most cases, forced to raise their fees. Therefore, due to the absence of a common tuition fee policy in the EHEA, similar programmes still differ enormously in the tuition fee they charge, with a clear tendency, however, towards higher fee programmes.

Also within the EMPA network, huge fee variations can be seen, which is another factor complicating the organisation of student exchanges. As stipulated before, according to the guidelines of EMPA, students are free from paying any additional registration fees at the host institution. As a consequence, not all partner universities might be willing to accept the same number of exchange students, especially if a balance in exchanges cannot be achieved. Students choosing strategically can enter an 'expensive' university through a first registration with a 'cheaper' partner. Since the EMPA network has no proper income, the Consortium is unable to compensate universities for this difference in tuition fees. The continuation of student exchanges is, consequently, entirely dependent from the voluntarism of the different partner universities, which it is vulnerable to rely upon.

4.1.3. Facilitating student mobility through a common European Credit Transfer System

While already established in the wake of the introduction of the popular Socrates/Erasmus exchange schemes in 1989, the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) has been given extra impetus with the Bologna reform process (European Commission, 2006). As explicitly stated in the Communiqué following the 2003 Berlin Meeting: "Ministers stress the important role played by the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) in facilitating student mobility and international curriculum development" (European Ministers responsible for Higher Education, 2003).

Although the EMPA mobility flows no longer officially take place under the Erasmus umbrella, student exchanges still operate according to the Erasmus key principles, including the ECTS system. Despite the clear necessity of this 'transparency tool' in the framework of a more harmonious educational landscape, the concrete application of this 'converting mechanism' still seems to suffer from some

anomalies, again caused by the often heterogeneous national and university interpretations of this common instrument. The practical difficulties experienced are twofold.

First, notwithstanding the existence of general guidelines for the granting of a specific number of credits to a particular course, as laid down in the 'ECTS Key Features document' (European Commission, 2006), the perception of the required volume of study for the same type of class often seems to be differently interpreted in practice. While universities could, in pre-Bologna times, compensate for this cultural difference by 'translating' the number of study points awarded for a course into a local number of credits, as Leuven University did, the ECTS system no longer allows this practice. As a consequence, the different traditions prevailing at the hosting institutions means that exchange students from the same home institution, having to take the same amount of credits, often have to follow a diverse number of courses, even if the particular type and intensity of a course is taken into account.

A second obstacle is linked to the particular approach the ECTS guidelines apply with regard to the awarding of a grade to a student. Contrary to the majority of national evaluation systems, which are usually criterion-referenced, determining a student's grade based on implicit or explicit standards for particular levels of performance, the ECTS grading model is primarily norm-referenced based (Karran, 2004). The ECTS grading scale ranks students on a statistical basis, with the performance of classmates as a point of reference. All students who passed a particular course are listed, from the highest mark to the lowest. Depending on the percentile in which a student falls, a student is assigned a particular letter code, using the following scale:

Table 1
ECTS Grading Scales (European Commission, 2006)

ECTS grade	Percentage of students achieving the grade	DEFINITION
A	10	Excellent: outstanding performance with only minor errors
B	25	Very good: above the average standard but with some errors
C	30	Good: generally sound work with a number of notable errors
D	25	Satisfactory : fair but with significant shortcomings
E	10	Sufficient: performance meets the minimum criteria
FX	-	Fail: Some more work before the credit can be awarded
F	-	Fail: Considerable further work is required

While this classification mechanism at first sight seems ideal to benchmark grades, the 'relative' character of the grading instrument includes some risks, associated with the cultural and societal different European traditions of student assessment (Sullivan, 2002). To begin with, the classification of students relative to their peers does not take into account the number of students who failed a course. As a result, an important number of students are sometimes isolated from the ranking system, which might be problematic if one compares the performance of several exchange students taking a similar course at different universities. The application of the ECTS system might also be problematic in case of small class numbers. The Commission's solution to have former cohorts included in the calculation in such cases is not very convincing.

Considering these downfalls which can emerge, it is apparent that the ECTS system tacitly assumes that the student cohorts at both the home and hosting institutions are evenly matched. As this is far from always the case, strict application of the ECTS rules can complicate the interpretation of the exchange students' results (REVE, 2006).

There should also be caution in interpreting the quality labels which the European Commission has added as an extra tool. They are equally masking the different assessment traditions in Europe. Hence, while the development of a common grading mechanism should be applauded, especially to counter the current heterogeneity in existing grading systems (ranging from universities only applying 3 grade points (e.g. Finland) to universities applying 20 grade points (e.g. Flanders) and 30 grade points (e.g. Italy)), the current ECTS system unfortunately seems unable to overcome the diversity of educational approaches and assessment techniques existing in Europe (Karran, 2004; Sullivan, 2002). In the absence of a suitable common European criterion-based grading instrument, judging the student's ability to achieve the learning outcomes for a course instead of judging the student's performance vis-à-vis his/her peers, exchange institutions remain obliged to rely upon the assumption of a commonly understood framework (Karran, 2004).

4.1.4 "Unity in Diversity" or "Diversity in Unity"? An interim conclusion.

'Higher education' remains a policy field of a mainly intergovernmental nature. Yet, with the Bologna reforms, the European Ministers of Higher Education explicitly aimed to better tune the diverse educational policies to each other. This – amongst other objectives – was assumed to make the organisation of student mobility within and outside Europe easier. While many critics blamed the reforms as being too intrusive in their national and university autonomy, one can equally claim that the Bologna Process did not go far enough. As the common European Bologna framework allowed for discretionary interpretation of the Bologna principles by the EHEA member states and their universities, a very heterogeneous education pattern has, in practice, emerged in the EHEA. Although intended to facilitate student exchanges, the educational reform processes actually complicated them. As such,

while the Bologna Process officially strived for more 'unity in diversity', it seems that more 'diversity in unity' has been the *de facto* outcome.

4.2 A different mobility strategy for a different student population

Besides the difficulties that result from the different national implementation steps of the Bologna principles, there is a second range of challenges linked with the increasing heterogeneous nature of a master programme's student body. More specifically, and to a large extent as a consequence of the Bologna reform measures, programmes seem increasingly to attract practitioners (section 4.2.1.) and international students (4.2.2.) Both groups require a different mobility strategy, as experienced by the EMPA network.

4.2.1 *The introduction of flexible learning paths to promote lifelong learning*

In an effort to promote lifelong learning, and to make European higher education more attractive for 'other' groups, including professionals, the European Ministers of Higher Education introduced flexible learning paths as one of the key tools of the Bologna Process (European Ministers responsible for Higher Education, 2005). Based on the ECTS accumulation system, students can now either choose to follow the traditional year path of study (equivalent to 60 ECTS) or opt to compose their own individual study trajectory through a credit-type of contract (Flemish Ministry of Education and Training, 2007). The latter is particularly attractive for students wishing to combine their studies with a professional career.⁵

On the one hand, the implementation of more flexibility threatens class group cohesion. On the other hand, having experienced practitioners among the student population is a major asset for the sake of a public administration oriented programme, as those students can enrich class discussions with their professional expertise (Bogason & Brans, forthcoming). Profiting from its geographical location, the Leuven MEPP programme increasingly attracts professionals working in one of the international institutions in Brussels (NATO/SHAPE, EU, etc.). Given the flexible arrangements imposed by the European Ministers of Education, the same trend is likely to take place in other PA/PM master programmes in Europe. Despite the beneficial effects of having direct input from the professional field in class, this evolution nevertheless imposes a challenge to existing exchange schemes, including EMPA, which were traditionally mainly oriented towards young graduate students. Evolving towards increasingly mixed groups of students, but not willing to keep the exchange opportunity reserved for only part of the students' body, the EMPA network is therefore challenged to reflect which exchange formula can best suit both

5 With regard to the Flemish educational context one should, however, note that only students coming from the European Economic Area are allowed to register for a credit type of contract. Pursuant to immigration legislation, students coming from outside the European Economic Area with temporary residence in Belgium can only register for the traditional degree contract.

groups, young graduates and more mature practitioners – this in order not to lose the interest of practitioners in following the programme.

4.2.2 Making student mobility attractive for international students within one year master programmes

Stimulated by the improved transparency of the European Higher Education structure, as well as by some recent political developments, European Master programmes in Public Administration increasingly attract international students. With the recent enlargement rounds of the European Union in 2004 and 2007 respectively, the Leuven MEPP programme noticed a boom in the number of students coming from Central and Eastern Europe as well as from Turkey. Also, several Asian students (notably from Japan, China, Vietnam and South-Korea) find their way to MEPP, although their number seems to be decreasing again as a consequence of the elevation of admission standards and the increased tuition fee introduced in 2006 – 2007⁶. A smaller, though increasing group of students, does come from the Americas.

Organising student exchanges within an international master programme imposes additional problems. As we indicated earlier, along with the increased internationalisation of the MEPP programme, convincing students to participate in the exchange became much more challenging. During recent years mainly Belgian students and students coming from neighbouring countries (France, Germany, and The Netherlands) took the opportunity to go abroad. Non-European students do not seem to be very inclined to move elsewhere after having familiarised themselves with a country's administrative system and a new educational environment in the first semester.

Convinced about the benefits of an exchange for the development of students' comparative skills and attitudes, it is considered important to figure out alternative ways to motivate international students to participate in the exchanges. After all, as proved by the recently established Erasmus Mundus Master programme, the trends towards more internationalisation and one-year master programmes should not necessarily be incompatible with the organisation of student exchanges.

5. Organising global student exchanges in the framework of Erasmus Mundus

In the framework of the Lisbon strategy, aiming “to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world” (European Council, 2000), the European Commission committed itself to enhance the quality in European higher education, and make it more attractive for third-country nationals worldwide.

6 Forced by the decision of the Flemish Government to no longer fund any post-master programmes, the MEPP programme decided to double the tuition fee for non-EHEA students in 2006 – 2007 (from 2500EUR to 5000 EUR).

As described above, until recently, the organisation of joint master courses proved very difficult in Europe, since legal structures were not all adapted to allowing the issue of joint diplomas. As a consequence, the idea to establish a joint EMPA degree was soon abandoned.

Circumstances seem to have changed now all over Europe, to a large extent influenced by the recent initiative of the European Commission: the *Erasmus Mundus Master* (EMM) programme.

Modelled along the successful Erasmus programme, which envisages only internal pan-European exchanges and co-operation, the EMM programme intends stimulating more structured exchange and co-operation with third-countries worldwide. More concretely, the programme supports the establishment of 'EMM courses', considered as "high-quality integrated courses at Masters level offered by a consortium of at least three universities in at least three different European countries". The notion 'integration' refers to the requirement of an obliged study period in at least two or three universities, which must lead to the award of a recognised, double, multiple or joint diploma.

In order to give the EMM courses selected a strong external projection, a generous scholarship scheme for third-country graduate students and scholars has been linked to these EMM courses, which funds the possibility for third-country nationals (students or staff members) to follow the EMM programmes or to work for them. Once selected, EMM programmes can, at a later stage, also apply for so-called 'partnership establishments' with specific third-country higher education institutions. The latter also allows European students and scholars themselves to spend a study period abroad outside Europe (Decision No. 2317/2003/EC).⁷

Opening the pathway for intercontinental student exchanges, EMM launches a new era of global programme collaboration.⁸ EMM is considered as the external pillar of the Bologna Process, serving as an additional stimulus to harmonise the different educational structures in Europe (P. Zgaga, 2006).

Yet, while the EMM action sounds very promising, the challenges described previously might well hinder this initiative. The success depends, again to a large extent, on the creativity and voluntarism of EMM Consortia to find flexible solutions to overcome the different barriers. Besides the difficulties related to the still very diverse national educational policies pattern in Europe, it is likely that in particular,

7 Extensive information about the Erasmus Mundus Masters initiative can be found on the European Commission's following webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmemes/mundus/index_en.html

8 Out of the 80 EMM programmes selected, according to our information, only one is currently having an orientation towards public policy ('Erasmus Mundus Masters Programme in Public Policy').

financial issues might form the major obstacle, jeopardising the successful establishment of an EMM course. After all, a consortium can only charge a single tuition fee for the entire programme, no matter what specific mobility path the student follows. The EMM partner universities are hence challenged to develop themselves a suitable distribution key for the Consortium's income. The administrative grant of 15.000 EUR per consortium seems to be insufficient to cover the real expenses related to the management of high quality trans-national integrated Master courses, as also underlined in the interim evaluation report of the Erasmus Mundus initiative (European Commission, 2007b).

Yet, despite these hindrances, with only one EMM course approved in the field of public policy ('Erasmus Mundus Masters Programme in Public Policy'), major opportunities still exist for the establishment of an EMPA based EMM course.⁹

Having made the 'joint degree exercise' previously (see above), some partners of the EMPA network intend taking the momentum to again pick up the former initiative, this time in partnership with peer public administration master programmes worldwide. The comparative dimension having a central position in the EMPA mission, and in MEPP in particular, the opening up of the 'EMPA window' towards non-European countries is of the utmost importance for reinforcing students' comparative skills even more. This is in line with the programme's conviction that the more administrative systems a student is familiar with, the more he/she will be familiar with his/her own.

6. Conclusion

The comparative dimension has a central position in the mission statements of both the European Master of Public Administration (EMPA) network and the Master of European Politics and Policies programme (MEPP). This implies that the organisation of student exchanges is an essential asset. The implementation of the Bologna Agreement has, in this respect, brought major opportunities for widening and deepening programme collaboration on a global scale. But the restructuring of the European educational landscape has, at the same time, created new impediments (or reinforced existing difficulties) for the practical elaboration of these schemes of international student mobility. The harmonisation of the educational systems that the Bologna reforms were intended to bring is only partially observable. Huge differences still exist between the different Master programmes in, for example, study duration. The uniformity of the EHEA has not been accompanied by a common tuition fee policy in the member states, which has resulted in an even more diverse pattern of tuition fees for Master programmes. Competition, as such, has not only

⁹ At the time of writing, 80 EMM courses have been selected. It is expected that at the end of the first EMM term (2004 – 2008), 105 EMM courses will be operational.

increased, but has also evolved from competition among generally low fee tuition programmes, towards competition among more high fee courses.

Confronted with these increased market-based circumstances, international exchange programmes are necessary to develop a suitable strategy to remain attractive and competitive for their entire (increasingly heterogeneous) student body, without losing any quality.

This article has elaborated how the K.U.Leuven MEPP programme, as part of the larger EMPA Consortium, is coping with these new educational circumstances. It should be clear that the continuation of student exchanges is more than ever dependent on the voluntarism and creativity of individual consortia to find an optimal solution for the above-mentioned obstacles. This challenge is even more pronounced in the recent Erasmus Mundus Masters' initiative, involving the development of a joint degree Master's programme.

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Academic Resources in Public Administration in the Arab Mediterranean Countries: Looking for Convergence and Recognition

Carlos Conde Martínez

Introduction

This chapter is based on reports elaborated in the context of a research project funded by the Tempus program (Tempus-Meda, SCM M014A04) and coordinated by the University of Granada. The project aimed at the identification and evaluation of academic resources in the field of governance and public administration in the Mediterranean region. Experts from the region produced national reports concerning the cases of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Palestine, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and Syria¹. For every country the following elements were analysed:

- Contextual elements, including the historical evolution of the higher education system, the academic organisation and governance and the resources for higher education and research.
- Academic programs, in particular, programs on governance in a broad perspective and programs specifically oriented to the study of public administration.
- Institutional setting and thematic orientations of research on governance and public administration.
- Relations between the higher education system and the professional world, in particular, systems for in-service training and staff development in public administrations.

¹ Al Kayed, Zuhair, Higher Population Council, Jordan; Dahbi, Mohammed, Dean SHSS, Al Akhawayn University, Morocco; El Debs, Sonia, Université Libanaise, Lebanon; El Messaoudi, Amina, Université Mohammed V, Rabat, Morocco; Gherairi, Ghazi, Université de Tunis, Tunisia; Hafsa, Nadjia, Université d'Alger, Algeria; Huniti, Mohammed, Jordan University, Jordan; Meri, Mohammed, Université de Damas, Dean of HIAD, Syria; Nashash, Hiyam, Al Balaq Applied University, Jordan.

The main conclusions of the national reports are summarised in the following pages. These conclusions explore interactions between education, research and practice in the context of knowledge societies. They also analysed the conditions for an effective contribution of the academic system to the requirements of human development and good governance in the Arab Mediterranean countries.

Academic Resources on Governance and Public Administration in MENA Countries

Academic resources in the field of governance and public administration in MENA countries are experiencing important changes at present. The political and social evolution of the different countries, together with the economic needs related to the adaptation to global markets is placing considerable pressure on higher education systems. The field of public administration is particularly sensitive due to its important implication for good governance in this regional context. The process of state building in Arab Mediterranean countries has been the major factor in the recent institutional history of these countries, as in most cases, they had access to their independence during the second half of the 20th Century. Government structures in the first decades of independent history have been concentrated in the exercise of domination in the context of politically authoritarian states. Only very recently, public administrations focusing on public service delivery and accountable to citizens are emerging as an institutional fact. This important evolution requires a coherent adaptation of the higher education system. Traditionally, the public system has only been studied from legal and financial perspectives. At present, new approaches are required in order to guarantee a general improvement of governance conditions.

Maghreb region

Morocco has introduced, in recent years, significant reforms in higher education. The main objective has been to get the higher education institutions involved in socio-economic change and development. The new higher education policy is introducing considerable elements of decentralisation, autonomy, democratisation and quality evaluation, including student feedback. The structure of degrees is in the process of being adapted to European standards and new degrees will be introduced. At this stage of the reform it is too early to outline definitive conclusions, but in general terms, it seems the reform process may lead to some satisfactory results if university autonomy is implemented in procedures and regulations as well as in practice. Concerning the situation of studies on governance and public administration, it is difficult to identify specific programs in Morocco focusing on these subjects as the analysis of these issues is usually part of curricula specialised in other topics, such as law or business studies. There are no specialised programs in the field of political science and public administration and most of the academic resources in

the field of governance are centralised in the professional schools (École Nationale d'Administration et Institut Supérieur de l'Administration).

The Algerian higher education system hardly addresses the concept of governance. This is referred only to the state and mainly within law schools. Only law students are usually recruited as civil servants after graduation. The curricula were written in 1977 and do not have a social or political approach to public administration and governance. The research system is not deemed significant as there is no research centre or research council particularly dedicated to public administration and good governance, with the exception of l'École Nationale d'Administration, whose main function is the recruitment and training of public administration officials. Nevertheless, there is huge interest for good governance as an informal orientation within the research community.

Tunisia has similar problems to Algeria. Public administration and governance are taught only in the context of education in law, focusing on formal institutions without regard to social sciences approaches. A major problem is that faculties are missing knowledge and qualifications in these subjects. The best opportunities for change are coming from economic and civil society liberalisation as business leaders play an important role in Tunisian society. This process will probably create and promote a new conception of the state that is more critical and adapted to contemporary problems. In this context, reforms in higher education are expected, including new degrees and new curricula for which international co-operation is needed.

Mashrek region

The Palestinian case is very specific due to the political situation in the Middle East. Palestine faces additional problems in the context of education for good governance and public administration. Access to teaching is often not easy, thus distant learning and internet play a more important role than in other MENA countries. Academic resources in the field are very limited with only two universities teaching public administration subjects. The big gap between public administration, research and training is also a visible feature in Jordan. There is no communication between the different actors. Studies on public administration have lost prestige and impact in governmental units in benefit of technical professionals. In addition, problems, obstacles and inefficiencies in the public administrations do not tend to be challenged by specialists. Egypt suffers from a very low state budget for research and education, poor quality of universities and poor management of higher education administrative systems. Education focusing on governance and public administration is offered only in the framework of some elitist institutions with limited impact on the public administrations as a whole. In addition, academic institutions suffer outdated teaching approaches. The Lebanese situation can be described with lights and shadows, if research oriented to governance issues is progressing, academic

programs are limited to elite universities that guarantee good standards of quality, but are not entirely connected to the Lebanese context, and in general, demands of the administrations, are not addressed. Finally, in Syria, socialism is still the inspiration of the educational system. No degree is closely related to the concept of governance. Universities suffer poor quality, poor management of higher education administrative systems and financial difficulties. Whereas 26.6 % of the working population are in the public service, recruitment policies are not connected to academic requirements, but rather to political loyalty.

Evaluating the Higher Education System in relation to Good Governance Needs: What Weaknesses?

In the case of Maghreb countries, the study of public administration is limited to traditional legal approaches. Academic programs in Mashrek countries are more diversified, including, for instance, studies of public administration and management in the schools of business in Jordan; or development studies with a focus on governance in Palestinian and Egyptian academic institutions. There are also some elite institutions such as the American universities of Cairo and Beirut with developed programmes on political sciences and public administration and policy, but with no real impact on the structures of national governments. The Maghreb states are missing appropriate contents while the Mashrek seems to have these programs. The reaction to new needs in Mashrek could be linked to funding sources, as in Maghreb countries higher education is completely free of charge, whereas in countries such as Jordan, Palestine or Egypt, education is fee-based. According to all reports, a significant social cleavage is visible across the region. Elite, fee-based universities are offering high quality programs on social sciences, including public policy and administration or development studies. However, graduates from these programs do not usually join public administrations, but international organisations and NGO's working in the area.

Identifying the contents of good governance that should be included in academic programs and the methods to teach this subject is an open question in the region. The difficulties to update curricula are reinforced by the fact that universities in the region face problems of expertise. Faculties lack general new pedagogical methodologies and have a low level of specialisation. For example, professors of public law are supposed to be able to teach all legal disciplines, including non-legal topics such as political science or public policy without any particular training in the subject. Therefore, the question may be posed: who should and could teach new subjects related to good governance, public services delivery and state modernisation? Is this to be senior professors with a classical profile, experience and influence in government, or a new generation of scholars adapted to new concepts but without any decision-making capacity? How will scholars be trained before teaching new courses and concepts? From whom and with which resources will they receive

this training? Training of trainers is a main issue in order to create and train new teacher elites.

There is a general agreement on the enormous gap between formal, written rules and practices in the reality of the region. However, higher education neglects this inconsistency by transmitting formal descriptions of reality not challenged by empirical analysis. There is an urgent need to link academic work and teaching with the administrative reality and a better communication between academia and practitioners. Political will is one main condition, not only to provide the academic system with the necessary resources, but also because the state will be the main employer of future graduated governance-experts. It is necessary to develop methodologies for governance with an interdisciplinary basis, which will also lead to a better acceptance of Good Governance as a subject.

The Way Forward, Challenges and Tendencies in Improving Research, Education and Links with Practice in Governance and Public Administration

The situation of applied research in the field of public administration is unsatisfactory in the region for several reasons: lack of systematic research programs, lack of communication between researchers, lack of motivation and commitment to research as it can only count on personal effort without institutional support. A main problem is the lack of incentives and motivation to research in the academic community of MENA countries. The current career system in academia does not encourage research or practical experience, but formal academic knowledge not exposed to empirical experience. The lack of research capacities includes weak methodological skills as well as poor financial and human resources. A good illustration of this lack of motivation and incentives is the fact that most researchers leave the region in pursuit of better opportunities in developed countries. There is a parallel lack of motivation in national authorities in order to address their needs of applied knowledge. Often public authorities are not able to express their demands and expectations; many employees are not adequately educated. Studies and research are not main priorities for public administrations, although more public organisations agree to be evaluated by external auditors, i.e. research centres. Demand for applied research is significant, new needs as evaluation of administrations or budgets based on results require systematic research on public performances, whereas supply is extremely limited. There is a very visible shortage of experts in public administration and some countries do not have any. The lack of knowledge within the government institutions regarding how to conduct proper administrative management is not fulfilled in the current situation by the academic system. In fact, universities lack the institutional capacities to bid for contracts for studies that are tendered by the ministries, due to a lack of resources and, as a result, studies are usually undertaken by the private sector.

Exchanges between universities and administrations are limited, due in part, to a lack of confidence by the former on the first, and a lack of empirical interest by the universities. Grants to investigate governance practices could be an instrument to overcome this situation. Joint curriculum development and systematic use of case studies are also good initiatives in order to fulfil the clear gap between public administrations in MENA countries and the national academic systems.

The institutional system in the region concerning the research and application of administrative knowledge is very centralised and officially directed, in the sense that it is based on national schools of administration with a direct dependence on governments and an official orientation in their priorities and practices. This system is not in accordance with current international trends and, in particular, is not in tune with the European case that has observed in the past years a clear tendency to decentralisation and privatisation of sources of administrative knowledge. The European diversified and pluralistic system leaves a bigger space for universities as independent producers of critical knowledge. This is a social need that can be better addressed in diversified and pluralistic institutional systems of knowledge production.

Communication and dissemination of knowledge is a main problem in the region. The absence of instruments for information dissemination is clear. For instance, there is not one regional scientific journal on public administration. In terms of communication and international co-operation, progressive Arabicisation of research and higher education has created barriers with Western countries in the understanding of contemporary political developments in the Arab world. In this sense, an effort to translate to Western languages current Arab research on social sciences is of critical importance. International co-operation can play a very positive role to improve this situation. International programs of co-operation are a main source of funding and institutional support to research in MENA countries, but there are management problems, which limits their impact. International co-operation can play an important role in assuring quality in research through the setting up of international standards, the facilitation of assessment and the promotion of international reviews. This support could fulfil an important gap regarding the lack of assessment and standards for research, as well as the link between knowledge and practice.

Universities have to be considerably reinforced in order to accompany reforms in the field of good governance. A main issue is the type of profile for public sector professionals needed in the coming years. A main controversy is visible in higher education circles in the region. Is the correct strategy focusing on the elite level and providing advanced capacities to pioneer groups of administrative leaders that will disseminate better practices in public service? Is it worthwhile concentrating efforts on centres of excellence? There are some reservations to the elitist approach, in the sense that development and modernisation requires a global elevation of the

educational level. Only public universities are able to provide countries and economies with large numbers of well-qualified professionals. For instance, the reform of the state and the process of decentralisation require good professionals for local, provincial and regional levels of government that will never be recruited in elite institutions, but in the public educational system. Innovations and modernisation should not be the monopoly of directors and the elite. The large number of public universities must have access to innovation and quality. Arab countries so far have over-emphasised the difference between the masses and the elite. Good curricula have to be accessible to all.

Conclusions

1. In general terms, the academic system of the Mediterranean Arab countries is diverse and complex and offers significant potential for change and modernisation, despite major problems of massification and a lack of resources. In recent years, the traditional public system of universities and specialised schools has been enriched by the establishment of numerous private institutions. In international terms, many of the countries have elite centres reaching very competitive standards. Nevertheless, the analysis of the presence of governance and public administration studies and research within this academic system illustrates the large deficit in governance denounced by the Arab Human Development Report.
2. Production and dissemination of knowledge is scarce in this domain and shows important limitations that have to be fulfilled. Concerning public administration, a main trend in the region is the concentration of knowledge resources in the national schools, although their success in the modernisation of administrative structures seems limited. In general, these schools are not linked institutionally to the higher education system, but to different ministries. A positive element that has to be underlined is that a substantial number of faculties in these schools is recruited from the public university system and serves in parallel in both arenas. This has the potential to be exploited as a tool to introduce public administration-oriented courses in universities. The practical monopoly of national schools in the field of public administration defines a non-pluralistic system that emphasises official knowledge instead of autonomous and critical knowledge.
3. Most countries in the region are implementing ambitious institutional reforms in terms of academic organisation, degree structures and diversification of degrees. It is important to note that several countries have explicitly adapted their systems to the spirit of Bologna in what is a very promising tendency in terms of opportunities of co-operation with Europe. Institutional governance is highly centralised in the higher education system of the region and this creates a di-

lemma concerning strategies for modernisation: if the bottom-up perspective aiming to sustain innovations on the ground seems very promising, the top-down orientation is unavoidable for effective change.

4. Despite significant differences between countries, there is a general lack of satisfaction with the adaptation of academic programs to new needs of good governance and government reform. Academic curricula are not updated and do not introduce regularly new international tendencies. Public administration is almost entirely taught from a legal perspective to the exclusion of other perspectives inspired by social sciences and empirical approaches. Exceptions to this tendency can be found in some programs of public administration with a managerial orientation taught in business schools, although these programs lack good connections with public administrations in practice and do not receive particular recognition from public systems of recruitment. The study of public administration from an interdisciplinary perspective and the specialised studies of public policy are almost entirely absent in the region, with the exception of some elite institutions with reduced impact of government structures. A regional divide has to be mentioned in this respect, as academic systems in Maghreb countries are less adapted to non-legal perspectives, whereas the Mashrek region has a more diversified disciplinary approach.
5. Human resources in higher education are scarce in the field of governance and public administration. Recruitment systems and institutional inertias do not favour innovation and diversification of academic profiles. On the contrary, most scholars find it difficult to reach an adequate level of specialisation, as academic systems prefer generalist profiles able to adapt to a large set of courses and disciplinary orientations. Pedagogical innovation is not supported with sufficient resources and capacities for updating are almost absent. Training of trainers is considered a principal requirement. Current institutional reforms have to be accompanied by an intensive effort of encouragement, recognition and opportunities of career development for scholars that currently lack motivation and incentives.
6. Quality assurance and accreditation are in their first steps in the academic system of the region. There is no international co-operation in this regard at present; therefore an effort should be made in this direction as both elements have a clear, trans-national dimension.
7. Academic programs, as well as academic staff, lack practical orientation and empirical focus. Transmission of knowledge is, in general, formalistic and disconnected from research and practice. Curriculum development originates from the supply side and is not reactive to demand from the professional market. Methodologies for curriculum development are needed. It is important to note that a very positive element is the general recognition of this weakness and the introduction of reforms to fulfil it. In particular, part of the incentive is the up-

grading of the economy (“mise à niveau”) in preparation for association with the EU, that underlines the strategic role that international co-operation can play and the interest of deepening links with European universities through the Tempus program.

8. Applied research is insufficient, taking into consideration the demand from public administrations. A very positive tendency is visible as governments are progressively aware of the need for evaluation and analysis and what is increasing resources for research and improving official recognition of the use and need of research. However, higher education institutions are not sufficiently reactive to these trends and most research is developed by the private sector. Considerable efforts have to be developed in order to increase the capacity of universities to respond to governmental needs. Mutual understanding, knowledge and respect between the academic system and the governmental structure seem to be particularly important in the goal of building a knowledge society.
9. An important hindrance suffered by research is the lack of communication and dissemination. The region lacks systems of transmission of research and effective distribution of scientific production. An effort of translation and dissemination is required; in this sense the setting up of a regional journal of public administration in Arabic, English and French with a good distribution and high quality standards could play a significant role.
10. The development of common concepts in the Arabic language in the field of governance and the improvement of clear communication in this subject is a big challenge in relation to the process of Arabicisation. Regional strategies of academic co-operation in research and academic programs can be fruitful in improving the quality of the use of Arabic in governance and public administration related issues.
11. International co-operation can play a critical role in the improvement of the academic resources of the region in the field of governance and public administration. So far, this co-operation has been very limited and reduced to bilateral contacts usually in a north – south direction. Following the spirit of the Declaration of Barcelona, trans-national and regional systems of co-operation can considerably enrich the results. South – south co-operation is also a necessary strategy to be implemented.

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ISBN 978-80-89013-37-1