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Abstract

The article explores the changing patterns of disciplinary orientation in European public administration (PA) education. The study builds on an earlier research, which defined three distinct clusters of countries, based on their specific PA education tradition. It asks whether countries' movement away from the Legalist paradigm has continued since then and if yes, what were the factors triggering the shift and towards which cluster: corporate or public. The empirical basis of the article is a small-scale expert survey involving ten European countries. The key finding of the research is that since the early 2000s the geographical scope of Legalism in PA teaching has shrunk further with a number of formerly more Legalist-based countries having moved towards at least one of the two alternative clusters. These changes can be attributed to the demonstration effect of the international PA education field and a shift in actual needs triggered by domestic reforms. However, some countries in the response set – notably, Germany and Hungary – seem to remain largely unaffected by these trends and continue on an overwhelmingly Legalist PA education path.

Keywords

administrative tradition, comparative study, disciplinary reorientation, expert survey, public administration education

Introduction: Disciplinary orientation and multi- and interdisciplinarity in PA education

How future public administrators are educated is a question relevant from a number of viewpoints. From a practical or policy perspective, public administration (PA) education

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is a key determinant of the operation of public administrations and, in particular, of the feasibility of reformatory (or, for that matter, maintenance-oriented) intentions held by the government of the day. This question also has a more theoretical relevance, though. How public administration is conceived in the academia of different countries reveals much about the general conception – in a sense, the culture – of public administration as a field of societal practice. Throughout the 2000s, comparative research of PA education focused on a number of different dimensions. These included the didactical approaches used (Newswander and Newswander, 2012; Reichard, 2002), issues related to quality assurance and accreditation (Geva-May and Maslove, 2007; Reichard, 2010) and – last but not least – the disciplinary composition, orientation and identity of the field (Bauer, 2005; Bouckaert, 2008; Geva-May et al., 2006; Geva-May and Maslove, 2007; Hajnal, 2003; Kickert and Stillman, 1999; Kickert, 2007a; Nemeč et al., 2012; Reichard and Röber, 2009).

This article focuses on the last-mentioned aspect. It attempts to shed light on how PA, as an academic discipline taught in degree programmes, is located in the multi-dimensional space of related and relevant disciplines. The perspective taken is comparative, as it encompasses different countries as well as the temporal changes that have taken place within the observed countries. The ambition is predominantly descriptive, but involves explanatory elements as well by looking at the different factors triggering changes (if any) in the disciplinary identity of PA education.

On the western side of the Atlantic, there seems to be a fair extent of consensus that the most important factor driving change – beside the internal dynamics of the related academic fields – is, on a global level, the proliferation of phenomena often broadly referred to as governance. The increasing presence of horizontal, as opposed to vertical, links between the government and other societal actors, the increased reliance on for-profit and non-profit agents (most frequently as service providers), the increasingly globalised nature of the field, and the increasing elements of participation (Denhardt, 2001; Ellwood, 2008; Kettl, 2001; Newswander and Newswander, 2012; and Olewu, 2002) all pose important challenges to the traditional ways of teaching PA. As a result, the established genres of PA programmes in the broad sense – classical public administration, public policy/policy analysis, and public management programmes – continue to exist, while their curricula continue to converge (though to a limited extent only; see Ellwood, 2008).

On the European side of the Atlantic, in addition to the above factors, certain additional factors of change are observed, too.

Probably the single most important additional factor is the dynamic between two closely interrelated phenomena, resulting in the historically rooted national distinctiveness of PA education (Kickert, 2007b). On the one hand, this is oftentimes reinforced by institutional and cultural inertia (Reichard and Röber, 2009; Hajnal and Jenei, 2007, 2008); and on the other hand, by increasing Europeanisation largely triggered by the Bologna process and the formerly more entrenched national fields opening up as a result (Bouckaert, 2008; Geva-May and Maslove, 2007; Verheijen and Connaughton, 2003). Authors focusing on one or a few countries/regions occasionally highlight additional, more idiosyncratic factors, too. For example, Reichard and Röber (2009) note German citizens' preference for publicly provided services, as opposed to those that are privatised and contracted out, which stands in clear opposition to global trends and pressures

towards third-party service provision. Moreover, the formal legally defined norms, as well as the more informal values-in-use that guide recruitment into the civil service, play down interdisciplinary PA graduates in favour of those with the traditionally entrenched, predominantly legal training. A similar factor was identified by Nemeč et al. (2012) in the context of three central and eastern European countries: the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia. A third example of such regional-scope explanations may be the one advanced by Bauer (2005). Bauer hypothesises, among others, that the disciplinary orientation of central and eastern European countries' PA education may be explained by the extent to which these countries' PA education systems were open or closed during the Communist era (Bauer, 2005: 63).

The current study focuses on the above issues – that is, on the changes that have taken place in terms of PA programmes' disciplinary identity in Europe throughout the 2000s, as well as the driving forces underlying those changes – in the light of some additional data. In order to fully understand this endeavour, a brief description of the present research's antecedents is necessary.

The antecedent of the current research

The EU/Socrates Funded Thematic Network for Public Administration undertook a detailed survey of European university degree programmes in the field of public administration (Verheijen and Connaughton, 1999; Verheijen and Nemeč, 2000). Subsequently, a quantitative statistical analysis of PA curricula taught in (almost) all participating countries was undertaken (Hajnal, 2003). The focus of this research was mostly on the disciplinary composition of PA programmes – that is, on the extent to which programme curricula include subjects in law, management, political science/public policy, and so on. The central questions of this research were twofold:

- a) whether there are characteristic differences between countries in terms of the disciplinary orientation/composition of their PA curricula, and if yes,
- b) can these countries be grouped into distinct, characteristic clusters?

Answering these questions, in the final analysis, was thought to say something about the prevailing administrative culture(s) to be found in Europe.

The statistical analysis performed on curricular data revealed that the 23 European countries included in the data set could be grouped into three distinguishable clusters – the corporate, the multidisciplinary and the legal (see Table 1).

The three clusters coincide with the three basic, traditional approaches to PA found in Europe.

- a) The legal cluster included Greece, Hungary, Italy, Moldova, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Yugoslavia. The legalistic administrative culture views public administration as a well-running machine executing detailed legal regulations.
- b) The public cluster included Belgium, France, Spain and Sweden. The specialty of this approach seems to be its emphasis on the uniquely political, public character of its subject, strongly relying on concepts and approaches of political sciences

Table 1. The three clusters of European Countries based on the disciplinary composition of their public administration Programmes (significant values highlighted).

Discipline	Corporate	Public	Legal	Mean for all countries
	cluster (% of disciplines in PA programme curricula)			
Law	12.5	16.1	<u>33.9</u>	20.5
Management	<u>19.5</u>	5.2	10.1	13.8
Political science	11.3	<u>29.0</u>	9.9	13.9

Source. Hajnal (2003: 250). Only the three most significant disciplinary categories are displayed.

Note. PA = public administration.

and policy sciences/public policy. This historically newer paradigm gradually appeared in certain Mediterranean countries as well, where to some extent it succeeded in replacing the traditional, strongly legalistic PA culture.

- c) The corporate cluster included Armenia, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Slovakia and the Ukraine. These countries approach the problem of running the public sector by relying on concepts of business management. This approach seems to be identical with the one often denoted as “Anglo-Saxon” or New Public Management, and it was most emphatically present in Ireland and the Nordic countries. It is remarkable that – in addition to the Baltic states, which are strongly influenced by Scandinavian public management concepts and practices – a large number of former Communist countries are members of this group, too. However, note that most of these countries are so-called “newly independent” ones.

In addition to these central findings, the study concluded, on the basis of limited and partly speculative evidence, that a shift had been occurring in the two halves of Europe – away from the common, law-centred past and towards a different future – whereby continental European and Mediterranean countries lean towards a public approach, whereas former Communist countries (or, at least, the newly independent ones) lean towards a corporate managerial approach to PA (Hajnal, 2003: 253).

The research questions

The work briefly reviewed above induced some extent of academic interest and debate. Now ten years after its publication, it seems topical to take a new look at the questions and hypotheses that have been formulated on the basis of the above findings.

These speculations provided a basis for most of the research questions at the heart of the present study. They were formulated as follows.

- RQ(1): Will the already established (i.e. not newly independent) countries of central and eastern Europe (such as Hungary, Poland, Romania and Serbia) remain

impenetrable to the Western European, public-oriented influence and thus remain strongholds of the legal tradition?

RQ(2): Is the trend among Mediterranean countries leading from a legal to a public tradition going to continue?

RQ(3): What is going to happen to the “core” Germanic cultures – are they going to adapt or remain intact (Hajnal, 2003: 253)?

In addition to these questions, several new lines of inquiry – not directly addressed in the previous research – have been formulated as follows.

RQ(4): What are the driving forces of change, if any, related to the affected countries’ PA tradition?

RQ(5): Given the Bologna reforms that have been underway in the meantime, what effects, if any, can be attributed to their introduction?

The research reported here attempts to shed light on these questions.

Method and data

The large-scale, very resource-consuming survey underlying the 2003 results was impossible to replicate at this time. Therefore, a survey of key informants was conducted. The experts targeted by the survey were those invited for the Sixth Trans-European Dialogue in Public Administration (TED6) held in Potsdam, Germany, on 7 to 9 February 2013.¹ The theme of the by-invitation expert meeting was “Education and Training: Preparing for the Future of the Public Sector in Europe”.² The authoritativeness of the participants was ensured by the restrictive selection/invitation criteria applied by the organisers emphasising proven academic credentials and experience in the field of PA education and training. The survey instrument was administered online (see Appendix A). Among some additional questions, the survey included the following open-ended queries:

Reflect on the findings of the original [2003] study regarding the cluster membership of your country (legal versus managerial versus public cluster).

Has there been any significant change, since 1999, regarding the position of your country in the three-cluster typology?

How did the Bologna reforms affect PA education in your country?

In the past decade, what were the major factors influencing the disciplinary position and orientation of PA education in your country (if any)?

In two cases, the survey data were supplemented by additional questions (in writing and in person) for clarification on the answers by the original respondents.

Altogether experts from 18 European countries were sent invitation emails. Thirteen respondents from 10 countries filled in the survey instruments. These countries were Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany (two respondents), Hungary (two respondents), Italy, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, The Netherlands (two respondents) and the Ukraine.

Table 2. Agreement with the findings of the Hajnal (2003) study.

Country	Agreement
Belgium	YES
Czech Republic	NO
Germany	N/A
Hungary	YES
Italy	YES
The Netherlands	NO
Romania	YES
Slovakia	YES
Slovenia	N/A
Ukraine	YES
Total	6:2

Note. N/A = no data available.

One of the important assumptions underlying the research was that it is justified to treat “country” as the primary unit of analysis. As some of the respondents pointed out that the extent to which PA programmes’ heterogeneity within a nation allows one to treat “country” as a unit of analysis (i.e. to talk about a given country’s “representative programme” or “dominant mode of instruction”, et cetera) may, of course, be questioned.

Despite possible doubts, there are two important arguments supporting the above assumption. Firstly, this assumption is broadly shared and very rarely, if at all, seriously questioned in scholarly research on European PA science and education (Bauer, 2005; Hajnal, 2003; Kickert and Stillman, 1999; Kickert, 2007a; Nemec et al., 2012; Verheijen and Connaughton, 1999, 2003; Verheijen and Nemec, 2000). Second, this question – whether aggregation of data at the country level is justified or not – was explicitly tackled in the 2003 study (Hajnal, 2003: 256). The univariate and multivariate analyses of variance performed on programme-level data with “country” as independent variable (factor) showed that the nationality of PA programmes is statistically significant in explaining programme variance.

Therefore the primary unit of analysis was “country” throughout the present survey and analysis (see Table 2). In a limited number of cases, where one country was represented by two respondents who happened to disagree on one question or another, the analysis reflects upon individual respondents, too.

In most of the cases one expert per country was invited. As noted earlier three countries, however, were represented in the feedback set by two respondents each. In these cases, “country” as primary unit of analysis was maintained. Where present, however, agreements versus disagreements between the two respondents were separately analysed and reflected upon in the course of the analysis.

A comment regarding the number of responses seems to be in order at this point. First, the response rate may seem to be modest (though response rates in the range of 30–40% are often treated as acceptable in the case of high-level executive or expert surveys). In this regard, it is important to realise that, in the context of this particular survey, neither the

total N nor the N of responses can be treated in the usual way. The mere fact that instead of, say, 30, only 13 respondents appear in the feedback set does not affect either the validity or the reliability of the findings established – it is only the geographic scope of the survey that becomes more limited. Moreover, the fact that instead of 2 or 3 only 1 expert per country responded does not pose, in and of itself, any particular difficulty, since either respondent is deemed to have sufficient information and judgmental ability anyway.

The resulting data was analysed using computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (ATLAS.ti) and simple visualisations and cross-tabulations of the resulting data.

Findings

In the following four subsections, the four focal questions of the survey are explored. These are the respondents' perceptions regarding

- the given country's original disciplinary position,
- size and direction of disciplinary reorientation/change (if any),
- causes of this change (if any), and
- the role played by the Bologna process in this change.

The analysis proceeds in all but the initial subsections by first presenting the main analytical categories found in the response data (in the terminology of qualitative analysis: codes), and then examining the distribution of these codes among (groups of) countries present in the data set.

Agreement with the original (2003) findings

The main research question tackled by the survey regards the trajectory – the direction, size and determinants of movement – of countries in the disciplinary space defined in the 2003 study (this space was spanned by eight axes corresponding to such key disciplines as law, economics, and political science; for a detailed overview see Hajnal, 2003: 248). As the concept of trajectory involves not only the end-point but also the starting position of a country, it seemed to be justified to check the extent to which respondents locate their country's starting position in agreement with the 2003 study's findings. The responses are shown in Table 3.

Two countries in the present data set – Germany and Slovenia – were not included in the 2003 survey. The Dutch and the Czech respondents signalled their disagreement with the way their countries were clustered in the 2003 survey; while, in the case of the remaining six countries, respondents agreed. Importantly, however, the disagreements had less to do with the substantive findings (the country's position among the three clusters). Rather, two out of the three respondents who disagreed perceived problems with the extent to which country as such can serve as a unit of analysis, given the large heterogeneity of PA programmes in their given nations (however, see also the arguments presented in the first section on this issue).

Table 3. Patterns of disciplinary change and original cluster positions.

Original cluster position	Country	Change occurred	Direction of change
Legal	Italy	YES	+ POLICY
	Romania	YES	+ MANAGEMENT
	Slovenia ^a	YES	+ POLICY +MANAGEMENT
	Hungary	NO	–
	Germany ^b	NO	–
Corporate or public	Slovakia	YES	+ POLICY
	Czech Republic	NO	–
	Belgium	NO	–
	Ukraine	NO	–
	The Netherlands ^c	NO	–

^aThe Slovenian respondent assumed a legal position for Slovenia at the time of previous survey.

^bOne of the German respondents observed a 'very cautious' shift in the managerial direction.

^cIn the case of the two Dutch respondents, there was disagreement regarding the trajectory.

Disciplinary reorientation – patterns of change

The central research question regards the trajectory of change (if any) characterising individual countries during the 2000s. Three substantive trajectories appear in the responses: countries either

1. reorient themselves, in which case they may become
 - a. increasingly managerial, and/or
 - b. increasingly policy oriented; or, to use the terminology of the earlier survey, increasingly public (note that these two patterns are not mutually exclusive, but can be concurrent); otherwise,
2. they do not change.

The country-specific responses – along with the original cluster positions – are shown in Table 4.

Three central features of these data should be highlighted here.

First, it is remarkable, especially considering the relatively long amount of time that has passed since the previous data collection, that the majority (five or six) of the observed countries do not seem to have produced any significant change in terms of their disciplinary orientation.

Second, the weakening or shrinking of the legal cluster seems to have continued. Policy and management orientation strengthened in some countries; law orientation, however, has not. Neither has it happened (of course) that the predominant approach in any one of the countries became more legally oriented.

Finally, it is noteworthy that, for the most part, only countries originally in the legal cluster underwent any change. Non-law-oriented countries remained stable throughout the past decade, the only exception to this rule being the special case of Slovakia, which will be

Table 4. Factors driving or inhibiting disciplinary change (code frequencies).

	Country	Internal factors	External factors
Change	Slovakia	–	Lack of demand by employers and/or students
	Romania	–	International exposure and models
	Italy	–	Managerial reforms
	Slovenia	–	International exposure and models
?	The Netherlands	Academics increasingly lean towards PA	International exposure and models
No change	Germany	–	Lack of demand by employers and/or students
	Belgium	–	–
	Czech Republic	–	International exposure and models Lack of demand by employers and/or students
	Hungary	Incumbents freeze the field; Academics increasingly lean towards PA	Lack of demand by employers and/or students
	Ukraine	–	–

Note. PA = public administration.

addressed shortly. The melting away of the legal cluster took place in the case of Italy, Romania and Slovenia. Italy, Slovakia and Slovenia seem to have moved towards the policy-oriented public cluster, while Romania and Slovenia have demonstrated a management orientation (note that these two shifts may occur concomitantly, as was the case with Slovenia). Germany and Hungary, however, seem to have remained strongholds of the legally oriented PA education, though some subtle changes might have occurred, especially in Germany.

As for Slovakia, it seems that the disciplinary reorientation that occurred in the 2000s was only a temporary one, triggered by a one-off legislative change. Namely, in the early 2000s, national legislation on civil service employment changed, the new legislation requiring civil servants to hold a BA degree. This created a market opportunity for higher education institutions, many of which responded by launching new, policy-oriented education programmes. However, as the boom period has ended and the size of the PA education market has shrunk back to its earlier size (or even further), many of these new programmes are about to disappear, thereby leaving the PA education field in a state only marginally different than it was in the early 2000s. Therefore, from a broader (time) perspective, the classification of “no-change” could, or perhaps should, be applied to Slovakia, since it is at least equally as valid as the “change” category. This should be kept in mind when interpreting the findings presented in the subsequent subsections.

Factors driving change

The next question relates to the factors driving changes in the disciplinary orientation of the countries under examination.

The factors revealed by the responses can be conveniently grouped according to whether they are external to the PA education field or, rather, result from the field's internal dynamics. (By internal, the management and staff of PA programmes and education institutions are meant; by external, all the stakeholders and effects located/originating outside that realm.) The motives are displayed in Figure 1.

Some of the less straightforward analytical concepts that appear in the figure deserve a brief explanation.

The code "Academics increasingly leaning towards PA" broadly refers to the phenomenon whereby the "hearts and minds" of faculty and management running PA education programmes change; they become more open and show more positive attitudes towards a new paradigm of PA as a discipline as opposed to other – predominantly legally-oriented – approaches. This may happen either through the emergence of a new generation of academics who conceive of the field differently – in the present case, in a way that is more interdisciplinary and is closer to the "mainstream" European (as opposed to the legalist) conceptualisation. As a second option (not excluding the first), the faculty and programme management may change their attitude/orientation over time in a similar vein thereby accepting and/or promoting approaches and practices related to policy science and/or management to an extent larger than earlier.

The code labelled "Lack of demand by employers and/or students" refers to a set of phenomena, the common element of which is that there is a decreasing demand for different – more multidisciplinary and less legalist – PA education, or the existing demand is insufficient to trigger change. This may happen because of one or both of the following circumstances. First, the (public) organisations employing PA graduates do not tend to choose graduates of non-traditional, more multidisciplinary programmes – either because the legal framework itself does not promote this practice or even discourages them from doing so, and/or because their entrenched practices and culture are more compatible to graduates of the traditional, legalist type PA programmes. Second, decreasing or insufficient numbers of graduate students may choose to enrol in multidisciplinary PA programmes for many other demographically-related reasons – for example, perceived career prospects in public service and the like.

Finally, the code labelled "Incumbents freeze the field" applies to the situation when entrenched institutional and personal interests – "old dinosaurs" who are socialised into and may have a direct stake in doing things the traditional way – block attempts and pressures to change.

As can be seen, two of the factors identified by the respondents – "Incumbents freeze the field" and "Lack of demand by employers and/or students" – are actually not driving forces of change, but rather forces that counteract change and work towards maintaining the status quo instead.

The occurrence of the different motives is summarized in Figure 1.

A key pattern emerging out of these data is that significant disciplinary changes were all driven by factors external to the PA education realm. Internal factors – originating within the institutions, personnel and practice of PA education – do not seem to have played a role whatsoever. (Note the special position of Slovakia as a partly "no-change" country, as discussed earlier.) This finding is especially interesting – and, possibly, disappointing – in the view of the constant ambitions of the international PA academic community to give

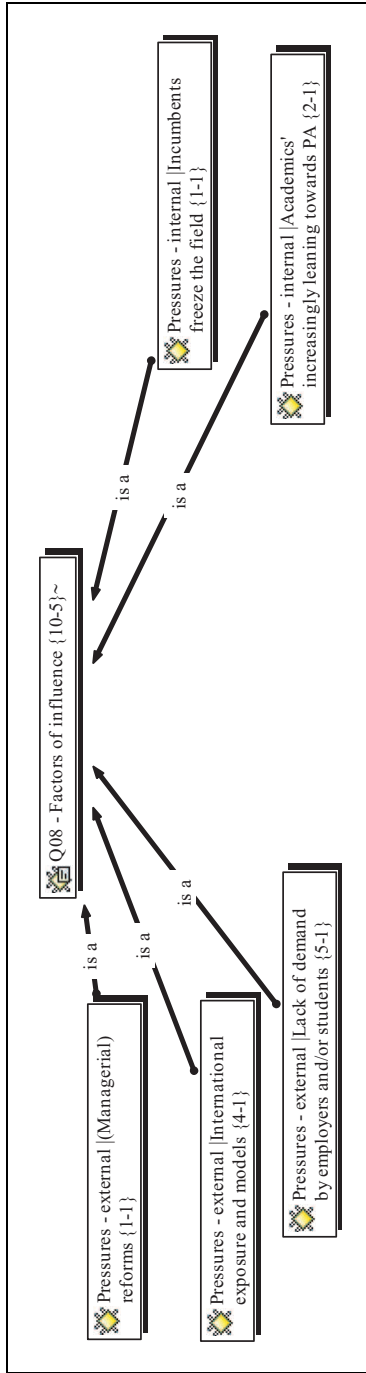


Figure 1. Codes related to the “factors influencing disciplinary change”.

Note. In all the figures, the first number enclosed in parentheses after the code name refers to the given code’s number of occurrences. The second number (not relied on in the present analysis) shows the number of links to other codes.

direction to, and possibly even lead, changes and developments in the PA education field (cf. the permanent working/study groups devoted to the theme in all major international academic PA associations in Europe).

Focusing on the two hard-core legalist countries where little or no actual change has occurred – Germany and Hungary – it seems that the “Lack of demand by employers and/or students” is a decisive inhibiting factor. (This lack of demand is, nevertheless, present in other central and eastern European countries: the Czech Republic and Slovakia, too.) Therefore, it may be instructive to explore this factor in more detail, using the words and formulations of the respondents themselves.

In the case of Hungary, it means that ‘the organisations prefer lawyers to PA degrees. The legal regulation reveals a similar nature. Students find this natural, as the alternative does not even occur to them. In fact, the overwhelming majority of students who seek further education after completing the School of PA go to law faculties’.

In the case of Germany, one of the respondents observed that ‘on the demand side (recruitment of junior civil servants): generally poor demand in last years, due to cut-backs, now increasing (demography). Still, about 2/3 of junior staff at the two higher layers of civil service who were recruited in the last 10 years have a law focus’. ‘Most polytechnic universities in Germany now have changed from a diploma to a BA degree; the content, however, is still predominantly law (it must be more than 50% according to a joint civil service access regulation)’.

The Czech respondent explained it as follows: ‘demography [leads to] a decrease in demand. . . . A crisis of trust: public administration is not considered to be a prestigious, or sometimes not even a decent, occupation among the young generation (or at least the most talented part)’.

Finally, in Slovakia, it was observed that ‘the interest for PA studies is significantly decreasing. For part-time students, the reason is obvious: most PA employees without degrees already finished their studies. . . . Non-existing rules for carrier promotion in PA may be an important factor (moreover, there is no formal requirement for public servants to hold a PA degree)’.

These quotations suggest that it is the legalist thinking entrenched by, and maintained in, the organisational practices – legal regulations, as well as culture in the broader sense – that underlies the remarkable stability of legalism in PA education. This finding, in a way, reinforces the previous conclusion regarding the dominant role of external factors in triggering change. In both of the two stable legalist countries – Germany and Hungary – the lack of exactly such an external demand has been identified by the respondent as a key factor inhibiting change.

Effects of the Bologna process

The last question analysed here is related to the effects of the introduction of the Bologna type of educational structure having occurred in the course of the 2000s – three-phase, internationally compatible – on PA programmes. Respondents were asked the following question: How did the Bologna reform affect PA education in your country? Five key themes can be located in the responses. These are displayed in the column headings of Table 5 (see above), whereas the frequency of their occurrence is displayed in the data cells.

Table 5. Effects of Bologna-type reforms (code frequencies).

	Country	New programmes in PA	Competition among programmes	Internationalisation	More popular	Specialisation	Total
Substantive effect	The Netherlands	0	0	1	0	1	2
	Germany	1	0	0	1	0	2
	Italy	0	1	0	0	1	2
	Slovenia	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Hungary	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Ukraine	1	0	0	0	0	1
No substantive effect	Slovakia	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Romania	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Belgium	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Czech Republic	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	3	1	2	1	2	9

In the case of the four countries labelled as featuring “no substantive effect” – three of which are central and eastern European countries – respondents mentioned either no effects or only formal, structural, self-evident effects of the Bologna-type reforms (such as the division of programmes into a three-plus-two-years format).

Significant effects appeared in six of the ten countries. The Bologna reforms led to the emergence of new PA programmes in three of those six countries: Germany, Hungary and the Ukraine. This is not surprising as Bologna reforms can lead to such an effect in a number of ways. Obviously, splitting five-year programmes into a Bachelor’s and a Master’s automatically increases the number of programmes. However the possibility of creating a (less resource intensive) Bachelor’s programme may induce institutions with modest capacity – which would have been unable to run a five-year programme – to launch a Bachelor’s programme in the field (as this happened in a number of cases, for example, in Hungary). Finally, the new possibility of offering an Master’s degree on top of an (already existing) Bachelor’s degree is a straightforward and logical way for higher education institutions to expand.

Increasing specialisation (IT, NL) and internationalisation (NL, SLO) were recorded in two of the six countries. The latter is a main objective of the Bologna reforms – and therefore it might seem somewhat surprising that it has been observed in two countries only. The question of why this effect did not materialise in a definite majority of the countries would deserve a separate research. Increasing specialisation might possibly be seen as a by-product of increasing (domestic and/or international) competition having ensued in the wake of the Bologna reforms. Note however that increasing competition was observed in only one of the countries, Italy, which may, again, come as a sort of surprise.

Summing up, two general observations may be formulated in regards to the consequences of the Bologna reforms on PA education. First and most important, it is striking how little change – and, within that, especially how little of the intended consequences –

are attributed to the Bologna reforms. Second, no association with – let alone effect on – the disciplinary (re)orientation of PA programmes can be observed as the main dependent variable of the current research. Rather, the PA educational field has opened up to some extent, both internally (new programmes appearing) and externally (increasing internationalisations with student and faculty exchange and transfer of models).

Discussion and conclusions

The first three research questions introduced were related to the hypothesised trajectory of the three sub-groups of legalist European countries: (i) the former Communist central and eastern European – notably, mostly “old” and not newly independent – countries; (ii) Mediterranean countries; and (iii) the “hard-core Germanic” countries of Austria and Germany.

As regards the first group (RQ1), the answer is definitely yes. Out of the three legalist central and eastern European countries in the data set – Hungary, Romania and Slovenia – three made a notable move away from the legalist tradition. The direction of this shift is not uniform, however. Romania has leaned towards a more public approach, while Slovenia has leaned towards an approach more public as well as more managerial. Hungary’s system, however, has remained largely intact after similar changes.

As regards the second group of countries (RQ2), unfortunately only Italy appears representing the Mediterranean countries in the current data set. Italy, in line with the expectations formulated earlier (Hajnal, 2003), continued its shift towards a more public and policy-oriented approach to PA education. From among the third group of countries, only Germany appears in the response data set. In this case, the predominantly legalist character seems to have remained more or less intact.

In sum, the gradual shrinking of legalism continued to characterize the PA education landscape over the past decade; countries already located in one of the other two clusters did not exhibit major change or reorientation.

The fourth research question (RQ4) was related to the factors driving – or, for that matter, inhibiting – change, if any.

Out of the four countries demonstrating any change (all having originally been located in the legalist cluster),

two countries – Romania and Slovenia – were characterised by normative pressures emanating from (perceived) international models and standards;

Italian changes were driven by the domestic factor of real-life managerial reforms in public administration; while

Slovakia’s case remains somewhat ambiguous, since its real, long-term disciplinary reorientation seems to be questionable.

Remarkably – and notwithstanding the PA profession’s constant efforts to shape its own future – the factors that proved to be effective in triggering change are all rooted outside the realm of PA higher education. Moreover, in both of the entrenched legalist countries – Germany and Hungary – the lack of exactly such external, demand-side triggering factors was noted by the respondents.

It is interesting to take a look at the dynamics of forces for and against change that, in the case of Hungary being one of the two legalist strongholds and the only one in central and eastern Europe, have supposedly led to a stalemate in the field of PA education. One – supposedly pro-change – factor is the influx of a new breed of PA academics in the higher education field. On the other hand, this impetus was blocked by the institutional landscape of PA education, dominated by well-established, strong incumbents, which deterred new entrants. Although no further details appear in the data in this regard, on the basis of personal insight, an additional, second-order factor explaining the strength of incumbents may be hypothesised. Namely, the system of higher education accreditation has, at least until very recently, been characterised by an undisputable dominance of old, established universities. In practice, any new entrant could only be allowed into the market by an almost consensual agreement of their future competitors, the old universities.

Although these patterns do not explicitly appear in the data, it should be noted that, after the 2010 parliamentary elections, the incoming centre-right government initiated sweeping changes in the field of PA higher education. The legally oriented PA programmes run by the older, large, established universities were, in the course of 2011 to 2012, practically eliminated by government regulations. Instead, relying on the force of legal regulations, almost the entire market for PA education was concentrated in the newly founded National University of Public Service (in fact, a joint university of civil and uniformed services). The curricula of this university's PA faculty continue, at the time of writing, to be overwhelmingly legalistic, however.

In general, it seems that, in the cases where real changes occurred, impetus came from outside the PA education programmes and institutions. On the other hand, if we take a look at the two legal countries largely untouched by disciplinary reorientation, we see that – notwithstanding any other internal and/or external pressure – in both countries there is a powerful force inhibiting change. This force stems from such sources as (i) the recruitment practices and preferences of public administration (often reinforced by civil service regulations), and (ii) students' preferences related to PA education – in particular, their lack of interest in a more multidisciplinary programme. These two factors probably reinforce one another mutually.

Notes

1. See <http://ted-dialogues.org/2013/01/31/announcing-ted6-in-potsdam/>.
2. The organisers of the TEDs are, traditionally, the two major academic networks of the public administration field in western and eastern Europe, EGPA (European Group of Public Administration) and NISPACEE (Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe), respectively. The 2013 event was hosted by the Potsdam Center for Policy and Management, University of Potsdam and the German Federal Academy of Public Administration (BAKÖV).

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Appendix A

The survey instrument

TED6 Expert Survey - Disciplinary orientation of PA education in European countries

Sixth Trans-European Dialogue in Public Administration: Education and Training: Preparing for the Future of the Public Sector in Europe

6-8 February 2013, Potsdam, Germany

“Re-visiting the three clusters of PA education in Europe”. Expert Survey on the trends and developments in the disciplinary character of European PA education

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The EU/Socrates Funded Thematic Network for Public Administration undertook a detailed survey of European university degree programmes in the field of Public Administration (Verheijen-Connaughton 1999, Verheijen-Nemec 2000). Subsequently, I undertook a quantitative statistical analysis of PA curricula taught in (almost) all participating countries (Hajnal 2003, attached in pdf format). The focus of this latter research was mostly on the disciplinary composition of PA programmes – that is, on the extent, to which program curricula include subjects in Law, Management, Political Science/Public Policy, and so on. The central questions of the research were twofold:

- a) whether there are characteristic differences between countries in terms of the disciplinary orientation/composition of their PA curricula and if yes
- b) can these countries be grouped into characteristic, distinct clusters?

Answering these questions, in the final analysis, would say something about the prevailing administrative culture(s) to be found in Europe.

The work induced some extent of academic interest and debate. Ten years later now it seems topical to take a new look at the same questions. TED6 offers an excellent occasion and opportunity for doing this.

Since collecting hard data is not possible at this stage the organizers of the TED6 and I decided to conduct a mini expert survey among the participants of TED6. **THUS YOU ARE INVITED TO FILL IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE AS A PARTICIPANT OF TED6.** The objective of this expert survey is to spot whether, and if yes to what extent and in what ways, national modes of teaching (and, by ways of induction, of conceiving) PA have changed in the past decade. It is this objective, for which I ask for your valuable time and insights.

The preliminary findings of this survey will be presented at TED6 in February 2012 in Potsdam.

IF POSSIBLE PLEASE RESPOND TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE BY 6 JANUARY 2013. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND EFFORT.

György Hajnal

SOME IMPORTANT TECHNICAL AND SUBSTANTIVE REMARKS:

- BEFORE FILLING IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE PLEASE READ THE "TED6 SURVEY DESCRIPTION.PDF" FILE ATTACHED TO THE INVITATION EMAIL.
- Note that all questions refer to university level PA education in your country as a whole (that is, a "typical" PA program).
- "PA education" refers to any type of university (BA or MA) level education that is in your country generally conceived as training generalists for the public administration.
- Please try to formulate your responses so that they don't exceed 200 words per item. However if you deem necessary please do provide additional text or information.
- The questions refer to your overall impressions based on your general experience in the field of PA education in your country. If however you feel fundamentally uninformed or unsure about the question at hand please indicate this in your answer.
- Text boxes can be resized by click-and-dragging their bottom-right corner.

* Required

The following 3 questions (Question 1 to Question 3) are optional only. However by providing answers to these questions you enable me to get back to you with questions for clarification, sort out possible technical problems etc.

Question 1: Your name

Question 2: Your institution

Question 3: Your email address

Answer to this question if your country was included in the original survey. For the list of countries see TED6 Survey Description.pdf attached to the invitation email.

Question 4: Reflect on the finding of the original study regarding the cluster membership of your country ("legal" versus "managerial" versus "public" cluster - for explanation see the TED6 Survey Description). Do you agree or disagree? What are your arguments pro/con?

Answer to this question if your country was NOT included in the original survey. For the list of countries see TED6 Survey Description.pdf attached to the invitation email.

Question 5: At the time of the original research (1999) how would you have positioned your country in the three-cluster typology (“legal” versus “managerial” versus “public” cluster - for explanation see the TED6 Survey Description)? How would you justify this choice?

From this point on all respondents are asked the same questions.

Question 6: Has there been any significant change since 1999 regarding the position of your country in the three-cluster typology (“legal” versus “managerial” versus “public” cluster - for explanation see the TED6 Survey Description)? In particular, has your country moved towards another cluster, and if yes which one? What arguments support your claim? *

Question 7: How did the Bologna reform affect PA education in your country? Was/is there any other significant change in your country in the field of PA education? *

Question 8: In the past decade what were the major factors influencing the disciplinary position and orientation of PA education in your country (if any)? What was the role in inducing change, for example, of students, public authorities “in charge”, possible employers, other external stakeholders, or academics? *

Question 9: What country do your answers refer to? *

Question 10: Please provide any other comments or remarks you deem relevant.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND EFFORT!

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