

# *Public Administration Education in Twelve Post-Socialist Countries and Croatia: Is There a Convergence?*

*Gordana Marčetić\**

*Goranka Lalić Novak\*\**

*Jasmina Džinić\*\*\**

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The authors describe the situation regarding public administration (PA) education in twelve post-socialist European countries divided into two circles: Central European post-socialist countries and former Yugoslav countries. The analysis is focused on the main orientations of the PA curricula, levels of education, and character of the institutions offering education in the field. A special attention is put

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\* Gordana Marčetić, PhD, associate professor at the Chair of Administrative Science, Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb (izvanredna profesorica na Katedri za upravnu znanost Pravnog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, e-mail: gordana.marctic@pravo.hr)

\*\* Goranka Lalić Novak, PhD, lecturer at the Chair of Administrative Science, Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb (predavačica na Katedri za upravnu znanost Pravnog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, e-mail: glalic@pravo.hr)

\*\*\* Jasmina Džinić, assistant at the Chair of Administrative Science, Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb (asistentica na Katedri za upravnu znanost Pravnog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, e-mail: jdzinic@pravo.hr)

on PA education in Croatia. The article is based on sociological neo-institutional theoretical approaches that often indicate exogenous factors as causes of institutional changes. The comparative research has confirmed the hypothesis of the paper that there is interconnection between the process of transition and increased development of the PA education systems in central and south-eastern European post-socialist countries. It shows a great similarity at the levels of education, a sufficiently high level of convergence toward multidisciplinary approach to PA education and diversity in colour at the institutional-organizational level.

*Key words:* public administration education, public administration curricula, educational institutions, post-socialist European countries, Croatia

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Overview

Important changes have been noticed in the character of the modern state and its administration in the past decades. Contemporary social processes have direct influence on the transformation of values and goals of the traditional administrative systems and public organisations that have been faced with uncertain, dynamic, and unpredictable environment. Globalization has caused major changes in the character of the modern state and its administration, such as reinforcement of supra-territorial governance organization whose decisions and codes of conduct are binding over the nation-states affecting their administrative systems. Perhaps the most important change for public administration (PA) is the shift of the administrative state from a welfare state to a corporate state or entrepreneurial state (Farazmand, 1999: 2, 7–8, 2006: 704). Due to economic insufficiency of the welfare state, global competition and pressure »... the language of economics undoubtedly dominates the conversations regarding global governmental reform« (Terry, 1999: 6).

Efforts to introduce economic viability, efficiency and effectiveness (the three E's) in PA in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are propagated through the concept of the New Public Management (NPM), which has developed as a critique of the old, bureaucratic and inefficient adminis-

trative apparatus. While traditional Weberian administration is based on democratic values and legal rules, NPM is focused on economic values and introducing market principles from the private sector into PA. The NPM has neglected democratic and social values, downgraded legal regulation (which is the base for a responsible PA) and reduced citizens to mere consumers. Through NPM »law« has been »replaced by economics as the language of the state« (Lowi, in: Terry, 1999: 6).

At the same time when the globalization process and global breach of the NPM doctrine spread across north-western Europe, in eastern Europe and the USSR socialism was broken down. During 1989 and 1990, former socialist countries entered into the period of post-socialist transition (PST) that became a broadly researched phenomenon in political, sociological, economic, legal and philosophical literature.<sup>1</sup> The post-socialist transition may be designated as a systemic transition that includes the period of disintegration of the old socialist system and transition to the new, capitalist system. Transitional countries have been trying to build pluralist democracy and western-type capitalism although their specific circumstances aggravate the implementation of the western model and cause a different type of development. The period of transition is characterized by a radical institutional transformation in political, economic, administrative, social, and other subsystems. PST includes the process of integration of Eastern European countries into the global community because the transition towards western-type capitalism has been conditioned by the integration into the international community.

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<sup>1</sup> The phenomena of social orders transition have been researched for several decades by social sciences. From classic theory of democratic transition led by O'Donnell and Schmitter that was developed as the result of efforts aimed to explain occurrences before and after the collapse of the authoritarian systems of Latin America and south Europe in the 1970s, to new theories that tried to explain the changes after 1989 and 1990 in Central and East Europe. As later occurrences in post-socialist countries showed different characteristics from previous transitions and classic comprehension of transition as »democratization« of social systems (understood as an »interval« or transfer from non-democratic to democratic systems) proved to be insufficient, post-socialist transition began to be researched as a specific phenomenon. Different authors defined and explained PST differently. At the beginning of the transition process, PST was interpreted as »democratization« from the perspective of classical theory of democratic transition, so the expressions like »democratic revolution« (Dahrendorf, Ash) and »democratic waves« (Huntington) were used. As those approaches could not explain the phenomenon of PST completely, Beyma and the representatives of German transformational theory introduced a new analytical category of »system change«. This was accompanied by new definitions and approaches that understand PST as »institutional transformation« (e.g. Gabrielian, Wollmann), »system exchange« (e.g. Švob-Đokić, 2000) etc. However, the definition or theory of transition that would be generally acceptable has not been developed yet (more in: Marčetić, 2005: 7–48).

The EU accession process has been accompanied by numerous institutional reforms in the administrative systems of the candidate countries (Marčetić, 2005: 69–70, 328–329; Grabbe, 2006; Schimmelfennig, Sedelmeier, 2004).

Within these reforms, more attention is paid to human potentials development, university and vocational education for service in public administration, and in-service training of civil and public servants. Transformation of the political, economic, social and normative framework of public administration has resulted in a radical change of institutions, administrative practice, and administrative education. The main hypothesis of the article is that there is interconnection between the process of transition and increasing development of public administration education systems in the post-socialist European countries.

Several questions arise from this postulate. If the process of transition affects the development of administrative education system, is there a certain degree of convergence between particular countries? Have administrative education curricula been developed rapidly during the transition process in all countries analysed in the paper, and if so, do those curricula show similar institutional and organizational forms? Do they comprise similar disciplines or each country has its own study approach depending on its administrative tradition, historical, political and other circumstances? Those questions are even more important if we have in mind that the complex process of PST is parallel and interrelated with other global processes that might cause the relevant degree of convergence, such as the global impact of contemporary administrative doctrines (NPM and Good Governance) and the process of Europeanization.<sup>2</sup>

## 1.2. Theoretical Approach

This paper is based on sociological neo-institutional approaches. Sociology pays much more attention to the processes of creation, transformation and collapse of institutions than to the characteristics and effects of insti-

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<sup>2</sup> The expression 'Europeanization' is used for the explanation of different phenomena and change processes. In general, Europeanization is the process of institutionalization of Europe – bottom-up, top-down and horizontally (Musa, 2009: 203). As the focus of Europeanization is at the national level, it should be considered as »domestic impact of Europe« (Börzel, Risse, 2007: 485).

tutions caused by those processes, which are subject of political science's interest.

Since the institutional changes in administrative education of transitional countries as well as the creation of new educational institutions that deliver administrative programs are observed in the paper, it seems this approach will be the appropriate theoretical framework for comparative analysis and observation of changes.

By explaining the changes of institutions, sociological institutionalism often indicates exogenous factors as causes of change – e.g. new interpretative frames transposed or imposed from the outside (DiMaggio, Powell, 1991; Hannan, Freeman, 1989; according to Mahoney, Thelen, 2009: 6), development of broader political, legal or market fields (Fligstein, 1996; according to Mahoney, Thelen, 2009: 6) or new experiences and institutional framework that cannot be subsumed under existing rules and institutions (March, Olsen, 2009: 15–17). Furthermore, the changes may be caused by catastrophes, crisis or collapse of systems – when they appear in the process of transformation, delegitimization, adjudication or collapse of the established order (March, Olsen, 2009: 15–17).

Concerning the countries of Central and South East Europe, both moments had key role in the collapse of the old and establishment of new institutions, behaviour rules, roles and identities. The collapse of socialism after 1989 triggered a chain of institutional changes in all social subsystems of East European countries. Those institutional changes in post-socialist countries cannot be interpreted out of the context of exogenous factors – international communities and powerful international organizations. The EU had a special role among them due to its crucial impact on the course and direction of transition process.

One of the important questions posed by sociological approaches is related to the appearance of »isomorphism«, e.g. why similar organizational and institutional forms emerge from very different social and political frames. It is a phenomenon according to which similar environmental conditions limit developmental possibilities of an organization and lead to the creation of similar organizational structures. Isomorphism may be based on pressure (*coercive* isomorphism), on the imitation of organizational structures and approaches of organizations that are considered successful (*mimetic* isomorphism) or on certain norms prescribing 'the way how the things should be done' (*normative* isomorphism) (DiMaggio, Powell, 1991: 63–74). At the same time, organizations could be countries themselves (Miller, Banaszak-Holl, 2005:

196), so one could ask the question why countries with significantly different internal circumstances are so very similar to one another (Finemore, 1996: 335).

The comparative analysis that follows should show if isomorphic changes of the institutions for administrative education in post-socialist countries exist in spite of different social and political frameworks of different countries, i.e. if similar organizational and institutional forms have emerged as a result of similar environmental factors that affect post-socialist countries, cause selections and solutions to a certain extent, and limit free choices and developmental possibilities.

### 1.3. The Methodology

The article provides a comparative analysis of public administration education programmes in 12 post-socialist countries that are connected with Croatia geographically, culturally, politically, and /or historically. The countries analysed are divided into two groups. The first one (Central European post-socialist countries) comprises member states of the EU close to Croatia with regard to geographical position and socialist background (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia). The second group consists of the countries that were part of the former Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (former Yugoslav countries) and currently are (potential) candidates for EU membership (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia).<sup>3</sup> Special attention is devoted to PA education in Croatia.

Part of the paper regarding the state of affairs in PA education before the collapse of socialist era and during the transition period is mainly based on the data available in Hajnal (1999), NISPAcee (2000), Connaughton and Randma (2002), Hințea et al. (2006).

The comparative analysis is based on the programmes of 114 higher education institutions,<sup>4</sup> with information collected via web sites of the institutions during May 2011.

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<sup>3</sup> Although the Republic of Slovenia was one of Yugoslav federative republics, it is also the only one thereof that became an EU member state. Accordingly, the authors have decided to select it as a Central European post-socialist country.

<sup>4</sup> The list of institutions with web sites is not included in the bibliography due to its large volume. It is available on the web site <http://www.pravo.unizg.hr/UZ/linkovi/ostalo>.

Furthermore, it deals with main orientation of the PA curricula, levels of education and character of the institutions offering PA education. The PA education programmes have been identified by reviewing the names of the courses offered within the PA education programmes. In addition to PA programmes, programmes in public management have been analysed as well. However, policy analysis programmes, law programmes and similar programmes comprising only specific courses related to public administration or administrative law etc. have not been included in the research. According to their titles, the courses have been subsumed under five groups of approaches/orientations: legal, business/financial, administrative science, sociology and political science and multidisciplinary approach. At the same time, all high education levels (1<sup>st</sup> *Bachelor* – BA, 2<sup>nd</sup> *Master* – MA, or 3<sup>rd</sup> *Doctor of Science* – PhD) have been included in the research.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the authors have indicated several types of educational institutions providing specific programmes of PA education: specific institution for PA education, law faculties and institutions for education in economics and management, political and social sciences, European and regional development studies and other, represented in a lesser degree (e.g. faculties of philosophy). Public as well as private university institutions and polytechnics have been included. Programmes for the education of future lawyers, economists etc. that include some of the courses related to public administration have not been analysed.

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<sup>5</sup> Due to limited space of the paper and number of countries analysed, denomination of concrete courses would make the paper vast and too extensive.

## 2. Central European Post-Socialist Countries (EU Members)

### 2.1. Development of PA Education – from the Socialist Era to the Post-Socialist Transition

In *Bulgaria*, there was no special school for administration when the communist party came to power after World War II. The Party Academy, not open for public and with the tendency of developing the »obedient political culture« of future civil servants was established. Apart from the centre for training local government personnel within the Ministry of Civil Engineering and Regional Development, there were no PA programmes in Bulgaria until the mid-1990s, when PA programmes at the BA and MA levels were first introduced at the new private universities. At state universities, PA programmes were established only after 1997, partly as a reaction to the programmes ran by the private universities. In general, the development and delivery of PA programmes in Bulgaria have been strongly influenced by the Bulgarian state standards and other legal regulations regarding the discipline and the profile of the school where particular PA programmes were institutionalised.

From 1945 to 1950, the School of Social and Political Sciences educated senior civil servants and politicians in the *Czech Republic*. In general, public administration disciplines were ideologically oriented, especially at the Political Institute of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and at the Institute of National Security, where employees and officers of the political apparatus and army were trained. Although administrative law was taught at the faculties of law, legal professionals were underrepresented in the civil service. After 1989, several PA majors were established at various universities and institutes.

*Hungary* is one of the few countries that developed PA as an academic discipline during the socialist period, mostly at law schools within the discipline of administrative law. From the late 1970s on, the emphasis was put on administration as a specific element in PA that was not sufficiently dealt with by the study of administrative law. The 1990s were marked by two major tendencies in the development of PA programmes: a continuing emphasis on general and administrative law as a disciplinary approach to PA and the emergence and relatively rapid development of other disciplinary approaches to PA in academia, including public management, political and applied political sciences, public policy studies, etc.



After World War II, in socialist *Poland*, administration as an academic field in its present form did not exist, but some of its elements could be found in such disciplines as theory of organization and administrative law, while communist political elites were educated at the political school in Warsaw. Administration was part of legal and administrative programmes at the faculties of law and PA. After the democratic changes, elite National School of Public Administration was established in 1990, sponsored by the Polish Government, which offered postgraduate studies to the law, economics, and administration school graduates. During the 1990s, non-public and private universities launched similar programmes.

In 1989, schools of PA were non-existent in *Romania*. Initially, higher education in the field was considered as being only a form of administrative law (Hințea et al., 2006). More multidisciplinary approach started to develop in 1999, when the Ministry of Education stated that the curricula of PA schools would be built on four domains: administrative sciences, law, economics, and social and political sciences (Connaughton, Randma, 2002).

In 1968, when university education became the sole responsibility of the Ministry of Education, PA was not recognised as an independent academic field in *Slovakia*. The political elites, including top public servants were educated at special political universities established by the Communist Party. The first faculty for education of public servants was established in 1977. After 1989, the number of PA programmes in Bratislava rapidly increased largely due to two factors. First, society started to feel the need for academically trained professional public administrators, prepared to fill PA and public management roles effectively. Second, universities were finally able to choose the structure of their curricula, faculties and departments.

In *Slovenia*, the School of Public Administration was established in 1956 as the College of Tertiary Education by decree of the Government of the People's Republic of Slovenia, and the orientation was predominately legal. After the initial few years, the curriculum was changed in order to reduce the number of legal courses and increase the number of economics and organisational studies courses. In 1975, the Tertiary College of Public Administration merged with the University of Ljubljana. After Slovenia gained independence in 1991, and the changes in the education system ensued, the School of Public Administration became a college with a three-year university curriculum in PA, providing higher vocational

education. In 2003, the School officially became the Faculty of Administration.

## 2.2. Current Situation in PA Education

The specialized programmes in *Bulgarian* PA are mostly held by state-supported universities, within various faculties (even those of philosophy, geology and geography, law, history, etc.). However, there are some private institutions that offer study programmes in the relevant field as well. All three higher education levels exist. The BA programmes usually last four years and cover a variety of disciplines such as public and EU law, public finances, political science, management, public services, HRM, social sciences and other. MA programmes promote multidisciplinary approach as well, but with possibilities for specialization in public management and policies, HRM in the public sector, territorial administration, tax management, European public administration, administrative practices (exclusively for those who are already working in the public service) etc. However, there is still a significant part of programmes with prevalence of legal and economic courses as well as those from the field of political science. A number of programmes are related to regional development and management. The compulsory internship at administrative structures is often part of the study programmes.<sup>6</sup>

PA study programmes in the *Czech Republic* are held at many public and private universities and colleges. Although economic orientation is still dominant, there is a tendency towards more multidisciplinary approaches. In addition to educational institutions specialised in economics, the study programmes at all levels are held at faculties of public policies, social sciences, law, and regional development. As it may be expected, disciplinary background is often determined by the institutional environment, so the programmes carried out at those faculties are determined by their main field of study. There are a number of programmes in regional development. Most of them have multidisciplinary orientation based on legal, economic, managerial, social, political, administrative and other sciences. The programmes comprise education in practical methods and tools. Generally, the practice in public organizations is often part of compulsory

<sup>6</sup> In total 11 institutions have been analysed.

students' obligations. Several universities offer study programmes in English as well as the possibility of distance learning.<sup>7</sup>

Specialized legally oriented programmes in PA in *Hungary* (undergraduate and graduate) have been introduced by several faculties of law. However, new approaches include public policy studies, economics, management and other disciplines as well as a mixture thereof as a multidisciplinary orientation. Privately funded universities and schools offer programmes based mostly on public policy studies at all three levels of higher education. However, some of the studies have core curricula of multidisciplinary character with subsequent public policy or managerial concentrations. The Corvinus University of Budapest should be emphasized as the unique institution that maintains specialized programmes in the field. Namely, the Faculty of Public Administration offers BA and MA study programmes in Public Administration and MA programme in European and International Administration. BA in Public Governance and MA in Public Policy and Management are held at the Faculty of Economics. There are also several PhD programmes (in Hungarian and English). A Joint Master's Degree in Comparative Local Development can be obtained as well. The general approach of all programmes is multidisciplinary, but specific streams emphasize disciplines in the field of management and public policy. The University offers one-year certificate programme European Master's in Public Administration with disciplinary background based on public policy studies and processes.<sup>8</sup>

In *Poland*, higher education in the field of PA is provided at various institutional forms: universities, non-university institutions (higher schools), private colleges and, as specificity, at the Polish National School of Public Administration. The latter is intended for the people who already obtained graduate degrees as well as some professional experience and it is detached from ordinary education system. The best part of PA study programmes is mostly held at state-supported faculties of law and administration. The whole range of education levels in administration is offered. Five-year professional studies, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle (BA and MA), one-year postgraduate programmes as well as doctoral studies can be attended. There is a variety of streams with multidisciplinary oriented core courses, but the prevalence of legal disciplines may sometimes be perceived, especially at lower levels of higher education. Furthermore, PA and public

<sup>7</sup> In total 14 institutions have been analysed.

<sup>8</sup> In total five institutions have been analysed.

management programmes are offered at several higher schools/colleges in combination with studies of finance, management or economics. The programmes are of multidisciplinary character, sometimes with slight emphasis on legal or economic disciplines.<sup>9</sup>

As of 1999, a tremendous proliferation of special multidisciplinary programmes and new institutions for PA education has occurred in *Romania*. Today, nearly twenty public and private universities offer a variety of programmes at all three study levels. Some of them have branches outside the seat of the faculty. The distance learning programmes as well as programmes in foreign languages (English, Hungarian) are provided and the obligatory practice is often part of the curricula. Education in the relevant field is also provided by the Faculty of Public Administration at the National School of Political Sciences and Public Administration, as a public, non-university institution. The programmes' disciplinary background, in addition to administrative sciences, comprises legal, socio-political, economic, managerial, and other disciplines as well as specific techniques and tools such as research methods, public policy analysis tools etc. However, there is a prevalence of law-oriented courses at some faculties, mostly within BA programmes. On the other hand, Master's programmes have a rather multidisciplinary approach with a number of streams in the relevant field.<sup>10</sup>

Higher education programmes in the field of PA are held at several public universities and private colleges in *Slovakia*. All study levels of education are carried out and some of them are offered in foreign languages (French, Russian) as well. The institutions that conduct this type of education are mostly faculties of economics and, more rarely, faculties of social and political sciences, European studies, regional development etc. The unique institution specialized in higher education in PA is the Faculty of Public Administration at the University of Pavol Jozef Šafárik in Košice. The Bachelor and Master's study programmes in Public Administration and BA programme in European Public Administration are provided. All of these programmes have a multidisciplinary approach based on legal, economic, socio-political, administrative and other sciences, as well as various practical methods and tools required for work in PA. However, a vast majority of the programmes are still economy-oriented, except those com-

<sup>9</sup> In total eight institutions have been analysed.

<sup>10</sup> In total 20 institutions have been analysed.

binning public policy and PA. The orientation of the latter is more focused on political science.<sup>11</sup>

The programmes of PA education in *Slovenia* are held at public faculties as well as at one private faculty that does not belong to any university. Although there are some courses affiliated specifically to the public sector within programmes in the field of business and management, the latter are not intended primarily for work in PA, so they will not be indicated in particular. In the Slovenian system, all three education cycles in the subject area are provided. The Faculty of Administration at the University of Ljubljana offers university and professional study programmes in Administration and joint university study programme in Administrative Information Systems, Master's programme in Administration and two Master's joint study programmes (in Management in Administration and in Finance and Accounting for Common Europe) as well as a doctoral study programme in Administration. All of these programmes are inter- and multidisciplinary, although there are possibilities for specialization in the final year of the study within professional and Master's programmes. One-year Master's programmes *Management of Public and Non-Profit Organizations* and *Political Science-Public Administration* are held at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences. The former is of multidisciplinary character, but with prevalence of managerial disciplines and the latter is significantly related to political sciences.<sup>12</sup>

### 3. Former Yugoslav Countries<sup>13</sup>

#### 3.1. Development of PA Education in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Traditionally, on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, PA was taught at law faculties. Therefore, in *Bosnia and Herzegovina*, as well as in other republics, PA was studied within the courses of administrative law and administrative science. However, during the 1950s, all republics of the

<sup>11</sup> In total 10 institutions have been analysed.

<sup>12</sup> In total four institutions have been analysed.

<sup>13</sup> In this chapter, PA education in five former Yugoslav countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia) is analysed, while Slovenian and Croatian PA education is explained in Chapters 2 and 4.

former SFRY established higher administrative schools (Pavić, 2003). At the beginning, the latter were two-year studies with unique curricula and courses such as Introduction to Administrative Science, PA Organization and Methods, Administrative Law, Administration, Constitutional System, Sociology, Social Psychology of PA, Records Management and Communication (Dimitrijević, 1959 in Živanović, 2007).

The first course in PA in *Serbia* was introduced in 1950, when the Faculty of Law of Belgrade University introduced a course »Administrative Science«, which was renamed »Public Administration« in the beginning of the 1960s. In 1961, the Faculty introduced a two-year master's programme in PA with courses in administrative law, PA, liability of the state, and the civil service system. PA was also taught at the Higher Administrative School in Nis (from 1964) and at Novi Sad Law School (from 1974). In 1971, the PA programme of the Faculty of Law, University of Belgrade introduced public and private management and changed the title of the programme to »Science of Management ». Furthermore, Higher Schools for Organisation were established in Belgrade and Novi Sad to provide formal education in management. In 1971, a new Faculty of Organisational Sciences was founded, following world trends in studying management.

In *Kosovo*, PA curriculum was taught at the Faculty of Law and Economics in Pristina from 1970.

### 3.2. Current Situation in PA Education

There has been a significant increase in the number of new (private) universities in the post-war *Bosnia and Herzegovina*. PA programmes are taught at eight universities and colleges; five of them are private, two are state-supported and one is established as public-private partnership. Most of the faculties are management-oriented and there are no programmes in the field of political science at all. First and second education cycles have been introduced (in the combination of 3 + 2 or 4 + 1 years of study), but the third cycle is still missing. However, several faculties have intended to introduce the doctoral level of education in PA in the future. There are still several relics from the »old« system of higher education. Namely, the title of administrative lawyer may be obtained at the faculty of law after two-year undergraduate study as well as Master degree in the field of Public Law and Administration after a two-year postgraduate programme. The Faculty for PA has been established as well. It makes an exception

due to its multidisciplinary orientation. Namely, there is an equivalent representation of legal, economic and administrative subjects in this faculty's curriculum. BA and MA degrees in PA can be obtained.<sup>14</sup>

There are no special studies in the field of PA at public universities in Kosovo. The closest programmes are those taught at law faculties. Namely, there is a possibility for students to choose administrative-constitutional module in the eighth term of undergraduate study as well as to obtain a master's degree in the field.

Within the Faculty of Law at private AAB-Rinvest University and in cooperation with the Universities of Ljubljana and Sarajevo, a multidisciplinary Department of Public Administration and Diplomacy has been established. American University in Kosovo, a private, not for-profit university, offers undergraduate disciplinary and multidisciplinary programmes in the fields of management, economics, public policy and other. Furthermore, there is a special graduate programme *Public Service*, primarily designed for senior members of Kosovo's civil service. The undergraduate study of *Public Administration* is to be held at the Universum College, but the curriculum for this specific programme is not available on the University's official web site. There are also several other private management-oriented faculties that offer BA and MA programmes in the field of business, economics and management, and educate students for work in the private, as well as in the public sector. Regarding PhD studies, no special programmes are provided.<sup>15</sup>

PA programmes in Macedonia are taught at five faculties within two public universities as well as at one public-private and two private universities. Two cycles of studies are organized, but there are no special doctoral programmes in the field of PA. However, there is a possibility for students who graduated in PA to write the thesis in relation to public management and administration. At law faculties, the first cycle (3 years) of study is legal-oriented even when specialisation in PA has been chosen. However, second cycles (1–2 years) are of multidisciplinary character and include courses in administration, law and political science. After five years of studying, an MA in Law is acquired. Doctoral programmes in PA are taught at the faculties of law, i.e. within study programmes of legal and political sciences.

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<sup>14</sup> In total eight institutions have been analysed.

<sup>15</sup> In total six institutions have been analysed.

Faculties of economics organize postgraduate study programme *Public Sector Management* lasting three semesters as well as special education in the sector of public health management (undergraduate, graduate and master's – 3 + 1 + 1). However, both programmes are significantly economics and management-oriented and students obtain a Master's degree in Economics.

At the Faculty of Administration and Management of Information Systems, a postgraduate study programme of Public Administration is held. This two-year programme is conceptually based on multidisciplinary approach with subject contents derived from legal, political, economic and organizational sciences. Multidisciplinary oriented programmes are also available at the Faculty of Public Administration and Political Sciences that maintains two cycles of studies in the field of PA (BA and MA) as well as at the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences that organizes a four-year undergraduate programme at the Department of Management and Public Administration.<sup>16</sup>

PA programmes in *Montenegro* are taught at state-supported University of Montenegro, at the Faculty of Economics as well as at the Faculty of State and European Studies established as a public-private partnership project. The main study area of the latter is PA. Although legal-oriented subjects prevail, there is a significant part of economic-financial and European programmes as well as those in the field of social and administrative sciences. The Faculty offers several levels of education, beginning with the three-year undergraduate (BA) programme *State and European Studies*. There are also one-year postgraduate (specialist) state studies and postgraduate (specialist) European studies; one-year MA state and MA European studies that are provided as a continuation of specialist studies. Finally, two-year MA programmes in both fields are offered. The Faculty of Economics offers a course in Public Administration Economics in the final term of the four-year study. A single-term master's study, *Public Sector Economy* is also offered. There is no special need to observe that these programmes are mainly oriented towards economics.<sup>17</sup>

PA in *Serbia* is taught at the Graduate School for State Administration, established at the private University Megatrend. The Faculty offers all three cycles of higher education (4 + 1 + 3) in the field, with programme that is significantly legal-oriented. However, the academic title acquired

<sup>16</sup> In total nine institutions have been analysed.

<sup>17</sup> In total two institutions have been analysed.



after completion of Doctoral Studies in Public Administration is PhD in Law-Public Administration.

In a cooperation of the Faculty of Organizational Sciences, University of Belgrade and the Faculty for Administration, University in Ljubljana, a Joint Master's programme *Management in Administration* has been established. The study is multidisciplinary due to the fact it comprises a variety of courses in administrative-legal, economic, organizational and managerial areas. The Faculty of Organizational Sciences in Belgrade used to organize a one-year specialist study programme of management in PA.<sup>18</sup>

## 4. Public Administration Education in Croatia

### 4.1. Development of PA Education – Historical Overview

After the establishment of the socialist regime in Croatia, the so-called party schools aimed at implementing a systemic education of party staff and leaders as the basis for maintenance of internal party unity, were created. These schools educated specialists in techniques of social control, organization of planning and producing, welfare regulation, international politics management, diplomacy, management and scientific work (Ob-radović, 2002: 387). Higher Party School at the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was the central party institution for ideological education. The Schools's programme included, among others, the course *Study of the State* (Petranović, 1988: 41).

PA was taught at the High School of Administration in Zagreb, founded in 1956, and integrated with the Faculty of Law in Zagreb in 1968. It eventually ceased to exist. Parallel with the High School, the Higher Administrative School in Zagreb was founded in 1957, and afterwards merged with Zagreb Faculty of Law, as a sort of vocational (professional)<sup>19</sup> programme that lasted for two years. Based on the Zagreb model, similar vocational administrative studies were introduced at the Faculties of Law in Rijeka, Osijek and Split.

After the 1990s, fast development of PA education can be noticed. There are many public and private institutions that offer BA degrees in PA, and

<sup>18</sup> In total two institutions have been analysed.

<sup>19</sup> In Croatian official documents, the term »professional study« is used for »vocational study«, so the authors used the term »professional« in the sense of »vocational«.

vocational education is very dynamic due to rather low requirements for establishing a college (polytechnics). However, there are no private universities and faculties covering PA field, because basic legal requirements for the establishment of a university are very complex, and a faculty cannot be established as an institution outside university (Koprić, Marčetić, 2009: 11).

## 4.2. Current Situation in PA Education

### 4.2.1. Education Programmes of PA in Public Institutions

The Croatian higher education system is a mixed one, comprising professional education offered at polytechnics, independent schools of professional higher education and universities, on one hand, and academic education conducted solely at universities, on the other.

The study programmes in PA are offered at all levels of the higher education system. However, first cycle (undergraduate) is offered only within the professional study pillar of education, while second cycle university education does not exist.

Table 1 – List of all PA programmes

Institution	Level	Content	ECTS	Degree
Zagreb Faculty of Law	Postgraduate doctoral university study programme	Public law Public Administration	180	PhD
Zagreb Faculty of Law	Postgraduate specialist university study programme	Public law Public Administration	120	univ. spec. iur.
Osijek Faculty of Law	Postgraduate specialist university study programme	Management of the Local and Regional Self Government Development	90	univ. spec. iur.
Rijeka Faculty of Economics	Postgraduate specialist university study programme	Management in the Public Sector	60	univ. spec. oec.
Zagreb Faculty of Economics	Postgraduate specialist university study programme	Local Economic Development	60	univ. spec. oec.

Zagreb University, Centre for postgraduate studies	Postgraduate specialist university study programme	Crisis Management	120	univ.spec.
Zagreb University, Centre for Postgraduate Studies	Postgraduate specialist university study programme	Public Administration	60	univ. spec. publ. adm.
Zagreb University, Centre for Postgraduate Studies	Postgraduate specialist university study programme	City Management	60	univ. spec.
Faculty of Political Science	Postgraduate specialist university study programme	Local Democracy and Development	60	univ. spec. polit.
Osijek Faculty of Law	Specialist graduate professional study programme	Public Administration	60	spec. publ. adm.
Split Faculty of Law	Specialist graduate professional study programme	Public Administration	60	spec. publ. adm.
Rijeka Faculty of Law	Specialist graduate professional study programme	Public Administration	60	spec. publ. adm.
Study Centre for Public Administration and Public Finances, Zagreb Faculty of Law	Professional study programme	Administrative study	180	bacc. admin. publ.
Osijek Faculty of Law	Professional study programme	Administrative Study	180	bacc. admin. publ.
Rijeka Faculty of Law	Professional study programme	Administrative Study	180	bacc. admin. publ.
Split Faculty of Law	Professional study programme	Administrative Study	180	bacc. admin. publ.
Vukovar Polytechnics	Professional study programme	Administrative study	180	bacc. admin. publ.
Gospić Polytechnics	Professional study programme	Administrative study	180	bacc. admin. publ.
Požega Polytechnics	Professional study programme	Administrative study	180	bacc. admin. publ.
Šibenik Polytechnics	Professional study programme	Administrative study	180	bacc. admin. publ.

In addition, the field of PA is covered by courses offered by integrated undergraduate and graduate public university study programmes of law at the Faculties of Law in Zagreb, Osijek, Split and Rijeka and at the Faculty of Political Science. Within legal studies, the compulsory courses are Administrative Science and Administrative Law, while the elective vary – Local Self-Government, Comparative Administrative Systems, Sociology of Administration, etc. The Faculty of Political Science offers the compulsory course Science of Administration and the elective course Public Administration.

The analysis of PA programmes' compulsory and elective courses by title and, where available, by content allows some extent of generalization and classification into the same categories. In this paper, courses will be grouped into the following categories: legal courses, business (finance) oriented courses, administrative science courses, sociology and political sciences courses, and skills-oriented courses.

#### *4.2.2. Professional Study Programmes – Undergraduate Programmes*

In general, BA programmes are mainly provided by public institutions that are either institutionally linked with the faculties of law or are independent and have been established in accordance with the Law on Higher Education Institutions of 1996 as a form of professional education. These have taken over former independent schools, as well as those that used to be included into different faculties. The BA programmes in PA are offered by the Study Centre for Public Administration and Public Finances at Zagreb Faculty of Law,<sup>20</sup> Faculties of Law in Osijek, Split and Rijeka as well as by Polytechnics »Lavoslav Ružička« in Vukovar, Polytechnics »Nikola Tesla« in Gospić, and Polytechnics in Požega and Šibenik.

Programs aim at educating bachelors for professional, ethical and independent dealing with administrative and legal matters in PA, local and regional self-government, courts of law, companies, public sector institutions and other forms of social organizations. Programmes are offered as either full-time studies (six semesters) or part-time studies.

According to Table 2, the courses offered by undergraduate programme s are mainly legally oriented.

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<sup>20</sup> Study Centre for Public Administration and Public Finances, Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb also offers a two-year programme in tax administration.

Table 2 – Content of the undergraduate programmes (compulsory and elective)

	Legal courses	Financial courses	Administrative Science courses	Sociology and Political Science courses	Skills-oriented courses	Total
Gospić Polytechnics						
compulsory	12	3	4	1	6	26
elective	3	–	1	2	1	7
Požega Polytechnics						
compulsory	8	3	5	1	6	23
elective	1	–	2	–	–	3
Šibenik Polytechnics						
compulsory	4	1	4	1	3	13
elective	9	–	–	–	1	10
Vukovar Polytechnics						
compulsory	9	5	6	1	6	27
elective	4	1	1	–	–	6
Study Centre of Zagreb Faculty of Law						
compulsory	13	3	10	2	4	32
elective	4	0	2	4	1	11
Osijek Faculty of Law						
compulsory	10	5	4	1	5	25
elective	8	1	3	1	0	13
Rijeka Faculty of Law						
compulsory	13	2	4	1	5	25
elective	2	1	1	2	1	7
Split Faculty of Law						
compulsory	10	1	4	1	4	20
elective	6	1	3	1	1	12
Total compulsory	69 (38%)	23 (13%)	41 (23%)	9 (5%)	39 (21%)	
Total elective	37 (48%)	4 (5%)	13 (17%)	10 (24%)	5 (6%)	

There are no BA programmes in PA provided by private institutions. However there are courses that are broadly connected with PA subjects, mainly offered through several programmes oriented toward business and/or economics, at the College of Finances and Law »Effectus«, College of Business and Management in Zaprešić and Polytechnics in Velika Gorica.

#### 4.2.3. Specialist Graduate Professional Study Programme

Specialist graduate professional one-year study programmes with 60 ECTS have been offered by the Faculties of Law in Split, Rijeka and Osijek. After completing the studies, students obtain the title of administrative specialist.

The courses mainly include legal and administrative science courses while the sociology and political sciences courses and skills oriented courses are underrepresented.

Two-year study programmes offering 120 ECTS have recently been accredited at Osijek and Zagreb Faculties of Law. Their commencement is expected in the academic year 2013/14.

Table 3 – Compulsory and elective courses (Specialist graduate professional study programme)

	Legal courses	Business/ Financial courses	Administrative Science courses	Sociology and Political Science courses	Skills-oriented courses	Total
Specialist Graduate Study at Osijek Faculty of Law						
compulsory	3	–	5	–	–	8
elective	1	–	5	1	–	7
Specialist Graduate Study at Split Faculty of Law						
compulsory	5	–	4	–	–	9
elective	5	–	3	1	1	10
Specialist Graduate Study at Rijeka Faculty of Law						
compulsory	3	1	2	–	–	6
elective	8	1	2	1	–	12
Total compulsory	11 (47.8%)	1 (4.4%)	11 (47.8%)	–	–	23
Total elective	14 (48.27%)	1 (3.45%)	10 (34.49%)	3 (10.34)	1 (3.45%)	29

#### 4.2.4. Postgraduate (Doctoral and Specialist) University Study Programmes

On the postgraduate level, PA university study programmes are provided by the faculties of law, faculties of economics; Faculty of Political Sciences and Centre for Postgraduate Studies of Zagreb University (see Table 1). There is only one postgraduate doctoral study in field of PA at the Faculty of Law in Zagreb, while others are postgraduate specialist studies. Content and orientation of the postgraduate programmes depend on the institutional setting – the courses offered by faculties of economics, for example, are mainly directed toward business/financial courses, those taught by faculties of law toward the legal issues, etc. The most multidisciplinary programme is the one offered by the University of Zagreb, Centre for Postgraduate Studies *City Management*, which has courses on urban planning, urban traffic, urban agriculture, etc.

Table 4 – Compulsory and elective courses (postgraduate programmes)

	Legal courses	Business/ Financial courses	Administrative Science courses	Sociology and Political Science courses	Skills-oriented courses/ Other	Total
Zagreb Faculty of Law, <i>Public Law and Public Administration</i> (doctoral)						
compulsory	4		3			7
elective	15	1	10	2		28
Zagreb Faculty of Law, <i>Public Law and Public Administration</i> (specialist)						
compulsory	6		3			9
elective	11	1	5	2	1	20
Osijek Faculty of Law, <i>Management of the Local and Regional Self Government Development</i>						
compulsory	1		4		1	6
elective	3	3	7	3	1	17
Rijeka Faculty of Economics, <i>Management in the Public Sector</i>						
compulsory		2	1		1	4
elective	1	10	3	1	2	17
Zagreb Faculty of Economics, <i>Local Economic Development</i>						
compulsory		4				4
elective	1	7	2			10

Faculty of Political Science, <i>Local Democracy and Development</i>						
compulsory			1	3		4
elective			1	5		6
Zagreb University, Centre for Postgraduate Studies, <i>Crisis Management</i>						
compulsory	1	2		4	6	13
elective	2	2	2	1	18	25
Zagreb University, Centre for Postgraduate Studies, <i>Public Administration</i>						
compulsory	1		3	1		5
elective	1	1	4	1	1	8
Zagreb University, Centre for Postgraduate Studies, <i>City Management</i>						
compulsory	1	2	1	2	2	8
elective	1		2	5	5	13
Total compulsory	14 (23.33 %)	10 (16.67 %)	16 (26.67 %)	10 (16.67 %)	10 (16.67 %)	60
Total elective	35 (24.31 %)	25 (17.36 %)	36 (25 %)	20 (13.89 %)	28 (19.44 %)	144

## 5. Conclusion

### 5.1. Summary of the Comparative Overview

Until World War II, the administrative systems in the countries of Central and East Europe had been developing in different ways depending on socio-political circumstances of each country. Some of those countries, such as Hungary (from 1777) and Bulgaria,<sup>21</sup> have a very long tradition in studying administrative disciplines and PA educational systems, while others, such as Romania, were confronted with this issue at the beginning of the 1990s, during the transition process. However, even in the post-socialist countries with long tradition in education of professional civil servants, this practice lost its importance during the socialist socialism (Marčetić, 2005: 157). Then, the administrative tradition was discontinued in most of the countries and civil service systems were reformed in accordance

<sup>21</sup> In a very short period after obtaining independence, Bulgaria established a powerful administrative apparatus. During Stefan Stambolov's governance in the 1890s, Europe considered this country »Prussia of the Balkans«, partly because of its excellent administration (NISPAcee, 2000).



with Marxist-Leninist ideology. Nevertheless, there were differences between those systems in certain elements. The countries belonging to the USSR's domain established a stricter model of political subordination of state administration in comparison with other countries of Central and East Europe<sup>22</sup> (Verheijen, 1999: 328–330).

However, during the socialist period, education for PA in contemporary meaning practically did not exist and if did, it was poorly developed. Certain type of education was performed at special party schools for education of political officials and senior civil servants. It was logical because real decisions were made at the party top<sup>23</sup> and party officials were on key positions in the executive according to the nomenclature system.<sup>24</sup> PA was most often taught at law faculties, within the course of administrative law. The programmes were mainly legally oriented, with an exception of the Czech Republic that developed a more economic orientation.

Legal approach to PA during the previous period was not a characteristic specific for socialist countries. Namely, the idea of the rule of law, founded by great democratic revolution, was governing across the whole continental Europe for a long time. Consequently, the positions of senior civil servants in administrations of Western European countries were filled by lawyers. The changes of such a situation started to occur after the 1970s when »the biggest boom of science in PA and related disciplines appeared at the beginning of 1990s« (Koprić, Marčetić, 2003: 203). A significant contribution to these changes was made by the NPM doctrine that criticized previous normative orientation. The rule of law and respect for the legal procedure are still obligatory requirements in PA but not in ultimate way because law has become insufficient to deal with the complexity of

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<sup>22</sup> For example, Yugoslavia supported a rough political version of the traditional civil service system until late 1960s and then it joined administrative tradition of continental Europe (Verheijen, 1999: 328–330).

<sup>23</sup> State administration was, within the context of its policy-making capacities, »sub-politicized«, and in personal policy, it was »allpoliticized«: it required political loyalty and eligibility of all civil servants and the nomenclature system provided the party with the possibility of control over all crucial appointments in state administration (Goetz, Wollmann, 2001: 864–884).

<sup>24</sup> All socialist countries had a nomenclature system. Nomenclature was an explicit list of high administrative positions that could be fulfilled only by particular people who were, without exception, multiannual members of the Communist Party. They were on the list of potential candidates supported by the party. This system existed at all social levels, from the ministries to local factories and it dominated until the 1970s when the transformation thereof began (Makeyenko et al., 1999: 14–15, 34).

the different tasks faced by PA. Beside legal science, the discipline of PA has to include the broader family of social sciences, »... it has become a superdiscipline ... having roots in economics, political science, business administration, history, psychology, and sociology/anthropology« (Dwivedi, 2011: 48). Therefore, modern administrative education has a much more multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary character<sup>25</sup> than earlier (Koprić, Marčetić, 2003: 226, 247–248, Koprić, Marčetić, 2009: 3–6).

After entering the transition period, post-socialist countries started to open themselves towards international community, integrate in numerous international associations and gradually fit into contemporary administrative trends. The comparative analysis has shown that all analysed countries developed administrative discipline after the 1990s when PA began to be studied at private and public faculties. Parallel with increased number of educational programmes, the multidisciplinary approaches have been developed.

Situation regarding PA education in 2011 is indicated in Table 5.

Table 5 – Comparative Analysis of PA Education

Country	Approach					Higher Education level			Educational Institution					
	Legal	Business/Financial	Administrative Science	Sociology and Political Science	Multidisciplinary	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>th</sup>	Public Administration	Law	Economics and Management	Political and Social Sciences	European and Regional Development Studies	Other
BG	x	x		x	xx	x	x	x		x	x	x		x
CZ		xx			x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	
HU	x				xx	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
PO	x				xx	x	x	x	x	x	x			
RO	x		x		xx	x	x	x	x		x	x		

<sup>25</sup> The interdisciplinary character raises important questions with respect to the design and implementation of PA curricula. Designers of these »face the challenge of incorporating various disciplinary perspectives into a coherent curriculum that is academically challenging as well as oriented towards real-world administrative and political challenges« (Fenger, Homburg, 2011: 385).

SK		xx			x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	
SI	x				xx	x	x	x	x			x	x	x
BA		xx			x	x	x		x	x	x			
HR	xx	x			x	x		x		x	x	x		
KOS		x			xx	x	x			x	x			
MK	x	x			xx	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
ME		x			xx	x	x		x	x	x		x	
SR	xx				x	x	x	x	x					x

LEGEND:

- XX – the most represented approach
- X – less frequently represented approach

Table 5 illustrates diversity in colour of educational institutions and less diversity regarding higher education levels. A lack of programmes at the doctoral level is visible in only three former Yugoslav countries – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Montenegro. Croatia is a unique case because it is the only country without the second, MA level, of PA education. Further, there is a high level of convergence toward multidisciplinary approach in PA education

*Central European post-socialist countries* show a significant similarity regarding courses in PA education. Multidisciplinary orientation of programmes prevails in most of the countries. Czech Republic and Slovakia make an exception with their mostly economic oriented programmes (which was also similar in the socialist era), but there is a significant part of multidisciplinary studies as well. More than a half of the countries (Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia) have established special faculties for PA. The rest of them have PA programmes at a variety of institutions, mostly faculties of economics and law. All three cycles of study are organized in each country within this circle.

Within *former Yugoslav* countries, multidisciplinary approach to PA education prevails. In Serbia and Croatia, legal orientation is dominant, while in Bosnia and Herzegovina managerial orientation prevails. A variety of institutions offer PA programmes. In their recently conducted research, Koprić and Marčetić (2009: 14) have identified 70 programmes (offering mostly BA and MA degrees) in six countries on the territory of the former Yugoslavia (except Kosovo). Traditionally, some of the studies are held at law faculties and faculties of economics, but there is a proliferation of new institutions specialized in public/state administration, administrative science and European studies. Almost every country in this circle has es-

established some kind of PA-teaching institution as well as all three cycles of study. The exception regarding educational level is made by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Montenegro, which have not established doctoral level of PA education. Croatia does not have the MA level, but there is the PhD level of PA education.

Where is Croatia in that picture? Considering approach to PA, there is still conservative, legal approach, especially at public institutions. Business/managerial approach prevails at few private institutions that are not influential. Multidisciplinary orientation emerges at postgraduate studies, which are developed at high quality level. However, multidisciplinary approach is found less frequently. In conformity with that, numerous programmes in PA are taught at or linked with the faculties of law. Undergraduate, professional programmes are mainly taught at public institutions, either at institutionally linked with the faculties of law or at independent institutions – polytechnics. The biggest and the best, Zagreb Social Sciences Polytechnics, was integrated with the Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb in 2011, in the form of the Centre for Public Administration and Public Finances.

In Croatia, there is only one, mainly legally oriented, postgraduate doctoral university study programme performed at Zagreb Law Faculty. Other postgraduate university studies are of specialist character and the orientation of their programmes depend on the main scientific focus of the particular institution.

Comparing Croatia with other European countries with regard to educational level, a unique and uncommon situation may be noticed. Namely, Croatia is the only country that does not have the second educational level, i.e. university PA study (MA degree) although it has numerous professional undergraduate programmes (plus three recently established and one newly accredited graduate programmes), postgraduate specialist university studies as well as one doctoral university study. The fact that Croatia does not have an integrated system of PA education practically means that there is no vertical mobility for BA specialists in PA. They are completely hindered in their efforts to continue education in the same profession at postgraduate university studies despite the fact that among lawyers, economists, sociologists and other professions they *de facto* possess the widest knowledge about PA. Specialisation in public administration at universities is possible only for students who completed university education (2<sup>nd</sup> university level), which means faculties of law, economics etc., while the field of PA is completely neglected at the second university

level. The latter is covered by only two compulsory courses – Administrative Science and Administrative Law (plus several elective courses) at the Faculties of Law in Zagreb, Osijek, Rijeka and Split, and one compulsory course – Science of Administration (plus one elective course) at the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb.

## 5.2. Concluding Remarks

The comparative research has confirmed the hypothesis of the paper that there is interconnection between the process of transition and increasing development of PA education systems in European post-socialist countries. The process of transition has influenced the transformation of the values and role of PA such as the role and position of public servants – from a politically acceptable member of the nomenclature to the professional public servant at service to citizens. New tasks and changed role of public servants have emphasized the importance of their education, professional development, and in-service training. Depoliticisation and professionalization of PA was, and still is, one of the most important and one of the most difficult tasks in all transitional countries. Consequently, transitional countries have founded numerous institutions responsible for education and in-service training of public servants, and established and/or improved their administrative education curricula. The latter especially refers to the new EU member states and candidate countries that have been supported financially and professionally by the Western countries and international organisations.

The EU is among key exogenous factors in these and other institutional changes as well as in the direction of transition process. Considering isomorphic changes according to the typology of DiMaggio and Powell, it may be noticed that isomorphic changes of the administrative education institutions in post-socialist countries occur mainly through the first type of coercive isomorphism having its roots in political impact and problem of legitimization. A rapid increase of administrative education institutions after the collapse of socialism mainly resulted from implicit pressures of the EU aimed at strengthening candidate countries' administrative capacities, as one of the prerequisites for EU membership. Apart from the assessment of certain country's capacity for implementation of a key sector policy, general directions for administrative capacities were given by the EU. Among important ideas indicated in European documents, there is one regarding the creation of professional public service, independent

from political government.<sup>26</sup> For this purpose, the integral systems of administrative education and improvement of public servants have to be established (Marčetić, 2005: 157–160, 174–175, 280–301; Marčetić, 2007: 299–300).

Those changes partly occur through mimetic isomorphism caused by usual reaction to uncertainty. The western models have been mostly transferred explicitly, by consultant organizations and EU experts, by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and other international organizations and rarely accidentally or without direct intention. Imitation and uncritical mapping of western models were significant at the beginning of transition process »marked by euphoria of East and West as well as by faith in 'better tomorrow'« (Marčetić, 2005: 2).

The next question is about convergence. If the process of transition affects the development of an administrative educational system, is there certain degree of convergence among particular countries? What prevails in PA education of Central and South-East European countries, similarities or diversities? This question is in relation to a bigger one, which grew with the process of globalization and penetration of the NPM reforms all over the world: »Is there similarity or convergence in contemporary public administrations?« As Jones and Kettl notice: »Public management reform invites evaluation of convergence: how much, of what kind, and in what directions ...« (Jones, Kettl, 2006: 898). Many scholars have concluded that there indeed is some convergence, and many comparative studies emphasized that governments and administrative systems of every nation are converging in their administrative processes and structures and becoming progressively similar in form and style (Chandler, 2000: 250). For example, there is a convergence in the NPM reform agendas and implementation efforts in the UK, the USA, in most British Commonwealth nations and in selected OECD nations (Jones, Kettl, 2006: 893–901).

However, the experience of developing nations is more diverse than that of developed nations, even in Europe. In Western Europe, reforms are to a certain extent influenced by the doctrine of NPM, oriented towards better efficiency, reduction of PA costs, and downsizing of the expensive welfare state. On the other hand, administrative reforms in Eastern Europe included transformation of the old administrative structures, with

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<sup>26</sup> Separation of political and administrative roles as well as routine patterns of professional selection for the EU member states are not just an instructive norm, but an important symbol of assessment of a government's legitimization.

an emphasis on political neutrality, strengthening of responsibility, and building up of professional (institutional) capacity. Nevertheless, certain convergence can be observed between the reform processes taking place in less developed and/or post-socialist countries. For example, a significant correlation between the European standards and development of the civil service systems in the post-socialist countries can be identified, especially in the new EU member states and in candidate countries (Marčetić: 2005: 343, 357–358, 361; see also Eklund, Wimelius, 2008: 12, 18–21).

The desire to join the EU motivated many candidate countries to adopt the EU standards required for the civil servants' system, as well as PA education and civil service training in a rather similar manner. An earlier analysis of transitional countries (see Marčetić, 2005; Koprić, Marčetić, 2003; Verheijen, 1999, etc.) has shown that there are numerous similarities between them, caused by the influence of the international community (primarily by the adaptation to the EU standards) and common social heritage.

Our research shows a similar picture at the educational level. Almost all countries have first, second and third higher education levels, except Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Montenegro, which do not have PA programmes at the doctoral level, and Croatia, which does not have a university PA programme at the second level. It should be emphasized that none of these countries are EU member states, so it may be supposed they will make adjustments to European standards and become equal to the other states that have already established vertical systems of administrative education at all levels.

Approaches to PA are similar to a certain degree. The analysis has affirmed earlier comparative overviews of PA education systems (see Koprić, Marčetić, 2003; Marčetić, 2005; Musa at al., 2007) that showed interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach in major countries, although not to the same degree. In most of the countries, multidisciplinary orientation of programmes is the most frequent approach. Legal disciplines are still present in many countries, but somewhat put aside, while in two Central European countries (the Czech Republic, Slovakia) and three former Yugoslav countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Montenegro) they are completely excluded. The last three countries are the same ones that do not have the third educational level. The biggest influence of legal science may be observed in Croatia and Serbia, while business/financial orientation prevails in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

The biggest diversity is found at institutional and organizational levels, which has been expected because of different traditions and specific institutional environment of each country. PA studies are held at public and/or private universities, faculties of law, political sciences, economics, engineering and others. The programmes dealing with PA are rapidly spreading at a variety of specialized institutions. Hence, more than a half of Central European post-socialist countries (Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia) and former Yugoslav countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia) have established special faculties for PA, as well as other institutions specialized for PA education and in-service training.

The conclusion is that there is convergence between the analysed countries, but what kind of convergence is it? As Pollitt emphasizes, convergence can take place at different stages or levels. There is no automatic succession from one stage to the next, because the momentum of convergence can (and frequently does) stall or dwindle at any point. It is possible that convergence exists in the results that were created after the introduction of reforms, but it is also possible that the results are not convergent and there is only convergence of practices. Further, there is type of convergence where similar external labels or titles are used for reforms, although the real content of these reforms may vary considerably. In addition, less concrete type of convergence is confined to the world of talk (conferences, reports, books), but few real decisions or concrete actions follow from these 'talking shops' (Pollitt, 2001: 933, 944–945).

In our case, formal convergence in the meaning of similar external labels or titles that are used for reforms may be surely recognized. For example, the establishment of a comprehensive system of administrative education which enables vertical mobility according to the Bologna system 3 (BA degree) + 2 (MA degree) + 3 (PhD degree) is one of the most visible trends in PA education in Europe. However, the real content and scope of these reforms is different in different countries and results after the introduction of Bologna reform are quite questionable in practice.

Further, a lot of similarity has been found in relation to PA educational approaches. However, the analysis has been limited to formal course titles and has not included real content of the curricula (which would be too demanding a task for this kind of paper). The PA education programmes have been identified by reviewing the names of the courses offered in PA education programs. According to their titles, the courses have been subsumed under five groups of approaches/orientations (legal, business/fi-



nancial, administrative science, sociology and political science, and multi-disciplinary). Maybe the results would be different to a certain degree if the real content of the courses has been considered.

Finally, significant improvements in the development of administrative education of post-socialist countries occurred during the transition period. The latter is performed at all educational levels (with the exception of three former Yugoslav countries that do not have the third level (PhD) of education yet), at numerous public and private institutions. Croatia is a unique example of the country with first and third and without second (MA) level of administrative education.

This problem was underlined almost ten years ago at the International Conference Modernisation of the Croatian Public Administration: Historical Lessons, Current Situation and Development Perspectives held in Zagreb.<sup>27</sup> The fourth recommendation from the Conference emphasized that »it was necessary to establish an integrated system of administrative education – secondary education followed by college and university programmes and postgraduate studies ...« (RIC, 2003: 493). Today, Croatia is in the same position, which means the last in Europe. This paper shall not explain the reasons for such an ignorant and bygone attitude. It is worth noting, however, that positive movements in this area are expected.

The Centre for Public Administration and Public Finances was integrated with the Faculty of Law in Zagreb in 2011. In addition to the current three-year study, the process of accreditation of the Specialist Graduate Study of Public Administration, officially proposed by Zagreb Social Sciences Polytechnics in 2009, was re-started in September 2011. The Study would last two years and after graduation, students would acquire additional 120 ECTS credits and the title of specialist in PA. It should enable students to continue their education within their profession, to acquire the adequate professional title, and to continue education in accordance with the concept of lifelong learning. That should be seen as progress, but not as the final goal. Although the Study offers additional 120 ECTS credits, which would be the highest number of ECTS credits at professional second level (at specialist graduate professional studies at the Faculties of Law in Osijek and Split students acquire 60 ECTS credits), it would still be a professional and not a university study.

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<sup>27</sup> Modernisation of the Croatian Public Administration: Historical Lessons, Current Situation and Development Perspectives, Zagreb, 25–26 April 2002.

Therefore, there is an expectation and hope that Croatia will gain a better place among other European countries and finally recognize its primary task in the field of PA education – to establish a high quality graduate university study with multidisciplinary orientation.

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*Public Administration Education in Twelve Post-Socialist  
Countries and Croatia:  
Is There a Convergence?*

*Summary*

*Transformation of the traditional values and goals of public administration (PA) that has been in progress for several decades has resulted in significant changes of the system of PA education. Although the processes of globalisation and Europeanization joined with the most influential administrative doctrines point at common attitudes and convergence, there are still numerous differences in public administrations of various countries stemming from the degree of their development and their national, regional, cultural and other particularities. The authors describe the situation with regard to public administration education in twelve post-socialist European countries divided into two circles: Central European post-socialist countries and former Yugoslav countries. The analysis is focused on the main orientations of the PA curricula, levels of education, and character of the institutions offering education in the field. A special attention is put on PA education in Croatia, with a detailed analysis of institutions and PA educational programmes they teach. The article is based on sociological neo-institutional theoretical approaches that often indicate exogenous factors as causes of institutional changes. The comparative research has confirmed the hypothesis of the paper that there is interconnection between the process of transition and increased development of the PA education systems in central and south-eastern European post-socialist countries. It shows a great similarity at the levels of education, a sufficiently high level of convergence toward multidisciplinary approach to PA education, and diversity in colour at the institutional-organizational level.*

*Key words: public administration education, public administration curricula, educational institutions, post-socialist European countries, Croatia*

*Upravno obrazovanje u dvanaest postsocijalističkih zemalja i Hrvatskoj:  
Postoji li konvergencija?*

*Sažetak*

*Transformacija tradicionalnih vrijednosti i ciljeva javne uprave (JU) koja se događa tijekom zadnjih desetljeća rezultirala je i značajnim promjenama u području upravnog obrazovanja. Iako suvremeni društveni procesi globalizacije, europeizacije i vodeće upravne doktrine upućuju na zajednička stajališta i konvergenciju, primjećuju se i mnoga razilaženja u javnim upravama različitih zemalja koja proizlaze iz stupnja njihove razvijenosti te specifičnih povijesnih, nacionalnih, regionalnih, kulturoloških i drugih okolnosti. Autorice opisuju situaciju u upravnom obrazovanju 12 postsocijalističkih europskih zemalja podijeljenih u dva kruga – srednjoeuropske postsocijalističke zemlje i zemlje bivše Jugoslavije. Analiza je provedena u odnosu na glavne orijentacije nastavnih programa, razine obrazovanja i tipove institucija koje provode obrazovanje u predmetnom području. U pogledu upravnog obrazovanja u Hrvatskoj izvršena je detaljna analiza obrazovnih institucija i postojećih programa upravnog obrazovanja u javnim institucijama. Rad se temelji na teorijskim pristupima sociološkog neoinstitucionalizma koji uobičajeno upućuju na egzogene faktore kao uzroke institucionalnih promjena. Komparativno istraživanje potvrđuje početnu hipotezu rada o postojanju međupovezanosti između tranzicijskog procesa i ubrzanog razvoja sustava upravnog obrazovanja u postsocijalističkim zemljama središnje i jugoistočne Europe. Analiza pokazuje da među odabranim zemljama postoji velika sličnost u pogledu stupnjeva upravnog obrazovanja, značajan stupanj konvergencije s obzirom na multidisciplinarni pristup proučavanju javne uprave, dok se najveća raznolikost primjećuje u odnosu na tipove institucija koje izvode programe upravnog obrazovanja.*

*Ključne riječi: upravno obrazovanje, nastavni programi upravnog obrazovanja, obrazovne institucije, postsocijalističke europske zemlje, Hrvatska*