

**Prof. THEO A.J TOONEN and Dr. TONY J.G. VERHEIJEN,**

**(Assisted by Ms. INEKE VAN BEUSEKOM)**

**University of Leiden (NL)**

***PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION EDUCATION IN EUROPE: IN NEED OF  
CONVERGENCE AND EUROPEANIZATION?***

***1. Public Administration programmes and the challenge of Europeanisation***

The study of governance and public administration has a long history in the European context. On the European continent there is an ancient concern with the study of public administration. The institutionalisation of Public Administration as an academic field is more recent. As an independent and integrated field of study of its own, Public Administration is a relatively young academic discipline. Elements of what are now interdisciplinary academic programmes in Public Administration have been taught for many years (especially administrative Law). The study of the subjectmatter – government activity, governance, the administrative process, public policies – may be traced back for centuries. Public Administration as an independent, integrated discipline amounting to full academic degree programmes has become institutionalised and developed only during the last four decades.

Interdisciplinary academic programmes in Public Administration are programmes in which public administration is studied from the integrated viewpoints of different disciplines, usually at least Political Science, Law, Economics and Sociology. The subject ‘Public Administration’ is taught as the core subject of the programme. However, there are also programmes which do not include the subject ‘Public Administration’, but in which the public administration is studied exclusively from the viewpoint of the different contributing disciplines (multidisciplinary Public Administration programmes). In some European states Public Administration does not (yet) exist as a separate field of study. In these states programmes in Public Administration are taught, but usually as a

specialisation under Law or political science or, less frequently, economics or business studies.

Programmes or specialisations in Public Administration are generally inward looking programmes, concentrating on local, regional and national administrative systems, and largely devoting only lip service to the comparative and European dimension. The key focus of the typical PA programme is still exclusively with the national administrative systems.

The above is one of the main general conclusions we draw from the inventory of academic programmes in Public Administration, carried out under the SOCRATES sponsored Thematic Network Project in Political Science and Public Administration. The national reports written for this inventory were discussed at the first general conference of the above project, held in Paris on 26-27 June 1998. Even though there are exceptions, the number of universities and other higher education institutions in which Public Administration programmes with a strong 'European dimension' are in place is very limited. Public Administration programmes therefore seem to be out of step with reality, or at least lagging behind only a short period of time after they were created. In public administration institutions 'Europeanisation' is already a fact, while 'Europeanisation' of Public Administration education has hardly started.

In this report we draw together a number of insights generated by the national reports on the developments in each EU member state with regard to the study of Public Administration as an independent academic degree programme at the university level, as presented at the Paris meeting. This comparative paper will review the position of Public Administration programmes in different states, identifying possible patterns in different parts of Europe. These discussions will both deal with the position of Public Administration programmes in relation to other academic disciplines and with the relation between these programmes and the main employers of their graduates. An overview will be given of the state of affairs in terms of the development of the European and comparative dimension of the academic programmes, as well as the extent to which universities and other higher education institutions are engaged in expanding the European dimension of their programmes. The aim is to formulate some tentative ideas as

the basis for a strategy to strengthen the European dimension in Public Administration education through inter-university co-operation.

This paper will start with an explanation of our assumptions and frame of reference (Section 2). The delineation of our subject matter to 'Public Administration' as a label, as well as in terms of full degree academic programmes deserves clarification. We will also elaborate on why the Europeanisation of PA programmes is important for the consolidation and further development of these programmes, both from a European and from a member state point of view. Next, in section 3 we will review the country reports from this perspective and present the state of the art as reflected in these reports, in terms of the various national traditions in the study of Public Administration. In section 4 we concentrate on the European dimension in PA curricula. In section 5 we devote attention to a particular feature in PA as a discipline, i.e. the close relationship to the praxis of Public Administration. In section 6 we combine the various observations into a strategic approach to the Europeanisation of Public Administration as an independent field of academic training, education and teaching. We think that what some consider to be the weakness – the relationship to the practice of public administration - will actually be the strength and stronghold for the future development of a Europeanised Public Administration.

## ***2. The European Dimension in Public Administration Education: Why do we need it?***

The current national and local orientation of Public Administration reflects the perceived, subjective reality of European integration at the operational level of government programmes. The immediate and subjective awareness of people working in public sector institutions at various levels of government is not always quite as great yet as the 'objective' European developments would suggest. Times are clearly changing, but to many officials 'Europe' is still a matter of high politics, not necessarily of daily practice. Every professional civil servant or other public sector employee is quite aware these days of the overall European developments and prepared to underscore the importance of the European dimension for future public sector development. However, many people in the civil service and outside, in particular at subnational levels of government, will find it

hard to exactly spell out the consequences of the Europeanisation for their current, day to day work.

1.1.1. Public Administration: 'Government in action'

Public Administration as a field of studies concentrates on 'government in action', 'the business of government' or 'the running of a constitution' as Woodrow Wilson, the later President of the US once phrased it in the '*The study of Administration*' (1887). The lagging attention for Europe in PA curricula partly reflects the state of affairs in the object it studies.

In calling attention to this 'new field of studies' Wilson was inspired by and referred to the longstanding European tradition of the professional academic study of the general practices of *government in action*. Ever since the middle ages rulers, kings and governors relied on people trained to be specialists in the 'general business' of governments and states. This study was institutionalised in separate university chairs in 'Policey-science' or 'Science de la police' from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards (notably in Germany and France). 'Police' science obviously is a label which today carries a different meaning and at the time actually stood for the general affairs, general practice and general purpose dimension of government. The label *Policey-science* has been reintroduced to Europe since the 1950s of this century under the development of 'Policy Sciences', often defined as the study of what governments do, why they do it and how they do it.

In our view there is no clear intellectual distinction between Policy Sciences and Public Administration. Both concepts have been introduced to study the actual operations of government and other public sector institutions: the term Public Administration is inherited from a time when this was done from an institutional and organisational point of view. The label of Policy Science is inherited from a time when the same questions were studied predominantly from the perspective of process, people and the substance of policy. In the 1980s, another concept has become popular, reflecting still another approach to the same subject matter: the concept of public management. These different concepts may easily be understood as a reflection of different stages in the development of the practise of government. Public Administration is a reflection of the institutionalisation and modernisation of the organisational set-up of the modern nation

state in the first half of this century. Policy studies reflected the growth of substantive government activity as a result of the expansion of the public sector in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s (the development of the ‘welfare state’). The concept of public management is an expression of the economisation of the public sector and the search for a new mission for government and the state in a changing international environment in the last decades of the 20th century. Efforts to redirect, re-anchor and reinvent government and public administration are reflected in newly emerging concepts of ‘good governance’ and ‘government governance’. Increasingly there is a return to the study of ‘classical’ notions like the duties of government in society and the fact that the business of government is about the public accountability of government in action.

These developments have affected states in different ways. The academic reception of the various labels varies accordingly, and often the same activities are studied under different labels in different countries at different times. Instead of constantly trading horses we prefer to stick to the same label and try to coin a – admittedly – traditional concept to give identity to a field of studies which is approached differently, but the subject matter of which has remained stable over a rather long period of time. We follow here the definition of Public Administration as the study of government in action as given by the Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Institutions:

***Public administration*** In the lower case (p.a.) institutional arrangements for the provision of public services; in the upper case (P.A.), the study of those arrangements. ‘Institutional arrangements’ is a general term to denote the complex of agencies, authorities and enterprises, the formal rule structures, mixes of instruments, and conventions of behaviour which describe the organisational means of public services’

*(The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Institutions, Oxford, 1987: 504)*

Although we concentrate in this paper on fully-fledged academic degree programmes only, this definition allows us to embrace different approaches and to do justice to cultural variety that underlies the study of government in action in different European states. In our perception, the Study of Public Administration – as a label - stands for a

professional and academic European tradition of studying government in action, which ranges from the 17th century ‘Policy-science’/ ‘Science de la Police’ to late 20th century ‘government governance’ and all steps in between.

#### The European Dimension of Public Administration

There are at least three reasons why we would need to pay attention to the Europeanisation of Public Administration and an academic field of specialisation:

1. European historical developments,
2. The dawn of ‘the age of comparison’, and
3. The emerging market in Europe.

##### 1.1.2. Ad 1. The Europeanisation of public sector institutions

The Europeanisation of the work of public sector institutions is the result of the steady increase of cross-border co-operation in Europe, which affects all public institutions. This cross-border co-operation ranges from the often bilateral, functional interaction between municipalities and regions to the interaction of national administrations in the framework of the European Union. Whether civil servants work at local, regional or central government level, their daily work increasingly requires them to act internationally. The work of civil servants in national administrations in particular is increasingly permeated by ‘European’ work. This is valid even for local governments, and ministries and departments that were previously thought of as ‘exclusively national’. An ever increasing number of national (or state, in multi-level systems) civil servants need the skills and knowledge to be able to deal with ‘European’ issues. This requires the development of knowledge of the EU institutional system and procedures, but also knowledge on policies as well as administrative culture and practise in other EU member states. ‘Europeanisation’ also requires civil servants to develop networking skills and other skills necessary to work in the European (bilateral and multilateral) arena. The enlargement of the EU to central and eastern Europe will make the European policy process even more complex, adding new states with a different administrative culture and

approach. Enlargement will therefore pose new requirements to civil servants across Europe.

In view of the above, it is important to see to what extent Academic programmes in Public Administration can assist national administrations in coping with the challenge of Europeanisation, in particular by 'delivering' well prepared graduates. For this, it is important to analyse the level of Europeanisation in Public Administration programmes. This level of Europeanisation is determined by the extent to which modules and courses with a comparative dimension or focusing on the European Union are included in the curriculum of these programmes. The inventory showed that in the overwhelming majority of academic programmes in Public Administration only a small percentage of the overall course load is devoted to comparative European issues, and very often courses on these subjects are not part of the core curriculum.

1.1.3. Ad 2. The age of comparison

The current developments in the European integration process substantiate Woodrow Wilson's statement that it is 'harder to run a constitution than to frame one'. The past two decades have been devoted to the development of the institutional framework for European integration, not only in terms of EU institutions, but also in terms of the institutionalisation of the single European market. With the introduction of the monetary union this market will become really operational and will start to affect government in action at all levels in the European administrative system. The development will further 'unfreeze' national judicial systems and legal frameworks and force them to accommodate broader European norms, values and traditions. The denationalisation of the national legal and administrative frameworks will invariably create a need for a new comparative understanding. Increasingly it will become necessary to look *through* instead of across or over borders and to assess governmental operations elsewhere in the Union in comparable operative terms, not only on the basis of legalist principles or policy requirements. The attention for the implementation of European policies – the real world of government in action – will inevitably increase as the comparative advantages of various regions and member states will be assessed in their real operative meanings and not only the promises that legal frameworks and national policy statements entail. This

requires a whole new expertise, hardly developed yet, in terms of ‘benchmarking’, based on a comparison of the practical operations of European governments in real terms, as over and against formal and legal terms. Both business and governments will experience this need to compare the grassroots level of government in Europe. In addition it is predictable that issues of enforcement and implementation of European policies will require more attention as the process of deepening the European integration continues and ‘Europe’ has to become a reality in terms of government in action. It takes a special expertise in comparative administrative analysis to perform this exercise in a meaningful and valid manner. The further the European unification and a single market develop, the more important it becomes to generate a meaningful comparative understanding of the cultural and administrative varieties within this market and within this political union.

1.1.4. Ad. 3 In Search for European Administrative Quality

The de-nationalisation of networks of public administration that is the inevitable result of further European integration has a number of consequences for the people working and managing European public sector institutions. One can already note the development of transnational networks of civil servants and public employees. These are used for educational as well as professional and policy purposes. The national administrative systems are about to lose an empire, and are in the process of finding an defining a new role. A lot of the activity still exists out of stocktaking and exploring the situation in other member states. Soon, this will go beyond the mere gathering of information. Business needs to be done. This suddenly makes co-operation less easy and requires new institutional frameworks for administrative co-operation. The bureaucratic and administrative difficulties inherent to this enterprise are illustrated by the emerging co-operation in border regions or, for example, police co-operation in the Schengen countries. Problems can be solved, but this requires the emergence of a new administrative understanding by all participants involved. Inherent to all processes of administrative integration is that initially ‘the norm gets lost’. Former national rules, regulations and standards do not apply anymore – or are not effective anymore in the new context – without immediately being replaced by a new set of norms. The developments of new norms, administrative standards and standard operational procedures becomes

necessary in order to be able to work and cooperate in transnational networks which replace the national divisions. Out of the denationalised legal, political and administrative systems a need for new norms, standards and procedures of 'good government' will emerge. From this perspective, European integration may easily be perceived of as a new search for norms, values and standards of administrative quality. This quest for quality goes well beyond the more recent attention for the responsiveness of public service delivery, to be guaranteed by citizen charters, one window service delivery and or public sector marketing.

Administrative quality in the context of the process as described is bound to gain a broader meaning and destined to pay attention to more classical administrative concerns as good or proper government and reliable and sustainable governance. Questions like these typically belong to the historical tradition in the Study of Public Administration, however conceived of in terms of academic degree or curriculum design.

Obviously academic programmes in Public Administration do not only 'produce' civil servants. As the national reports produced in the Thematic Network Project (TNP) indicate, in many states a large percentage, often even the majority of Public Administration graduates end up in the non-governmental sector, a large percentage of these graduates work in the private sector. They come to work on the private side of the public-private interface, dealing with administrative questions from the outside. At the same time there is a whole European section of hybrid non-governmental, non commercial not for profit, third sector organisations which require knowledge and skills of principles of doing public as well as corporate business.

'Europeanisation' is possibly an even more important factor in the non-governmental sector than in the administration itself. In particular in the type of private sector functions which Public Administration graduates are best suited for, such as public affairs officers, the knowledge of different administrative systems is of increasing importance. An increasing number of enterprises and non-profit organisations act on a cross-border level. This cross border interaction takes place mostly inside Europe.

The question arises whether Public Administration programmes do not risk losing out if they do not adapt to these new realities. This question becomes even more important if one considers the often difficult position of Public Administration in relation to the job

market, as their graduates have to compete with graduates from programmes which historically 'supplied' the administration or with graduates which have been specifically educated to work in the private sector.

The national reports from a number of European states made reference to the difficulty programmes in Public Administration have had in gaining credibility from potential employers of their graduates. In several states graduates from Public Administration programmes have found it difficult to compete with graduates from other academic programmes; in particular with graduates from programmes which were either 'in fashion' (such as management programmes in the UK) or traditionally considered more appropriate as educational background (such as Law programmes in continental European states). In other states Public Administration has developed into a respected and central player in meeting the labour market demands of governments and other public sector institutions and do PA graduates belong among the most looked for human resources in and outside the public sector.

Considering the above, one could argue that the 'Europeanisation' of governmental and non-governmental practise actually provides opportunities for Public Administration programmes, which due to their less 'established' nature should be able to adapt more easily to the changing demands of the governmental and non-governmental sectors. The results of the inventory, however, still gives little or no evidence that there is awareness in the academic community of the threats and above all the opportunities posed by 'Europeanisation'.

Interestingly, a similar path of development can be observed in central and eastern Europe. In most central and east European states public administration programmes have been developed during the last 8 years, many of which have been rather successful.<sup>1</sup> However, these programmes, like their equivalents in current EU and EEA member states, appear at a first glance to give only limited attention to the European and comparative dimension. During the last Annual Conference of the Network of Schools and Institutes of Public Administration (NISPAcee), held in Prague from 16-18 March

---

<sup>1</sup> In most cases the number of candidates for programmes well exceeds to number of available places. The Hungarian School of Public Administration, for instance, quotes a ratio of 10 to 1 between applicants and available places.

1998, 'Europeanisation' was put on the agenda as a topic for discussion. However, even though participants acknowledged the importance of this area of Public Administration education, there appeared to be little prospect for the development of a comparative and European dimension to the newly established academic programmes. Other experiences confirm this trend.<sup>2</sup> This is an interesting phenomenon, in particular since the requirements and opportunities posed by Europeanisation are more than obvious for central and east European states. For the ten EU candidate states in particular, European integration, in the widest possible sense, is a core policy objective for both the state and the non-governmental sectors. An inventory of the new programmes in place in central and eastern Europe is planned for the academic year 1998-1999 and it will be interesting to see whether this first impression, that there is a similarity in trends between the two parts of Europe, will be confirmed.

In view of the general inward looking nature of Public Administration as an academic discipline, the above picture might not come as a surprise. However, it is important to discuss whether and how a change in the status quo can be brought about. A change in status quo is crucial if Public Administration programmes/specialisations are to maintain their current position, and possibly to gain some ground on 'competing' disciplines for 'clients' for Public Administration graduates.

### *3. Public Administration programmes in Europe: different origins and traditions*

The history of the development of academic programmes in Public Administration varies considerably between European states. However, there are certain common trends in development. Furthermore one can distinguish different models of organising Public Administration education. For instance, in some states Public Administration exists as an independent full degree programme (either on BA or on MA level), in others only as a specialisation inside a different degree programme, such as for instance general Social

---

<sup>2</sup> As an example, the first variant of the new MPA programmes of the universities of Sofia, Varna and Plovdiv did not include a single course that could be considered as part of a European and comparative dimension. This was changed in later versions, but the initial drafts indicate the level of separation of 'internal public administration' and what would be considered 'European integration'. The overlap between these two areas often remains 'empty'

Sciences, Political Science, Law or (Business) Management. In several states both models can be found.

1.1.5. Overview of the historical development of PA programmes

As stated before, Public Administration is generally perceived as a young academic discipline, even though elements of current Public Administration programmes have been taught under other disciplines for a long time. There is a clear general tradition in continental Europe to teach Public Administration as Public/Administrative Law. The UK and Ireland, as 'Common Law countries' do not share this continental tradition. This is strongly related to the fact that whereas a legal education was a prerequisite for entry into the national administrations of continental European states, Ireland and the UK used different entry criteria, based mostly on a test of broad general knowledge. In terms of historical development, therefore, Public Administration in continental Europe was more or less equal to Law, while in the UK and Ireland there was little scope for the development of Public Administration programmes.<sup>3</sup>

In the period before the Second World War there was little change in the type of preparation required for entry into the administration. In some states elements of management and administration were given a more prominent place in university (Law) programmes, basically designed for the preparation a civil servants. However apart from these relatively limited changes the status quo was maintained.

In the period just after the Second World War the first signs of a re-orientation of Public Administration education can be noted. First, the new Institutes d'Études Politiques (IEP), created in France in 1945, and later of the ENA<sup>4</sup> led to a fundamental shift in requirements for entry into the French administration, or at least for entry into its top layers. The IEP designed a curriculum that is much closer to what would nowadays be considered an interdisciplinary Public Administration programme. Gradually IEP

---

<sup>3</sup> It is important to note the differences between Ireland and the UK in this respect. Whereas in the UK higher level civil servants were recruited after a usually general university education, in Ireland entry into the university and entry into the civil service were for a long time considered alternative career paths. However, in both cases the type of entry criteria applied did not create the need for the establishment of specific university programmes in Public Administration

<sup>4</sup> The in-service training programme of the ENA is not an academic programme is therefore not considered in this paper

graduates managed to monopolise high level positions in the administration (through their entry into the ENA). France was therefore the first European country where the monopoly of Law and Lawyers in Public Administration was challenged and broken. However, Law remains a very important element in the preparation for entry examinations into the ENA and the civil service.

The programmes at the IEP cannot be considered 'independent Public Administration programmes'. Public Administration remains subordinated to or at most integrated with Political Science. However, the development of the IEP marks the start of a fundamental change in orientation towards Public Administration as an academic discipline.

From the middle of the 1950s onwards, independent interdisciplinary university programmes in Public Administration were created in a number of states. In Italy, Finland, Germany, Belgium and the UK new programmes in Public Administration were created between 1955 and 1970. The reason for the creation of these programmes was mostly the perceived need of professionalising the civil service. It is important to distinguish between the 'continental' programmes, where the creation of Public Administration programmes marked an 'emancipation' from the area of Law (to break the monopoly of lawyers) and the new programmes created in the UK. In the UK new programmes were established mostly as a reaction to the Fulton report, which called for a professionalisation of the administration, by improving managerial and analytical capacities.

In several other states, new programmes in Public Administration were created later. In the Netherlands, Ireland and Portugal new independent programmes were created around 1980. The reasons for the creation of these programmes varied. In Portugal the main reasons were the need to modernise the administration after the change of regime and the preparation for EU membership. In the Netherlands the creation of PA programmes was a (belated) reaction to the changing needs of the civil service. In Ireland the Public Administration programme at the University of Limerick was created as part of a move towards more interdisciplinarity in university studies, certainly not as a reaction to changing needs of the central administration.<sup>5</sup> In Estonia, on which a pilot study on

---

<sup>5</sup> For a more in depth discussion, see the section on the relation with the profession

central and east European states was conducted, several new programmes were created in the early 1990s, after the state re-gained its independence.

The second model of development of Public Administration programmes is the creation of increasingly independent specialisation in general Social Science or Political Science programmes. This model of development can be found in most of the Nordic States (with the exception of Finland), in France (as an integrated element of the programmes of the IEP), Greece, Spain and Austria. There are great differences between the strength and level of independence of these sub-programmes. Whereas in Denmark, for instance, the course programme would not deviate much from the Dutch programmes (to which the Danish programmes were compared in the Danish report), and could be considered an independent programme all but in name, this is less so in Sweden and Norway. In Spain Public Administration and Political Science are integrated in one programme (as in France, even though the substance of the programmes is different). In Greece Public Administration is also integrated with Political Science, but there are only two programmes in place, which have so far not managed to compete with the still dominant area of Public Law. Interestingly Austria is the least developed state when it comes to Public Administration Education. No programme or specialisation has been created in Austria as yet.

#### 1.1.6. Influences and influence

As discussed above academic programmes in Public Administration are now mostly linked to the Social Sciences. This is valid both for independent programmes, which are usually taught under Faculties of Social Sciences or Humanities, and for specialisations, which are usually part of general Social Science or Political Science Programmes. During the last two decades Public Administration programmes have also developed stronger links with programmes in Management or Business Studies, as part of the general focus on management in public administration. These links are strongest in the UK and, to a lesser degree, Ireland, but also in the Netherlands and some of the Nordic states (especially in Finland). However, in general Public Administration programmes are anchored in the Social Sciences.

The next question is to what extent Public Administration programmes have managed to 'compete' with the traditional 'suppliers' of Public Administration education; the Law

faculties in continental Europe and general programmes in Humanities in the UK. Do Public Administration programmes and specialisations provide a credible alternative to the traditional suppliers of candidates to the civil and public service.

Even though the courses provided at Law faculties are still significantly different from the interdisciplinary programmes developed during the last five decades, they continue to be the dominant form of Public Administration education in several European states. Germany is one of the most important examples of this. Public Administration programmes exist in very few universities as well as in some Fachhochschule, and have found it difficult to compete with the still dominant Law faculties. A similar picture is valid for Austria, where Public Administration programmes or specialisations do not even exist. Greece Public Law programmes are also still considered the dominant providers of Public Administration education

On the Iberian Peninsula, Public Administration programmes and specialisations have gradually established themselves as a competitive alternative to the Law faculties in Italy and, to a lesser degree, in Spain. In Portugal the emerging Public Administration programmes mainly focus on local and regional administration. Law faculties are still the dominant force in the preparation of students for work in the central administration.

The situation in Ireland shows some similarities to the Portuguese case, even though the type of competition is different. A broad general education still provides the best preparation for the entry examinations for the Irish administration, while Public Administration graduates, if they find employment in the public sector at all, can mostly be found at local government level.

In the UK the orientation towards management skills in the administration has improved the position of Public Administration programmes, most of which have a strong management component. However, Public Administration programmes have by no means managed to become a dominant provider of civil service entrants.

In other states, whoever, Public Administration programmes have gradually managed to establish themselves as competitive or even dominant providers of graduates to the all levels of the administration. In France the great majority of entrants to the ENA are IEP graduates, which provides the best indication for the general importance of the IEP in educating the elite of the French administration. In other states Public Administration

programmes have gradually gained a high degree of credibility. The same is valid for the specialisations in Public Administration under Social Science programmes in Scandinavia and Finland, which have gradually managed to 'replace' Law as the dominant provider of graduates to the civil service and, to a lesser extent, also for Belgium. The Scandinavian programmes generally have a basis in Political Science or general Social Sciences. This is also valid for Belgium, even though in Wallonia independent Public Administration programmes have been created. Dutch public administration programmes in Twente, Rotterdam and Leiden have managed to gain credibility as providers of high quality graduates, after initially facing difficulties due to scepticism of especially the central administration. A new programme at BA level, focused more on local government, has been developed more recently at the Thorbecke Academy, as well as a 'technical Public Administration' MA-level programme at the Technical University Delft. The Public Administration programmes in Estonia are expected to become an important provider of graduates to the state administration, and one can expect a similar pattern of development in most other central and east European states.

The following table provides an overview of the extent to which Public Administration programmes have managed to establish themselves as providers of candidates for the civil and public service, i.e. the extent to which they have managed to achieve their initial core objective.

| Position of PA programmes/specialisations  | States   |
|--|--|
| well established, high degree of credibility at central and local government level, largely replaced traditionally dominant programmes as providers of civil and public service candidates | Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, France <sup>6</sup> , Estonia (forecast), (Iceland) |
| well established, high degree of credibility at local and central government level, increasingly on equal footing with traditionally dominant programmes in Law                            | Italy, Spain, Belgium  |
| well established, high degree of credibility at local and central government level, but still generally dominated by traditionally dominant programmes in Law                              | Germany  |
| well established, recognised as a provider of candidates by local and/or regional government, limited impact on central government   | Portugal, Ireland (limited access also to local government), UK                                    |
| not (well) established, little impact on either central or local government  | Austria, Greece  |

---

<sup>6</sup> Considering the IEP programmes as constituting a PA programme/specialisation

*4. The Degree of Europeanisation of Public Administration Programmes and Specialisations*

Academic programmes in Public Administration have in a relatively short period of time established themselves as credible alternatives for the education of prospective civil and public servants in an area previously almost fully dominated by Law (except in the UK and Ireland). This development has moved faster in some states than in others. However, even in Southern Europe, which still has a generally highly legalistic administration, Public Administration programmes have increasingly gained acceptance. The changing nature of work of government is obviously one important explanatory factor for the rapid growth of Public Administration as an accepted academic discipline. The interdisciplinary nature of Public Administration programmes provides graduates with the ability to analyse problems facing the state from different angles and to develop solutions that take into account different factors. Lawyers and other specialists obviously still make up a large percentage of recruitment in the administration, but for generalist functions Public Administration graduates are increasingly sought candidates.

One of the main 'tests' for the new programmes and specialisations in Public Administration is whether they are sufficiently adaptable to maintain this 'competitive advantage'. One of the main challenges public administrations are facing is the increasing internationalisation of their work. In Europe the main element of internationalisation is the co-operation in the politico-administrative system of the European Union; the Europeanisation of policy-making and implementation. As we stated earlier, Europeanisation affects all levels of government, albeit in different ways. Gradually governments have started to realise that they need to prepare their administration for the effects of this internationalisation. Public Administration programmes as increasingly important providers of candidates for the civil and public service, should be able to anticipate these new demands and respond to them.

The second part of the inventory therefore consisted of an analysis of the extent to which courses with a 'European dimension' were included in core curricula of academic programmes in Public Administration. The responses from the rapporteurs lead to a rather disturbing picture of the lack of integrated courses/specialisations on European

Integration and Comparative Public Administration. This is disturbing in particular for EU member states. One can see that for Norway and Iceland the issue is less relevant at the current time. The second part of this section of the inventory dealt with the issue of research on Comparative Public Administration and European Integration *inside* Public Administration departments. This is an important indicator for the extent to which there is a potential for the future development of courses, based on research being undertaken at the current time. Also in this area there little initiative was reported on. Therefore the only conclusion one could draw is that the 'European Dimension' of Public Administration education is not developed at the current time and that there is very limited potential for the development of this dimension in the near future.

This is obviously a rather general conclusion, which needs further qualification. For instance, the number of courses offered on European Integration and Comparative Public Administration is not the only indicator of the degree of Europeanisation. One indicator is whether these courses are part of the core programme, since it is important that all students get some form of basic introduction to comparative public administration and European Integration. Offering a small number of core courses on these two subjects generates a higher level of 'Europeanisation' than offering a large number of courses on relevant subjects that are all optional.

There are very few universities that have courses on European Integration and Comparative Public Administration in their core curriculum, i.e. obligatory courses, which *all* students have to take. The programme of the University of Limerick in Ireland is one exception worth mentioning. The core Public Administration curriculum contains some four courses on European Integration or Comparative Public Administration. Interestingly all three programmes in place in Estonia contain obligatory courses in European Integration. In most states at least some of the universities offer a specialisation in European Integration, International Administration or Comparative Public Administration, but few include these as core curriculum courses. It is difficult to draw clear distinctions between states/regions on this issue.

In general the European dimension is hardly developed in Southern Europe. In Spain, Portugal, Greece and even Italy there are virtually no core courses on European Integration, even though most Spanish universities include Comparative Public

Administration in the core curriculum. Optional courses on both subjects exist everywhere, but there are no indications as to what percentage of students take such courses. There is hardly any research basis on which to develop the European dimension. This is striking especially for Italy, one of the EU's founder members.

In France and Germany optional courses on both aspects of the European dimension have been created but nowhere do these form part of the core curriculum. Even in these two founder members there is hardly any research basis for the development of new courses on 'European' and comparative subjects. The MEPA programme, in which the Verwaltungs Hochschule Speyer participates, is an exception to this. This highly specific initiative will be discussed later on. In Belgium and the Netherlands, two other founder-members, the situation is not much better. The Universities of Leiden, Rotterdam and Leuven are participants in the MEPA/EMPA initiative, but this is a special programme which is not part of the core curriculum in Leiden and Rotterdam and available for MA specialisation in Leuven. Apart from this initiative, most universities in the Netherlands and Belgium have specialisations in International Administration, but do not include European Integration in their core curriculum. However, Comparative Public Administration is in most cases taught as a core subject. There are a limited number of ongoing research projects that could provide possible inputs to an extended 'European' curriculum.

In Northern Europe courses on Comparative Administration have traditionally focused on intra-Nordic comparison. European Integration courses in Public Administration programmes were hardly developed until recently, even in Denmark, which has been an EU member since 1973. However the accession of Finland and Sweden has led to the development of new courses in European Integration. From the reports submitted it appears that the Nordic countries (with the exception of Iceland and Norway) are by far the most active in the development of new courses in European Integration and are also extending the scope of existing Comparative Public Administration courses.

Finally, there is an interesting difference between Ireland and the UK. The curriculum of the University of Limerick is one of the few to include four European and comparative courses in the basic core programme, plus a new specialisation in International Affairs. The new programmes being developed in Galway and Cork are also expected to have a

strong 'European' character. In the UK, to the contrary, most Public Administration programmes have become increasingly management and skill oriented, with very limited attention for the European Dimension. A smaller number of programmes do apply a European dimension, but this remains a minority.

The European Dimension in Public Administration education is clearly underdeveloped and not in correspondence to developments 'in the field'. Public Administration curricula remain generally inward looking, focusing above all on the national administration.

***5. Relations with the Profession: the Achilles' heel of Public Administration programmes?***

On the basis of the previous two sections one obvious question arises. Why have Public Administration programmes failed to anticipate the changing nature of administrations in Europe or to at least respond to the increasing 'Europeanisation' of their field. The lack of anticipation or reaction is surprising: Public Administration Programmes have generally been rather successful in finding a 'niche' in the increasing variety of academic programmes on offer and in gaining credibility among potential 'clients'.

Two possible reasons for the failure of Public Administration programmes to respond to the changing nature of the work of national administration can be deducted from the inventory.

The first reason relates to the recruitment system of central government civil servants. A large number of states still use general examinations as one or the main method for recruitment (e.g. Greece, Italy, Spain, Belgium, France, but also Ireland and the UK). The use of competitive examinations, generally designed to test the general knowledge of candidates can lead to a 'delayed translation' of changing demands in the administration. The focus on the substance of the examinations leaves little room for responsiveness to new developments. The examinations become a 'barrier' between the administration and the academic programmes. However, if Public Administration programmes would have good institutionalised contacts with the administration, they could still anticipate the changing requirements of the administration. So far these institutionalised links hardly exist. The Greek report provides a good example of this. 'European' subjects are not part

of the core curriculum of students, but once they pass the examinations and enter the Greek National School of Public Administration, 'European' subjects become an important part of the training curriculum. If Public Administration programmes would provide students with a better basic knowledge on these subjects, this could greatly improve the position of graduates after entry into the administration.

Even in states which have a 'position system', i.e. in which positions are filled as they become vacant, without general examinations, the links between Public Administration programmes and potential employers of graduates are not well developed. The increasing use of internships in academic education has provided PA programmes with good opportunities to strengthen their links with the administration. However, little use appears to have been made of these opportunities. In Sweden and Finland administrations have increasingly looked to universities as providers of in-service training on EU affairs. However, this seems not to have been picked up yet by universities as a signal that they might have to increase the 'European dimension' in their curricula.

In Ireland the linkages between Public Administration programmes and the civil service have remained limited, especially as far as central government is concerned. On regional and local level contacts are often better developed, which has led to the development of an increasing number of courses on European regional policy. However, the Irish administration generally remains highly sceptical of Public Administration graduates as candidates for civil service positions. The situation in the UK has not been reported on.

The Netherlands and Belgium constitute more positive examples of frequent and consistent interaction between the Academic Public Administration Community and the 'field'. In these states an increasing number of students find employment at the different levels of government, including central government.

One can pose the question why Public Administration programmes and their main 'clients' so often live 'back to back'. It almost seems that Public Administration programmes have been successful *regardless of* their relations with government. There are some potential explanations for this general tendency. One possible explanation is the fear that programmes might become too 'demand driven'. The academic standards in Public Administration programmes have often been challenged by other disciplines, especially Political science and other social sciences. Public Administration is often

considered a practical programme with too little academic substance. Changing Public Administration programmes in response to defined needs of administrations might strengthen the position of the critics of Public Administration programmes. The lack of confidence of a relatively new discipline might be a second explanatory factor.

However, 'Europeanisation' is not a fashionable fad, which will lose its attractiveness in the future. It is part of a larger and continuing trend in internationalisation of government. 'Europeanisation' will continue to affect the daily routine of public and private sector alike. Therefore Public Administration programmes need to respond to this development if they are to retain their attractiveness to students. Furthermore it is in the general interest of academic in the area of Public Administration to forge closer relations with the administrations in their state, in order to guarantee the relevance of their teaching and research work. As with Europeanisation, much work remains to be done for Public Administration programmes in this area.

#### ***6. Towards a Europeanisation strategy?***

Progress in the development of Public Administration programmes has been considerable over the last four decades. However, the nature of the discipline requires that academic programmes in the area continuously anticipate and respond to developments in the field. Whereas at a national level the performance of Public Administration programmes in this area appears to have been generally satisfactory, Public Administration programmes, so far, have generally failed to respond to the Europeanisation of the work of administration. Furthermore, the basis for the development of a European Dimension in Public Administration programmes is weak. Research initiatives in European and Comparative Public Administration are scarce. Therefore, it will be difficult for individual Public Administration programmes to face up to the challenge of Europeanisation and make use of the potential opportunities generated by the Europeanisation of the work of administrations, at least in the short term. This is the reason behind the design and implementation of a Europeanisation strategy. This strategy could form the basis for the joint development of the European Dimension in Public Administration by European academic institutions.

1.1.7. Possible elements of a Europeanisation strategy

The strategy to promote the Europeanisation of PA curricula should be based on a number of principles:

- Allow for a procedural en developmental approach, which may deal with variety in terms of the way PA is thought at university levels. Stick to the principle that there is not one best way, although some ways might be better than others.
- Build transnational networks for teaching and training PA. Use technology to bring people together.
- Accept that the study of PA is practice driven. There is an emerging European market for graduate training in European PA. Undergraduate training will follow. Many programmes will not be able to come up with the investment it takes to Europeanise there curricula. However, they will probably adopt and provide PA courses and modules on strategic issues and dimensions of comparative public sector development if these are supplied and made available in a network where they may act as co-producers of relevant programmes and teaching techniques.

In the coming year, we will consider several possible areas of action to stimulate the development of the European dimension in Public Administration education. We distinguish between actions to start the development of the European Dimension in the short term and long term measures.

1.1.8. Combining forces

The joint development of European and comparative modules has already started under several Joint European Module (JEM) projects. JEMs have been created on regional and local government and on several policy fields (e.g. environmental policy and social security). JEMs are a good instrument to use scarce academic talent in developing the European Dimension, especially if combined with cross-border team-teaching. Cross-border team teaching might be organisationally problematic, but is expected to become more important, with the forecast reduction in student mobility.

Other joint curricular initiative include for instance the MEPA/EMPA programme, a specialised programme at MA level, focusing almost exclusively on the European Dimension of Public Administration. In its current form, MEPA has too small an institutional basis (two Dutch one Belgian University, the Verwaltungs Hochschule Speyer and the Budapest academy of Economic Sciences) and is not well enough integrated in the regular curricula. Therefore its current contribution to Europeanisation is limited. However, if the participation base of MEPA/EMPA could be broadened and its programme more integrated in regular curricula, it could become a driving force for Europeanisation.

*Long term measures: a minimum package, good practise guidelines and prioritising research focusing on the European dimension*

The design of a minimum package and/or good practise guidelines on European and comparative modules should be the next step in the development of the European Dimension. New associations, such as EPAN, should play a key role in the design of a minimum package (vetted by an expert committee of leading professors in Public Administration). The availability of the minimum package in university programmes should become a mark of good quality, which should be developed as an accepted Europe-wide norm.

The development of a sound research base on the Comparative and European Dimension in public administration education should be a second element of a strategy for sustainable development. The research base on comparative and European public administration is currently weak, in some states non-existent. The only guarantee for the long-term sustainability of new courses and (sub-) curricula is a gradual extension of the number of specialists in the area. The creation of the Civil Service Research Consortium (a joint initiative of the University of Leiden and Indiana State University) is an important step in the right direction, but more work needs to be done in this area. One could think in particular of the development of the Public Administration dimension of the European Integration process. A limited number of initiatives have been taken on a national level (e.g. at the University of Leuven), but no cross-national projects have been set up as yet.

1.1.9. The need for Pan-European co-operation

The Europeanisation strategy is not only relevant for EU member states. The involvement of candidate states and non-member states should be actively sought. NISPAcee, for instance, has tried to put Europeanisation on the agenda of its annual conferences, but so far with little success. This is therefore more than just an issue for EU member states. The inventory of central and east European programmes, as well as of programmes in Cyprus, to be carried out in the academic year 1998-1999, should provide an insight into level of development of the European dimension in these states. It is important to make the Europeanisation initiative a Pan-European initiative.

**1.2. 7. Conclusion**

Europeanisation will affect the future of Public Administration programmes throughout Europe. These programmes are currently ill prepared to face the challenge of the changing nature of public administration. Europeanisation, which could have provided important new opportunities for Public Administration programmes, could instead become a threat to the position that these programmes have managed to obtain in the last four decades. It is important that Public Administration programmes face up to this challenge as soon as possible, before other, competing disciplines will fill the void.