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International Differences in Public Service Motivation: Comparing Regions Across the World

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Public service motivation has become an important public administration concept for scholars (Mann, 2006; Perry & Wise, 1990) and practitioners (Pattakos, 2004). The literature cites incidences of public service motivation in various geographical settings around the world. Although most of the literature on public service motivation, or related concepts such as public service ethos, is still mainly focusing on the United States and the United Kingdom, research is being extended to new geographic contexts such as Western Europe (Castaing, 2006; Steijn, 2006; Vandenabeele & Hondeghem, 2004), Southern Europe (Camilleri, 2006, 2007; Cerase & Farinella, 2006), and Australia (Taylor, in press). The concept is also found in Asia, which highlights the universal character of the topic (Choi, 2004; Kim, 2005; Turner & Halligan, 1999).

Studying public service motivation in these different national settings is not always easy. The American dominance in the study of the topic is reflected in the empirical measures used (see Chapter 4 by Wright, this volume). Not only are the instruments often difficult to translate and validate, but more importantly, the factorial structure of the measurement instrument sometimes differs across countries (Castaing, 2006; Vandenabeele, 2006; Vandenabeele & Hondeghem, 2004). The values associated with public service motivation are different across regional settings (Norris, 2003), causing the measurement of public service motivation to differ. Therefore, although a great deal of congruence in public values exists internationally (Raadschelders, 2003), some dimensions of public service motivation will be more prominent in some countries than they are in other countries. Moreover, these values are not equally 'public' in character in these various settings (Norris, 2003).

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This chapter elaborates further on this issue of international comparison of public service motivation. Using international survey data we map public service motivation and its constituent values in a series of countries. We analyze regional patterns in public service motivation, and examine the 'public' character of the values underlying public service motivation by comparing value orientations of people in public and nonpublic employment.

THEORETICAL ISSUES IN COMPARING PUBLIC SERVICE MOTIVATION ACROSS COUNTRIES

There are a number of issues that are important when comparing public service motivation internationally. First, there are different perspectives on public service motivation. Second, international comparison of a value-laden concept such as public service motivation requires understanding of the international variability of values, especially public administration values, upon which public service motivation is based. Finally, the relationship between public service motivation and the public service is considered in a global context.

International Perspectives on Public Service Motivation and Related Concepts

Definitions of public service motivation vary and each has its own particulars. Some highlight selflessness (Brewer & Selden, 1998) or the ethical background (Rainey & Steinbauer, 1999) of the motivation, while others tend to stress its public character (Perry & Wise, 1990; Vandenabeele, in press). However, a central element in most of these definitions is the reference to institutions, or permanent and structural interactions on different levels. This grounding in institutions refers unmistakably to a value component (Vandenabeele et al., 2006) and therefore, values of public institutions and public service motivation can be considered as highly related, albeit distinct, concepts. This relationship is described by Perry and Vandenabeele (see Chapter 3, this volume), who further develop how public service motivation is based upon public institutions and their constituting public service values. For this reason, public sector motivation is a concept that is relevant in many national environments. Originating in the United States, the concept has also been found to be relevant in Belgium (Vandenabeele, 2006; Vandenabeele & Hondeghem, 2004), France (Castaing, 2006; Hondeghem & Vandenabeele, 2005), the Netherlands

(Steijn, 2006; Vandenabeele, 2005a), Germany (Vandenabeele et al., 2006), Malta (Camilleri, 2006, 2007) and Italy (Cerase & Farinella, 2006), South Korea (Choi, 2004; Kim, 2005), Central America (Snyder et al., 1996), and Australia (Taylor, in press). In all these cases public service motivation has been identified as influencing public human resource management in some respects.

Similar value-based concepts are used elsewhere. In the United Kingdom, public administration scholars talk about *public service ethos* (Brereton & Temple, 1999; Chapman, 2000; Pratchett & Wingfield, 1996), which is related to public service motivation. In Canada 'l'éthique du bien commun' refers to 'communal capital . . . the amalgam of principles, rules, institutions and means which enable the promotion and assurance of the existence of all members of a society' (Chanlat, 2003, p. 55), whereas in China 'belief in mission', applied by Robertson et al. (2007), also shows resemblance to the public service ethos.

International Variability in Public Service Values and Public Service–Motivation Patterns

While public service motivation and related concepts are prominent in public administration research around the globe, their structure and content are not always consistent. There are differences in the concept's empirical measurement (see Chapter 4 by Wright, this volume), and in its factorial structure. Perry (1996) distinguished between four dimensions of public service motivation: 'politics and policies', 'public interest', 'compassion', and 'self-sacrifice'. Vandenabeele (2006) adds 'democratic governance' as an additional dimension. Also, just as there are individual patterns of public service motivation (Brewer et al., 2000), it is highly likely that institutional and societal differences contribute to different patterns of public service motivation in different nations. In a comparison of national administrative values in France, The Netherlands, Germany, and the United Kingdom, it was found that in each country the pattern of values was distinctive (Hondeghem & Vandenabeele, 2005; Vandenabeele et al., 2006). In the United Kingdom, for instance, there was a stronger focus on values such as impartiality and neutrality, while in France the focus was more on the public provision of services. Similarly, in the compassion dimension of public service motivation, in France the focus was on individual compassion, while in the Netherlands the focus was rather on collective compassion.

Several variables have been found to be influential in the differential development of public service motivation. Perry (1997) found that religious, parental and educational socialization significantly influenced the level

of general (composite) public service motivation, and political and professional socialization provided additional institutional influences for particular dimensions of his four-dimensional model of public service motivation. Likewise, Moynihan and Pandey (2007) found that education and professional socialization and organizational characteristics influenced levels of public service motivation. While these studies focused on the institutional origins (see Chapter 3 by Perry and Vandenabeele, this volume), this chapter takes the concept of institutions one step further by assessing country-level differences in institutional elements impacting on public service motivation.

Even where national public sectors share a common heritage, as is the case with the Judean and Roman–Greek heritage in most Western countries (Raadschelders, 2003), there are differences in national administrative values upon which public service motivation is based. Likewise, while we talk about the 'public sector', this concept actually covers distinct realities in different countries (Coombes, 1998; Kickert & Stillman, 1996; Stillman, 1999), meaning that concepts are not easily transferred or used across borders. Comparing public service motivation internationally is further complicated by our limited knowledge of public values (Beck Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007), national administrative cultures (Hajnal, 2003; Loughlin, 1994), and differences in public perceptions of the public sector (Van de Walle, 2007; Van de Walle et al., in press).

The Relationship between Public Service Motivation and Public Service

Another matter that is not often explicitly discussed in the literature is the 'public' character of public service motivation. Measuring public service motivation is essentially measuring a set of attitudes, related to 'public service', not to the public sector. However, in most cases, especially in a Western environment, the link between 'public service' and the public sector is assumed and it makes sense to follow Perry and Wise (1990) in their theoretical proposition that high public service motivation levels are more common for employees working in the public sector. Lewis and Frank (2002) found a higher level of public service motivation in government employees compared to nongovernment employees. Equally, Norris (2003) found, in a global survey looking at five different regions (Anglo-American, Scandinavian, Western, Central and Eastern Europe, and Asia), that preferring a job that is 'useful to society' is strongly related to public sector employment. Also, Snyder et al. (1996) found public service motivation to be higher among South American public

managers than among private sector managers. These findings clearly support the 'public sector' character of public service motivation.

However, Norris (2003) also found that preferring jobs associated with 'helping others' was not related to public service employment in Asia and that it was not related to a preference for working in the public sector in either the Anglo-American countries or Asia. Furthermore, a job that is 'useful to society' was not related to the preference for working in the public sector in Asia. These results, together with the variability in public service values, are more supportive of international differences in the 'public' character of public service motivation.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

International comparative research on public values in public administration has been limited. We therefore build here on established scholarship in political science and sociology, where international comparisons have a longer empirical tradition. Much of this tradition relies on the availability of international data sets, with the European and World Values Surveys as the most important examples. Since the publication of Almond and Verba's five-nation civic culture study (Almond & Verba, 1965), the international study of values has gradually expanded. Noteworthy in this respect is Inglehart's work on long-term value change (Inglehart, 1990, 1997), and the *Beliefs in Government* project that followed this tradition (see Kaase & Newton, 1995). In a public administration context, this type of research has remained much more limited. There are a number of reasons for this, and the problem of conceptual equivalence is a very important one. However, international comparative research *always* risks being subject to problems of comparability and conceptual equivalence. When studying public service motivation, we study values that may have different meanings, and public sectors that may look very different across countries, such that similar words reflect very different social realities (Rutgers, 2004). These problems of equivalence exist and need to be recognized, but they are also unavoidable. We need to navigate, using van Deth's words, 'between the Scylla of losing national and cultural validity and the Charybdis of endangering cross-cultural or cross-national comparability' (1998, p. 2) to find a balance between specificity and comparability in doing international comparative research.

In this chapter, we use data from the 2004 International Social Survey Program (ISSP) citizenship module to analyze international patterns in public sector motivation. The ISSP is a cross-national collaboration on social science

surveys that has existed since 1983, and currently covers about 40 countries. It coordinates research and adds a short supplement of questions to existing or specific national surveys. In 2004, this module focused on 'citizenship', with a series of questions on relations between citizens and the state, including questions on the qualities of a good citizen, political efficacy, trust, interest in politics, public service, voting behavior, etc. This approach provides researchers with cross-national data, but unfortunately, due to differences in methods of data collection, direct international comparison is not always straightforward. Readers need to take this into account.

For our analysis we use data for the following 38 countries: Australia, Germany, Great Britain, United States, Austria, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Poland, Bulgaria, Russian Federation, New Zealand, Canada, Philippines, Israel, Japan, Spain, Latvia, Slovak Republic, France, Cyprus, Portugal, Chile, Denmark, Switzerland, Flanders (Belgium), Brazil, Venezuela, Finland, Mexico, Taiwan, South Africa, South Korea, and Uruguay—a total of 52,550 respondents.[1]

The ISSP has not been designed to measure public service motivation, and for this reason we cannot simply replicate scales used in previous research. Conceptual precision would require us to use every dimension of public service motivation (politics and policies, compassion, self-sacrifice, public interest, democratic governance), but the available international data do not allow for this. We have constructed a composite public service motivation scale by averaging the score on a select set of public service motivation–related items in the ISSP data set. While suboptimal (see Chapter 4 by Wright, this volume), such an approach has been frequently applied in public service motivation research. Brewer and Selden (2000), Naff and Crum (1999), and Kim (2005) used a similar instrument, with one item representing each dimension of public service motivation, apart from the dimension politics and policies (which was measured only in Naff and Crum). Lewis and Frank (2002) averaged the score of two items ('A job that allows to help other people' and 'A job that is useful to society') to construct a measure of public service motivation. The possible (negative) consequences of such an approach are further discussed in Wright (Chapter 4, this volume).

In the ISSP data set, items are available to construct three public service motivation dimensions: politics and policies, compassion, and self-sacrifice. We used one or two items for each dimension, as Table 11.1 shows. The items were measured on a 1–7 scale, on which 7 represents 'very important'.

Across countries, the average public service motivation score is 4.99 (with a standard deviation of 1.21). A Cronbach's α of 0.72 for the scale exceeds the suggested minimum of 0.70 (Nunally, 1978). This internal consistency

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Table 11.1. Public service motivation–measurement scale

Subdimension	Cronbach's α	Variable
Politics and policy	0.60	To keep watch of the actions of government
		To be active in social or political associations
Compassion	0.76	To help people in my country who are worse of than myself
		To help people in the rest of the world who are worse of than myself
Self-sacrifice	NA	To choose products for political, ethical, or environmental reasons, even if they cost a bit more

Cronbach's α = .72; mean = 4.99; std. = 1.21; 'Important' on a scale from 1 (not at all important) to 7 (very important).

demonstrates that the items more or less measure an encompassing concept of public service motivation. However, the values for the subscales are not always internally consistent. The subscale for politics and policies is somewhat below the threshold due to the small number of items. For self-sacrifice, no sufficient subscale could be created due to the low intercorrelations between the available items. Therefore, only one item representing self-sacrifice is used in the scale. This enables us to incorporate the idea of (mainly) financial self-sacrifice for ethical reasons into the scale.

PUBLIC SERVICE MOTIVATION: REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

In total, 38 countries have data available to study public service motivation. In general, the mean public service motivation scores are rather high, as only the Czech Republic reports a score slightly below the middle option of 4 (for individual country scores, see Appendix 11.1). When comparing these countries' average public service–motivation scores, it is clear that the countries on the lower half of the score sheet (Figure 11.1a) are mostly European countries. Of 24 European countries represented in the data set, 16 are countries with a low public service–motivation score. Of the 10 lowest-scoring countries, 9 are European (6 of which are in Central and Eastern Europe). Conversely, only three non-European countries (Japan, New Zealand, and South Korea) are part of the 'lower-scoring' group.

Among the higher-scoring group of countries (Figure 11.1b), we find far fewer European countries, despite the fact that Southern European countries are quite well represented. Similarly, the Northern American (Canada and the United States) and Latin American (Chile, Uruguay, Venezuela, Brazil)

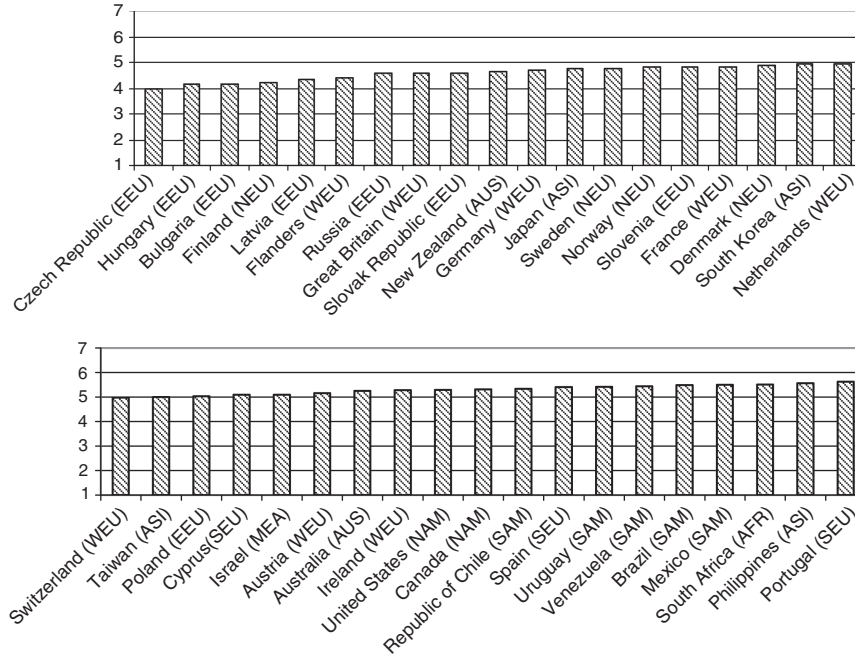230 *International Differences in Public Service Motivation*

Figure 11.1. (a) Mean country public service motivation scores (lower scores). (b) Mean country public service motivation scores (higher scores).

countries included in the comparison have rather high scores. Although differences between Asian countries are higher, they are all in the higher-scoring group (Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Philippines).

The overall public service–motivation scores suggest some kind of regional effect. Therefore, the countries have been clustered into geographical regions: Eastern Europe (EEU),[2] Northern Europe (NEU), Western Europe (WEU), Southern Europe (SEU), Australasia (AUS), Asia (ASI), Northern America (NAM), and South and Central America (SAM).[3] Analysis of variance provides some support for a clustering based upon these geographical regions. Table 11.2 demonstrates that these regions are a significant correlate of both the overall score of public service motivation and its subdimensions, with geographical region being accountable for 8% in the variance of the individual overall public service–motivation score and 5–11% of the variance in the scores of its subdimensions, regardless of the effect of other explanatory factors.

The average scores of the regional clusters reveal that European regions (except for Southern Europe) have the lowest scores, while the American

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Table 11.2. Analysis of variance with geographical region as independent variable

Dependent variable in model	F-value	R^2
Public service motivation	626.86***	0.08
Politics and policy	433.07***	0.06
Compassion	815.08***	0.11
Self-sacrifice	328.42***	0.05

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

regions, together with Southern Europe, score remarkably higher. Australasia and Asia are somewhat in between. Bonferroni tests provide additional support for using the geographical regions, as the regional scores for each variable is statistically different from most other regional scores (see Appendix 11.2; Figure 11.2).

However, the average regional scores of the subdimensions do not display the same pattern everywhere. When looking at politics and policies, the three lowest-scoring regions on public service motivation also score lowest on 'politics' (and in the same rank order). On the other end, North America has the highest score. Asia, Southern Europe, and South and Central America make up the middle group. The 'compassion' dimension respects the aggregate public service motivation ranking less well. Eastern Europe and Northern Europe still have the lowest average scores, followed by Australasia and Asia (there is no statistical difference between the first two and the latter two). Southern Europe and South and Central America have the highest scores on

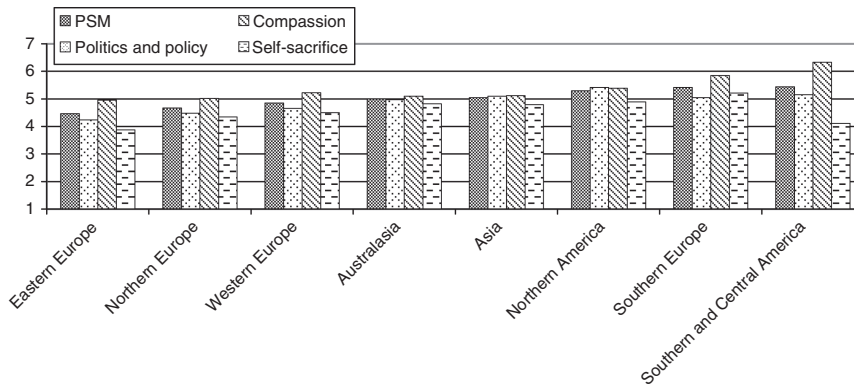Au: Appendix 11.2 is missing. Please provide.

Figure 11.2. Mean regional scores on public service motivation and its dimensions.

compassion, and the top three regions rank the same in both compassion and public service–motivation measures. Western Europe has a more or less average score. Finally, in terms of self-sacrifice, the lowest-scoring region is again Eastern Europe. South and Central America scores rather low on self-sacrifice, followed by Northern and Western Europe. These are followed again by a group consisting of Asia, Australasia, and North America. The highest-scoring region for self-sacrifice is Southern Europe.

How can we explain such regional differences? Pratchett and Wingfield's (1996) findings would suggest that the lower scores of Western European countries are due to a more intense confrontation with new public management reforms, with a greater focus on marketization than on typical public administration values. If market values permeate society, public service motivation and its constituting values will become less important. But this explanation cannot account for the position of the United States, Canada, and Australia.

Perry (1997) found various types of socialization (religious, educational, professional, parental, and political) to be antecedents of individual-level public service motivation. The pattern found in Latin American and Southern European countries lends this position a certain credibility. The strong Roman Catholic heritage in these countries makes religion an important institution in these societies. The most obvious factor to look at in assessing the importance of religion as an institution is secularization. This phenomenon has been especially strong in Northern and Western Europe, and to a certain extent in some Central and Eastern European countries, Poland being an important exception (Lambert, 2004; Norris & Inglehart, 2004). An integration of communities, whether religious- or secular-based institutions, could lead to the internalization of, and identification with, moral values (Hertzke, 1995), and therefore to a higher average public service–motivation score for countries and regions (thus corroborating some of the statements in Perry and Vandenabeele, Chapter 3, this volume). In a similar institutional vein, the lower scores for the East European countries can be explained by a shorter experience with democratic regimes after 50 years of communism. Also, these countries have fully embraced capitalist values, without compensating elsewhere.

This institutional analysis provides additional evidence that public service motivation is embedded in a multidimensional institutional environment, where the sector of employment is not the only determinant of public service motivation. This in turn raises the matter of both the publicness of public service motivation and the possible effects of public service motivation outside government, in the private sector or in other segments of society (see Chapter 9 by Houston; Chapter 10 by Steen, this volume).

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THE PUBLICNESS OF PUBLIC SERVICE MOTIVATION

The second part of our analysis focuses on the extent to which public service motivation is related to public sector employment. Thus far, we have only looked at differences of public service motivation at country level, and we were interested in differences between countries and regions. In this section, we look at differences within countries. It is suggested that public service motivation is related to public employment. Note that we say 'related', as it is not our intention to discuss causality or processes of socialization. Respondents indicated whether they worked for government (1), for a publicly owned firm (2), for a private firm (3), or whether they were self-employed (4). The data are not available for some countries (United States, Canada, Russia, Brazil, and Bulgaria), and are incomplete for others. To analyze whether respondents in government employment (1) score differently on the public service motivation scale and its constituting dimensions than respondents not in public employment, we use a t-test, first on the individual regions, and then on the entire data set. The results are summarized in Table 11.3. To increase

Table 11.3. t-Tests comparing public service motivation for public and nonpublic employees across geographical regions

Region	Effect size	PSM	Politics and policies	Compassion	Self-sacrifice
Asia	Abs. diff.	0.10	0.01	0.17*	0.13
	Cohen's *d*	0.09	0.01	0.12	0.07
Australasia	Abs. diff.	0.14*	0.13*	0.09	0.22*
	Cohen's *d*	0.12	0.10	0.06	0.13
Northern America	Abs. diff.	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Cohen's *d*	NA	NA	NA	NA
Northern Europe	Abs. diff.	0.12**	0.19***	0.06	0.07
	Cohen's *d*	0.11	0.14	0.04	0.04
Eastern Europe	Abs. diff.	0.30***	0.38***	0.42***	0.18*
	Cohen's *d*	0.25	0.25	0.29	0.09
Southern and	Abs. diff.	0.15**	0.32***	0.02	0.05
Central America	Cohen's *d*	0.20	0.21	0.02	0.02
Southern Europe	Abs. diff.	0.23**	0.25***	0.22***	0.26***
	Cohen's *d*	0.23	0.19	0.21	0.18
Western Europe	Abs. diff.	0.10**	0.17***	0.03	0.10*
	Cohen's *d*	0.09	0.13	0.02	0.06
Entire data set	Abs. diff.	0.07***	0.12***	0.04*	0.02
	Cohen's *d*	0.06	0.08	0.03	0.01

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

Significance levels for absolute differences and Cohen's *d* are identical.

Israel and South Africa have been excluded from the calculations for the entire data set.

the statistical power of the analysis, the analysis is performed only on the geographical regions.

In general, respondents working in the public sector score higher on the composite public service motivation measure than those who do not. In Asia, however, this difference is not statistically significant. When standardized, the difference in public service motivation between public and nonpublic employees for the entire data set is small, albeit significant (Cohen's $d = .06$ [Cohen, 1988]). The largest effect size is found in Eastern Europe (.25). The other significant effect sizes range from.09 (Western Europe) to .23 (Southern Europe).

Subsequently, we looked at differences in the three public service motivation dimensions: politics and policy, compassion, and self-sacrifice. First, for 'politics and policy', the aggregate difference amounts to a Cohen's d of .08, which is statistically significant. For the individual regions, every t-test (except Asia) renders a significant difference, with effect sizes ranging from .10 (Australasia) to .25 (Eastern Europe).

The second dimension, 'compassion', returns only three significant results for the individual regions (Asia and Eastern and Southern Europe), while only a very small significant result is found for the general sample (.03). Cohen's d for these regions ranges from .12 for Asia, to over .21 for Eastern Europe, to .29 for Southern Europe. The score difference for Asia is remarkable, given the absence of a significant difference on the aggregate public service–motivation measure, and given Norris's (2003) earlier finding of a lack of dominant public values in Asian public sectors. Public service employees and non–public service employees do not score significantly different on the third dimension (self-sacrifice) when analyzing the entire data set (however, for, Australasia and Eastern, Western, and Southern Europe, a significant effect is found). The largest effect is found in Southern Europe (.18).

One might conclude that 'politics and policy' is the most 'public' dimension and is a common element in public service motivation around the globe (only in Asia is the relationship not statistically significant). This corresponds with Vandenabeele (2005b), who found that this dimension had a consistent influence on employer attractiveness in the public sector, whereas compassion and public interest were only related to attractiveness for more 'publicly' oriented government organizations. 'Compassion', with a small difference across the entire data set, differs significantly in three regions (Asia, Eastern Europe, and Southern Europe). Self-sacrifice differs significantly in half of the available regions (Australasia, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, and Southern Europe). These results demonstrate that in a number of regions, some dimensions of public service motivation are not typically related to public service employment. This does not mean that those dimensions are absent in these public

services or that public service motivation has no motivating impact. Some dimensions may be equally important in and outside government organizations. Public service motivation can also have a motivational effect on behavior outside government employment, where, for example, public service is delivered by non–public sector bodies or individual persons in a nongovernmental context (see Chapter 3 by Perry and Vandenabeele; Chapter 9 by Houston; Chapter 10 by Steen, this volume; Brewer, 2003).

However, interpreting these findings is not straightforward. The status and role of the public sector in a given society varies, as do the motives of citizens to opt for public employment (Norris, 2003). Two caveats apply to this analysis. The first is the definition of public employment we have used. This is essentially based on self-definition, whereby respondents are asked to indicate whether they work for government, for a publicly owned firm, for a private firm, or whether they are self-employed. While this distinction is rather straightforward for many professions (e.g. civil servant, retail sales manager), this is less the case for other professions, especially those in which public and private elements interact, such as health or education. As a result, we have little control over the interpersonal and international comparability of these self-definitions. In addition, not all countries using the ISSP module included the 'publicly owned firm' category in their questionnaires, making it hard to predict which category respondents in these firms will opt for. The second caveat is that the analysis does not discriminate between countries with large and small public sectors, or between countries where more public goods are provided through private and nonprofit actors and countries where this is not the case. As a result, differences in public service motivation between those working in the public sector and others may become smaller or insignificant due to either the large number of public sector employees, or the number of private sector employees involved in the delivery of public goods.

These findings suggest that regions and countries, to different extents, have embedded the dimensions of public service motivation within their government administration, although politics and policy seems to be the common core. This provides further evidence for an institutional explanation of public service motivation. Next to the institutional differences in the various countries, resulting in different country-level scores, sector of employment is also an important institutional level (Scott, 2001), resulting in different sectoral scores. These results remind us that it is important to consider multiple institutional levels in researching public service motivation. Countries, but also sectors of employment, individual organizations, and other institutions will probably exert an influence on individual public service–motivation levels.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR COMPARATIVE
PUBLIC SERVICE MOTIVATION RESEARCH

This chapter has explored patterns of public service motivation across the
world, based on a data set of 38 countries. Using data from the ISSP, we
developed a composite measure for public service motivation, consisting of
three dimensions. We first analyzed regional differences in absolute levels of
public service motivation and in the relative composition of this public service
motivation, and then tested whether public service motivation is a phenom-
enon related to public sector employment. Two general conclusions stand out.

First, public service motivation and its constituting dimensions are only to a
certain extent universal. While we found evidence of public service motivation
in most countries, the analysis of variance revealed that public service motiva-
tion scores differ by region. Scores are generally high in Southern European
and American countries, and low in Central and Eastern Europe. There is
also considerable variation in the dimensions that make up public service
motivation, resulting in different score patterns across regions.

Second, the 'public' character of public service motivation was investigated
in this study. The results demonstrated that for most regions the average
composite public service motivation score was higher for public employees
compared to private sector employees. This indicated that public service moti-
vation, as it was measured here, has a distinct public character. However, given
a closer look, analysis of the constituting dimensions revealed that not all
dimensions under investigation were equally public in character. Although
the dimension 'politics and policies' was clearly public, 'compassion' and 'self-
sacrifice' were not significantly related to public sector employment. Only in
particular regions do these dimensions have an obvious 'public' character.
These observations lead to the conclusion that patterns of public service
motivation are different for various regions across the world.

Summarizing both conclusions, we can state that although public service
motivation is a more or less universal concept, both the score patterns and the
distinct 'public' character vary regionally. Although the concept of public ser-
vice motivation is found everywhere and one can speak of a robust common
core, the focus and empirical nature tends to differ due to a different or partial
implementation of similar ideas. This observation might be an indication that
the historical evolution of public service motivation, and with it ideas such
as path dependency, might be important in explaining what today is under-
stood as public service motivation. Because of its 'limited universal character',
one should always take regional and national dimensions into account when
researching public service motivation. Further research will have to focus
on validating measurement scales in various countries to achieve a better
international comparison. Another issue in further international comparative

research is to assess the possible differential effect of institutional antecedents, because different institutions may account for different effects across regions and countries. Finally, a comparative historical analysis of the institutions influencing public service motivation (not unlike Vandenabeele & Horton, in press) could provide insights into the mechanisms of public service motivation development.

Some limitations apply to this analysis. At present, no international comparative data exists to compare public service motivation internationally using all known public service motivation dimensions. The composite measure was necessarily based on a very specific set of items, and no items were available to measure the 'public interest' and 'democratic governance' dimensions. Our conclusions therefore only refer to three dimensions: compassion, self-sacrifice, and politics and policy. A more detailed survey with a more sophisticated measurement scale might deliver better results. In addition, existing surveys only make a very crude distinction between public and private employment. Improving public service–motivation scales and the categorization of public and private employment would greatly contribute to comparative research on public service motivation. As things stand now, there may be issues of conceptual equivalence. We cannot assume that the scales used in, for example, American or British research will mean the same in other national contexts. Items used to develop the public service motivation dimensions do not necessarily have the same meaning in all countries. Despite apparent similarities in the questions' wording, certain concepts may mean entirely different things. Further research should therefore also be directed at answering these questions and remedying these limitations. The sample used in this analysis is, despite its large size, rather selective. It contains a limited set of predominantly democratic countries, and many countries are thus excluded from the analysis. Moreover, countries in which public service motivation is least likely to occur due to the lack of democratic and public institutions are excluded.

When studying the publicness of public service motivation by looking at the effect of public employment, we need to develop additional variables for mapping the characteristics of national public labor markets. This will allow distinguishing between public service motivation and other work motivations in public employment. The existing research tradition on value change could be an important source for data and expertise, and combined with insights from the public administration discipline, public service motivation could be an alternative way of analyzing and comparing national administrative cultures. By combining individual-level data on attitudes and values with structural information on the public sector and the public sector labor market, possibly in a longitudinal way, we can learn a great deal about societies' values, and how public sectors represent, carry, transform, and pass on these values.

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APPENDIX 11.1

Average country scores for PSM and its constituting dimensions

Country (Region)	PSM	Politics and policy	Compassion	Self-sacrifice
Australia (AUS)	5.25	5.20	5.36	5.12
Austria (WEU)	5.16	4.84	5.48	5.08
Brazil (SAM)	5.49	5.15	6.35	4.36
Bulgaria (EEU)	4.17	3.90	5.12	2.57
Canada (NAM)	5.31	5.45	5.34	4.98
Cyprus (SEU)	5.09	5.06	5.49	4.34
Czech Republic (EEU)	3.97	3.74	4.40	3.59
Denmark (NEU)	4.90	4.65	5.28	4.61
Finland (NEU)	4.22	3.77	4.66	4.14
Flanders (WEU)	4.40	4.18	4.81	4.10
France (WEU)	4.84	4.83	5.03	4.54
Germany (WEU)	4.72	4.49	5.13	4.32
Great Britain (WEU)	4.58	4.30	4.96	4.28
Hungary (EEU)	4.13	3.90	4.34	4.25
Ireland (WEU)	5.28	4.99	5.81	4.79
Israel (MEA)	5.10	5.27	5.46	4.00
Japan (ASI)	4.74	4.82	4.86	4.33
Latvia (EEU)	4.34	4.08	4.85	3.74
Mexico (SAM)	5.50	5.39	6.34	4.02
Netherlands (WEU)	4.94	4.90	5.29	4.27
New Zealand (AUS)	4.65	4.67	4.73	4.42
Norway (NEU)	4.83	4.83	5.17	4.13
Philippines (ASI)	5.56	5.82	5.63	4.87
Poland (EEU)	5.03	4.88	5.66	3.85
Portugal (SEU)	5.63	5.33	5.93	5.53
Republic of Chile (SAM)	5.33	4.89	6.27	4.13
Russia (EEU)	4.57	4.69	4.74	3.94
Slovak Republic (EEU)	4.59	4.08	5.30	4.17
Slovenia (EEU)	4.83	4.29	5.33	4.87
South Africa (AFR)	5.51	5.41	5.62	NA
South Korea (ASI)	4.93	5.03	4.71	5.15
Spain (SEU)	5.40	4.85	5.94	5.36
Sweden (NEU)	4.77	4.68	4.96	4.55
Switzerland (WEU)	4.98	4.61	5.38	4.91
Taiwan (ASI)	5.00	4.86	5.24	4.78
United States (NAM)	5.29	5.38	5.43	4.81
Uruguay (SAM)	5.42	5.18	6.11	4.46
Venezuela (SAM)	5.44	5.20	6.55	3.47

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APPENDIX 11.2.1

Mean regional scores for public service motivation and Bonferroni tests of difference between means

Geographical region	Mean	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Eastern Europe	4.46	–	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
2 Northern Europe	4.67	–	–	*	*	*	*	*	*
3 Western Europe	4.85	–	–	–	*	*	*	*	*
4 Australasia	5.00	–		–	–	–	*	*	*
5 Asia	5.04	–		–	–	–	*	*	*
6 Northern America	5.30	–	–	–	–	–	–	*	*
7 Southern Europe	5.41	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	
8 South and Central America	5.44	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

* $p < 0.05$.

APPENDIX 11.2.2

Mean regional scores for politics and policy and Bonferroni tests of difference between means

Geographical region	Mean	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Eastern Europe	4.23	–	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
2 Northern Europe	4.48	–	–	*	*	*	*	*	*
3 Western Europe	4.65	–	–	–	*	*	*	*	*
4 Australasia	4.97	–	–	–	–	–	*	*	*
5 Southern Europe	5.04	–	–	–	–	–	–	*	*
6 Asia	5.10	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	*
7 South and Central America	5.15	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	*
8 Northern America	5.41	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

* $p < 0.05$.

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APPENDIX 11.2.3

Mean regional scores for compassion and Bonferroni tests of difference between means

Geographical region	Mean	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Eastern Europe	4.96	–	–	*	*	*	*	*	*
2 Northern Europe	5.01	–	–	–	*	*	*	*	*
3 Australasia	5.09	–	–	–	–	*	*	*	*
4 Asia	5.11	–	–	–	–	*	*	*	*
5 Western Europe	5.22	–	–	–	–	–	*	*	*
6 Northern America	5.39	–	–	–	–	–	–	*	*
7 Southern Europe	5.85	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	*
8 South and Central America	6.33	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

$^*p < 0.05$.

APPENDIX 11.2.4

Mean regional scores for self-sacrifice and Bonferroni tests of difference between means

Geographical region	Mean	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Eastern Europe	3.88	–	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
2 South and Central America	4.11	–	–	*	*	*	*	*	*
3 Northern Europe	4.34	–	–	–	*	*	*	*	*
4 Western Europe	4.50	–	–	–	–	*	*	*	*
5 Asia	4.79	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	*
6 Australasia	4.83	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	*
7 Northern America	4.89	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	*
8 Southern Europe	5.21	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

$^*p < 0.05$.

NOTES

1. The ISSP is based on a nationally representative random sample of the adult population in each country, generally between 1000 and 1400. The ISSP questions generally are supplements to regular national surveys. As a result, there is considerable methodological variation across countries. More information can be found at www.issp.org.

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2. Russia has been labeled an Eastern European country, as its history and its public service–motivation score is more similar to those Eastern European countries than to the Asian countries in the survey.
3. The individual countries in each region can be derived from Figure 11.1. The Middle East (MEA) and Africa (AFR) have been removed from further analysis, as each is represented by a single country (Israel and South Africa, respectively).

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