Denita Cepiku, Marco Meneguzzo

Public Administration Education in Italy: a Statistical Analysis



University of Rome "Tor Vergata" Università degli Studi di Roma "Tor Vergata"

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Public Administration Education in Italy: a Statistical Analysis

Denita Cepiku, Marco Meneguzzo¹

Abstract

The paper presents a statistical analysis exploring public administration education in Italian universities. It highlights the main specificities of PA education in Italy with reference to the disciplinary character, the geographical distribution, the type and level of PA programs, etc. and aims at describing how universities are adjusting curricula in relation to public sector modernization, by comparing the main faculties (economics and management sciences, law, political sciences, sociology, engineering, sciences of communication, social sciences) of all Italian universities.

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Keywords: public administration; education; training; disciplinary approaches; administrative culture

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The paper is the result of the coordinated work of the two authors. Denita Cepiku built up the database and wrote paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 5; Marco Meneguzzo wrote paragraphs 4 and 6. The authors would like to thank Chiara Giordano and Gloria Fiorani at the University of

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Editorial notes

An early draft of this paper has been presented at the Conference of the European Group of Public Administration (EGPA), 19-22/IX/2007, INAP, Madrid, Study Group IX: PA and Teaching). Following discussions within the Study Group, the Observatory of Public Administration University Education in Italy has been created at the University of Rome "Tor Vergata", as part of a European network on PA education.

1. Introduction

The paper presents a statistical analysis exploring public administration (PA) education in Italian universities. It contributes to the literature on PA education and training, developed in specific countries (Lewanski, 2000; Molina, Cèsar, 2000; Pollitt, 1996; Randma, 2001; Rhodes, 1996; Araújo, Alvarez, 2006; etc.) as well as in a comparative perspective (see for example Verheijen, Connaughton, 1999; Toonen, Verheijen, 1999 for Europe and Kettl, 1998; 2001 for the US).

The literature has classified European countries according to the nature of PA education in three clusters: a legal group of countries, where a strong emphasis is put on administrative law; a public group, in which the PA is recognized to have a unique public and political character; and, a corporate or managerial group focused on business management techniques (Hajnal, 2003). In most researches Italy belongs to the legal group of countries (Lewanski, 1999; Kickert, 2005).

The paper aims at verifying if the administrative law approach to university-based PA teaching is still prevalent in Italy, as well as the extent of development of other disciplinary orientations. The research also highlights the main specificities of PA education in Italy with reference to the disciplinary character, the geographical distribution, the type and level of PA programs, etc. It aims at describing how universities are adjusting curricula in relation to public sector modernization, by comparing the main faculties (economics and management sciences, law, political sciences, sociology, engineering, sciences of communication, social sciences) of all Italian universities.

A distinguishing element of the research is the simultaneous consideration and the comparison of different disciplines: economics, management, law, political science, sociology, sciences of communication and engineering, while existing literature often focuses only on single disciplinary areas (Wise, 1999).

The paper relies on original and exhaustive data, which cover the whole population of Italian universities and were collected between June and July 2007. The main source of information are the didactic programs (the so-called

"Manifesto degli studi") approved by the faculties for the most recent academic year (2007/08 or 2006/07).

Information from 204 faculties of 72 universities was gathered. 2.198 education programs at different levels were registered and classified.

Overall evidence suggests that the legal cluster, including but not limited to administrative law, is not the prevalent approach in teaching PA in Italy. The public cluster - mainly political sciences and public economy approach - is instead widespread in Italian universities. Furthermore, there is a strong, yet more recent, development of the managerial approach.

We find substantial variation within and between north, centre and south Italy. In general, an insufficient supply of PA programs is registered in southern regions, which also put a greater emphasis on doctoral education.

Two specificities of PA education in Italy include the prevalence of the juridical approach in public accounting programs and the major political science disciplinary orientation of programs in administrative science.

In the next paragraph we give account of the research methods and main steps. A short description of the university education in Italy is offered in the third paragraph. The results of the literature review, including the main historical specificities of PA education in Italy, are presented in paragraph four. The fifth paragraph presents the main results of the statistical quantitative analysis. These are commented in the last paragraph, which also highlights some areas for further research.

2. Research objectives, procedures and methodology

The aim of the research is to explore the state of art of university-based PA education in Italy, in several faculties.

The research questions include the following:

- Is the administrative law approach still prevalent in Italy?
- Which is the extent of the development of other disciplinary orientations?
- What are the main specificities of PA education in Italy?

To this end, the statistical analysis aims at answering the following questions:

- What levels and types of PA programs are offered by the different faculties?
- How are these programs distributed according to their disciplinary character?
- How are these programs distributed according to the different regions and administrative cultures they embody?
- How are these programs distributed according to the three clusters identified by the literature (public, legal and corporate)?
- How are these programs distributed, according to the specific topic dealt with (analysis limited to the corporate cluster)?

The first stage of research was based on a literature review, which has helped to identify and explore PA as an academic and scholar discipline in a comparative perspective. Furthermore, the main characteristics of PA and management education in different political and social contexts, as well as some historical drivers that have influenced the selection and training of the administrative élite in Italy have been explored.

The second stage of the research - descriptive statistics - consisted in the collection and analysis of PA programs taught in Italian universities. The whole population of PA programs was analyzed. The data were collected between June and July 2007 and draw on the information available in the official didactic programs of the selected faculties of 72 Italian universities, both public and private (see appendix). The six telematic universities were not included for homogeneity reasons.

The construction of a "PA program database" specifically designed for the purpose of the study included the following variables:

- Name of the education program
- Level of the program

- Undergraduate programs or "Corsi di Laured" (1st and 2nd cycle, respectively Bachelor's degree 180 and Master's degree 120 credits²) and courses or "Insegnamenti"
- Professional graduate courses (1st and 2nd level Masters, 60 credits)
- Research-based courses (doctorates or PhDs).
- Region
- Name of the university
- Type of the faculty³:
 - Economics and/or Management
 - Law
 - Political sciences
 - Sciences of communication
 - Sociology
 - Engineering
 - Social (and human) sciences.
- Disciplinary orientation or character:
 - Law
 - Economics
 - Management
 - Engineering
 - Political sciences
 - Sociology
 - Communication

² According to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), a standard for comparing the study attainment and performance of students of higher education across the European Union. One academic year corresponds to 60 ECTS-credits that are equivalent to 1500-1800 hours of study in all countries irrespective of standard or qualification type, in order to facilitate transfer and progression throughout the Union. Cf. http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/socrates/ects/index_en.html.

³ Only universities having at least one of these faculties were considered.

- Administration and governance of specific policy fields (local government, healthcare, cultural heritage, welfare, universities, security, etc.)⁴
- Interdisciplinary
- Other...

Education cluster:

- Public (includes programs which have a disciplinary orientation in Political sciences, as well as in Sociology or Economics)
- Legal (covers programs which have a disciplinary orientation in Law)
- Corporate (takes in programs which have a disciplinary orientation in Management as well as in Communication or Engineering).
- Thematic focus or subject area (only for the corporate cluster):
 - General public management
 - Planning, budgeting and control
 - Organization and human resources management
 - Accounting and finance
 - Accountability and social reporting
 - e-Government
 - Marketing and communication
 - Market-type mechanisms (outsourcing, PPPs, privatization, regulation, government-business relationships)
 - Other issues.
- Number of ECTS-credits.

Only programs entirely dedicated to PA were taken into consideration. These were found in 186 out of 204 faculties. We did not consider generic programs

⁴ The courses belonging to this category are centred on a specific sector or type of organization instead of a disciplinary approach.

where some courses (or courses where some lectures), are dedicated to PA, although we acknowledge the relevance of these programs.

Programs dealing with political aspects alone - such as the financing, the marketing and communication of political parties, etc. - were also left out of the study. On the contrary, programs dealing with the political-administrative boundary were considered.

We also did not include more specialized programs such as development studies (but did include local or regional government development policies), environment protection (either regulations or management), etc.

It is also worth explicating some terminological choices. Some studies have reported a shift away from the term "public administration" apparent in several countries (Kettl, 1999; Wise, Pitts, 2003), also supported by empirical data (Wise, 1999)⁵. "Public administration" is here used in a very wide sense, comprehending more bounded definitions such as those found in political science, public management, administrative law, etc.

For the sake of further analysis, the programs have been grouped in undergraduate; professional and mid-career training; and research programs (Wise, Pitts, 2003).

The seven types of faculty selected cover almost all the didactic supply on PA. Only in a few cases, this classification leaves out new faculties. It is the case of the recently-established cultural heritage faculties (two examples are the Macerata and the Lecce universities), which have the merits of being of an interdisciplinary nature.

It was decided to analyze the programs according to a detailed classification of their disciplinary character, which was identified independently of the faculty in which they are taught. Three technical criteria were adopted: we tried to have a moderate number of categories; a clear-cut distinction should be between categories; and we tried to use as much as possible the same categorization used in previous researches (mainly Hajnal, 2002; 2003).

At a second stage, the programs were grouped into the three well-known clusters. In general, the legal cluster included the administrative, public, re-

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⁵ PA as an academic modern discipline or field of study is described in paragraph four.

gional and local law, etc. programs. The public cluster included the programs having a political science disciplinary orientation. The corporate cluster included programs classified under the management discipline.

The classification of the other programs was done on a case by case basis. Very often, programs in sociology and economics were classified in the public cluster, while communication and engineering programs went within the corporate one.

Finally, the counting of programs and courses was done according to their weight in ECTS-credits⁶.

3. Briefly on university education in Italy

Italian universities have a long history, beginning in mediaeval times with the establishment of the university of Salerno in the IX century, and the university of Bologna in 1088. Other universities were founded in the following centuries: the university of Padova in 1222, and two years later the university of Naples founded by Frederick II, the university of Florence, founded in 1308, then the universities of Pisa, Pavia and Turin (Wikipedia, 2007).

Higher education is provided by universities, technical universities, university institutes, as well as by a wide range of academies, higher institutes/schools and by a number of professional training institutions. Most of the existing university institutions were established directly by the State, while a limited number, originally set up by private entities, were later recognized by the relevant Ministry.

At the time of writing (2007), the university system includes 87 university institutions of different type⁷.

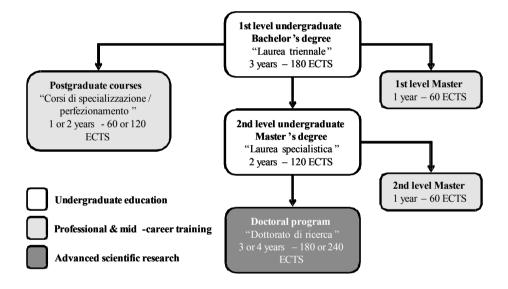
⁶ Few programs could not be included in the database: 15 single courses (3 at the engineering faculty of the Modena university and 12 at the economics faculty of the Parma university) for which it was not possible to determine the amount of credits; two doctoral programs at the social sciences faculty of the Lecce university, as it was impossible to identify their disciplinary orientation. Finally, doctoral programs organized jointly by two or more universities were counted only once.

⁷ Cfr. UNESCO, International Association of Universities, World Higher Education Database (WHED), Italy - Education system: http://www.unesco.org.

Italy has adopted in 1999 the so-called 3+2 system, although the adjusting process is going on even as of 2007 (Figure 1).

The first degree is the "Corso di Laurea triennale" that can be achieved after 3 years of studies. Students can then complete two more years of specialization or the "Corso di Laurea specialistica" (now called Magistrale). The five (3+2) years correspond to a Master's degree⁸ and give access to third cycle programs (second level masters and doctorates). The "dottorato di ricerca" (doctorate) requires 3 or 4 years of work⁹.

Figure 1: University education in Italy



⁸ It should not be confused with Italian "masters", less popular second cycle degrees which do not give access to doctorates. 1st Level Masters can be pursued by those who hold at least a "Laurea triennale" or Bachelor's degree, while 2nd Level Masters (Magister Philosophiae) require also the two-years specialization degree before entry.

⁹ Cfr. http://www.unesco.org/iau/onlinedatabases/systems_data/it.rtf. Cfr. also Wikipedia. Last accessed on 6 December 2008.

4. PA education: historical factors and international comparison

4.1. PA as an academic field of study

The literature acknowledges a strong relationship between the processes of PA reform and the features of the PA education and training system in a country and PA education and PA as a field of practice definitively correlate (Hajnal, 2002: 15).

Mosher (1982) considers the education system as the most important element of an evolving administrative culture, by which public service ethos, frame of reference and knowledge are transmitted. The nature and quality of the public service heavily depends upon the nature and quality of the system of education (Connaughton, Randma, 2002: 2).

There is a rich literature on the intellectual foundations of PA (Dahl 1947; Mosher 1956; Charlesworth 1968; Heady 1979; Guerreiro Ramos 1981; Daneke 1990; Riggs 1991; Bailey and Mayer 1992; Bogason, Brans, 2005). The discipline continues to be characterized by "the ahistorical, instrumental, voluntaristic, parochial, and state-centered nature of its approaches and explanations" (Baltodano, 1997).

Three fundamental elements influence, either directly or indirectly, the curricula of PA in different countries (Connaughton, Randma, 2002):

- The concept of the State and the State tradition, which is far stronger
 in Europe as compared to the United States. Furthermore, there is a
 wide diversity of State tradition within Europe, which have a direct impact on the development of PA education.
- The identity (crisis) of PA as a discipline, which is academic and professional at the same time and requires a variety of approaches to understand PA (Raadschelders, 1999). This diversity is its greatest strength and its most serious limitation (Denhardt, 1990). It also implies that the survival of PA as a distinct field of study will depend on the ability to develop techniques, concepts, rhetoric and vision which

- are of perceived use to governments and public servants (Pollitt, 1996; Kettl, 1998).
- The multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary character¹⁰ which, together with the continuous evolving nature of government and government-society relations, disallow the development of a unified body of theory. This lack of unity, especially evident in Europe as compared to the United States, is primarily due to historical and cultural paths of different countries. One clear indicator is the predominance of public law in European continental countries and its absence in the UK.

4.2. PA education: an international comparison

The national attributes of PA education systems are described below following the literature of different countries.

The review of the literature on PA as a scholarly field has highlighted many researches developed on a national basis and very few as truly comparative. Even less provide empirical quantitative evidence on PA education.

Exceptions include the two inventories of PA education in the EU states and Norway, carried out by the Thematic Network in Public Administration and transformed into a quantitative analysis by Hajnal (2002).

It is also worth mentioning, for the United States, the Peterson's Guide of programs in PA, public affairs, public health, public history, and public policy. An analysis of the evolution of PA programs from 1980 to 1995 in terms of number of programs and students enrolled has been performed by Wise (1999). Qualitative comparisons can be found in Wise and Pitts (2003) and Connaughton, Randma (2002).

Wise and Pitts (2003) offer an interesting comparison of PA as an academic field in different countries. For many countries, the roots for PA are found in

¹⁰ In interdisciplinary academic programs PA is studied from the integrated viewpoints of different disciplines, generally those of political science, law, economics and sociology, with PA being the core subject of the program. Since the 1970s the ideas of New Public Management have become established, and many countries have included management and business administration perspectives to PA education (Toonen, Verheijen, 1999).

political science as for the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, and Taiwan, even though, other disciplines have contributed to the development of the field over the last fifty years. The linkage between the study of PA and business is less frequently found in Australia and New Zealand, where the former is mostly taught in departments of politics. Administrative law is the dominant influence on the development of PA in parts of Western Europe (Germany, France), most of Eastern Europe, Japan and Korea. Evidence of influence from administrative law is also apparent in the United States, but in contrast there appears to be little link to law in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

In the United States, PA as an academic modern discipline tracks back to both academic political science and law as a separate study in the 1910s¹¹. It arises in a political controversy between democratic control of government and competent achievement of governmental ends (Williams, 2003)¹².

It is worth mentioning the Training School at the Bureau of Municipal Research (1911), affiliated with Columbia University, the City College of New York (1916), Georgetown University (1920), the School of Citizenship at Syracuse University (1924), the University of Michigan, and the University of Chicago (1916). Many early academics were affiliated with political science, although disciplinary boundaries were not strong in 1900, so they could easily be published in multiple disciplines. This early training and academic focus formed the core of the subsequent discipline (Williams, 2003).

In the last generation, PA has been replaced with fields of study like implementation, public management, and formal bureaucratic theory and few of the top political science departments offer courses in the field (Kettl, 1998).

PA as a subfield within political science has two problems: it has methodologically lagged behind; and the subfield's theoretical work seems not to define it. As PA has sought respect within the discipline, it has risked distancing itself too much from practice, with "reinventers" often looking outside PA for answers to government management problems.

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¹¹ Cfr. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_administration.

¹² Cfr. also Lynn 1996; Waldo 1948, 1955; White 1965a, 1965b, 1965c; White, Schneider 1965.

The management of intergovernmental programs, contracts, loans and regulations has not received attention proportionate to government's growing reliance on them (Kettl, 1998). Nowadays, a better identification of the mission of PA education represents a challenge due to the increasing weight of nongovernmental partners in performing several public tasks, the globalization process and the growing presence of participatory elements in the policy process (Kettl, 2001). The three fundamental approaches to PA teaching in the United States (i.e. the PA, the management and the public policy paradigms) give a clear frame of reference but are unable to address these challenges (Hajnal, 2002). Nonetheless, PA has become more, not less important, to political science (Kettl, 1998).

In Canada, there is much disagreement about whether the study of PA can properly be called a discipline, largely because it is often viewed as a subfield of the disciplines of political science and administrative science (or administration). The study of PA has evolved primarily as a subfield of political science. The broad field of administration is divided into public, business, hospital, educational and other forms of administration, which are considered to be more similar than different (Kernaghan, Siegel, 1995).

There is, however, increasing recognition of PA as a separate field of study, which is reflected in the creation within universities of schools of PA which combine elements of the two earlier approaches. PA is taught as an interdisciplinary subject by political scientists, economists, sociologists and others.

Nowadays, schools or faculties of PA exist at several universities across Canada; the oldest and largest of these include the Queen's University of Victoria and the École National d'Administration (Québec) (Kernaghan, 2007).

PA as an academic field of study in Europe, notably England and Germany (Max Weber), started as a separate scholarly field in the 1890s, but it was first taught in continental universities in the 1720s. It has developed as an academic field in the past four decades (e.g. in Italy, Finland, Germany, Belgium and the UK, new programs in PA were established between 1955 and 1970) (Yan, Brans, 2004).

PA in continental Europe has predominantly been a legal study. Following the World War II and the development of the welfare state, other disciplinary

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perspectives entered the study. The French, Germans, Italians, Dutch and the Scandinavians developed a conception of PA with its intellectual roots in philosophy, law, sociology, economics, political science, history and so forth. This marked a resurrection of the separate study of PA in the form of a more social science oriented field of study. Therefore, in Western Europe it is a relatively young field of science (Stillman, 1999) and it does not represent a regional model of its own due to the variations in administrative culture and the stronger dominance of a legal orientation and analysis of the use of public power in Southern Europe in comparison to Northern Europe, and across the English Channel to a British tradition of pragmatic analysis (Connaughton, Randma, 2002). In the United Kingdom, PA is still more a North American satellite than a core European state (Pollitt, 1996).

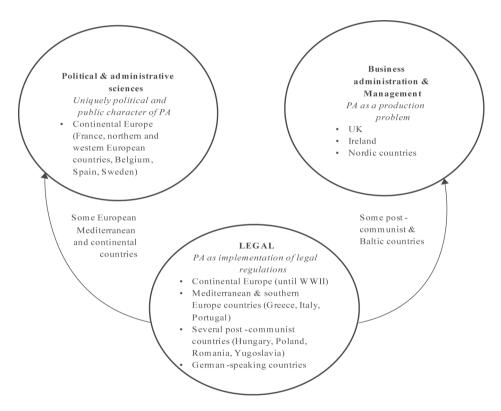
In the Iberian Peninsula, PA was taught in law faculties until the middle XIX century in Portugal and until the second half of the XX century in Spain. Although we can track the origins of the studies in the Old regime and connect them to the political science approach (Spain) and basically the French influence (Portugal) (Araújo, Alvarez, 2006: 9-14). In the 1970s, there is a methodological opening (sociology, economics, political law, bureaucracy and personnel management) and a stronger influence of administrative sciences (linked to political sciences and sociology) rather then administrative law. A further development has been the analysis of public policies and studies on public management. Currently, PA education in Spain is an ill-defined interdisciplinary field based in political science, economics, law and sociology. Issues such as administrative reform, modernization, participation, performance, etc. appear as transversal matters gathering specialists with any of those backgrounds (Ballart, 2007). Researches have highlighted that the European dimension of PA education is underdeveloped and that very few universities have courses in European integration and comparative PA in their core curriculum¹³. This evidence con-

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¹³ We refer to the two inventories of PA education in the EU states and Norway, carried out by the SOCRATES-sponsored Thematic Network in Public Administration (TNPA, now EPAN), which analyzed the general composition of some PA programs with the aim of highlighting to what extent the European dimension of PA studies was included in core curricula and compulsory courses. Cfr. Verheijen, Connaughton, 1999; Verheijen, Nemec, 2000. The focus of the TNPA national reports undertaken during 1998-2000 is on comprehensive accounts

trasts with the relevance of adequate administrative capacities as a key requirement for EU membership. The creation of new PA programs in the states of Central and Eastern Europe as well as the increasing interactions between administrations across Europe could give the discipline a further impetus to develop its own identity and approach (Connaughton, Randma, 2002).

Figure 2: PA curricula in Europe. A move away from legalism



Source: Based on information from: Hajnal, 2002; Seibel, 1999; Toonen, Verheijen, 1999; Ballart, 1999.

of the development of PA programs within the national context with specific reference to courses with a European and comparative dimension. The reports list courses but the references to theory courses are vague and there are also very limited references to the national literature. For subsequent elaborations see Hajnal, 2002.

Future perspectives of the PA as a field of study in Europe are bounded by uncertainty and the "membership" of the European countries to the three clusters established by the literature is becoming more and more questionable. Figure 2 gives an overview of the developments since the II World War, which appear as a shift of several countries from the predominant legal area towards the political science or the management areas (Hajnal, 2003).

A relevant area of future research would be the development of PA teaching in countries still considered to belong to the legal cluster: mainly Italy, Austria, Germany and Switzerland on the one hand, and some post-communist countries on the other. Will these countries remain in the legal area or will they change the patterns of their education systems? If so, which influence will be the strongest: the Anglo-Saxon (and in part Nordic) or the continental Europe one? Furthermore, will the growing weight of European Union administrative structures impose a certain degree of convergence?

4.3. PA education in Italy: historical overview

Any analysis of the PA field of study in Italy requires a description of the historical context in which it developed. The distinctive national characteristics of the study of PA and public management in Italy are explained by the historical evolution of PA in Italy; the coexistence of competing disciplines in the study of PA and the traditional domination of the administrative law approach; the recent influence of the Anglo-American managerial approach, New Public Management ideas, and the Italian managerial theory "economia aziendale" (Meneguzzo, 2007).

Italian PA is the result of the cross-fertilization of different administrative cultures including the *Rechtsstaat* tradition (Austro-Hungarian derived Lombardia and Veneto), bureaucratic Napoleonic traditions (Piemonte and Sardinia), and weak-State models more similar to the Vatican State and the Two-Sicilies realm (South Italy).

These administrative cultures embody vastly differing visions of institutional and organizational models, and a diversity of relationships between PA,

citizens/civil society and other social and economical actors. These cultures further influence more minor themes such as public accounting and the management of public assets. This can be seen in northern regions where attention was given to openness and clarity of bureaucratic processes and on the delivery of basic public services such as waste and garbage collection, road maintenance, and public lighting. Here the philanthropy of the aristocracy and bourgeoisie played and strong role in the provision of social services and healthcare. In contrast, the southern civil servants were known for their arbitrariness and free-riding behaviours which determined the low quality of public services and a greater distance between the government and the citizens (Meneguzzo, 2007).

While the Piedmont in north-western Italy played a leading role in shaping the unified administration, institutional modernization efforts took place earlier and more obviously in other pre-unified States. East of Piedmont, in the Lombardo-Veneto region, a social class of bureaucrats was developed following a formalized fostered by the Austro-Hungarian empire featuring educational requirements for entry, career mobility, and ethical principles.

In the Naples realm and the Kingdom of Two Sicilies, the main Bourbonic laws (1816 and 1817) were in line with the previous French tradition. There were differences between formal rules, based on professional bureaucracy and territorial mobility, and their real application (prevalence of personnel with aristocratic origins). In other States - such as the Vatican - there was general lack of formal norms regulating the organization and functioning of public offices.

The Italian bureaucracy from the unification to 1900 was characterized by small size and high uniformity, including most of the employees coming from the Piedmont administration. Career paths were mainly hierarchical with high integration between bureaucrats and politicians. It was only in 1908 that a civil servants statute was adopted, as a consequence of a major conflict due to increasing size and function of the government, as well as the increasingly socially and culturally diverse public employees with the increasing number of civil servants from the former Kingdom of Two Sicilies and from the former Vatican State.

Public employment increased as a consequence of the expansion of the role of the State in the economy and the increase of employees from the South is simultaneous to this expansion.

Selection and training were carried out by the administration itself, which brought about the isolation of bureaucracy. Administrative elites such as those developed in France and the United Kingdom (Cassese, 1983) were all but nonexistent, and the closeness of career paths didn't allow to develop an education system similar to the ENA in France. Needless to say, Italy have not established PA education traditions such as the French *grands corps* or the English Oxbridge.

Italian PA has traditionally been dominated by administrative and public law while hesitant initiatives aimed at introducing scientific management principles encountered obstacles related to a formalistic and juridical culture.

Studies in the field of PA in Italy have been influenced by the juridical culture, both for historical reasons and because administrative law was (and is) required for recruitment at the higher levels of the public sector¹⁴. Only in the last three decades has PA began to be analyzed by the social sciences (political science, sociology as well as economics and management) (Lewanski, 1999; Meneguzzo, 2007). The administrative sciences approach has developed inside the administrative law and the public accounting areas, along with the development of organizational sociology, political sciences, public policy analysis, and finally the "economia aziendale" approach.

In literature administrative law is still widely considered the most or even the only relevant study of administration. A political science based administrative science, like in the United States and north-western Europe is said to be rare in Italy, while the study of public management has only emerged in the last two decades (Kickert, 2005). Cotta (1996) offers an interesting historical analysis on the Italian faculty of political sciences. It is depicted as a multifaceted

http://www.sspa.it/index.php?a=12.

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¹⁴ One of the most important public competitions for the access to management positions in the public sector (the so-called corso-concorso) organized by the National School for Public Administration is based on an exam including queries on administrative law; constitutional law; EU legislation; private law; labor legislation; political economy; public economics; national accounting; statistics; contemporary history; public management and foreign languages. Cfr.

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unit which covers a variety of disciplinary areas: the main ones are sociology, contemporary history, constitutional and international law, economics, political philosophy and history of political ideas, statistics and political science stricto sensu. Especially after the II World War, faculties of political sciences began to spread in other universities, but quite often the first step was to create a program of political sciences under the umbrella of the more well established law faculties. With time such programs have generally managed to become autonomous faculties from the faculties of law.

Political science as a specific and autonomous discipline has gained a role in the university curricula only since the 1960s, although in the Italian academic tradition the disciplines of political philosophy, history of political ideas and state theory (the German Staatslehre) had existed long before the appearance of political science (Cotta, 1996).

Regarding the economic faculties, it is worth mentioning the *Corso di Laurea* in PA and international institutions economics introduced first in the faculties of economics of the Bocconi and Tor Vergata Universities¹⁵. Although featuring a more management-oriented approach, the program represented an optimal allocation of courses in terms of legal, economic, managerial and statistical areas. Furthermore, there were specific courses in PA and the history of administration, as well as in international institutions¹⁶.

5. PA education in Italian universities: the results of the quantitative analysis

The research explored the university-based PA education in Italy. Information from 204 faculties of all 72 Italian universities was gathered. 2.198 education

¹⁵ "Economia delle amministrazioni pubbliche e delle istituzioni internazionali" also known as CLAPI.

¹⁶ Unfortunately, this four-years program has disappeared from most Italian universities with the Bologna process. At the University of Rome Tor Vergata it has been substituted by the three-years "Economics of public administration and regulation" (*Economia dei servizi, amministrazioni pubbliche, e regolamentazione*) and the two-years "Social and economic sciences with an orientation in Public economics and regulation" (*Scienze economiche e sociali - economia pubblica e regolamentazione*).

programs of different levels were analyzed and classified. Universities and faculties are distributed in geographical terms as shown in Table 1. Although universities are allocated evenly between north, centre and south, central Italy universities have fewer faculties. Nonetheless, the distribution of programs (in terms of credits) follows a different pattern as shown in Figure 3.

Table 1:	Geographical	distribution	of universities

Geographical area	Number of Universities	Number of Faculties			
North	28	79			
Centre	19	54			
South & Islands	25	71			
Total	72	204			

The supply of programs regarding PA is greater in north Italy, especially if compared with the south¹⁷ (Figure 3). Most of the programs are distributed among Lombardia (20%) and Lazio (15,9%) regions, followed by Toscana (10,7%) and Marche (7,5%).

Figure 3: Geographical distribution of PA programs

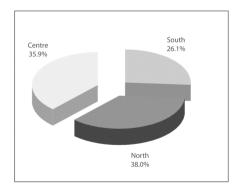
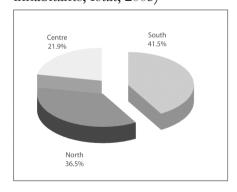


Figure 4: Geographical distribution of civil servants (% on data per 1,000 inhabitants, Istat, 2005)



¹⁷ If not specified, "south" is intended to include the two islands of Sardinia and Sicily.

This can be compared with the number of civil servants (Figure 4). According to the annual report on PA of the National statistics institute, during 2002, 36% of them worked in northern regions, 22% in the centre, 41% in the south (Istat, 2005: 41)¹⁸. Although with a high level of approximation¹⁹, it can be observed an adequate supply of PA programs in the north, a weak development in the central regions and an absolutely undersized situation in the south.

186 faculties out of 204 – distributed among economics, law, political science, sciences of communication, sociology, engineering and social sciences – have programs in PA (Figure 5).

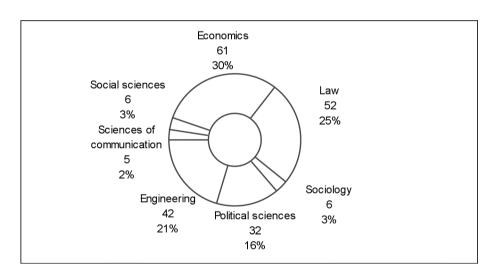


Figure 5: Distribution of faculties by type (nr & %)

¹⁵

¹⁸ Elaborations on data of civil servants per 1,000 inhabitants. Another dimension which can be considered, though less precise than the number of civil servants, is the number of public organizations. According to the same source, 67,7% of all the central administrations are concentrated in the Lazio region and 9,1% in Lombardia. Local governments are more numerous in Lombardia (18%) and Piemonte (14%), followed by Veneto and Campania (both with 7%) (Istat, 2005: 35).

¹⁹ It should be considered that PA programs, especially master programs which offer professional and mid-career training, are attended not only by civil servants but also by consultants or unemployed. As it will be shown later on, only 20% of all professional programs are taught in the south.

The program levels (Bologna system) included undergraduate programs (Bachelor's and Master's degree) and courses; 1st and 2nd level Masters; and PhD programs (Table 2).

All the programs were classified in several categories regarding the level, the type (undergraduate; professional training; and research programs); the disciplinary nature (law, economics, management, engineering, political science, sociology, communication, interdisciplinary and governance of specific policy fields) and the education cluster: public, legal or corporate.

A further categorization for the corporate cluster distinguished the programs in terms of subject area in: general public management; planning, budgeting and control; organization and human resources management; accounting and finance; accountability and social reporting; e-Government; marketing and communication; market-type mechanisms.

For the sake of exhaustiveness, all types of programs were considered. It should be noticed however that these are of a different nature and weight. For instance, a single course of 5 credits in public management has a different relevance of a PhD program of 180 credits in the same topic. Therefore, the calculations were performed by considering the credits, instead of the number of programs.

Undergraduate programs – Bachelor's and Master's degrees – were considered (and counted) separately from single courses. In several elaborations we chose the more detailed information on courses.

5.1. The levels and types of PA programs

Table 2 illustrates the distribution of the 2198 PA programs by level. Pregraduate courses have more credits (45,1%) as compared to professional training (28,6%) and research-based education (26,2%).

There are 1846 undergraduate courses in PA in Italy, taught inside bachelor's or master's programs (Bologna system): we counted 191 of this kind.

Level of program	Number of programs	Amount of credits (ECTS)
Bachelor's degree	121	21780
Master's degree	70	8400
Single course	1846	11763
Masters I level	70	4200
Masters II level	53	3320
PhDs	38	6840
Total	2198	56303

Table 2: PA teaching programs by level

There is a prevalence of II-level master programs (Master Philosophie) over I-level masters, which, together with the high number of enrolled students in the master's degree, represent an indicator of the failure of the so-called Bologna system in Italy.

There are 38 doctoral programs in Italy. Of these, 22 are developed around political science and public economics issues; 10 regard administrative and public law; and 6 are in managerial issues.

The amount of PA programs taught in economic faculties is larger then programs taught in political sciences and law faculties (Figure 6). This result is quite interesting but it doesn't take into account the disciplinary character of the programs, which will be considered in the next paragraph. In other words, the over 37% of PA programs taught in economic faculties includes also course and programs in administrative or public law.

An important data is represented by the nearly 5% of the programs organized jointly by different faculties. Again, this is something different from the interdisciplinary character of the programs. Only 21,7% of the interfaculty programs have an interdisciplinary character.

The programs can be distinguished in pre-graduate, professional and midcareer training, and research oriented. An overview of their distribution across the faculties is given in the Figure 7. Professional training is very often organized jointly by two or more faculties and it is prevalent in communication faculties, where we didn't find research-based programs in PA. On the contrary, research or doctoral programs have a significant weight in law, political sciences and economic faculties.

Figure 6: Distribution of PA programs by type of faculty

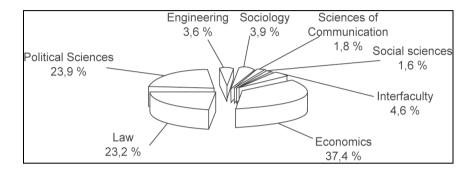
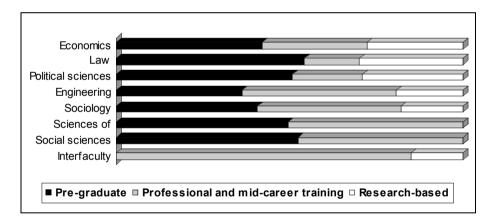


Figure 7: The distribution (%) of program types across faculties



In the framework of undergraduate education, it is worth distinguishing between single courses and degrees (either Bachelor's or Master's programs). The existence of specific degrees in PA could exemplify a more sustainable or "institutionalized" interest in the topic. It is the case of political sciences faculties (39,3%), as well as economics (33,1%) and law (16%) (Figure 8).

□ Dacrieioi s degrees ■ iviaster s degrees | 41,4%_____ 35,7% 30,4% 17,1% 0,0% 5,8% **Economics** Law Political Engineering Sociology Sciences of Social Interfaculty Sciences Communication sciences

Figure 8: Undergraduate programs by faculty

Figure 9 shows the allocation of programs in north, centre and south Italy. Southern universities are distinguished by a greater emphasis on research-based programs as compared to professional training.

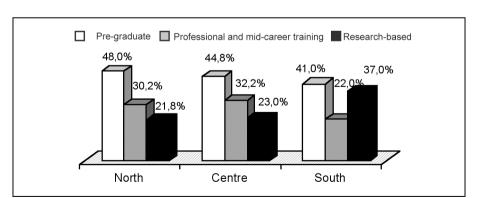


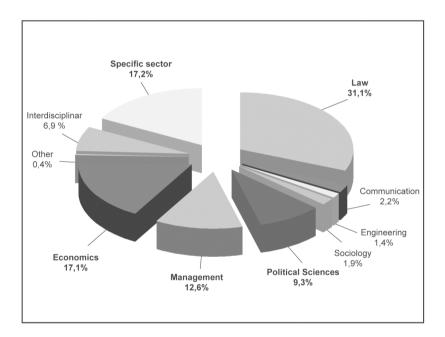
Figure 9: The geographical distribution (%) of program types

5.2. The disciplinary character of PA education programs

While information on faculties presented in the previous paragraph is interesting, it is even more so to describe PA programs in terms of their disciplinary character.

What we find is a more balanced picture, with law-oriented programs counting for 31%, economic and management counting together for 29,7% and political sciences and sociology at 11,2% (Figure 10).

Figure 10: The disciplinary character of PA programs



The distribution of PA programs inside the disciplinary areas is not homogeneous. A greater detail is given in Figure 11. It is easy to detect that law-oriented programs concentrate on the pre-graduate area, while professional and mid-career training is quite underdeveloped in this disciplinary area. This

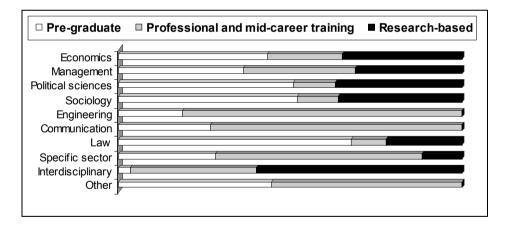
may be explained by the fact that Italian civil servants are mostly graduated in law and want to develop other kind of competencies²⁰.

It is also worthy to mention the high rate of 1st and 2nd level masters focused on the administration and governance of specific policy sectors and characterized by a special kind of interdisciplinarity developed around policy problems.

Finally, if we consider the weight of PhD programs as an indicator predicting the development of the disciplinary area, we can notice that economics and law are well placed ahead, followed by political science and management.

Figure 12 analyses Bachelor's and Master's degrees according to their disciplinary orientation. It is worth of note that, while the political science approach prevails as in the previous figure, other disciplinary areas such as sociology or even law and economics seldom recognize PA as a specific degree topic.

Figure 11: The disciplinary character of PA programs by type



²⁰ A survey of the Italian Department of Public Administration could be usefully recalled. 99% of the 1,588 senior civil servants interviewed in 2003 felt to lack managerial competencies.

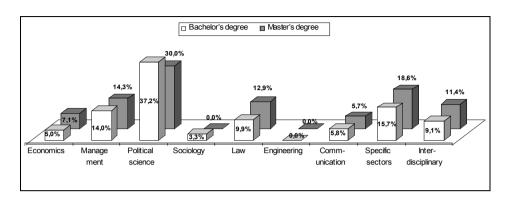
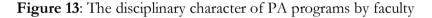
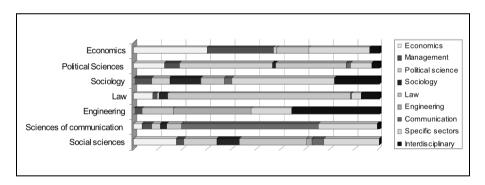


Figure 12: The disciplinary orientation of undergraduate degrees

Another area of analysis is the relationship between the type of faculty and the disciplinary area. A general overview is given in Figure 13 and a greater detail is found in Figure 14.

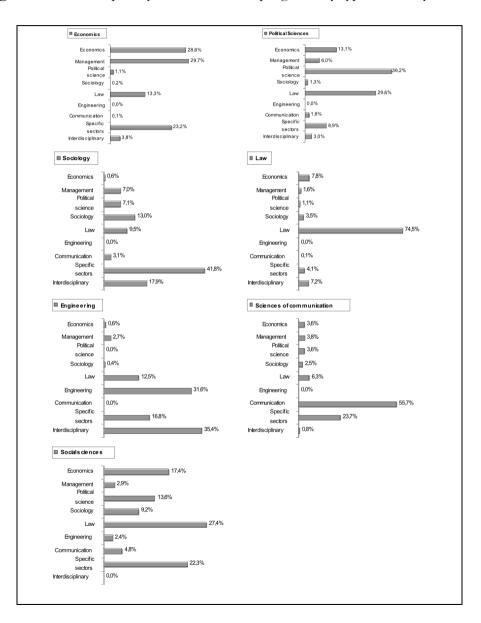




The faculties of law and sciences of communication are the most homogeneous. Juridical programs in PA are the most present in the different faculties and play a central role in the faculties of political sciences and of social sciences. The analysis of the disciplinary character of PA programs by geographical area (Table 3) highlights the major weight of juridical programs in almost all regions, with the exception of Lombardia, Campania and Sicilia, which have a strong presence of economic programs; Toscana and Calabria with an empha-

sis on managerial programs; and Abruzzo where the relevance of the political science approach is registered.

Figure 14: The disciplinary character of PA programs by type of faculty



	Econ.	Mng.t	Pol. science	Sociology	Law	Engineering	Commu- nic.	Spe- cific sectors	Inter- disciplinary
Lombardia	20,6	9,7	10,1	0,7	28,3	1,2	2,6	17,1	9,8
Lazio	13,4	15,2	9,8	1,3	34,4	1,5	1,5	11,0	11,7
Toscana	6,8	21,3	9,4	0,3	33,4	2,4	4,6	21,5	0,3
Campania	40,3	8,2	10,0	0,9	28,3	2,9	0,0	9,4	0,0
Marche	5,3	9,1	6,3	14,0	31,6	0,0	3,8	0,0	29,9
Sicilia	39,4	16,1	5,9	0,0	33,5	4,7	0,0	0,4	0,0
Piemonte	11,4	4,5	14,5	1,1	21,4	0,0	0,7	37,7	8,6
Veneto	10,4	10,7	4,7	0,0	22,6	1,2	0,4	34,0	16,1
Emilia R.	10,3	32,1	7,9	0,0	34,2	0,0	0,0	15,0	0,5
Puglia	13,7	6,6	5,7	0,8	33,1	0,3	0,8	6,4	32,6
Abruzzo	7,6	6,7	43,3	2,0	18,3	0,0	7,1	15,0	0,0
Calabria	6,8	52,9	0,0	0,6	20,5	0,0	0,0	19,3	0,0
Molise	3,7	4,5	3,9	3,9	53,6	1,9	2,2	26,3	0,0
Umbria	6,2	14,0	13,2	0,0	43,5	0,0	14,4	8,8	0,0
Friuli V.G.	6,1	4,9	9,5	3,2	36,4	1,9	0,0	0,0	38,1
Liguria	16,6	6,5	19,1	2,7	52,0	0,0	0,0	3,1	0,0
Sardegna	7,9	6,0	12,0	0,0	71,8	0,0	0,0	2,3	0,0
Trentino AA	5,7	2,9	6,9	10,3	70,1	2,9	0,0	1,1	0,0
Valle D'Aosta	17,1	20,0	8,6	0,0	45,7	0,0	0,0	8,6	0,0
Basilicata	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	27,8	38,9	0,0	33,3	0,0

Table 3: The disciplinary character of PA programs by geographical area (%)

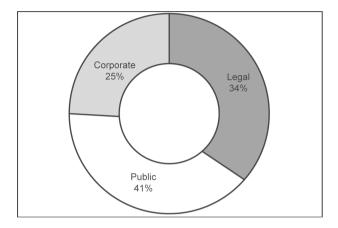
5.3. PA education clusters

This paragraph is focused on the distribution of PA programs according to the three clusters identified by the literature: public, legal and corporate. As already mentioned, Italy is classified by the literature among the legalistic group of countries. Our research shows that the public cluster is the prevalent one in Italy (Figure 15).

This data, however, should be put in opposition to the information regarding the disciplinary orientation (Figure 10). The final result consists in law be-

ing the predominant disciplinary area (at 31,1%); but not the main cluster, which is the public one with 41%.

Figure 15: PA education clusters



This can be easily explained by considering the high homogeneity of the legal cluster (matching with law) and the high fragmentation of the other two clusters, especially the public one, split into several different disciplines.

A closer look suggests some other differences in the composition of each cluster. While in the legal cluster there is a prominence of pre-graduate programs, in the public cluster there is a strong relevance of PhD programs and in the corporate cluster the emphasis is on professional training (Figure 16).

However, pre-graduate education inside the legal cluster takes place through single courses, while it is more "structured" into B.A.s and M.A.s in the other two clusters, in particular in the public one (Figure 17).

It is also worth to analyze the clusters by considering their relative weight inside the three classical geographic areas. A north-centre-south comparison shows a greater weight of the public cluster in the south and in the north, and an equilibrated interest towards the three clusters in the centre. The corporate cluster is strong in central Italy and particularly weak in the south (Figure 18).

At a greater detail, there is also a difference between the 20 Italian regions, as shown in the next map (Figure 19 and greater detail in Table 4).

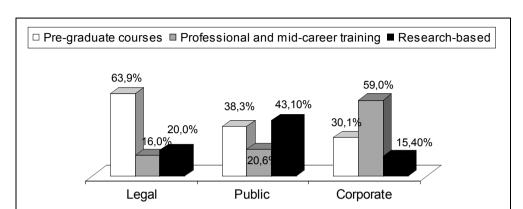
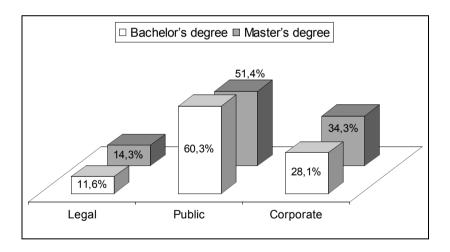


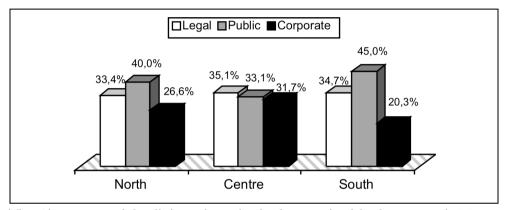
Figure 16: PA education clusters by program type

Figure 17: Undergraduate degrees by disciplinary cluster



It doesn't seem to exist an association between administrative cultures and traditions on the one hand, and educational clusters on the other. Lombardia and Veneto are often considered in the historical literature as regions which embody the Austro-Hungarian derived Rechtsstaat tradition. We should therefore expect to find the dominance of the legal cluster. Nevertheless, the public cluster includes over 44% of PA programs in Lombardia, compared to the 34% of law; and 35% in Veneto (compared to 35,1% in law).

Figure 18: PA education clusters: internal distribution by geographic area



The Piemonte and Sardinia regions, both characterized by bureaucratic Napoleonic traditions, show differentiated situations. In Piemonte we find a harmonized picture with the prevalence of the corporate cluster (at 42,9%). In Sardinia the legal cluster is decisively predominant at 69,7%.

Figure 19: PA education clusters: regional distribution



Finally, the weak-State model inherited by Lazio and Sicily and similar to the Vatican State and the Two-Sicilies realm is characterized by a greater weight of the public cluster.

A further analysis of the corporate cluster with reference to the specific subject areas of the programs has highlighted the strong presence of programs dealing with public management in general (over 50%), followed by programs in strategic planning and control and programs in marketing and communication (Figure 20).

Table 4: PA education clusters: regional distribution (%)

	Legal	Public	Corporate
Basilicata	27,8	0,0	72,2
Valle D'Aosta	45,7	25,7	28,6
Trentino Alto Adige	68,9	25,6	5,6
Sardegna	69,7	19,9	10,4
Liguria	53,5	40,0	6,5
Friuli Venezia Giulia	36,4	56,9	6,8
Calabria	30,2	28,0	41,8
Umbria	45,1	21,6	33,3
Molise	53,6	12,7	33,7
Abruzzo	25,1	59,7	15,3
Puglia	39,1	52,4	8,5
Emilia Romagna	35,1	19,7	45,2
Veneto	35,1	35,0	29,9
Piemonte	34,7	22,4	42,9
Sicilia	33,5	45,7	20,8
Campania	28,3	57,7	14,0
Marche	32,6	41,8	25,6
Toscana	35,9	18,3	45,8
Lazio	34,6	40,4	25,0
Lombardia	31,7	44,5	23,8

Perhaps most noteworthy is the group of programs in innovation processes, entirely based on professional training programs or master. Professional training is also prevalent in the other main groups, with general public management programs including 49,4% of masters and programs in strategic planning and in marketing and communication each including 63% of masters.

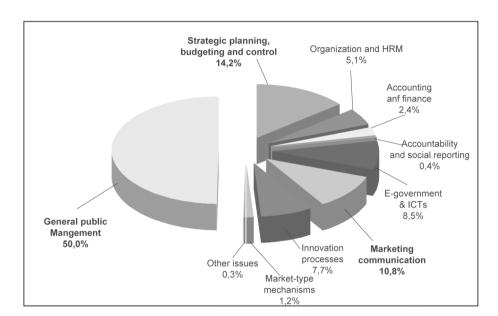


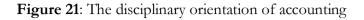
Figure 20: Subjects taught in corporate programs

5.4. Specificities of PA education in Italy

The disciplinary approach adopted in teaching issues such as accounting and administrative sciences merits a further analysis.

We would expect accounting (public, regional or national) to be taught mainly in economic faculties and adopting a managerial approach. However, 70% of programs in accounting are characterized by a juridical approach.

Programs entitled "Scienza dell'amministrazione" include only undergraduate courses and one Bachelor's degree at the faculty of political sciences of the University of Palermo. 80% of the courses pertain to the political science disciplinary area (therefore to the public cluster) and are mainly taught in this kind of faculty. Nonetheless, there are nearly 20% of the courses taught according to the legalistic approach (Figure 22).



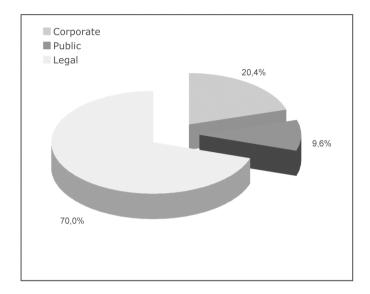
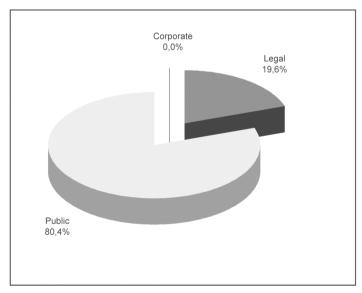


Figure 22: The disciplinary orientation of courses entitled administrative sciences



6. Key findings and areas for further research

PA as an academic field of study is going through a strong evolution in Italy. It can be affirmed that Italy is at the beginning of an important shift from the legalistic approach. It is not possible however to identify the direction of this evolution, although the continental European approach, based on political and administrative sciences, seems to exert a stronger influence in comparison to the Anglo-Saxon and partly Nordic managerial approach. On the one hand, there is empirical evidence that the public/political science cluster is the prevalent one, on the other the management/corporate cluster is experimenting an accelerated and sustainable development.

The role of the main faculties

Findings from the statistical analysis highlight the strong development of PA programs in faculties different from the law faculty. The greater commitment in PA programs is registered in economic faculties (over 37%) and political sciences faculties. In these, especially political sciences faculties, we found a greater presence of BAs and MAs, while the law faculties supply tends to focus on single pre-graduate courses. A relevant difference between these three main faculties is the level of homogeneity: extremely high in law; and scant in economics and political sciences.

The disciplinary orientation

As far as the disciplinary orientation is concerned, juridical programs in PA are generally prevalent (31%) and widespread also in economic and in political sciences faculties.

Surprisingly enough, PA programs approached by a management perspective amount to nearly 13% and are placed between the economic (17%) and the political science approach (9%). The management approach seems to be particularly strong in central regions.

However, if we aggregate the disciplinary approaches in clusters, as suggested by the literature in the topic (Hajnal, 2003), we find that the public cluster, mainly based on political science, is the main one (41%), both in terms of quantity of programs and in terms of emphasis on doctoral education.

Geographical differences

The geographical comparison of the 20 Italian regions has highlighted the underdevelopment of PA programs in south Italy, concerning mainly undergraduate and professional training.

Other specificities

Other specificities of PA education in Italy include two topics: public accounting on the one hand, and administrative sciences in the other.

The former is commonly dealt with adopting a legal approach (70%) and the weak position of the managerial approach is highlighted.

Administrative science is mainly approached by political science (80%), although law plays an important role (20%).

Areas for further research

Given the dynamicity of the scenario, this statistical analysis represents a static, yet complete, photography. Therefore, it should be updated in the mid-term in order to monitor the development of the different disciplinary approaches and clusters.

Furthermore, the research could benefit of other information such as the number of enrolled students. Data regarding student placements and career success, and regarding the relative success of PA graduates in securing government employment would also be valuable.

The database could be usefully expanded in order to consider also professional training institutes and academies operating at the national and regional levels. The main of them, at the national level, include the National School of Public Administration (SSPA), the High School of the Ministry of Economy and Finance (SSEF) and the High School of the Ministry of the Interior.

Other important areas of further research include the comparison with other countries, especially with Austria, Germany, Switzerland and Greece, in which PA education is experimenting similar evolutions.

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Appendix: list of universities analysed

Region	Name of the university	Nr. of faculties analyzed	Nr. of faculties with PA programs
Abruzzo	Chieti-Pescara	2	2
	Aquila	2	1
	Teramo	3	3
Calabria	della Calabria	3	2
	Magna Grecia	1	1
Campania	Napoli II - Capua	3	2
	Napoli L'Orientale	1	1
	Napoli Federico II	5	5
	Salerno	4	3
	Suor Orsola Benincasa	1	1
	Sannio di Benevento	3	2
	Parthenope	3	2
Emilia Romagna	Bologna	4	3
	Ferrara	3	2
	Modena e Reggio Emilia	4	3
	Parma	3	3
Friuli Venezia	Udine	3	3
Giulia	Trieste	4	3
Lazio	Roma - Tor Vergata	3	3
	Roma - La Sapienza	6	6
	Roma III	4	3
	Cassino	3	3
	Tuscia	2	2
	San Pio V - Roma	2	2
	Luiss - Roma	3	3
	Lumsa - Roma	1	1
	Università Europea di Roma	1	1
	Università "Campus Bio-Medico" Roma	1	1
Lombadia	Bocconi - Milano	2	2
	Liuc - Castellanza	3	2
	Iulm - Milano	1	1
	Cattolica del Sacro Cuore - Milano	4	4

Region	Name of the university	Nr. of faculties analyzed	Nr. of faculties with PA programs
	Insubria - Como Varese	2	2
	Bergamo	3	3
	Brescia	3	3
Lombardia	Milano	2	2
	Milano Bicocca	3	3
	Politecnico di Milano	1	1
	Pavia	4	4
	Istituto Universitario di Studi Superiori - Pavia	1	1
Marche	Camerino	1	1
	Macerata	4	4
	Carlo Bo - Urbino	4	4
	Politecnica delle Marche	2	2
Molise	del Molise	4	3
Piemonte	Torino	4	3
	Orientale	3	3
	Politecnico di Torino	1	1
Puglia	del Salento - Lecce	4	4
	Bari	3	3
	Foggia	2	2
	Politecnico di Bari	1	1
	Lum	2	2
Sardegna	Cagliari	4	3
_	Sassari	3	3
Sicilia	Palermo	4	4
	Catania	4	3
	Messina	4	3
	Kore di Enna	3	3
Toscana	Siena	4	3
	Pisa	4	4
	Firenze	4	4
	S.Anna di Pisa	1	2

Region	Name of the university	Nr. of faculties analyzed	Nr. of faculties with PA programs
Umbria	Perugia	4	4
Veneto	Ca' Foscari - Venezia	1	1
	Verona	2	2
	Padova	4	4
Basilicata	Università degli Studi della Basilicata	2	2
Liguria	Università degli Studi di Genova	4	4
Valle D'Aosta	Università della Valle D'Aosta	3	2
Trentino Alto	Università degli Studi di Trento	4	4
Adige	Libera Università di Bolzano	3	3
Total number of fac	culties	204	186

