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EIPASCOPE dans les grandes lignes

EIPASCOPE est le Bulletin de l'Institut européen d'administration publique et est publié trois fois par an. Les articles publiés dans EIPASCOPE sont rédigés par les membres de la faculté de l'IEAP ou des membres associés et portent directement sur les domaines de travail de l'IEAP. A travers son Bulletin, l'Institut entend sensibiliser le public aux questions européennes d'actualité et lui fournir des informations sur les activités réalisées à l'Institut. La plupart des articles sont de nature générale et visent à rendre des questions d'intérêt commun accessibles pour le grand public. Leur objectif est de présenter, discuter et analyser des développements politiques et institutionnels, ainsi que des questions juridiques et administratives qui façonnent le processus d'intégration européenne.

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Civil Services in the EU of 27 – Reform Outcomes and the Future of the Civil Service



Christoph Demmke*

This article is presenting the results of a study on “Civil Service Systems in the EU of 27”¹, based on empirical data from the EU Member States, and realised within the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN), on the evolution of the classical bureaucratic career system in Europe. The following discussion presents an overview of the current status of national civil services, the main reform trends that are taking place and the main outcomes of selected national reform policies. The overall aim is to provide empirical evidence, facts and comparative statistical evidence in order to help experts and scholars to better understand the different national civil service systems, the nature of reforms and the changes that are taking place. This study thus represents basic research from which it may be worth continuing with more research into managerial issues, organisational reforms as well as different HR policies such as leadership issues, developments in the field of working time, diversity management, anti-discrimination and pension reforms. This overview may also serve as an instrument for a more rational discourse about the similarities and differences amongst the different national civil services.

Introduction

National public services are moving through a fascinating but also disorienting period of change throughout Europe. During the last few decades almost all national (and sub-national) public services have introduced major civil service reforms. The discussion on what has been achieved by restructuring the national public service is most controversial. Still, there is little evidence of the outcome of these reforms, the identification and definition of new administrative and organisational models and on the answer to the question of whether and how a specific civil service will survive at all in the future.

Still, civil service systems are a constituent part of our system of government. Modern government still depends to a great extent on the work of the national civil services and their employees; the millions of civil servants. In fact, the quality of life in Europe depends in many ways on those who work for governments and on how government works as such. Furthermore, civil services have a democratic and

ethical function; they should serve society and the law, protect the population as well as function in a sustainable manner. For all of these tasks and duties the Member States have established specific civil services. No government functions as a private company or under labour law.

Public Service Reforms and their outcomes

When looking back in time it indeed seems that every “era (...) has a few words that epitomise its world-view and that are fixed points by which all else can be measured. In the Middle Ages they were such words as faith, grace, God, nation; in the eighteenth century they were such words as reason, nature, and rights...”²

In the field of public management, reform language is changing all the time and is subject to many fashions. One could also say that, where classical civil service values such as neutrality, stability, hierarchy, impartiality, fairness

and standardisation are “static” and “conservative”, public management reform values are “fluent” and “modern”.

Modern public management science still promotes the linear development belief that there is always a better way to do things. Management theory therefore often matches our own cultural belief that anything new is better and promising. Therefore, many consider the old-fashioned term “bureaucracy” as something negative whereas the modern term “good governance” is seen as more positive. Reform rhetoric also contrasts new (good) managerial reforms with old (bad) bureaucracies, civil services and bureaucrats. “The name given to the old – that against which the modern, reformed public sector organisation stands out as superior – is usually something like traditional bureaucracy”.³ However, it remains unclear as to what the new model actually is and how it contrasts with the old model, if this new model ever existed at all.

Pollitt claims that public management reform has occurred much more as a result of replication of rhetoric, fashion and symbolism than the “grim dictates of the world economy or the functional necessity for increased efficiency”.⁴ When looking from the past to the present, however, it seems more likely that change will not result in a linear progress for the better, but rather to failures, successes, paradoxes, dilemmas and simple alternation. Choices must therefore be made very carefully. In reality, public sector modernization is full of paradoxes and unintended results (see Margetts/Perri 6 and Hood (2010)). Moreover, often, public reform language is contradictory.

Of course, most experts have a clear idea of what they want to leave behind. The well known bureaucratic pathologies have produced a counter wave against the bureaucratic model. But what is emerging instead? New public services, new public management organisations, hybrid organisations, private sector-like organisations, post-bureaucratic organisations, position systems? Some observers even claim that public administration in the 21st century has arrived in a new era of post-modernity.⁵ Still, “techniques for organisational engineering come and go with remarkable rapidity. New techniques come into fashion and old ones go out, much like the outfits modelled in Paris, Milan, and New York”.⁶

As many modern terms imply, the new models are mostly counter models to an old model. However, there is not yet a widely accepted new organisational model. Moreover, the move away from the classical model has produced new, but still not well known, organisational problems and difficulties. In the future, it will be interesting to see where and how new organisational models and reforms will indeed produce better results.

As the study “Civil Services in the EU of 27” shows, the reform of classical bureaucracies is actually a fascinating subject. It challenges many popular assumptions and increasingly calls into question the traditional characteristics of civil service systems, but leaves us puzzled as to the outcomes of all reforms. In fact, although almost all European civil services are in a process of ongoing reforms, there is still very little knowledge and comparative information

with regard to the nature and outcomes of these reforms. As a consequence, traditional features of the national civil services are increasingly disappearing. Long-standing taken for granted assumptions and orthodoxies no longer hold.

The Challenge of Comparing Civil Service Reforms in the European Union

Since the publication *Public Management Reform: A Comparative Analysis*, from Pollitt and Bouckaert (2000)⁷ until *Government at a Glance* (OECD) (2009),⁸ awareness has been growing of the importance of government activities and public sector reform. Despite the great importance of the civil services for the well-being of our societies, very little comparative and empirical information exists about the nature of reforms and the reform paths of the national civil services. Even amongst academics, little attention has been devoted to the field of comparative civil service reform outcomes. What could be the reason for this? One basic explanation could be the enormous difficulties involved in carrying out comparative research in an area which, until recently, was considered to be a national competence and represents a branch of the politico-administrative system that has been influenced the most by national traditions and history.

Comparisons of the national public- and civil services have so far produced a contrasting picture.⁹ Most of these comparisons are based on qualitative and literature research. Overall, there is very little factual and empirical evidence about structures, processes and policies in the national public services. The same is true as regards the nature of civil service reforms and evaluations in terms of their effects and outcomes.

Due to the difficulties involved in obtaining reliable data and carrying out applied empirical research, many theories reflect personal opinions, images and perceptions. According to Pollitt and Bouckaert, “There is a growing fashion for the authors of academic texts to ‘confess’ their own perspectives and likely biases”.¹⁰ Often, some countries are praised as being reform-oriented countries, whereas others are seen as reform laggards although it remains unclear as to the basis on which these judgements and value statements are based. Another challenge represents the identification of administrative models. As such the use of models is ambiguous: “Not only is it difficult to know what the exact reference is about, but the word ‘model’ is often used with an everyday language connotation (...). One of the most typical uses of this kind of concepts of models is illustrated by the recurring temptation to look at so-called best practices in public management. Comparing experiences can be very fruitful if it is done according to a carefully designed programme, but it usually ends up at best in misunderstandings, at worst in used-car salesman attitudes...”.¹¹ Overall, many comparative publications about civil service reforms easily take the direction of ideological discourses.

The latter is not surprising given the fact that it is very difficult to obtain reliable, yet comparable data from all 27 EU Member States.¹² Moreover, different historical

Of course, most experts have a clear idea of what they want to leave behind. The well known bureaucratic pathologies have produced a counter wave against the bureaucratic model. But what is emerging instead?

traditions and cultures¹³ as well as different HR systems have a considerable impact on public management modernisation paths and on the outcomes of HR reforms. The relevance of context and diversity in European public administrations also has critical implications for the concept of mutual learning and the possibility to “import” so-called best practices from one country to another.

Other problems relate to the challenges involved in comparing different national concepts and definitions of civil services. For example, the concept of civil service is totally different in the British concept. Moreover, whereas some Member States apply a narrow concept of the national civil service (e.g. Ireland and Poland), others use a broad definition (e.g. France, Finland, the Netherlands). Moreover, there can be too little or too much attention paid to theoretical issues, too little or too much focus on historical explanations, an analysis which is too general without taking into consideration the many existing specific features of the national systems, avoidance of different linguistic meanings and definitions, etc. In particular when comparing civil service systems, another problem stems from the question as to whether different reform concepts mean the same thing and whether the comparison is really comparing the same issues.

Other challenges relate to the lack of attractiveness of doing research in a field which is often considered to be very complex, technical and dominated by legalistic approaches. In many Member States civil service laws can easily fill hundreds of pages. Thus, any comparative study faces the risk of being far too superficial. Finally, there is the added difficulty of comparing and analysing the different (legal, political, organisational and HR-) instruments in different legal and administrative traditions and in many languages.

Study outcomes

The study “Civil Services in the EU of 27” took more than two years from which more than one year was dedicated to the gathering of data, the clarification of concepts and definitions. It was supported by all Member States and the European Commission. All Member States contributed to the study. There is no space to discuss the applied methodology in detail (the interested reader may consult the relevant book chapters II, III and IV).

The study confirms an OECD analysis¹⁴ which maintains that there is:

- a transition from a centralised to decentralised determination of employment condition;
- a shift from statutory to contractual or managerial governance;
- a development from career systems to post-bureaucratic (position systems);
- a delegation of responsibilities to managers;
- an alignment of pay levels with private sector practices;
- a change of special retirement schemes.

However, it observes different and distinct reform paths amongst different country clusters, administrative models and civil service systems. For example, the current reform paths in Portugal and Spain, Austria and Germany or Latvia and Lithuania seem to differ widely. This reform process does not only challenge many traditional perceptions and traditional aspects of the bureaucratic civil services. In reality, it challenges the whole concept of a specific civil service and the traditional legitimacy of specific working conditions as such. Moreover, the often prevailing perception that civil services are reform resistant is clearly wrong. Instead, the tremendous pace of change is challenging the experts who have difficulties in understanding how and why public services are changing.¹⁵ Moreover, the current reform process is taking place in very different national contexts and against the background of widely varying traditions. In addition, the changing of some features has turned out to be more sensitive in some countries than in others.

In the discussions and the analysis of the various civil service systems, much insight and many fascinating developments have been found. However, the results of this comparative analysis also represent a remarkable challenge regarding a theoretical understanding of the discussed change processes in the field of civil service reforms. In fact, many reform outcomes confirm the assumptions of path-dependency, political culture, rational choice, neo-institutionalism, Europeanisation and convergence theories at the same time.

Moreover, because of the growing fragmentation of national public services, the increasing diversity of the public sector workforce and the differences in structure and size of the national civil services, this study also challenges uniform public motivation theories. On the other hand, the findings do not challenge the existence of public service motivation as such. However, we agree with Perry and Hondeghe that it is necessary to investigate the influence of the country/region/civil service structure as an institution of public service motivation. In addition, it is also important to carry out more research on public service motivation in different parts of the public sector. Do civil servants (still) have a different public service motivation than other public employees? Are civil servants in the ministries different to those in the agencies? Do civil servants in “bureaucratic” countries have different motivations and values than civil servants in post-bureaucratic countries? And – are civil servants more ethical because they are civil servants?

This study gives evidence that different historical traditions and cultures as well as HR systems have a considerable impact on public management modernisation paths and on the outcomes of HR reforms. In a way, the findings in this study give an intriguing picture about the differences and similarities of the public service systems in Europe at the same time. It also illustrates the difficulties in identifying country models and geographical similarities in times of decentralisation, differentiation, greater flexibility and blurring of boundaries within the public sector and between the public and private sector. At the same time it

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also gives an overview about Europeanisation, convergence and common reform and fashion trends in some areas.

In fact, whereas in some policies similar reform trends and reform outcomes can be observed, in other fields differences are prevailing or even increasing. Almost all Member States follow the same grand reform paths: decentralisation of HR responsibilities and responsabilisation of managers, greater flexibility in recruitment and career development policies, a stronger focus on individual and organisational performance management and a general trend towards de-bureaucratisation. The relevance of context and diversity in European public administrations has important implications for the concept of mutual learning and good practice. Because of this it is almost impossible to offer a European definition of the term *civil services* and good practices in civil service reform. Only in rare cases can foreign reforms be purchased as standard off-the-shelf products without taking into account their roles and repercussions in the respective administrations. Success is only possible if new reform instruments are shaped to the needs of the specific administration, taking the particularities of the administrative culture into account. At the same time, benchmarking may only be possible in those areas which are marked by a) common reform trends, b) common reform fashions, c) the adoption of common reform instruments in a d) similar administrative culture/structure.



Despite all current developments away from the bureaucratic model, it is difficult to say whether the findings confirm the end of the bureaucratic paradigm or the beginning of a new post-bureaucratic paradigm. For certain, the classical bureaucracies are about to change. However, some bureaucratic features are not vanishing. It is also not yet clear what the post-bureaucratic paradigm is, apart from remedies to the weaknesses of the classical bureaucratic model. Still, developments like decentralisation, responsabilisation, greater flexibility, deregulation and more openness are too wide and too fluid concepts. These developments are also full of paradoxes and ambivalences. Consequently, they represent alternatives to the classical models. But does this also mean improvements?

What is clearly noticeable is that the post-bureaucratic reform of the national civil services is gaining importance in all Member States. As a result, the current international reform process is leading to a boost in innovation that could also be of great interest in the respective national practice. The international comparison provides a multitude of options for learning from the experiences and problems of

others, without ignoring the particularities of the national administrative structures. Hence, the nature and effects of public service reforms must be seen much more in the context of the different public administrative traditions, geographical and cultural differences as well as the importance of different organisational structures. At the same time it must be seen in the context of worldwide reform trends, reform fashions, political interests and the importance of the European integration process.

The need for better country clusters

As the results of the study suggest, it is also important to find better and more fine-tuned classifications for the national civil service systems. It also becomes increasingly difficult to classify the Member States into country traditions, geographical or civil service clusters. In fact, similarities exist only with regard to some institutional and structural issues. One example may illustrate this: all Mediterranean countries have a career structure in their civil services; whilst none of the Scandinavian countries has a career system. This could be interpreted as the existence of two different models. However, this is problematic for various reasons. In fact, other institutional features may be very diverse within the different country clusters and administrative traditions. For example, continental countries differ sharply as regards the issue of civil servants' job security.

From the clusters, only one group, Mediterranean countries, indeed represents a number of homogeneous civil service systems. However, the trend seems to be rather in the direction of more differentiation. In the meantime, especially after the most recent reforms in Portugal, this group of countries (Greece, Cyprus, Portugal, Spain and Italy) is becoming increasingly diverse. Although most

of these countries still share the fact that they have many more bureaucratic features than the Scandinavian group, they are also relatively diverse. The bureaucratic and "privatised" Italian civil service is very different from the still relatively traditional and bureaucratic Greek civil service. On the other hand, the reformed Portuguese civil service cannot be compared with the Spanish civil service which still resembles the traditional French model (although the Spanish reform process has introduced, similarly to Germany, many different and diverse reform initiatives at central and regional level). Contrary to this and despite some significant differences between Estonia on the one hand and Denmark, Finland and Sweden on the other hand, the latter three Scandinavian countries can also be seen to form a relatively homogenous administrative tradition. The Netherlands combine features of the Scandinavian states with classical bureaucratic states. The data suggests that it would be problematic to include it into the same category as Belgium, Germany, Luxemburg and France, which still have more traditional bureaucratic systems. The Anglo-Saxon countries and the Eastern European

countries represent the most diverse groupings of countries. Thus, the Anglo-Saxon cluster and Central European cluster are relatively diverse and arbitrary groupings.

Differences can also be seen in relation to the former communist countries that entered the EU in 2005. Most of them adopted a traditional bureaucratic career system in the early nineties. However, many Eastern European states are still struggling with many different reform concepts and do not know which reform path to take. Whereas some take very different reform concepts (Lithuania vs. Latvia), others have opted for more similar strategies (Slovakia, Hungary). Today, most of the Eastern European states have hybrid systems with fragile career systems (if at all), less job security for civil servants than in other Member States, no specific pension systems for civil servants, flexible recruitment systems and mobility flows that are too large (given the fact that work in the public services is not very attractive).

Overall, the study confirms the existence of a great variety of systems. Whereas most countries move away from the traditional bureaucratic career systems, our study cannot confirm that all Member States are moving towards the same direction. There is no clear development towards the emergence of a European post-bureaucratic model. Instead, most Member States seem to be keeping some traditional elements whilst discarding others. The decision on what to keep and what to abandon is closely connected with national traditions, habits, beliefs and the national political interests. Overall, the result is a paradox: whilst all Member States want to move away from the bureaucratic model, they have not found yet a final reform destination.

Thus, this study gives a completely new insight into the differences and similarities of the HR systems in Europe. However, it illustrates much more a new stage of civil service reform and experimentation. The reform focus varies greatly amongst the Member States. Whereas some introduce new civil service laws (Portugal and Germany), others focus on HR reforms and mobility policies (France), coordination policies (Sweden) or the fight against corruption (many Eastern European states). Bureaucratic career systems and post-bureaucratic systems produce their own reform agendas. The same can be said for country clusters: Continental, Eastern European, Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon, South-Eastern and Mediterranean countries produce their own successes and failures as a result of public service reforms.

Still it is very difficult to say whether post-bureaucratic countries produce more or less efficiency, effectiveness, citizen orientation, fairness, good administration, performance, less patronage and corruption than the bureaucratic countries. So far it seems that many civil service models have their own strengths and weaknesses. However, as the study shows, many Eastern European countries face challenges that do not exist in old Member States (and even less in the Scandinavian countries). In general, the older Member States seem to be more successful in fields such as anti-discrimination, equality and diversity policies. Many continental career-system countries also have more competitive salary systems. However, overall the Scandinavian countries are seen as more successful with regard to a number of individual HR policies. Eastern European states and the two new Member States face more challenges than the older Member States.

The future of national civil services

In the future, public administration will most likely become more complicated and probably more contradictory all the time¹⁶. While expectations of government are increasing, the resources available to meet these expectations are diminishing. Civil servants of the future will have to be at ease with more complexity and flexibility. They will have to be comfortable with change, often rapid change. At the same time they will take more autonomous decisions, be more responsible, accountable, performance-oriented, and subject to new competency and skill requirements. Despite the popularity of criticising the over-emphasis on laws and rules in contemporary civil services and the reaction: reducing bureaucracy, rules and administrative burdens, the primacy of law is likely to remain in the future. However, it will be complemented by other tools for resolving conflicts, new integrity-based approaches, new regulatory techniques, new informal instruments, an enhanced access to IT information, and a delicate balance between more citizen rights and a general stronger concern for governmental risks.

The civil service workforce will be better qualified and more diverse than ever before. At the same time, civil servants will face more value conflicts and dilemmas although they are also more aware of the existence of ethical rules, conflicts of interest issues and conflict resolution techniques.

Despite all alignment trends, civil servants will never be able to compete with private sector companies in terms



of flexibility. On the other hand, in the meantime, there are also a number of national public services that are less bureaucratic than many companies in the private sector. However, especially in the national civil services some specific bureaucratic features will remain in place in order to sustain core democratic values like equality, fairness and legal security. According to Peters and Pierre, "the challenge in the longer term.... is to design organisations that combine the efficiency and service capacity of decentralised organisations with the uniform and legalistic nature of hierarchical organisations".¹⁷

Overall, despite all popular images, work in civil services will remain interesting, challenging, important and "a key to a better society and world".¹⁸ Next, the Member States will – due to different national political agendas – continue to differ sharply as regards reform pressure and reform priorities. However, reform policies such as diversity, anti-discrimination, reducing administrative burdens and performance-related pay are likely to continue to have a high priority on the reform agenda of many countries. At the same time, budgetary constraints will lead to a deterioration of working conditions in some countries and not enhance

the attractiveness of work in the national civil services. Moreover, growing financial constraints and budget pressures will force the national governments to further cut resources in more areas and policies, and this may have negative results on the effectiveness of public policies. Many Member States will continue to employ a specific category of public law civil servants. However, the number of civil servants will be reduced as will the sectors that employ civil servants.

In the future, the national civil services no longer have a single, coherent paradigm or conceptual framework. "Disaggregation promotes decomposition of the civil service. Two concepts central to traditional management are now disappearing. One is that any particular government, whether federal, state, or local, should act as a single, unified employer. The other is the concomitant idea of a unified civil service".¹⁹ Consequently, "we may soon find ourselves with a hollow administrative structure processing huge transfers", but with service provision increasingly conducted under the auspices of non-governmental actors.²⁰ Whereas once perhaps 80 to 90% of national public employees were subject to the same statutes and working conditions, today the number is declining.²¹ "Information technology also promotes decomposition. The workplace of the future may be no 'place' at all".²²

Overall, these changes may also have positive effects after all; "the problems of the old 'one-size-fits-all' approach are well documented and real. However, they will also fundamentally alter the concept of civil service and further fragment government".²³ For example, if reliance on decentralisation and outsourcing grows, "as seems likely, the demands for personal responsibility are likely to increase and reach private individuals engaged in government work".²⁴ Therefore, good leadership will become more important than ever before. At the same time, people will also become more critical towards bad leadership and poor performance of their leaders.

Without a doubt, the future will see the emergence of a growing paradox. On the one hand, various factors (e.g., growing financial and demographic pressures as well as value changes) will continue to put pressure on the civil services to continue with radical reforms. On the other hand, the pace of change and growing uncertainties about the reform results will generate more discussions on the need to preserve traditional values, to keep the identity of civil servants and to maintain some specific features that are different to the private sector. The emergence of new discussions around "Value Management" is such a counter development.

In all Member States, accusations that the civil services are not innovative, not ready to reform and suffering from reform inertia are clearly wrong. Contrary to this, reforms have led to many changes. The ongoing reforms in the national public services promote the change, deconstruction and the decentralisation of the public services on all fronts. As a consequence, the traditional concept of the public service as a single, unified employer is slowly disappearing. At the same time, HR management is also becoming more flexible and decentralised. Moreover, public employees and their values are also changing with the result that value dilemmas will ever increase.

Today, the changing role of the state requires a changing conception of the public services and the civil servants. Despite the many changes that are taking place in many countries, the public perception is still that civil servants work in an environment that is clearly separated from the private sector. In some countries civil servants are seen as a protected group, set apart from the outside world. In reality, customer- and citizen- orientations have increased, and working conditions have been aligned to those in the private sector. Nowadays the differences between public and private employees in terms of their status, working time, pay, pensions, holidays, recruitment and competency requirements are smaller than they were previously.

Reforms are implemented everywhere and at great speeds. Overall, this study has shown that the current reform process in the national civil services can be identified as an opening-up process of the national civil services. Instead of being separated from the society and citizens, the trend is towards the blurring of public and private boundaries as well as between civil servants and public employees. Also physically, the walls between the civil service and the labour market are coming down. Almost all Member States have started to facilitate recruitment procedures, reform or even abolish careers, reduce internal hierarchies, support more mobility, delegate more responsibilities to line managers and align the working conditions between civil servants and other public employees. More and more public tasks are carried out by non-state bodies and more tasks which have traditionally been carried out by civil servants are carried out by other public employees or private service providers.

In future the national civil services will look more aligned as was ever the case before. To state that the times of the traditional bureaucracy are over is tempting. In fact, it is highly unlikely that traditional bureaucracy is coming back. However, it cannot be excluded that specific principles and aspects may return to the agenda. For example, the current trend towards decentralisation and fragmentation has resulted in new discussions about the need for a

Thus, the reform outcomes do not indicate that the post-bureaucratic times are much better; in many cases they are simply different.

new public service ethos, the need for common values, standardised HR practices and fairness issues. Much depends on the outcomes of reforms. As the study 'Civil Services in the EU of 27' shows, many HR reforms in the national civil services do not show clear results. Whereas some reform trends produce improvements (e.g. in the field of transparency, citizen orientation, ethics, anti-discrimination, job autonomy and responsibility), others simply bring about alternation (fairness, impartiality) in the field of performance related pay or even deteriorations of working conditions (stress, risks, job security, partly working time, pay) and reform results (more performance management bureaucracy, fewer career development possibilities). Thus, the reform outcomes do not indicate that the post-bureaucratic times are much better; in many cases they are simply different.

Also in the coming years, most Member States will maintain the public law status of civil servants. At the same time they are introducing reforms which call into question the very sense of it. Civil servants are still numerous; however, their numbers are diminishing. They still enjoy greater job security. However, the difference between public employees and civil servants' job security is fading. Member

States are abolishing careers and seniority. However, they still want to value experience, competence and stability and fight patronage. Member States are eager to promote the traditional civil service ethos. However, many modern reform trends are generating a new set of values which are producing value dilemmas. Member States are fighting inequality and discrimination. However, poverty and inequality levels are rising in society.

The future will be a constant strive towards finding the right balance between competing values and principles: between standardisation and citizen-orientation, flexibility and the need for stability, autonomy, individualism and fairness, centralisation and decentralisation, secrecy and openness, hierarchy and responsabilisation, the call for new rules and deregulation, individual performance and equality, etc.

If the traditional bureaucracy is slowly disappearing what will happen to the bureaucrats, the civil servants? Will they disappear like the classical concept of bureaucracy? In this study we could not find that civil servants carry out their tasks any differently than other public employees. However, we also could not find any evidence that they perform their tasks differently (or worse) because they are civil servants. Nevertheless, this study reveals one important paradox: all Member States continue to employ civil servants; however, they see fewer reasons as to why civil servants with specific working conditions are needed. In fact, all they need are professional and competent public employees.

NOTES

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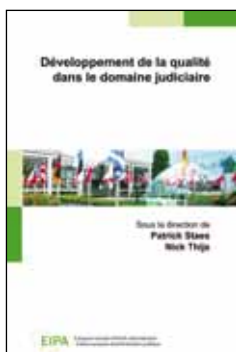
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Développement de la qualité dans le domaine judiciaire

Patrick Staes and Nick Thijs

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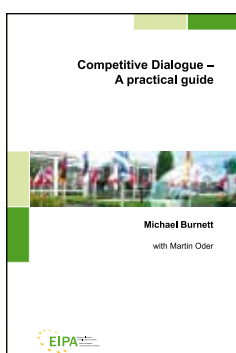
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Le secteur public fait face à de très nombreux défis et doit sans cesse répondre à de nouveaux besoins et demandes de la société moderne. Par conséquent, il fait régulièrement l'objet d'importantes réformes. Ce processus de réforme et de modernisation se concentre sur différents aspects tels que « accent sur le citoyen/usager », « efficacité et efficacie », « transparence », « maîtrise de la qualité », « benchmarking », « accent sur les résultats » et « responsabilisation ». Comme tous les secteurs du service public, la magistrature et le pouvoir judiciaire sont confrontés à un certain nombre de défis et de pressions, qui nécessitent la mise en place de réformes de grande ampleur.

Cette étude du cadre d'auto-évaluation des fonctions publiques (CAF) et de son application dans le domaine judiciaire s'articule en deux parties.

- La première partie offre une vaste introduction à la gestion de la qualité en général en abordant son évolution et les différents modèles utilisés, et examine de plus près le CAF et son application dans le secteur public. Elle retrace le contexte historique de cet outil et analyse en détail tous les aspects pratiques – de la mise en œuvre aux résultats, en passant par les actions d'amélioration et l'évaluation des performances.
- La seconde partie vise à étayer le cadre théorique de la première partie et porte sur les bonnes pratiques introduites par les institutions judiciaires de différents pays européens afin d'améliorer la qualité dans le secteur de la justice. Elle se penche notamment sur le cas des tribunaux du Danemark, de la Cour d'appel de la Suède occidentale et du Bureau du Procureur général de Bolzano en Italie, ainsi que sur les travaux menés par la commission européenne pour l'efficacité de la justice (CEPEJ) du Conseil de l'Europe, et les approches belge, finlandaise et néerlandaise du système judiciaire.



Competitive Dialogue – A practical guide

Michael Burnett with Martin Oder

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Competitive Dialogue was created by the 2004 Public Procurement Directives as a new and more flexible solution for public authorities wanting to award contracts for complex infrastructure projects. Some predicted that it might be used only rarely and others saw problems in applying it effectively to obtain value for money for the public sector. But it is now firmly established in Europe as a means of awarding public contracts, with more than

3000 award procedures launched. Yet objective advice for decision makers on when and how to use Competitive Dialogue effectively is hard to find. Cutting through the jargon and the misconceptions, this book is an independent guide for those at all levels in Europe facing these challenges.

Written from a public sector perspective, this book has two main audiences in mind, i.e.:

- European decision makers responsible for creating and implementing an appropriate legal framework at EU level for Competitive Dialogue
- Politicians, public officials and their professional advisers in EU Member States currently facing choices about when and how to use Competitive Dialogue in a way which provides both legal certainty and maximises the likelihood of achieving value for money.

After an explanation and analysis of legal framework for Competitive Dialogue, the book sets out how Competitive Dialogue emerged, how it compares to the Negotiated Procedure, the legal challenges in applying Competitive Dialogue, when it is appropriate to use it and where it is being used in the EU. Successive chapters then analyse the key issues arising in the implementation of Competitive Dialogue at each stage of the process and how they should be addressed.

Finally, the book draws together the key conclusions for the future use of Competitive Dialogue and the actions needed to implement them at EU and national level. Taken together, they add up to an agenda for the future effective use of Competitive Dialogue.

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Paradoxes of improving performance management (systems) in public administration



Dr Wouter van Dooren* and Nick Thijs**

New public management set off a new wave of performance management efforts in government. Recent performance literature has documented the shortcomings of performance management and provided recommendations on how to improve it. This emerging issues' contribution revisits this literature and makes a distinction between recommendations for better implementation of what are seen as essentially good systems (single loop learning) on the one hand, and recommendations that target the performance management systems themselves (double loop learning) on the other. It is argued that in complex settings, performance management may benefit from new ways of carrying out performance management. It is suggested that performance management needs to be more agile, more decentralised and more political.

Introduction

Performance management in public administration has had a long ascent, and in all probability, has a long road ahead. Nonetheless, performance management is not without its problems. Practitioners, management consultants as well as academics have sought solutions in response to the paradoxical and often problematic nature of performance management. Based on recent performance literature, this contribution tries to identify some emerging issues for performance management improvement.

The article first outlines some paradoxes in public sector performance measurement and management, which at the same time echoes some of the main challenges. Next, Argyris & Schön's (1996) distinction between single and double loop learning will be used to categorise the character of the proposals, which may stimulate a strategic reflection on where to go with performance measurement and management. Single loop solutions suggest mitigating the implementation problems of performance management. The main argument is that better results in performance management can be obtained by better implementation. The message is *'to have a second go'* with an essentially good system. A second cluster of responses, the double

loop, proposes to change (parts of) the system itself. Here, the message is not just to try it again, but to do it differently. In complex and ambiguous contexts, the double loop proposals have the highest potential to improve the added value of performance management. Alongside the learning approaches, the article stipulates some new ways of improving performance management in the public sector.

Paradoxes in performance measurement and management

NPM reforms worldwide have introduced a variety of performance measurement and management practices. Performance management has gradually become an integral part of modern governance arrangements (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2004). In recent years, evaluative research has uncovered some paradoxes in the current practice.

Counting the uncountable

Albert Einstein's office at Princeton University had a sign stating, 'Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts'. Sometimes this insight is forgotten. Managers and politicians inferred

from the conviction that *what gets measured, gets done* that *what does not get measured, does not get done*. This incorrect logical inference was reinforced by management consultants advocating the quest for the ultimate set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Many employees deduced that services not subjected to a KPI are not that important – they are no ‘key performances’ after all. It is not uncommon for divisions in large organisations to lobby to get their activities into the KPI set (Van Dooren 2006). They know; what is counted, counts.

The last decade, several performance management experts have pleaded for a focus on measuring outcomes instead of outputs or processes (Hatry 2002; Perrin 2003). The argument is that only outcomes are ‘real’ key results, i.e. results that matter for society. It does not matter how many police patrols are negotiating the streets (which is an output); citizens want safety (which is an outcome). Therefore, performance measurement should primarily focus on outcomes. Yet, and therein lies the paradox, outcomes are in many instances very hard to count. We know that what is measured gets attention, but we also know that many important dimensions are immeasurable.

Distrusting professionals, but relying on them

Performance management doctrine has an ambiguous attitude towards expertise and professionals. On the one hand, professionals are the key to better performance. In fact, the NPM phrase ‘let managers manage’ reflects confidence in the professionalism of managers (Kettl 1997). Similarly, it is expected that managers are entrepreneurs and leaders that bring about the best in the staff under their supervision. Not in a command and control style, but by empowerment (Osborne and Gaebler 1993). On the other hand, performance management systems often express a certain amount of distrust in professionals. Davies and Lampel (1998), assessing performance management in the British National Health Service, argue that managers primarily used performance information in a tactical way, in order to intervene in the doctor-patient relationship. Hence, a plethora of indicators has been developed to counterbalance doctors’ professional knowledge. Radin (2006) provides the example of the British Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) which audited the research quality of universities based on a number of performance indicators such as the number and type of publications. Rather than trusting the professional researcher, quality is counted. Similarly, Radin points to the No Child Left Behind initiative in public schools in the USA. She asserts that the most vigorous critique was on the standardised tests that allegedly did not leave enough room for teachers’ discretion.

There is a clear paradox. On the one hand, trust in professionalism is vital in an increasingly complex society. On the other hand, we are reluctant to grant this trust and hence we fall back on control and audit. According to Power (1999) these audits are to a large extent ceremonial – he speaks of “rituals of verification”. Many audits are mainly about creating an illusion of control. Similar arguments can be made for other performance measurement initiatives in both public and private sectors (Van de Walle and Roberts 2008).

Paralysis by analysis

Decision makers have to process a lot of information; budgets, audits, impact analyses, evaluation studies, memoranda from interest groups, laws and jurisdiction, personal communication, etc... An almost superhuman analytical capacity is required to process all these sources. Performance information comes on top of this pile, and for this reason, the risk of an information overload increases even more. Although performance management is devised to improve decisions, it may well lead to paralysis. It should thus not come as a surprise that practitioners consider selectivity in measurement to be one of the key challenges for implementing performance management (Mayne 2007).

If everyone is accountable, no-one is

There is increasing awareness that public organisations cannot be effective on their own. A considerable amount of literature on collaboration, partnerships, and networks has developed (see for instance Mandell and Keast 2008). As a result of collaboration, the responsibilities for performance are shared as well. Hence, when many organisations participate, it becomes more difficult to hold a single organisation accountable for results. And if many are accountable, the risk occurs that no one takes responsibility for failure and everybody for success.

Should we then stick to traditional accountability schemes with one principal and one agent? Probably not. The willingness to collaborate can erode when single accountability schemes are maintained. Aristigueta & Denhardt (2008) demonstrated that typical approaches to performance management are impacting partnerships and collaborations. Performance-based accountability systems tend to undermine collaborative efforts unless they are accompanied by other strategies for providing an impetus for alignment and collaboration across agencies.

**Not everything that counts
can be counted,
and not everything that
can be counted counts**

Single loop learning - better implementation

The usual response to the paradoxes of performance management is to improve implementation. This can be categorised as single loop learning, the basic premises of performance management are not called into question. The idea is that if only we try harder, performance management will improve. In what follows, four strategies for better implementation of performance management will be discussed.

Improve the quality of performance information

A first strategy is to improve the quality of the information. The attention paid by organisations to quality issues is not always evident. Research suggests that often only modest attention is paid to quality assurance practices in the area of performance measurement (Mayne 2007). Nonetheless, Hatry (2008) argues that investment in the many dimensions of quality can ratchet up the use of performance information. He mentions validity, accuracy, timeliness, analysis and presentation as some important quality dimensions. Clear and timely presentation of performance information may remedy the information overload of decision makers. Professionals may trust performance information more

when validity and accuracy increases. Better analysis may help to focus performance management on what matters and to single out accountability issues.

Quality of performance information alone however does not guarantee the use of performance information. As we argued above, performance information competes with other sources of information for decision-makers' attention. Moreover, research on gaming has revealed that on several occasions information is selected because it fits into a pre-determined agenda and not because it is intrinsically good (Perrin 1998). Yet, it should be clear that in such a context, quality improvements will not help to overcome issues such as disputes about accountability or resistance from professionals.

Leadership

An OECD survey (Curristine 2005) found that strong leadership (also politically) is key in explaining the success of performance management. Someone has to put his or her shoulders under a performance management effort and develop a measurement strategy. Preferably, this person carries some weight. Good leadership may be a response to these paradoxes, because it takes the uncountable into account, quickly identifies core bits of information, motivates professionals and holds people to account in a fair way.



However, leadership as a concept is ill-specified, and hence the interpretation of the OECD findings is more complicated. In particular in survey research such as the OECD's, there is the risk that respondents use leadership as a quick fix when they cannot point to more precise factors. Hence, better implementation through better leadership is not a very actionable recommendation. The issue of leadership certainly raises a host of secondary questions (Van Wart 2003); who should the leader be? What traits are important for performance leadership? Where does leadership in performance come from and how can it be sustained? What should these leaders do in which circumstances? Thus it does not suffice to state that better performance management depends on better leadership. We also need to make clear what it is and what leaders need to do.

Ownership

Another somewhat magical word in the management discourse is ownership. Implementation failures are regularly said to be caused by a lack of it. Mayne (2007) for

instance notes that a system built on filling in performance information forms for others, with no apparent use for those down the line, is unlikely to be robust and survive over time. Better implementation of performance measurement and management requires that those who are affected by the system have to accept and internalise the system (Van Dooren, Bouckaert, and Halligan 2010).

In a thrust to assure ownership, performance management reforms often fall victim of over-commitment (Pollitt 2008). Many people need to be convinced in order to introduce a performance management system; politicians, top and middle managers, professionals and front line workers, to name a few. Hence, an understandable strategy is to create high expectations and to play down the costs. Yet, although this strategy may prove successful in the short term, it almost definitely will boomerang in the medium term. Typically, costs of a performance management system are tangible and become apparent relatively shortly after the introduction of the system. Benefits on the other hand are intangible and may only appear in the longer term. Disillusionment with performance systems that do not (yet) deliver may undermine confidence and therefore the failure of the performance management effort may become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Ownership strategies are hence relatively fragile. It takes much more effort to build acceptance of a performance management system than to lose it.

Variations of integration

Integration, coordination, formalisation, consistency, coherence, routine-building, and alignment are some of the most common key words for those who want to fix performance management without questioning its blueprint. Although the importance of integration and coordination is undeniable, we should also acknowledge its limitations. Complexity and change regularly tear carefully coordinated systems apart. The desire to coordinate all efforts in advance may lead to delay and even deadlock. In some instances, it may make more sense to remedy on the consequences of ill-coordinated performance efforts than to embark on excessively ambitious coordination efforts (see for instance Laegreid, Roness, and Rubecksen 2008).

Double loop learning – new ways of doing performance management

The previous section suggested four strategies for better implementation. Although they may substantially mitigate the paradoxes identified in the first section, also some limitations were pointed out. Recent research on performance management however also suggests new ways of doing performance management. Not only in theory, but also in practice some of these new ways are emerging (see for instance Abramson and Behn 2006). The purpose of this section is to dig deeper into these proposals. Firstly by arguing that the main challenge of performance management lies in making it "ambiguity-proof". Secondly, in proposing more concrete implications of this argument.

Making performance management ambiguity-proof

The context of public administration is complex and ambiguous. Kravchuk & Schack (1996) explain what complexity means; indeterminate objective functions, multiple administrative layers, collective action problems,

system overloads and information overloads, and an increasing scope and scale of operations. There are many sources of ambiguity: history (what has happened?), intentions (what must be done?), technology (what can be done?) and participation (who is present?). Noordegraaf & Abma (2003) add that current performance management, which they label as management by measurement, only fits the rare unambiguous contexts. Defined as such, not many unambiguous situations will be found. Since ambiguity is everywhere, the prospects for performance management in this view are rather limited.

An alternative to giving up on performance management is to rethink it in order to make it 'ambiguity-proof'. This can only be done by taking complexity and ambiguity as a given, and changing the practice of performance management on this foundation. Along these lines, Radin (2006: p. 241-242) argues that many problems with performance measurement and management can be attributed to faulty points of departure. She argues that intelligence is not based on universal principles and literal meanings. Rather, multiple sources, situational knowledge and literal and symbolic meanings are important in making sense. It should also not be assumed that values, politics and conflict are not at play in performance management. They clearly are. Finally, the assumption of linear causes and effect relations, clear goals and planned change does not survive the reality check. On the contrary, Radin paints a picture of complexity, interdependence and unplanned change.

Implications; performance management needs to be agile, decentralised and political

What would such an ambiguity-proof performance management system look like? Three features are discussed below; performance management needs to be (a) agile, (b) close to the action, and (c) political.

A. Performance measurement needs to be agile – use PIs for learning rather than accountability

Kravchuck and Schack (1996) refer to Ashby, a cybernetics scholar, who posited that only complexity can absorb complexity. Rigid information systems will not be able to apprehend and to understand rising complexity in the environment. In the most extreme cases, chaos will appear to reign due to the ever increasing gap between practical experience and the knowledge base as provided by the information system. Information (what we believe to know) and practice (what we experience) risk becoming separated worlds; one orderly, where objectives are set and performance targets are reached, and one chaotic, where people are mainly trying to muddle through the day.

The main implication would be that performance indicators (PIs) should be used for learning, and less so for accountability (see also (Delancer Julnes 2008)). PI based accountability requires stability for the period for which targets are set. Yet, not many fields remain stable for three to six years. Research in New Zealand has demonstrated the difficulties of maintaining stability in an indicator set. As a result, accountability erodes accordingly (Gregory and Lonti 2008). In addition to stability, accountability requires relatively univocal PIs that do not allow for much interpretation. PIs have to be an accurate representation of 'real' performance. Unlike accountability, learning does not

require the same stability and robustness. On the contrary, performance measurement is part of a permanent dialogue in order to make sense of complexity (Moynihan 2008). Hence, indicators can and should be adjusted in response to contextual changes and new insights.

This proposal does not suggest that managers and professionals should not be accountable for performance. It only suggests that accountability through performance indicators is probably not compatible with the need to have agile measurement systems. Accountability however does not solely depend on PIs. Performance assessment can be qualitative, quantitative or both. In a complex environment, it might make more sense to hold managers accountable for, amongst other things, the way they facilitate learning from performance indicators, rather than the performance indicators themselves.

B. Performance management needs to be close to the action-guerrilla tactics and decentralisation

Organisations typically have an undercurrent of repeated decisions they have to make. To these recurrent cycles, a constant stream of unique one-off decisions is added. In recent decades, the relative importance of the stable, recurrent processes has decreased. Kettl (2002) argues that the traditional U.S. public administration boundaries of mission, resources, capacity, responsibility and accountability must be managed in an increasingly complex and political context, necessitating additional negotiation and collaboration between systems and agencies. These complex parallel processes are in a unique way shaped by situational requirements of time and place (Pollitt 2008).

Recurrent financial, HRM and contract cycles have been the main vehicle for incorporating performance information in decision making (Bouckaert and Halligan 2008). Without a doubt, these cycles will remain the foundation of performance management in the future as well. Yet, top down performance management on a yearly (as in the budget cycle) or monthly basis (as in many balanced scorecard systems) will need to be supplemented by flexible efforts to provide performance information on demand. Since complex, unique processes will gain importance, the timing (when is performance information used) and the locus (where it is used) will be challenged.

With regard to the timing, performance management in complex contexts may need to resort to a kind of 'guerrilla tactics'. In complex policy and management processes, the demand for performance information can arise relatively unexpectedly. At the same time, demand can fade away as quickly as it came about. In such a context, expert staff is needed to quickly infuse complex processes with performance information. Those performance information brokers need to be able to both capture the need for and understand the availability of performance information.

With regard to the locus, performance management in complex contexts may benefit from stronger decentralisation. Rather than devising top down systems, performance management needs to be in the hands of middle managers and front-line supervisors who understand the situational requirements best. This strategy might bring about the capacity of public managers that Behn (2004) calls performance leadership. He opposes the

Performance information should primarily refocus political debate rather than curb it

performance leadership model to focus on performance systems and structures. He writes that 'rather than develop public managers with the leadership capacity to improve the performance of their agencies, we have sought to create performance systems that will impose such improvements (p.3)'. The same reasoning can be applied within agencies. Middle management and front-line supervisors need the leadership capacity to improve performance. This includes drawing lessons from performance indicators.

For performance budgeting, this approach would suggest introducing performance information into budget negotiations through policy networks rather than systematically reporting performance in the budget document that is voted in parliament. Since the budget document is mainly an after-the-fact codification of political negotiations that have taken place before, performance budgets risk becoming a bureaucratic exercise. There is some evidence supporting the effectiveness of this approach. Bourdeaux (2008) for instance suggests that performance information mainly enters the legislative discourse through policy networks maintained by key committee staff, rather than through executive budget reports and requests. Some confirmation is also found in an OECD survey on performance budgeting showing that countries do use performance information to inform, but not determine, budget allocations (Curristine 2005). Furthermore, this study argues that much 'linking' of these performance and financial information has been simply to provide them in the same report. A study of Melkers and Willoughby (2001) found that from a list of factors explaining the introduction of performance budgeting at state level, the improvement of decision-making was most important. A further study at local and county level found the strongest usefulness of measures within a budget cycle to be during budget development, with less importance as the budget process proceeds (Melkers and Willoughby 2005).

C. Performance management needs to be political

Some time ago, Innes (1990) observed that the only way to keep data-gathering out of politics is to collect irrelevant data. Good performance information should strengthen the evidence base for solving the political problems of who gets what, when and how. Issues of who gets what, when and how are at play at all levels; in government-wide policy making, in policy sectors and networks, in organisational management, and in micro-management. Performance indicators can elevate the quality of political discussions at all of these levels. It is not suggested that the political institutions (the executive, parliaments, parties, etc) have to interfere with all performance issues at all levels. Rather, we want to stress the importance of recognising the political nature of performance management.

A first implication is that performance management should involve more, rather than fewer actors. In complex settings, performance management is mainly about making sense. Hence, we can expect that performance management will have the highest impact when different perspectives are drawn into the dialogue. Obviously, the interests around the table have to be relevant and the number of participants needs to be workable.

A second implication is that performance management should deal with controversy rather than suppress it. Performance information should not be an authoritative argument to end conflicting views on who should get what, when and how. Rather, it should underpin a careful argumentation of causes, consequences, and priorities in performance. It should bring controversy to a higher level of argument; more evidence based and more focussed on output and outcome. The assumption is that high quality dialogue will lead to improved judgement and decision-making.

The previous paragraphs dealt with the political nature of performance management, and not so much about the political institutions. There are efforts however to strengthen the role of performance information in the political system as well (Moynihan 2009; Bourdeaux 2008). Such initiatives will only be successful however when they acknowledge the different values and positions that political players assume. Performance information that promises to end political debates, to get political argumentation out of the political system, is irrelevant at best, but potentially harmful. Disagreement is essential for the functioning of democracy and therefore performance information should primarily refocus political debate rather than curb it.

Conclusion

New public management set off a new wave of performance management efforts in government. Recent performance literature has documented the shortcomings of performance management and provided recommendations on how to improve it. Some of these recommendations mainly prescribe better implementation (single loop learning) while others suggest new ways of doing performance management (double loop learning). In particular in complex and ambiguous contexts, performance management risks becoming decoupled from practice and hence irrelevant for decision-making. Therefore, new ways are needed. In order to make performance management ambiguity-proof, it may be useful to have more agile measurement systems, to manage performance close to the action, and to better appreciate the political nature of performance management.

NOTES

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Where are the MEPs from the accession countries?

Rapporteurship assignments in the European Parliament after Enlargement



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This article seeks to identify factors that influence the chances of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) becoming rapporteurs. More specifically, it attempts to answer the question of how MEPs from the accession countries were integrated into the report allocation process, which is crucial for EU legislative decision-making. Drawing on extended data from the last three legislative terms (1994-2009), the results confirm and challenge existing knowledge. First, the allocation of rapporteurship does not mirror the composition of the full plenary, but points towards strong under-representation of certain national delegations. Most important is the virtual absence of MEPs from the accession countries. Representing 22% of the full plenary, they reported on only 9% of all co-decision procedures concluded in the first legislative term after the 2004 enlargement. This pattern of under-representation is evident even when comparing the figures with first-time MEPs from the longer-standing Member States.

Power of rapporteurs in a changing institutional setting

The *Gebhardt* report on the Services Directive, the *Sacconi* report on REACH (regulation on chemical products), the *Gauzès* report on alternative investment (hedge) funds, the *El Khadraoui* report on the Eurovignette, the *Estrela* report on parental leave, or the *Száyer* report on the power of legislative delegation. These reports are exemplary of two important aspects of EU decision-making: First, introduced in 1993, the so-called co-decision procedure has emerged as the dominant policy-making procedure in Brussels. Especially with Amsterdam (1999), its adjusted procedure extended its applicability considerably. The number of co-decision reports has been multiplied by sixteen between the fourth (1994-1999: 30) and sixth legislative terms (2004-2009: 477). With new policy areas such as agriculture, police and judicial cooperation on criminal matters added by the

Treaty of Lisbon, which came into force on 1st December 2009, the co-decision procedure has also officially been turned into the ordinary legislative procedure of EU policy-making.

The second important aspect relates to the European Parliament (EP), the European co-legislator under the co-decision procedure. With a growing dominance of the co-decision procedure, not only the EP's overall role in EU policy-making is strengthened (Häge and Kaeding, 2007), but especially a distinct and small group of actors within the EP has gained considerable powers. This group is composed of individual Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), who are 'the most powerful of parliamentarians in terms of influencing the content of legislative outcomes' (Benedetto, 2005:85; see also Ringe, 2009), so-called rapporteurs.

Rapporteurs – among the most powerful legislative entrepreneurs in EU policy-making

Rapporteurs are normally to be found in parliamentary committees, where much of the detailed legislative work of the EP is carried out. They are fully responsible for drafting the committee's report and for following the proposal from the beginning to the very end. Rapporteurs monitor the progress of the EP's opinion on a European Commission (Commission) proposal; are among the members expected to table compromise amendments; propose that a vote is postponed based on the legal status of a Commission proposal or on the Commission rejecting amendments tabled in advance of the vote, and, eventually, make recommendations for a vote. In order to carry out this demanding legislative work, rapporteurs have a set of instruments at their disposal.

They are provided with exclusive access to resources unavailable to other MEPs (Kaeding 2005). They enjoy a priority to speak (along with leaders of political groups); may speak more than other members; are the only members allowed to speak during a Plenary vote, to outline their committee's position on amendments; may speak when a proposal or motion is considered without amendment and debate; may be heard under an urgent procedure; and may speak before a procedural motion (Corbett *et al.* 2005: 133). To put it differently, *who* is being selected as rapporteur determines 'the range of political opinions that are represented in the policy positions of the European Parliament' (Hausemer 2006: 512).

Legislative role of rapporteurs correlates with steady growth in use of informal dialogues

In addition to the rapporteurs' increasing formal powers, informal changes to the EU decision-making architecture have further strengthened their legislative weight. Systematically introduced by the stakeholders, so-called informal dialogues have forged more and more early reading agreements over the last years, i.e. 1st reading agreements and so-called 'early second reading deals'.

As table 1 displays, first reading agreements have considerably increased over the last 15 years. Starting from 19% of all dossiers concluded between 1999- 2000, almost three-quarters (75%) of all dossiers between 2004-2009 were adopted in first reading. In addition, the data shows that 11% of all co-decision files in 2004-2009 were adopted at 'early second reading'. This means that the Council's position is approved by the EP because it has negotiated

it with the Council in the phase between the 1st reading in the EP and the Council's adoption of its common position. These negotiations are then formalised by a letter from the chair of the responsible committee to the president of COREPER indicating a 'recommendation to the plenary to accept the Council common position without amendment.' While, formally speaking, procedures concluded in this way are concluded at second reading stage, in reality a political agreement has already been reached before the Council completes its first reading (see also Farrell and Héritier, 2004).

This has, amongst other things,¹ concrete implications for the role of rapporteurs, who negotiate on behalf of the EP in this increasing number of informal dialogues. These informal arrangements empower rapporteurs considerably, because EP committees and plenary sessions (where all party groups and MEPs are represented) are not allowed to change a 'dot or comma' of the 'compromise' position agreed in informal dialogue meetings (Rasmussen and Shackleton, 2005). The EP negotiators are tied in a deal to deliver the votes to push through

the deal agreed in informal negotiations, which makes them very influential. Who are these rapporteurs? How are they selected?

Curiously, knowledge about this group of 'legislative entrepreneurs' is relatively scarce. We only know that rapporteurs are selected based upon an obscure 'auction-like' system which has not guaranteed a proportional distribution of reports (Kaeding, 2004; Hoyland, 2006). But do these findings still hold after the 2004 enlargement? What effect has enlargement had on the distribution of powerful positions, such as rapporteurships, within the EP? What roles have MEPs from the accession countries played over the last five years? Our data hints at serious shortcomings with regard to the distribution of reports, particularly for MEPs from the accession countries.

What determines the selection of rapporteurs?

Whereas the composition of the committees and the selection of the office holders are regulated in the standing orders of the EP, the allocation of rapporteurships within committees is not. Instead, party groups have developed an auction-like system– an 'obscure and complicated' bidding system between party groups and coordinators. As Ken Collins, former chairman of the Environment Committee, noted in an interview, the selection of rapporteurs is 'a combination of a kind of auction, and a kind of elaborate game of poker'.

Rapporteurs: Information provider or preference outlier?

Experts see the assignment of rapporteurs driven by different logics: distribution or information. On the one hand, the allocation of reports is considered to be a self-selection process where members of parliament

Table 1:
Number of co-decision dossiers from 1994-2009 broken down by number of readings

Time period	Total co-decision	Dossiers concluded at 1 st reading	Dossiers concluded at 2 nd reading	Dossiers concluded at 3 rd reading
Total 1994-1999	30	--	18 (60%)	12 (40%)
Total 1999-2004	403	115 (29%)	200 (50%)	88 (22%)
Total 2004-2009	477	340 (72%)	107 (23%)*	23 (5%)

Source: European Parliament. * Out of which 11% early 2nd reading agreements

Selection of rapporteurs:

'The choice of rapporteurs and draftsmen is normally decided upon within individual committees by a system whose broad lines are common to all committees. Each political group receives a quota of points according to its size. Reports and opinions to be distributed are then discussed by the committee coordinators who decide on the number of points each subject is worth, and then make bids on behalf of their group, the strength of their claim being based in theory (but not always in practice) on the relationship between the number of points already used by the group and their original quota.' (Corbett et al. 2005: 117).

seek reports that reflect their particular interests (concept of demanding rapporteurs). Accordingly, the group of rapporteurs tends to consist of policy outliers; members with a high demand for the policies in their jurisdiction. On the other hand, one could foresee a preponderance of a non-outlier group of rapporteurs that is a 'microcosm of the house'. According to this concept of informative rapporteurs, the underlying logic is information. In other words, the group of rapporteurs is composed of 'natural' adversaries, specialists with heterogeneous preferences representing both sides of the policy spectrum in order to guarantee that critical information is signalled to the full plenary.

A selection bias in the European Parliament

Drawing on data from the fourth, fifth and sixth legislative terms (1994-2009)² covering the eight most important legislative parliamentary committees³, the results show that the group of rapporteurs is predominantly composed of policy outliers. The national origin of an MEP increases or decreases respectively the probability of rapporteurship assignment in the EP. In other words, the group of rapporteurs does not mirror the overall distribution of seats across national delegations in the full plenary. From a long term perspective, data even hints at shifts in selection patterns in favour of certain national delegations.

Most important, however, is the 'virtual absence' of MEPs from the accession countries. Representing 22% of the full plenary, they reported on only 9% of all co-decision procedures concluded in the first legislative term after the 2004 enlargement. Note that Estonian and Maltese parliamentarians did not draft any co-decision reports.

Some Member States are more equal...

Nationality has been a strong determinant of rapporteurship assignment over the last fifteen years. For example, in the Environment Committee, one of the more prestigious committees with the second highest number of members and the highest output with 31% of all co-decision dossiers adopted in 2004-2009, data shows the following pattern: coming from a green-minded Member State like Austria, Germany, Sweden, Luxembourg or the Netherlands, for example, increases the probability of being assigned rapporteur in the Environment Committee on average by 0.49. In other words, in the Environment Committee, there is a 50% higher chance to be appointed rapporteur for MEPs from green-minded Member States.

Table 2 illustrates that our findings are more nuanced. Some Member States, mostly so-called 'laggards' in the field of environmental policy, have become more passive over the years, whereas some, green-minded Member States, further strengthened their involvement in daily EU policy-making. Comparing the proportional share of seats of Member States in the EP Environment Committee relative to the number of reports in (+/-) percentage (1994-2009), Austria (+5), the Netherlands (+5) and Germany (+12) in particular increased their involvement considerably. Portugal, Italy and Spain, on the other hand, have fallen into almost total lethargy.

Next to these policy specific selection patterns (see also Kaeding, 2005), our data for the eight most active legislative committees from 1994-2009 displays that one particular bias holds across almost all policy areas: while Italian MEPs seem to be almost absent in parliamentary work (with a few exceptions such as in the Transport Committee), German MEPs appear to be the most active rapporteurs.

Table 2: Comparison between proportional share of seats of national delegations in EP relative to their total number of reports in (+/-) percentage 1994-2009 (part 1)

Member State	Culture, Youth, Education, Media and Sport			Industry, (External Trade), Research and Energy			Economic and Monetary Affairs			Employment and Social Affairs		
	1994-1999	1999-2004	2004-2009	1994-1999	1999-2004	2004-2009	1994-1999	1999-2004	2004-2009	1994-1999	1999-2004	2004-2009
B	+4	+2	-3	+3	-2	-3	+1	-2	+0	0	+1	-3
DK	-3	-1	-2	-1	-1	-2	-1	-3	+1	-1	+5	-2
E	+5	-2	-7	-3	+4	-4	+2	+11	-1	-6	-6	0
F	+4	-3	0	-6	-9	+26	-8	-6	+1	-8	-4	+3
I	-9	+4	-10	-5	-9	-7	-8	-8	-7	-6	-4	0
L	-1	-1	+10	+1	+11	-1	+1	-2	+5	-1	-1	+3
NL	+5	+1	-3	+3	+2	+2	+4	0	-4	+14	+4	+3
A	-4	+1	+5	-1	+2	+8	-4	0	+6	-2	-2	-2
P	-2	+3	+4	-2	-1	-3	-4	-3	-3	+2	+6	+4
FI	-1	0	+5	0	+3	+3	-1	+4	+7	0	-2	-2
S	-2	-3	-3	-3	0	-3	+3	0	-3	-1	+2	+14
UK	-2	-3	-10	+9	-4	0	-2	+3	+9	+1	+5	-3
D	+4	+4	+19	+7	+6	+6	+16	+5	+5	+11	-2	-6
GR	+3	0	+14	-1	0	-3	-1	+1	0	-3	-1	+4
IE	+2	-2	-2	0	-2	+1	0	+1	-2	-1	-1	+2

Table 2: Comparison between proportional share of seats of national delegations in EP relative to their total number of reports in (+/-) percentage 1994-2009 (part 2)

Member State	Consumer and Environment			Transport, (Regional Policy and Tourism)			Legal Affairs and Internal Market			Civil Liberties		
	1994-1999	1999-2004	2004-2009	1994-1999	1999-2004	2004-2009	1994-1999	1999-2004	2004-2009	1994-1999	1999-2004	2004-2009
B	+3	-1	+2	-3	1	-3	-3	1	-3			+2
DK	-3	-2	0	-3	-3	-2	-3	-3	-2			-2
E	+1	-4	-5	+13	+3	-5	+13	+3	-5			-7
F	-9	-7	0	-3	-7	-7	-3	-7	-7			-5
I	-10	-6	-2	-5	+7	+10	-5	+7	+10			-2
L	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1			-1
NL	+7	+5	+5	-2	-2	-1	-2	-2	-1			-1
A	-3	-2	+5	0	-1	-2	0	-1	-2			-2
P	-2	-4	-3	-4	-3	-3	-4	-3	-3			+8
FI	+10	+3	+1	+1	-3	+1	+1	-3	+1			+1
S	+5	+12	+3	-2	-3	-2	-2	-3	-2			+8
UK	+2	+4	-2	-8	+11	+14	-8	+11	+14			+12
D	0	0	+12	+15	+7	+5	+15	+7	+5			+1
GR	0	+2	0	0	-3	-3	0	-3	-3			-3
IE	0	+1	+3	+1	-2	-2	+1	-2	-2			-2



European Parliament, Brussels

What about the MEPs from the accession countries? : Republic, Hungary and Slovenia reported on Commission
 Apparently, the active involvement of MEPs representing the : proposals - the other six accession countries (Estonia,
 accession countries has been almost non-existent (with few : Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Poland and Cyprus) reported on
 exceptions). In the Environment Committee (2004-2009) they : none. This does not correlate with their overall 22% share of
 were only selected rapporteurs in 10 out of the 140 reports : seats in the full plenary.
 (7%). As table 3 indicates, only the Slovak Republic, Czech :

Table 3: Proportional share of seats of Member States relative to the number of reports in (+/-) percentage

EU 10 (6 th term 2004-2009)									
	Consumer and Environment	Transport, (Regional Policy and Tourism)	Legal Affairs and Internal Market	Culture, Youth, Education, Media and Sport	Industry, (External Trade), Research and Energy	Economic and Monetary Affairs	Employment and Social Affairs	Civil Liberties	
CZ	0	0	-3	-3	-3	-3	-3	-3	-3
EE	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
LV	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
LT	-2	+4	-2	-2	-2	-2	+2	+1	+1
HU	-2	-3	+15	0	+2	-2	+4	-3	-3
MT	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
PO	-7	-3	+3	-7	-1	-7	-7	+1	+1
SL	0	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	+2	+2
SK	0	-2	-2	+5	-2	-2	-2	+1	+1
CY	-1	-2	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	+2	+2

First-timers vs first-timers

In order to substantiate this claim of underrepresentation, we go one step further. We compare MEPs from the accession countries, who were first-timers by definition in the sixth EP with first-timers from the longer-standing Member States. The results in table 4 confirm, however, the nationality bias.

Table 4: Report Allocation for first-timers under co-decision, assent and consultation

Co-decision, assent or consultation report allocated?				
		No	Yes	Total
Accession country?	No	99 (50%)	98 (50%)	197 (100%)
	Yes	99 (67%)	49 (33%)	148 (100%)
	Total	198 (57%)	147 (43%)	345 (100%)

Note: In order to make the figures comparable, this table only includes the first-time MEPs who served the entire sixth legislative term (2004-2009). Romanian and Bulgarian MEPs are excluded for this reason.

Table 4 illustrates how the chances to obtain a report were distributed across first-timers from the 'new and old Member States'. Half of the 197 first-timers from the long-standing Member States were allocated at least one co-decision, assent or consultation report during the sixth EP term. However, only a third of the 148 first-timers from the accession countries managed to be allocated a report. This clearly supports the findings from the previous section that the chances of becoming rapporteur in the sixth term were significantly lower for MEPs from the accession countries than for MEPs from the long-standing Member States. Curiously this even remains true when we hold seniority constant and consider only MEPs who served for exactly the same time period. First-timers from the 'old' Member States were clearly advantaged in the report allocation process when compared with their colleagues from the accession countries.

Discussion

Enlargement has had almost no effect on the micro-management of the European Parliament (EP). MEPs representing the accession Member States have been almost absent in the allocation process for committee reports. This pattern appears across all powerful legislative committees of the EP. Comparing the proportional share of seats of Member States in the EP relative to the number of reports, we see that 'fresh input from the East' is lacking. Representing 22% of the full plenary, the new MEPs from the accession countries reported on only 9% of all co-decision procedures concluded between 2004-2009. Two Member States (Estonia and Malta), until now, have not even submitted one single co-decision report within the last five years. Poland, Hungary, Slovak Republic and the remaining two Baltic States (Lithuania and Latvia) have only recently started to get involved, albeit selectively. This almost 'non-existence' of rapporteurs from the accession countries could clearly question the integration efforts of the EP over the last five years.

Focusing on the last three legislative terms of the European Parliament (1994- 2009), another finding is striking: a strong bias towards a few Member States. In terms of rapporteurship assignment, some Member States (France and Finland) have caught up recently, while others have become less active (Spain) or almost invisible, falling into near total lethargy (Italy). Only one Member State has embellished systematically on a grand scale its lead in rapporteurship assignments over the last twelve years: Germany. Combining this finding with evidence that the EP's positions are significantly closer to the

positions of the rapporteurs' home countries (Costello and Thomson, 2007), we might just have paved the way for further research in the field.

All in all, our findings imply that the group of rapporteurs is clearly no microcosm of the full plenary, but that the allocation of reports appears to be a self-

The strong country biases in the allocation processes of reports in the EP are striking in a Union where proportionality seems to play such an important role.

selection process where MEPs seek reports that reflect their particular interests. This is astonishing if we acknowledge the evolving dominance of first reading agreements, the growing importance of informal dialogues, both in which rapporteurs are the key parliamentary negotiators with essential legislative powers. More generally, the strong country biases in the allocation processes of reports in the EP are even more striking in a Union where proportionality seems to play such an important role.



NOTES

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- ¹ Another implication relates to the lively debate on efficiency vs. legitimacy of EU governance. On the one hand these figures indicate that EP decision-making is efficient and shows 'the institution's willingness to cooperate'. On the other hand, you may want to raise concerns about the transparency of trialogues, their undemocratic nature and the quality of legislation they produce.
- ² The list of MEPs that builds the foundation for this analysis was obtained from Kaeding (2004) and a new website that has just been launched in 2009 (<http://www.votewatch.eu>). In order to construct the dependent variable, data on report allocation

during the last three EP terms were collected from the EP website, which provides detailed information for every individual MEP. Not all of those MEPs served in the EP for the entire three terms. Some left the EP before the end of the legislative periods; others joined it at a later point in time. We controlled for this aspect, since MEPs who did not serve the entire term in the EP must be expected to have a lower a-priori chance of becoming rapporteurs. All MEPs who served a full term had a theoretical chance of attending all plenary meetings and were assigned a value of 1. Please consult the authors for additional information.

- ³ Environment; Transport; Legal Affairs; Culture and Education; Industry, Research and Energy; Economic and Monetary Affairs; Employment and Social Affairs; Civil Liberties

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The response of Cohesion Policy to the economic crisis



Robin Smail*

The global economic crisis has had a major impact on the economies of EU Member States and on the livelihoods of millions of households. GDP has declined, many businesses are struggling, unemployment has risen sharply. The EU responded with the European Economic Recovery Plan, which encouraged Member States to provide a fiscal stimulus to their economies. As a result of this, the bail-out of the banks, and the impact of the recession, public sector budget deficits and public debt levels have risen dramatically. Cohesion Policy – designed to help the disadvantaged regions and communities of the EU – has made an important contribution to the Recovery Plan. A range of measures has been taken through a series of amending regulations. The objective has been to simplify and clarify the Structural Fund regulations, to protect project implementation and to accelerate spending on the ground. Cohesion Policy has shown itself to be responsive and flexible. Unlike so many areas of public expenditure, it focuses on investment and is designed to provide a positive socio-economic return for communities and economies.

Introduction

Although most leading politicians and financial regulators failed miserably to anticipate the banking crisis, EU leaders displayed surprising urgency and unity in reacting to the unfolding global economic crisis. They unveiled the European Economic Recovery Plan back in late 2008, designed to coordinate actions in the individual Member States – primarily by way of a fiscal stimulus in each country – and to take common action at the EU level, where it was deemed to be prudent and workable.

Amongst the contributions to the Recovery Plan is that from Cohesion Policy. This article briefly reviews the impact of the economic crisis on the EU and examines the initiatives taken within the field of Cohesion Policy – measures to simplify the Structural Funds regulations and accelerate spending on the ground. It concludes by considering the special merits of the policy and showing why it has been a useful tool at the heart of EU activity.

The impact of the economic crisis

Declining output, rising unemployment

While news headlines in 2010 have been dominated by the state of public finances in Greece, Ireland, the United

Kingdom, Spain, Portugal, Italy and beyond, the reality of the recession is very painful indeed for workers losing their jobs and maybe their homes, for businesses struggling to survive, and for failed businesses. Declining national output (usually measured by gross domestic product, or GDP) means fewer jobs, fewer businesses, lower average incomes, more hardship and a weaker public sector budget. Average GDP across the EU fell by 4% (in real terms) in 2009, and the decline was much more dramatic in some Member States.

Latvia has been worst hit by the financial and economic crisis. A small, open economy – with a population of only 2.3 million – Latvia had been somewhat “overheating” before suffering a banking and property crisis. Not cushioned by membership to the euro-zone, Latvia has seen unemployment rise from 6% to 22% in just over a year. National income fell by 19% in 2009 alone and, as tax revenues dried up, the country was forced to borrow from the IMF and the EU.

Spain, for so long propelled by their construction boom, has seen unemployment more than double from 9% to 21% in just over a year. In the middle of 2007, 1.7 million Spaniards were looking for work; the figure is now a shocking 4.5 million people. In Ireland, the unemployment rate reached

12%, up from just 4% in the previous year. Unemployment levels have passed 3 million people in both Germany and France and are projected to do the same in the UK. Across the EU, the standardised unemployment rate (the definition of unemployed being those out of work and actively seeking work) has risen from about 7% to around 10%, with over 23 million people now out of a job.



Killybegs Harbour Development, Co. Donegal, Ireland

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Public finances in trouble

The recession has undone 20 years of fiscal consolidation across the EU. Public sector budget deficits are now alarmingly high, easily surpassing 10% of GDP in Greece, Spain, Ireland and the UK. Across the EU the average annual budget deficit is 7% of GDP, more than double the 3% limit recommended by the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP). Leading euro-zone Member States chose to waive the SGP rules when it suited them. Now the lack of budget discipline and control is having massive consequences for the whole currency area and beyond.

Public sector (accumulated) debt levels in the EU are now standing at about 80% of GDP, up from about 60% in just two years. The UK and Ireland have seen the most dramatic increases in national public sector debt, in large part due to their exposure to the banking sector crisis and the massive bail-out packages for the banks. Debt levels have doubled for these countries, rising from relatively modest levels (around 30% of GDP in Ireland, about 40% in the UK) to levels previously associated with their less prudent EU neighbours. For Greece, Italy (and Belgium), for many years the bad cases of Europe, public sector debt levels are unlikely to fall below 100% of GDP for some time.

The figures for the Greek public sector deficit and debt are striking. Greek GDP – the output they produce or the income they can generate in one year – stands at about €240 billion. Government spending in Greece is about €120 billion per annum, maintaining the armed forces, police and justice services, public services, public salaries, pensions, social security and so on. On the other side of the budget balance, tax revenues to government do not even reach €90 billion. This leaves a gap between spending and revenue (the public deficit) worth €32 billion, a staggering 14% of GDP. Meanwhile, the burden of interest payments on the national debt is set to soar. The Greek national public debt has been high for many years, and now stands at about €275 billion.

It means that the Greek government has to periodically sell (issue and re-issue) bonds on the open market, whereby they borrow money for a period of time, paying (regularly) a competitive rate of interest to creditors, and then paying back the principal (the sum borrowed) when a bond matures. Creditors are now demanding higher rates of return on the bonds, to reflect the risk they take.

Although most public sector workers are usually protected from the worst effects of recession – keeping their jobs and guarding their pension entitlements – they too are finally sharing some of the pain in some countries. Latvian civil servants (indeed, all public servants) have seen their pay halved – across the board. Meanwhile civil servants in Ireland and Spain have had to suffer pay cuts, and it seems that public servants in Greece must finally pay more for

their job security and pension benefits.

The European economic recovery plan

A series of announcements came from the Council in late 2008, culminating in the publication of the European Economic Recovery Plan.¹ This Plan brought together the plans of Member States and proposed a number of measures to be taken at EU level. It added a little money at the EU level but most was to be done at the national level.

Most important was the recommended stimulation of demand in each country, by using fiscal policy to inject spending power worth 1.2% of GDP. Some taxes were reduced, some elements of government spending boosted. Monetary policy would complement this, by keeping interest rates at low levels. Member States were also encouraged to continue with important structural reforms, consistent with the Lisbon Strategy: more flexibility in wage-setting mechanisms and the functioning of labour markets, and reducing the regulatory and administrative burdens on business. Green measures were to be advanced, including investments in green technologies, and old car scrapping schemes. The European Investment Bank (EIB) was to increase its lending to small and medium-sized enterprises, while the European Commission would bring forward spending on the Trans European Networks (TENs) for energy supply and broadband.

State aid rules relaxed

Some EU-wide rules were relaxed. State aid rules,² for example, were relaxed for the period until the end of 2010, using a temporary framework established by DG Competition. Measures included allowing a lump sum of €500,000 of aid to be paid out to any company to help them through difficulties encountered since the middle of 2008.³

The response of cohesion policy

EU Cohesion Policy aims to reduce the economic development gap between the poorest regions and other regions and between the poorest communities and other communities within the EU. It does this by providing EU co-finance to projects in the Member States which support investment in companies, investment in skills and investment in essential infrastructure. There are three instruments of Cohesion Policy: two Structural Funds (the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF)) and the Cohesion Fund. All projects which are co-financed by these funds are organised into Operational Programmes. The priorities for these programmes are negotiated between Member States and the European Commission. The implementation of the programmes is managed by the Member States over a planning period of about seven years, called the programming period.

Cohesion Policy has had a central role in the EU response to the economic crisis. Measures were first proposed in the Commission communication "Cohesion Policy: investing in the real economy",⁴ followed by a series of amending regulations. The key amending regulations are listed in Table 1 and the substance of them is described below.

Advances to the 2007-2013 Operational Programmes

For the current programming period, the most significant change made by the European Commission was to increase the level of advances (or pre-payments) to Operational Programmes. From a total budget of €347 billion over seven years, the Commission had planned to hand out about €23 billion in advances to programmes over the first three years. But for 2009, an extra €6.25 billion was advanced to Member States, on top of the €5 billion already advanced that year.⁶ Added to the €18 billion of advances made in 2007 and 2008, this means that nearly €30 has now been advanced to programmes – more than 8% of all funds.

The latest amending regulation of 24 June 2010⁷ further increases the advances to Member States which currently have cash flow problems or have seen GDP fall by more than 10% in 2009: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary and Romania. This will be done by advancing a further 4% of ESF funds, and an additional 2% of the Cohesion Fund (see Table 2).

All these monies are hugely important for kick-starting projects and programmes in many Member States, especially at a time when Government finances are being squeezed. The advances also have the added advantage of being treated as expenditure (and payments made to programmes) for the purposes of the n+2 or n+3 rule.

Table 1: Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund amending regulations, 2008-2010

Date	Regulation number
18 December 2008	Council Regulation (EC) 1341/2008, amending Regulation (EC) 1083/2006 (General Regulation for Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund)
7 April 2009	Council Regulation (EC) 284/2009, amending Regulation (EC) 1083/2006 (General Regulation)
6 May 2009	Regulation (EC) 396/2009, of the European Parliament and of the Council, amending Regulation (EC) 1081/2006 (European Social Fund)
6 May 2009	Regulation (EC) 397/2009, of the European Parliament and of the Council, amending Regulation (EC) 1080/2006 (European Regional Development Fund)
1 September 2009	Commission Regulation (EC) 846/2009, amending Commission Regulation (EC) 1828/2006 (implementing regulation)
19 May 2010	Regulation (EU) 437/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council, amending Regulation (EC) 1080/2006 (ERDF)
16 June 2010	Regulation (EU) 539/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council, amending Council Regulation 1083/2006

Extending the 2000-2006 Operational Programmes

An important measure taken by the European Commission was to give Member States the possibility of extending the life of Operational Programmes from the 2000-2006 programming period.⁵ Structural Funds programmes from this period would normally be allowed to spend up until the end of 2008, with a series of winding-up reports being submitted to the Commission within a deadline of 15 months, by 31 March 2010. Under the extension scheme, spending could continue for an extra six months, until the end of June 2009, and the reports could be submitted by 30 September 2010 (and for some specific programmes even later).

In fact, of the €257 billion available to all programmes (and Cohesion Fund projects) for the 2000-2006 period, about €225 billion (87%) had been paid out by the end of 2008. With about two-thirds of all Programmes taking advantage of this extension (385 out of a total of 555 programmes), it is expected that virtually the whole budget will now be spent.

Table 2

	ESF additional advance (4%); in € million	Cohesion Fund additional advance (2%); in € million	Total advance; in € million
Estonia	15.7	23.0	38.7
Latvia	22.0	30.8	52.8
Lithuania	41.1	46.1	87.2
Hungary	145.2	172.8	318.0
Romania	147.4	131.0	278.4
Total	371.3	403.8	775.2

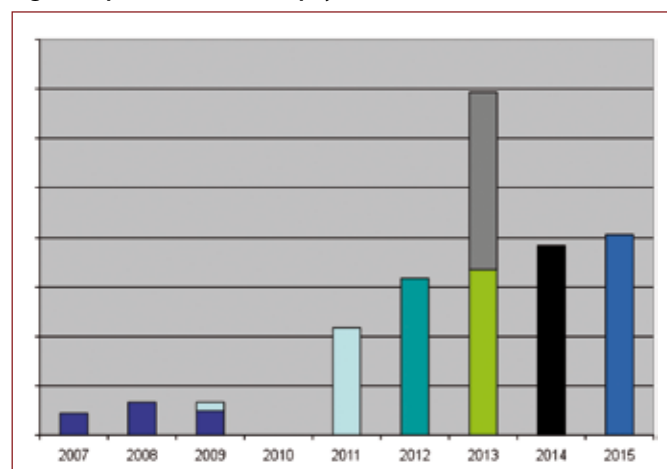
This rule dictates that EU funds to programmes are automatically decommitted (taken back by the EU) if not spent within two or three years of their scheduled (automatic) commitment.

Relaxing the rules on spending the 2007 commitment

Although the 2007-2013 programming period was well advanced in terms of planning and proposals – compared to previous programming periods – programmes rarely started in full flow at the beginning of January 2007. Even where programmes were agreed upon in early 2007, expenditure in the early months is slow, putting even more pressure on programmes to perform in subsequent years, in order to avoid the loss of funds through the $n+2/3$ rule. For this reason, the new 2010 amending regulation has also completely changed the nature of the 2007 commitment by removing the $n+2$ period (for EU15, less Greece and Portugal) and $n+3$ period (for EU12 plus Greece and Portugal).⁸ Thus, the 2007 commitment is now available across the whole programming period. More precisely, the 2007 commitment has been split into six equal parts and each sixth added to the individual annual commitments of 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013. The decommitment rule now applies only to the six other annual commitments, each of which has been supplemented by the sixth from 2007.

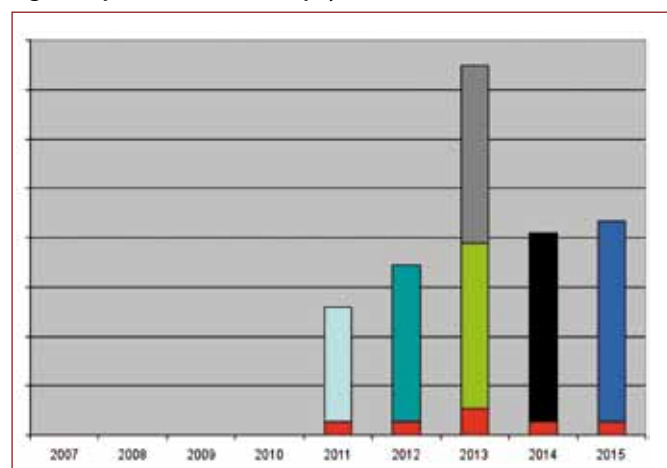
For EU12, $n+3$ operates for commitments from 2007 to 2010, and $n+2$ operates from 2011 to 2013. The different colours represent years of commitment, for example, green is 2010, grey is 2011. Their positioning represents the year by which funds must be spent under the $n+3$ and $n+2$ rule, for example, the 2011 commitment must be spent by the end of 2013. The advances use up the 2007 commitment in Figure 1; in Figure 2, the 2007 commitment is red, to be used up by the relevant years.

Figure 1: pre-amendment – payments to avoid $n+2/3$ losses



Source: European Commission

Figure 2: post-amendment – payments to avoid $n+2/3$ losses



Source: European Commission

Implementing major projects

Major projects were defined in the Structural Funds regulations as being those with a total cost of over €50 million (for example, transport or energy infrastructure), or over €30 million for environmental projects (usually construction of water supply facilities, waste water collection and treatment, solid waste treatment). After the 2010 amending regulation, the major project definition now only includes projects which cost in excess of €50 million, whether they are environmental infrastructure projects or not.⁹

Major projects have the special status of requiring Member States to conduct a (*ex ante*) Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA), reporting the results on a specific application form, submitting this to the European Commission, and having this approved or agreed by the Commission services. With a higher threshold for environmental projects, the administrative burden on Member States is apparently reduced. That said, Member States would still be well advised to conduct the CBA in order to demonstrate the positive socio-economic value of the project to the regional and national economies.

Under one of the 2009 amending regulations,¹⁰ Member States no longer need to wait for Commission approval to start spending on major projects. This can speed up the implementation process significantly. Major projects, as with all big projects, can often encounter long delays – usually caused by the need for careful coordination, the need for feasibility studies, environmental impact assessments (EIA), CBAs, and the need for land acquisition and planning approvals. These steps cannot ultimately be avoided, but cutting out the administrative waiting time for approval from the Commission should be an advantage and should assist the spending profiles of infrastructure programmes.

The amending Commission Regulation 846/2009 now also allows Member States to submit expenditure statements (and payment claims) based on expenditure incurred for major projects, before the Commission has formally accepted the project.

Of course, it is expected that the preparatory steps and *ex ante* analyses are eventually completed in a satisfactory manner and the Commission does reserve the right to refuse the co-financing of a major project. In such a case, where agreement through negotiation cannot be reached, the Member State would be obliged to finance 100% of the project from national funds (public or private).

Another change for major projects has also been introduced in 2010. Under the new rules, one major national infrastructure project (such as a new national motorway or an energy network crossing many regions) can now be funded from different Operational Programmes (typically different regional programmes).¹¹ Previously, the overall major project would have to have been split into different projects, each to be accommodated within a different Operational Programme.

Lastly, where a programme is facing an automatic decommitment of part of any commitment (that part not spent), under the $n+2$ or $n+3$ rule, the decommitment will now be reduced by an amount equal to the total budgets of major projects which are still being assessed by the European Commission.¹² This is on the condition that the major projects' application forms have already been submitted by the Member States according to the required standards.

Expanding the JASPERS facility

Besides these simplifications of the rules, the technical assistance facility JASPERS is being expanded by 25%. This initiative (Joint Assistance to Support Projects in the European Regions) is provided by the European Commission in conjunction with the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and is designed to provide specialist help to (the EU12) Member States as they try to implement large infrastructure projects.¹³ The expansion of this resource means that more experts are available to be employed temporarily alongside Member State officials, in order to help them get through the planning processes, to complete the technical feasibility and environmental impact studies, to conduct the cost-benefit analysis, and to manage and execute the project in the most efficient and effective manner.

Revenue-generating projects

For the 2007-2013 programming period new rules were introduced in order to eliminate the excessive draw-down of EU funds in cases where co-financed infrastructure yields a revenue stream to project developers. These are called the Article 55 rules (relating to Article 55 of the General Regulation for Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund, Regulation (EC) 1083/2006). Examples of projects covered by these rules include the construction of roads or bridges

For revenue-generating projects, the period for monitoring revenue streams has been cut Member States argued that the administrative burden of monitoring revenues for so long was excessive.

projects with a total cost over €1 million are now liable to follow the rules, with ESF projects now being completely excluded.

Where the project is above the threshold, Member State authorities have to make precise estimates of all future capital and operating costs and all future revenue streams, and use a discounted cash flow analysis to calculate the funding gap and *minimum* grant requirement. Under the original rules, on completion of the capital investment phase of the project, actual revenue streams were to be monitored for three years beyond the formal closure of an Operational Programme (which can be four years after the end of the programming period 2007-2013). In the event that revenues were greatly in excess of the estimate, a refund was to be paid back to the EU. Before the threshold was raised to €1 million, even the smallest revenue-generating projects had been bound to monitor revenue streams with a proportionate effort.

An amendment has now been made,¹⁵ cutting the period for monitoring revenue streams. They now need to be monitored up until the submission of closure documents of an Operational Programme, that is to say, 31 March 2017 (i.e. 15 months after the final date for eligibility of expenditure (31 December 2015)). Any excess revenue should be deducted from the (interim or final) payment claims made to the Commission. If programmes wish to re-use any funds repaid to the EU, deductions will need to be made in

payment claims before the final date of eligible expenditure. Significantly, this change has not been made in response to the economic crisis. Rather, it has arrived after much lobbying from Member States, who argued that the administrative burden of monitoring revenues for so long was excessive. Programmes would also have lost the funds repaid.

For projects where revenues cannot be estimated in advance (for certain categories of project, such as high-



New motorway, Comunidad Valenciana, Spain. Co-financed by ERDF.

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tech research and innovation centres), any net revenue generated within five years of completion of the project shall be deducted from expenditure declared to the Commission. If projects are completed more than five years before closure of a programme, the monitoring can be stopped after five years.

which have pay-tolls; the construction of business parks, where rent will be paid by companies using business space; and tourism sites which charge visitors. However, the rules apply to all co-financed projects which provide services (or where land has been sold) against payment. Notably, Structural Funds grants to businesses – designed to improve business performance – are not covered by the Article 55 rules, nor are loans to businesses, where loans are paid back to the lending body.

The earliest measure of simplification of the regulations took place in December 2008, when the threshold for revenue-generating projects was raised from €200,000 to €1 million.¹⁴ Only ERDF and Cohesion Fund co-finance

Assuming flat rate costs

Best known amongst the simplification measures taken by the European Commission is the introduction of a “flat rate” eligible cost procedure. The relevant amending regulations relate to both ESF¹⁶ and ERDF.¹⁷ So as to avoid the complications and difficulties in estimating the value of

indirect costs of projects, or the huge administrative burden of always calculating detailed exact costs for relatively modest standard activities, the Commission has decided to allow the submission of “flat rate” assumptions, as long as the assumptions are justified and presented in advance of their widespread application.

There are three specific “flat rate” cases described now in the regulations. The first is the case of “overheads” or regular *indirect costs* involved in executing a particular project (for example, heating, lighting, waste disposal, telephones, photocopying, shared facilities etc). Where justified, these may now be declared on a standardised basis, up to 20% of the direct costs of an operation. The second case is by applying a standard scale of *unit cost*. Good examples are in the field of training, for example, assuming that the average cost of putting a trainee through a particular type of training course is x 000 or y 000 euro; or for a piece of equipment, such as a basic computer terminal. The third case is the *lump sum* flat rate, whereby the lump sum can cover all or part of the costs of an operation. A typical example: the average cost of a particular type of event is calculated at €30,000, and this figure will be assumed as the flat rate cost for all such future events.

Application of the new flat rate methods is strictly prohibited from operations which have a public procurement procedure. That is to say, no contractor or contracting authority may work with flat rate assumptions within tender documents or within billing/payment claims during an operation.



Town heating pipes, Romania

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Greener housing and housing promoting social cohesion

Further boosting the green credentials of Cohesion Policy has been an amending regulation relating to the use of ERDF for the improvement of housing. In the original ERDF regulation, up to 3% of spending within an Operational Programme (or up to 2% of the Member States' ERDF budget) could be used by the new Member States (EU12) to invest in the improvement of certain sections of the housing stock. This is primarily housing in urban areas which are at risk of

serious physical deterioration and social exclusion. Selected areas had to be determined according to the benchmarks defined for a list of criteria. This regulation was designed to contribute to the vast cost associated with the upgrading of the concrete blocks of flats built under Communism.

Under the amending regulation,¹⁸ this spending in EU12 can continue, but an additional 4% of ERDF can also be spent on energy efficiency improvements and on the use of renewable energy in this housing stock. Moreover, this new measure also applies to EU15 Member States, with the condition that social cohesion is supported. This is the first time that Structural Funds have been dedicated to upgrading housing.

Further advances in the field of housing expenditure have been made as a result of a separate amending regulation.¹⁹ Previously, the housing expenditures described above had to be included within an integrated urban development initiative. The amendment means that this expenditure can now also be made in rural areas, where many of the problems to be addressed do exist. The interventions should not be restricted to housing in these rural areas, but should be part of an integrated approach for marginalised communities (e.g. Roma communities), to cover actions in the field of education, health care, employment and social support and inclusion. For these communities, new housing can now also be supported.

Financial engineering

Member States are increasingly encouraged to use financial engineering techniques within their programme operations, that is, bringing in private sector finance, experience and methods to supplement public sector funding and the traditional intervention method of grants to projects and businesses. Examples include standard loan mechanisms, the establishment of venture capital or risk capital schemes, the use of public-private partnerships (PPP), loan guarantee schemes, and so on.

Financial engineering instruments can be notoriously complicated and frequently require good advance planning and specialist management teams. One particular Structural Funds operational challenge to date has been the treatment of the management costs and fees. The 2010 amending regulation addresses this by allowing management fees, in addition to management costs, to be considered as eligible expenditure.²⁰

The new amending regulation also allows Member States to establish new, specialist financial engineering instruments for enabling operations in the field of energy efficiency and the use of renewable energies in housing.²¹

Other simplifications

Despite the financial crisis, fewer than half of the Member States have wanted to revise any Operational Programmes to date. This is good news for managing authorities and the European Commission, as revisions frequently require an evaluation study and significant negotiation between Member State and the Commission, and always require a formal Commission Decision. Programme revisions are very time consuming. The 2010 amending regulation now allows Member States to justify revisions with an analysis of rationale and expected impact, rather than a full evaluation.²²

One modest change introduced by the latest amending regulation is to simplify the requirements on reporting financial information in the Annual Implementation Report

for each Operational Programme. Member State authorities will now only be required to report the same information as that recorded in expenditure statements and payment claims (made regularly to the European Commission), and not to report a raft of financial indicators as before.²³

Projects are normally required to be operational for at least five years (in some cases just three years) after their completion, in order for all project expenditures to remain eligible. With the new amending regulation, this “durability” requirement has been clarified. In those cases where bankruptcy of a company has led to a project not enduring, the project will not be subject to the “durability” rule.²⁴

The possibility of partial closure of Operational Programmes was introduced for the new programming period. The aim was to allow Member States and the Commission to “wrap up” completed parts of Operational Programmes – where feasible – and reduce the significant burdens of big-bang closures. However, the danger of doing this was that auditors might then have found some irregularities in the closed part of the programme. As this would have led to a correction made retrospectively, the funds involved would have then been lost to the programme budget forever, even though the rest of the programme was still open. The amending regulation now allows any such corrections to be re-used, as long as it is the Member State who makes the correction.²⁵

Lastly, the amending Commission Regulation of 23 September 2009 (846/2009) aligned and clarified a number of provisions. Some publicity and information requirements were simplified, the amount of information requested on certified expenditure statements was reduced and a number of forms (for submission to the Commission) were modified.

Progress on the ground

During 2010, Member States reported on the progress of Structural Funds operations on the ground within the context of their Strategic Reporting exercise.²⁶ We know that at the end of 2009, 27% of the €350 billion Cohesion Policy budget had been allocated to projects which had already been approved. (Actual payments levels are much lower). For some Member States (e.g. Netherlands, Belgium), the figures are much higher, with over 50% of their budgets being allocated to projects which have already been approved. For others, the figures are worryingly low, little over 10% for Greece and Romania. Examining progress by field of activity reveals that grants to SMEs are moving ahead rather well, while spending approved for infrastructure projects is progressing steadily. Approvals of projects are taking place at a lower rate for energy supply networks, broadband networks and capacity-building within administrations.

Cohesion policy playing its part?

Cohesion Policy has been at the heart of the EU response to the economic crisis. It has shown itself to be responsive and flexible. Member States and the European Commission have worked together and a raft of new amending regulations have come into force between 2008 and 2010. As a result, spending periods have been prolonged and

additional financial advances have been made, enabling many Member States to complete programmes and initiate new programmes and projects. It has simplified a number of rules and reduced the burden of some administrative and financial control tasks. It is adapting to new needs and challenges.

A focus on investment

Of course the scale of the contribution of Cohesion Policy – in responding to the economic crisis – is modest when compared to the massive fiscal injections made by Member States themselves. But Cohesion activities do have a particular quality – they focus on investment, on creating a successful economic base, and not on consumption. Cohesion activities co-finance investment in essential infrastructure, investment in ongoing and new businesses, and investment in the local people – developing the skills that businesses need to thrive in a global economy. Cohesion Policy does use taxpayers’ money, but is not there to bail out struggling sectors or to provide handouts for the poorest. It is there to help disadvantaged regions and communities to help themselves.

A highly visible policy

For EU citizens, it is probably the most visible of EU policies, understood to produce tangible benefits in many ways. Many call for the policy to be repatriated, and let the Member States get on with their own economic development work, in some cases with the help of EU funds. Yet the added value of the policy at the EU level is significant: it provides a planning discipline and cycle largely protected from the whims of national political cycles; it guarantees investment finance over a medium-term perspective; it enables EU-wide priorities to be pursued, including transnational, cross-border and interregional projects and interests; and it facilitates an enormous exchange of experience and good practice. Moreover, much of the investment in the poorer regions is ultimately of great benefit to the wealthier regions.

Providing a positive return on investment

Like all elements of public spending – even capital investments – Cohesion activities will no doubt have to suffer their share of the impending cuts. What the champions of this policy need to remind the decision-makers of is that projects co-financed by the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund are designed to provide a positive socio-economic return, and be of net benefit for all project stakeholders and the wider community and economy. They are designed to deliver value-for-money to the taxpayer. This surely stands in sharp contrast to the multitude of expenditures that should come under close scrutiny, following the financial mismanagement of recent years. The underperforming and wasteful elements of public administrations, the liabilities of non-funded public sector defined benefit (final salary) pension schemes, unjustified early retirement ages and packages, tax evasion, welfare schemes which do not reward finding work, and – lest we forget – the massive emergency funding directed to the financial sector.

Cohesion Policy does use taxpayers’ money, but is not there to bail out struggling sectors or to provide handouts for the poorest.

NOTES

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The author wishes to thank Michael Hill and Anton Schrag (both DG Regional Policy, European Commission) for their time in discussing the amending regulations.
- ¹ The European Economic Recovery Plan, COM(2008) 800, 26 November 2008.
- ² State aid refers to all public financial assistance to enterprises, which has an impact on competition in product and service markets.
- ³ Note that any *de minimis* aid that may have already been granted has to be subtracted from the €500,000. The *de minimis* rule means that all companies can receive lump sum grants of up to €200,000 over three years.
- ⁴ Commission communication "Cohesion Policy: investing in the real economy", COM(2008) 876/3, 16 December 2008.
- ⁵ Enabled under Article 14, Regulation 1269/99
- ⁶ Article 5, Council Regulation (EC) 284/2009, amending Regulation (EC) 1083/2006 (General Regulation), 7 April 2009.
- ⁷ Article 1(11), Regulation (EU) 539/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council, amending Council Regulation 1083/2006
- ⁸ Article 1(13), Regulation (EU) 539/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council, amending Council Regulation 1083/2006
- ⁹ Article 1(1), Regulation (EU) 539/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council, amending Council Regulation 1083/2006
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- ¹² Article 1(14), Regulation (EU) 539/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council, amending Council Regulation 1083/2006
- ¹³ The JASPERS facility is designed to prioritise the new Member States (EU12), but at the outset was in principle open to other countries covered by the Convergence objective (regions in which average GDP per capita is under 75% of the EU average).
- ¹⁴ Council Regulation (EC) 1341/2008, amending Regulation (EC) 1083/2006 (General Regulation for Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund), 18 December 2008.
- ¹⁵ Article 1(6), Regulation (EU) 539/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council, amending Council Regulation 1083/2006
- ¹⁶ Regulation (EC) 396/2009, of the European Parliament and of the Council, amending Regulation (EC) 1081/2006 (European Social Fund)
- ¹⁷ Regulation (EC) 397/2009, of the European Parliament and of the Council, amending Regulation (EC) 1080/2006 (European Regional Development Fund)
- ¹⁸ Regulation (EC) 397/2009, of the European Parliament and of the Council, amending Regulation (EC) 1080/2006 (European Regional Development Fund), 6 May 2009
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- ²⁰ Article 1(10), Regulation (EU) 539/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council, amending Council Regulation 1083/2006
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"10 Years of CAF"

More than 2000 CAF users



Patrick Staes,* Nick Thijs,** Ann Stoffels*** and Lena Heidler****

In 2000, the Innovative Public Services Group (IPSG) of the EUPAN (European Public Administration Network) presented the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). After ten years of CAF in 2010 and more than 2000 registered CAF users, it is time to look again at the state of affairs; what has been achieved in these ten years and, maybe even more importantly, what do we want to achieve in the next ten years? This article will look at the evolution of CAF since its beginning in 2000 and examine where CAF stands in 2010 with more than 2010 registered CAF users in the EIPA CAF Resource Centre database. The milestones and achievements of CAF and its users and promoters up to its tenth birthday will be highlighted. Furthermore, the article will give an overview and a short analysis of how CAF has grown in Europe; where it is applied and in which sectors. It will also describe the development of its content and the shift in maturity that took place during these 10 years.

First steps towards the CAF

The launch of the CAF has to be placed in a context 10 years ago when, as is still the case today, public sector had to cope with a lot of challenges and had to respond to many new needs and demands in society. Due to these challenges and the pressure, the public sector has been the subject of large reforms. Especially in times of financial crises and severe cost-cuts in public administrations, the focus is on efficiency and effectiveness, attention to transparency and accountability, awareness for public service delivery.¹ Together with the principles of New Public Management (NPM), methods and techniques were constructed, focusing on one of these principles or trying to combine these principles. As such, one of these techniques, Total Quality Management, became a feature of the public sector from the late 1980s and particularly the early 1990s. In the late 1990s, many quality models and techniques (EFQM, ISO,) and subsequently the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) found their way into the public sector.²

Following years of informal consultations inside the EUPAN, there was an increasing need at the end of the '90s within the European Union for a more intensive and formal response in order to optimise cooperation with respect to the modernisation of government services in the Member States and the preparation for the upcoming enlargement.³ In 1997, this need was given substance in the formation of a steering committee at European level, which subsequently became the IPSG – the Innovative Public Services Group, acting under the aegis of the network of the directors general in charge of the public administrations in the Member States, the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN). The preparatory work that had been undertaken for several years at informal level by the directors general, led in November 1998 to a ministerial declaration containing 'the general principles concerning the improvement of the quality of services provided to citizens'. The IPSG working group then developed a quality tool specifically intended for and

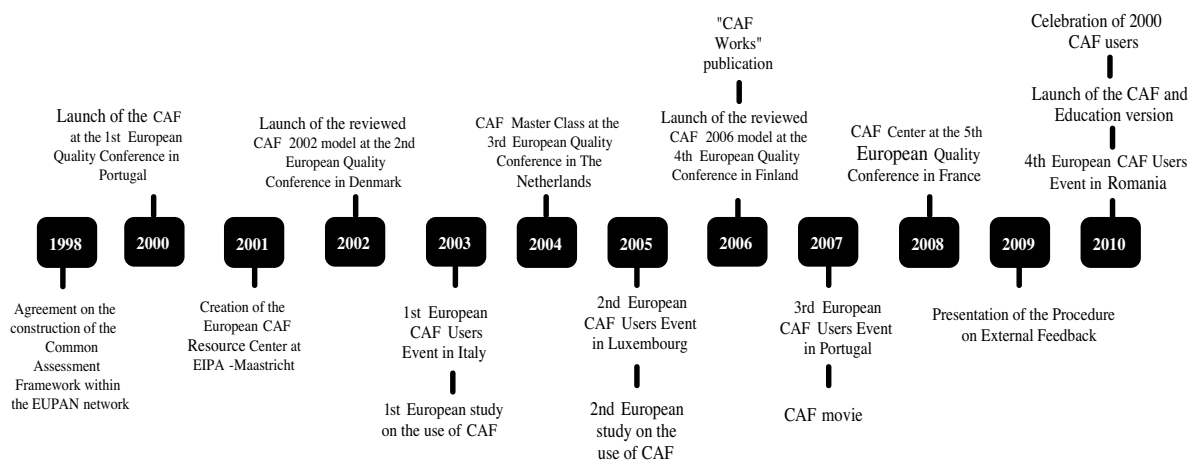
adapted to the public sector. This resulted in the year 2000 in the Common Assessment Framework – a self-assessment framework based on the principles of TQM and derived from the EFQM model and the German Speyer model. CAF was an easy to-use and free entry tool for self assessment in the public sector that could help public administrations across the EU to understand and employ modern management techniques. It has been launched at the first European Quality Conference in Portugal in May 2000.⁴

An overview of 10 years CAF

Since the first launch many things have been achieved in the past 10 years. In the following part we give a brief overview.

- to improve and regularly update the CAF;
- to define in collaboration with EIPA the role of the European CAF Resource Centre (tasks, mandate, placement, financing);
- to develop in collaboration with EIPA CAF support tools (e.g. CAF website);
- to validate the different ways to adapt CAF for national or sectoral use;
- to assist and promote the exchange of good practices of operational managerial tools between European Member States;
- to organise the CAF users events (content papers and programmes);
- to report back to the IPSG at least twice a year.

10 years CAF timeline



The year 2001 saw further development around the CAF: the European CAF Resource Centre (CAF RC) was established at the European Institute of Public Administration in Maastricht, Netherlands. This EIPA CAF RC was created at the initiative of the director generals in charge of public service with the aim of being a European centre of expertise in CAF implementation that coordinated with the national quality hubs and also served as a training and consultancy centre. Furthermore, the CAF RC carried out research on the use of the model to further develop it and aimed to stimulate the European CAF network of national correspondents and be a source of inspiration to the European CAF community. Last but not least, the CAF RC was entrusted with the setting up of a database to register and collect European CAF users with the aim of reaching 2000 registered CAF users by 2010.⁵

In 2002, the model was simplified and improved with the aim of adapting it even more to the public sector and launched at the second European Quality Conference in Denmark. The need to adapt the model in a way that was more tailored to the public sector became obvious to the network because of a European study on the use of CAF that had been done in 2002.⁶

In 2004 the IPSG, during their meeting held in Vienna, took the decision to set up the CAF expert group for developing a draft CAF Action Plan. The CAF expert group is composed of the CAF national correspondents of the Member States, the EIPA CAF RC and EFQM representatives. The group is open to the participation of experts of CAF/TQM nominated by countries. It meets at least twice a year and its major tasks are:

The collaboration as such is very special, because the network operates in the spirit of consensus at European level to drive forward the development around and within the model, which is at times difficult due to distance, different public administration cultures, national agendas, funding, etc. However, the network has proven its capability to steer the CAF forward with its many initiatives and products, which also will become evident in this article.

Since the launch of CAF in 2000, it was clear that mutual understanding and bench learning among CAF users would be a strong impetus for the success of the model in Europe. European CAF users' events are thus organised regularly with the aim of being an inspiring meeting point for CAF users and to further spread TQM in the public sector in Europe.

In 2003 and 2005, CAF users from all over Europe met in Rome and Luxembourg at the first two European CAF users' events. The Portuguese Presidency organised the 3rd European CAF Users' Event in Lisbon in 2007. In 2010, Romania hosted the 4th CAF Users' Event in cooperation with the network of CAF national correspondents and the EIPA CAF Resource Centre. The 4th Event has a special focus on the 8 principles of excellence and the newly developed the CAF External Feedback as well as the tailor-made CAF version for the education sector.

In 2004 the tradition of the European Quality Conferences was continued in the Netherlands. At this quality conference a CAF master class took place. Subsequently in 2005, not only the second CAF users' event took place, as mentioned above, but also a second study on the use of CAF was conducted.⁷

The study revealed that a number of areas in the CAF needed further improvement: increase the coherence and simplicity of the model, increase the user friendliness by improving the examples and the glossary, develop a more fine-tuned scoring system for certain users and broaden the quality approach with directives for the improvement action plans and guidelines for bench learning. Consequently the CAF was reviewed for the second time and in 2006 the CAF 2006 was launched at the fourth European Quality Conference in Finland. The result was a better definition of certain criteria and sub-criteria, an increase of the internal consistency of the criteria, the formulations and the way of evaluating and scoring.

Despite the fact that the procedure of adapting the model was highly technical and conceptual, there was a very strong participation of 15 countries during the process of the revision. Several countries prepared sub-topics in working parties which were supported substantively by EIPA and there was a strong contribution of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM).

Additionally, on initiative from the Austrian presidency and with cooperation from the CAF RC the publication "CAF works" was put together in 2006. "CAF works" presents 29 good practices from 15 countries and 8 different sectors, where the use of the CAF has led to improved results.⁸

Continuing the pattern of holding a CAF users' event as mentioned above, Portugal hosted the third event in 2007 and furthermore developed together with the CAF RC a CAF movie; an attractive tool to promote CAF by showing the effectiveness of CAF in improving public sector organisations.⁹ In addition, the movie clearly shows the European dimension of CAF: the collaboration between the different Member States, the advantages of a strong European network and community. It is the most appropriate tool to use for communication actions in an organisation, at quality conferences, etc. to demonstrate the process and results of working with the CAF model.

The fifth European Quality Conference took place in Paris, France in September 2008 and saw the second CAF Centre, a special place for CAF and the workshops and sessions about it, attract 800 of the 1100 participants at the conference; an undeniable signal that the interest for the tool was still growing.

As of today the CAF is translated into 20 languages and used in more than 2000 organisations (see *infra*).

Evolution in the development and use of the CAF Model.

In the past 10 years the CAF itself (and its use) also became more mature. In this maturity process three different phases can be distinguished. A first phase focusing on the self-assessment, a second phase having more attention for the improvements after the self-assessment and a third phase drawing attention to the mature culture of excellence in an organisation.

Since the first launch, many achievements have been realised over the past 10 years.

In the *first phase* of the use of CAF, from 2000 until 2006, the emphasis was placed on the introduction of TQM principles and values in the public sector by using the CAF as a self-assessment tool. Public sector organisations were not used to looking at themselves, certainly not involving their own people. A lot had to be learned and most of the energy was put into spreading a sound methodology of self-assessment.¹⁰

With the revision of 2006, much more attention was dedicated in a second phase to the follow up of the self-assessment; the implementation of the improvement actions that were the result of the discovery of many areas of improvement during the self assessment. The success of CAF was measured by the improved managerial practices that were installed and that led to better results in the results criteria of the model.¹¹

But awareness grew in a third phase of the need to develop further the concept of excellence that had been at the basis of CAF, but was not explicitly formulated enough for the public sector. If further developed, these principles could become the leading principles for building up the organisation towards the level of excellence on the basis of a sound self-assessment and an effective improvement plan. This work was done in the context of the discussions on the new Procedure for External Feedback.¹²

Most quality management tools have recognition schemes to evaluate assessments that have taken place in an organisation. Up until 2010, the CAF did not have such a system. Within the CAF expert group a number of volunteers - Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Slovenia, EFQM and the EIPA CAF Resource Centre - have crossed the Rubicon and paved the way for the implementation of CAF External Feedback. In relation to the nature of the needs and the kind of demands expressed by many CAF users in different Member States, the CAF External Feedback aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. support the quality of the CAF implementation and its impact on the organisation.
2. find out if the organisation is installing TQM values as the result of the CAF application.
3. support and renew enthusiasm in the organisation for continuous improvement.



4. promote peer review and bench learning.
5. reward organisations that have started the journey towards continuous improvement to achieve excellence in an effective way, without judging their obtained level of excellence.
6. facilitate the participation of CAF users in the EFQM® Levels of Excellence.

Within the course of the CAF External Feedback external experts – the CAF External Feedback Actors – visit the organisation and gather evidence on how the institution has prepared, implemented and followed up the CAF self assessment process. After going through this process the organisation will or will not receive the label ECU, which stands for an Effective CAF User, for a period of 2 times. The procedure was launched in 2010. The Member States have to install the procedure in the field from now on.

In the meantime, the European CAF network has also started to tailor CAF to specific sectors in public administration: the first initiative of this kind began in 2008, when the CAF network created a European working group, consisting of national correspondents and experts from the field to develop a CAF version for the education sector. The result is the CAF and Education that was approved by the EUPAN network in June 2010 and is available via the CAF RC website.

Growing towards 2000 registered users in 2010

During these ten years the CAF has not only grown in terms of conceptual and content work, more importantly the number of CAF users has grown as well, since the target was set in 2005 by the British presidency to register 2000 CAF users by 2010.

In June 2010 this target was met and the Belgian High Council of Justice (CSJ) registered as the 2000th CAF user. The CSJ is a constitutional body responsible for judicial selection and external audit of the judiciary. Composed of judges and law members, it plays an important role in the Belgian institutional landscape by organising the selection of judges, by exercising external control over the operation of the judicial system and by making recommendations and delivering opinions. It must serve as a bridge between the citizens, the magistrates and the political world in order to restore confidence in justice. *“The CSJ opted for a CAF analysis, since this model is widely used in federal, regional and local Belgian administrations. The goal was to optimise*

internal resources by opting for a method that was structured, participatory, bottom-up, and which involved the staff.”¹³

The 2000 and over users are widely spread in Europe and beyond Europe's borders. If we take a closer look at the content of our CAF user database (see Table 1) we see that most of the European countries have CAF users.

Furthermore there is no pattern anymore that would suggest a geographical reason as to where the most CAF users are located. At the top of the class are countries like Belgium, Italy, Denmark, Portugal, Poland and Austria. The fact that CAF does not know any continental borders can be seen by looking at the Dominican Republic and Tunisia which both have several CAF users; and even in China and Namibia we can find traces of CAF usage in our database. Also the supranational level has committed itself to quality management with CAF; several DGs in the European Commission, the Court of Auditors and Europol are only some of the European institutions that have successfully implemented the model. Looking at the spreading of CAF from this angle, prospects are that the reputation of CAF and therewith also its usage will further grow – in Europe, in the European institutions and beyond European borders.

In Figure 1 we can see that CAF users come from all sectors of public administration. It has to be noted though that the two most prominent sectors according to the EIPA CAF database are education and research (403 users) and local administration (542 users). This is particularly interesting because, as it mentioned above, a tailor-made CAF version has been developed for the Education & Research sector already. As CAF spreads further – also in other sectors – it might be that in the future more of these specialized CAF-sector versions will be developed.

The future

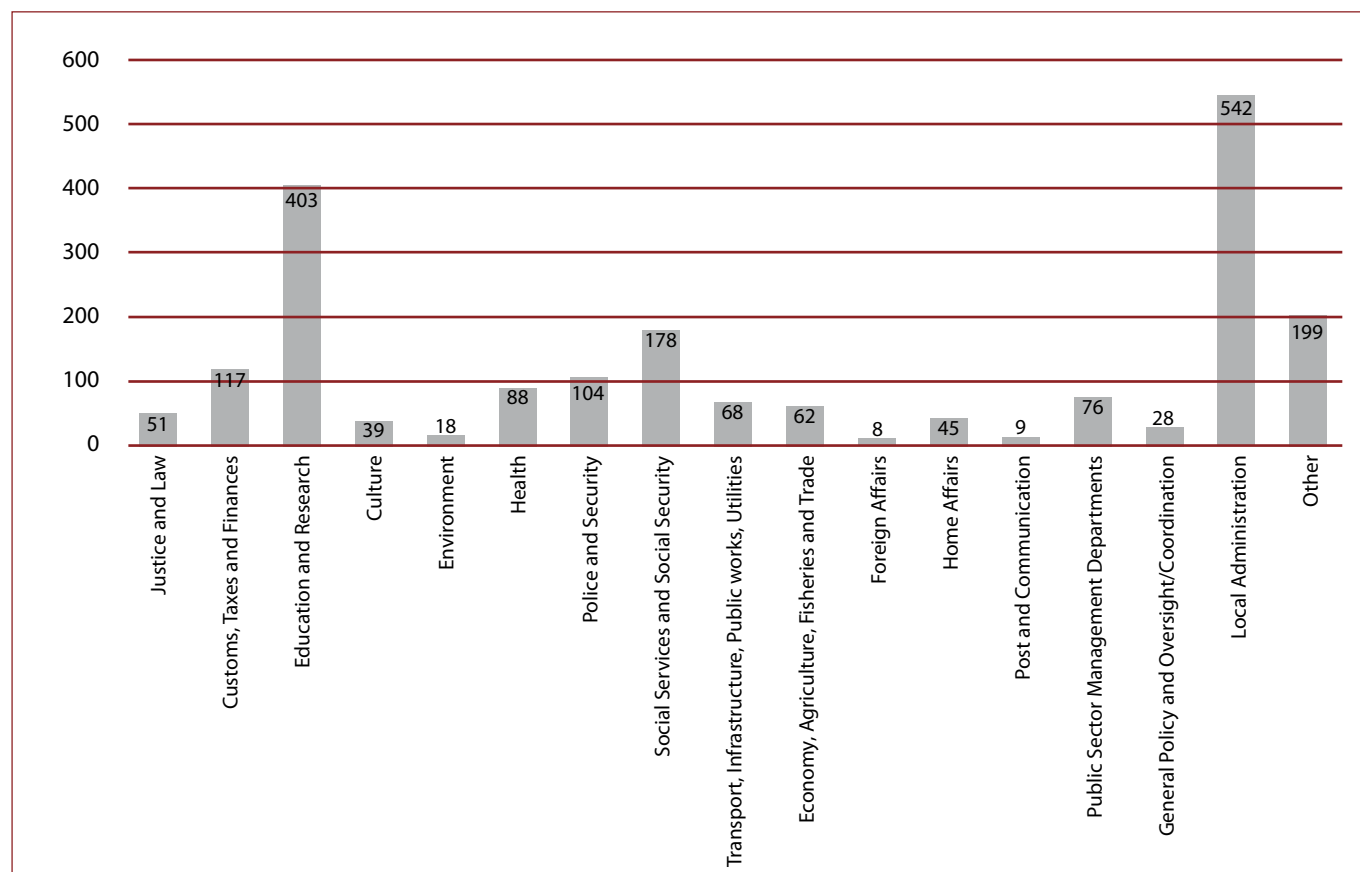
Since the launch of the CAF model in 2000 at the first European quality conference, more than 2000 public sector organisations have applied the model. Over the past 10 years the CAF model has established its position among the many quality management tools. Thanks to the unique European collaboration and the efforts of many people, the model has proven to be successful. But the challenges of the future need to be prepared today. The CAF community will need to take the necessary steps to prepare for the future.

In the previous chapters we described in general the origin and evolution of the Common Assessment Framework and

Table 1: Situation August 26th 2010: 2035 registered CAF users in 38 countries and the European institutions

Italy 322	Spain 44	UK 7
Belgium 284	Greece 39	Latvia 6
Denmark 250	Slovakia 39	EU Institutions and EC 6
Poland 160	Romania 33	Ireland 5
Portugal 112	Switzerland 20	Sweden 5
Hungary 104	Cyprus 19	Russia 4
Austria 90	Bosnia-Herzegovina 18	Croatia 3
Norway 85	Estonia 18	China 2
Germany 68	France 16	Namibia 2
Czech Republic 64	Luxembourg 12	Netherlands 2
Dominican Republic 54	Lithuania 9	FYR of Macedonia 2
Slovenia 50	Bulgaria 8	Tunisia 1
Finland 50	Turkey 7	Serbia 1

Figure 1: Spreading CAF users per sector



its implementation, all the activities and instruments that were deployed in 10 years and how the model was spread. Most of the applications occurred since the launching of the latest review in 2006. This review was based upon a comprehensive study on the use of the CAF 2002 model until then, thanks to the amount of qualitative information that was gained by this study. In order to set up new steps in the development and spreading of the model, a new in-depth study seems to be necessary, this time related to the use of the CAF 2006 version. We reached the quantitative target of 2000 registered users by 2010 and a new quantitative target might be set. But the time has come to do a qualitative evaluation of the use of CAF so that qualitative strategic objectives for the future can be defined.

This study will be undertaken in 2011. As in previous studies, questions about the content, the wording of the content and the process of implementation will have to be asked. The necessity or need to include new domains of public sector aspects like sustainability, integrity and ethics will be examined. Suggestions from national correspondents and users will be collected. More emphasis will be put on the impact of the action plans that were undertaken after the self assessment and to what extent they have led to a higher level of maturity in the organisation with reference to the 8 principles of excellence that are now worked out for the public sector.¹⁴ Information from the implementation of the new procedure on external feed back will give a first indication of to what extent these principles of excellence have found their way into the European public sector. It must be clear that one of the action points for the future will be the further promotion and installation of the

whole procedure and that this will demand a lot of efforts from the Member States as well as from the CAF Resource Centre at EIPA.

The Procedure on External Feedback can be seen as the third step in the quality development of public sector organisations. In the first step, the organisation has to look at itself, discover areas of improvement and work them out in close cooperation between management and people of the organization. A lot of opportunities to improve the

organisation can be found in the competences of its people as long as they are mobilized in an effective way. Much has been done to allow this to happen with the use of CAF but these efforts have to be maintained at European and national level and even to be increased in a number of MS that still have to be

convinced of the added value of this TQM approach for their public sector.

But a great deal of inspiration can also be found outside the organisation in other local, regional or national levels. This is the second step for organisations in their development. During the course of 10 years, the exchange of good practices has been on the agenda of many international meetings such as the 5 European Quality Conferences and the 4 European CAF users events but also at many national and regional quality events. But more can be done. Efforts will have to undertaken to raise the effectiveness of the exchange of good practices on the level of all aspects that are treated in the 28 sub-criteria of CAF. As it is a holistic TQM model, all good practices on organizational development are at stake. New methods of exchange offered by the fast developing electronic providers have to be included.

In these ten years the CAF has not only grown in terms of conceptual and content work; the number of CAF users has also risen to over 2000.

Efficiency is also becoming increasingly important in this field. In this way, we have to overcome the tendency that the first thing public sector organizations do in times of austerity is to stop meeting with colleagues from other countries. This will not only harm the growth of Europe but also the improvement of the capacity of the public sector in the MS.

In the third step, public sector organisations seek to visit expert peers to discuss with them how the self assessment and better managerial practices were implemented and to discover to what extent this has risen the maturity level on TQM. In fact this is the final outcome of working with CAF: an excellent organization that reaches the maturity level at all 8 principles of Excellence. This ambition is now clearly defined and starters are now aware of the final outcome of their CAF journey. On all three steps efforts of promotion and support will have to be maintained and developed in the future but especially in the field of the maturity levels in the 8 principles of excellence a lot remains to be done. What do they mean in practice for an organisation? What lies behind the concepts? How can an organization shift from one level to another? Are these concepts the same in all countries or can we learn from each other?

Besides working on the further deepening of CAF, the question is often put forward as to if it is useful to develop a sector-oriented version of the model, respecting of course the overall structure of the model. CAF and Education has been finalised in 2010 but some countries have already developed a CAF for Justice, a CAF for Health Care or a CAF for local administrations. This question still has to be discussed by the CAF network but reality has already passed the outcome of this discussion.

Conclusion

We have probably overlooked a number of other opportunities for the CAF in the future but it must be clear that the model can play an even more effective role than it did in the past in terms of moving towards excellent public services in and outside Europe. One major condition for that is strong cooperation within the CAF network amongst the Member States and between the Member States and the CAF RC. Because it is important to constantly remember, that together everyone achieves more!

NOTES

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⁵ all info on www.eipa.eu/CAF

⁶ EIPA (2003), Study for the Italian presidency on the use of the common assessment framework in the European public administrations, Maastricht, p. 92

⁷ EIPA (2005), Study on the use of the Common Assessment Framework in European public services, Maastricht, p. 89

⁸ The "CAF works" publication can be downloaded from www.eipa.eu/caf (publications section)

⁹ The "CAF movie" can be watched and downloaded from www.eipa.eu/caf (see movie section)

¹⁰ Thijs, N. and Staes, P., (2005) Quality Management on the European Agenda. *Eipascope*, 2005/1, pp. 33-41

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Collecting the Stars: Launch of the third European Public Sector Award - EPSA 2011

"Assess Yourself and Learn from the Best"

After the highly successful and rewarding experiences of the previous European Public Sector Awards, the new EPSA 2011 edition is scheduled to officially "take off" in Brussels in January 2011. Just as in 2009, the 2011 edition will be organised and managed by EIPA and will count on the full support of several European countries and the European Commission.

Against the background of a rapidly changing social, economic and environmental context in the 21st Century,



EPSA contributes to the progress of public performances by highlighting exemplary models of proactive public practices that address Europe's most pressing public concerns, whilst providing a platform for the public sector innovators behind these cases

to disseminate their achievements. In comparison to 2009, public administrations face an even more ambitious context in the aftermath of the financial and economic crisis, which poses a true challenge not only to the private, but also the public sector. Furthermore, in alignment with the EU 2020 strategy, local, regional and national public administrations are expected to meet the ambitious vision of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth for the future of the European Union. It is therefore even more important to highlight and reward public excellence in administrations that are finding innovative responses in times of budgetary constraints and are succeeding in delivering outstanding public services. In this context, the vision of EPSA and EIPA to create an arena in which Europe's public sector institutions can excel and become exemplars for the rest of the world remains valid and is in fact reinforced.

At the current stage of writing, 10 European countries – Austria, Cyprus, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain and Switzerland – and the European Commission represented by the DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, as well as the DG Inter-institutional relations and Administration are the official partners of EPSA 2011.



Brief flashback to EPSA 2009

EPSA 2009 saw a total of 300 applications from 28 European countries and EU institutions. The majority of these came from local administrations (42%), 27% from regional level, 27% from national level and 4% as pan-European projects. Forty contestants were awarded with a best practice certificate at the Maastricht Town Hall and four trophies were handed over to the winners from a total of 20 nominees in the four themes during a spectacular final ceremony in Maastricht on 5 November 2009. For additional information on EPSA 2009, please consult www.epsa2009.eu

Bridging activities

In the months following the 2009 award ceremony honouring the most brilliant projects with the EPSA trophy, many bridging activities have already taken place, such as the last meeting of the Steering Committee of EPSA 2009 in January this year and a number of knowledge-transfer activities exploiting cases from the last edition (see list at the end of this article).

The EPSA 2011 Road-map

Following the launch event of EPSA 2011 in January in Brussels, the call for online submissions will be open from mid-January to the end of March 2011. In the period between April and July, submitted applications will be assessed by an internationally-renowned, independent and impartial pool of experts. The multiple-step evaluation process will also include onsite visits to a small number of projects per theme. The EPSA 2011 will finally be awarded on the occasion of a high-level ceremony on leading-edge public administration solutions, which will be held in **November 2011 in Maastricht (NL)**, under the auspices of the Polish Presidency and patronage of the European Commission.

The three EPSA 2011 themes

The third edition of EPSA will revolve around three (new) themes that are soon due to be chosen by the EPSA Steering Committee (representing those countries officially sponsoring the scheme). These themes address European public sector challenges and are crucial drivers for change in the way that public administrations function in the 21st Century. They provide an insight into proactive approaches of hundreds of public administrations facing the current challenges of climate change, the supply and sources of energy, demographic change, rising unemployment and social exclusion, just to name a few.

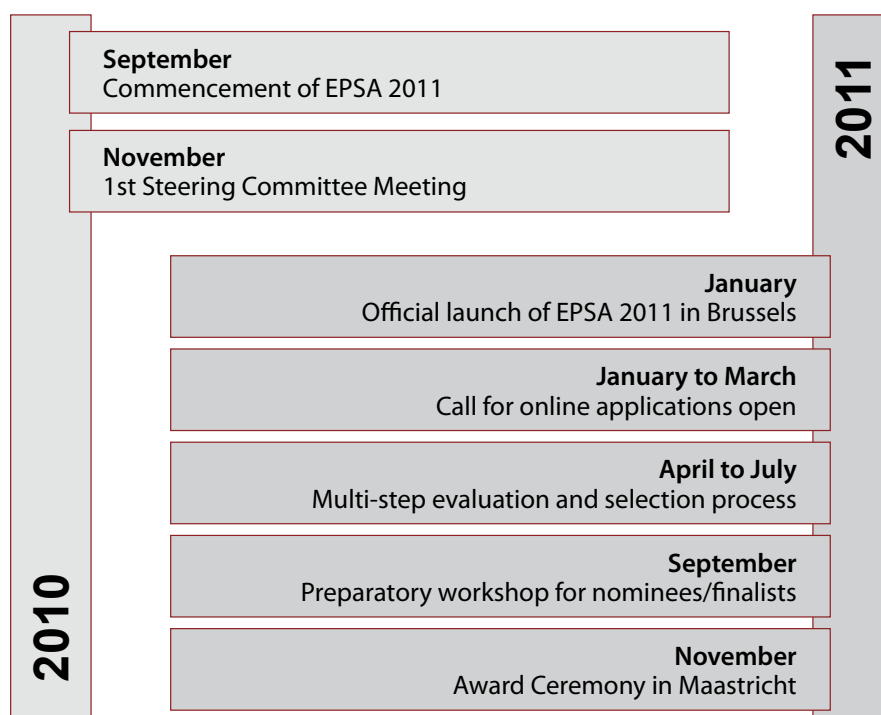
11 Good reasons for participating in EPSA 2011

There are 11 good reasons to submit your achievements to EPSA 2011, among others:

- The EPSA offers all innovative administrative areas the opportunity to be showcased and rewarded – irrespective of the size or type of the administration or the cultural sphere in which it operates.
- The EPSA offers applicants maximum benefits as a network of excellence and efficient knowledge-transfer across Europe.
- Participating administrative bodies will improve their image by publishing their results and achievements in the official EPSA publications, on the website and via other EIPA channels of dissemination.
- The travel and hotel accommodation for the participation of the EPSA 2011 nominees in the final event will be at the expense of EPSA/EIPA.

Anxious to know the other good reasons to take part? Consult our website: www.epsa2011.eu.

EPSA 2011 Road-map



"EPSA - collecting experiences and sharing best practices to deliver better services to the citizens of Europe. To me it sounds not just like a good idea but as an imperative for public sector institutions."

A Member of the EPSA 2009 Steering Committee

Some knowledge-transfer activities in 2010 taking advantage of the EPSA 2009 cases...

- **26 November:** Keynote speech "Public Excellence: Lessons from EPSA 2009" during the Quality Contest "Excellence" organised by the Swiss Graduate School of Public Administration and the Swiss Society of Administrative Sciences, Lausanne (CH).
- **27-28 October:** First international EPSA knowledge-transfer workshop on "The EU 2020 – What public management model for the next decade?" organised by EIPA together with the Sant Cugat City Council in combination with Santcugatribuna in Sant Cugat, Barcelona (ES). For more information, download the information package: <http://seminars.eipa.eu>
- **21-23 June:** 2010 United Nations Public Service Day – Awards Ceremony and Forum, Barcelona (ES) <http://www.unpan.org/2010unpsa>
- **11-12 May:** EPSA knowledge-transfer day on "Citizen Involvement" within the seminar "La e-Administración: Una administración mas cercana a la ciudadanía", organised together with the Basque Institute of Public Administration (IVAP), Vitoria (ES)
- **January/April:** Comparative analysis/research assignment of relevant cases for Norwegian municipalities based on the EPSA 2009, under the Nordic Project "New Public Leadership" and contribution to the Nordic Research Council meeting in June, Trondheim (NO)

A complete overview of the knowledge-transfer activities can be found on: www.epsa2009.eu



For more detailed information please consult **the EPSA Team** via the EPSA helpdesk, Tel.: +31 (0) 43 32 96 278
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Institutional News

EIPA's Board Of Governors

At its meeting in Maastricht on 21 and 22 June 2010, the Board of Governors approved the following appointments:

Chairman of the EIPA Board of Governors

The mandate of Mr Henning Christophersen has been extended until December 2012.



Estonia

Since the beginning of 2010, the responsibility for developing the civil service in Estonia has been transferred from the State Chancellery to the Ministry of Finance. The civil service department has been moved to and reorganised within the state administration and civil service department under the structure of the Ministry of Finance. Consequently, Estonia will be represented on EIPA's Board of Governors by the Ministry of Finance.

Mr Marek Helm (full member), Deputy Secretary-General for Public Governance Policy.

Ms Tiina Tamm (substitute member), Head of Public Administration and Public Service Department, Ministry of Finance.

They replace Ms Airi Alakivi, former Head of the Department of Public Service, State Chancellery of the Republic of Estonia, and Mr Urmo Merila, former Head of the Structural Fund Unit, Department of Public Service, State Chancellery of the Republic of Estonia.



Greece

The new appointed full and substitute Board members for Greece are both Directors-General within the Greek Ministry of Interior, Decentralisation and Electronic Government.

Ms Mary Kotronia (full member) is Director-General of the General Directorate of Administrative Support.

Ms Ourania Psomiadou (substitute member) is Director-General of Administrative Modernisation.

They respectively succeed Mr Nikos Michalopoulos and Ms Eftychia Lianou-Panagou.



France

Mr Jean-François Verdier (full member), the successor of Mr Paul Pény as Director-General of Administration and the Civil Service.

Mr Eric Roty (substitute member), Head of Section Forward Planning and International Affairs, has been appointed in the place of Mr Lionel Chaty, who has joined the RATP (public transport in Paris and suburbs).



Ireland

Mr Gearoid O'Keeffe (substitute member), from the Public Service Management & Development/Department of Finance in Dublin, he is succeeding Mr David Ring, who has retired from the Department of Finance.



Portugal

Ms Maria Do Rosário Raposo, Deputy Director-General of the Directorate-General for Administration and Public Employment, has been nominated as substitute Board member for Ms Carolina Ferra, replacing Ms Armada Da Fonseca.

Photograph taken on the occasion of the study visit to EIPA from 7 to 11 March 2010 by the Director of the School of Senior Civil Service in the Ukraine, Ms Tetyana Kovtun, and Ms Natalya Starostenko, Project Manager of the UNDP in Ukraine, during which another visit for trainees of the School for Senior Civil Service (Maastricht/Brussels, 21-24 June 2010) was discussed and prepared.

Maastricht, 7-11 March 2010

From left to right and back to front: Tore Chr. Malterud, Senior Expert; Head of Unit European Public Management of EIPA – Herma Kuperus, Seconded National Expert, EIPA – Dr Edward Best, Professor; Head of Unit European Decision-Making of EIPA – Jérôme Boniface, Seconded National Expert, EIPA – Aurélie Courtier, Research Assistant – Ms Tetyana Kovtun, Director of the School of Senior Civil Service of Ukraine – Prof. Dr Marga Pröhl, Director-General of EIPA – Ms Natalia Starostenko, project manager of the UNDP in Ukraine



Photograph taken on the occasion of the annual meeting between the Rector of the College of Europe in Bruges (BE), the Principal of the European University Institute in Florence (IT) and the Director-General of the European Institute of Public Administration in Maastricht (NL).

Maastricht, 18-19 March 2010

From left to right: Mr Wim van Helden, Director of Finance and Organisation of EIPA – Paul Demaret, Rector, College of Europe – Prof. Dr Marga Pröhl, Director-General of EIPA – Prof. Josep Borrell Fontelles, Principal, European University Institute

Visit to EIPA Maastricht by the German Bundesrechnungshof. EIPA's Director-General Prof. Dr Marga Pröhl expressed her pleasure of receiving the group at the Institute and her hope to collaborate further in the near future. Mr Martin Unfried, Expert, gave a brief introduction on the Treaty of Lisbon and led the discussion afterwards.

Maastricht, 7 September 2010

Left picture: Speaker, Martin Unfried, Expert of EIPA – right picture: Mr Horst Erb, Senior Audit Director/Head of Division, Bundesrechnungshof



The signing of the Cooperation Agreement between the Molise Region and EIPA. The Cooperation Agreement aims at conducting a series of activities for the public administrations of the Adriatic Euroregion and carrying out joint initiatives concerning publications, all in the fields of European public management, as well as policies and strategies related to European integration and other areas of cooperation, decided upon in coordination with the parties involved.

Brussels, 5 October 2010

Prof. Dr Marga Pröhl, Director-General of EIPA and Molise Region, represented by its President, Dr Angelo Michele IORIO

Staff News

Maastricht



Maja Augustyn

European legislative processes (ordinary and special legislative procedures, delegated and implementation acts, Lamfalussy structure and its reform), EU level expert groups

Maja Augustyn (PL) is Research Assistant at EIPA Headquarters in Maastricht. She joined EIPA in April 2010. Maja has studied at Wroclaw University (UWr) in Poland and at Freie Universität Berlin (FUB), and holds a Bachelor and a Master degree in Political Sciences with specialisation in European Affairs from FU Berlin. Her main fields of expertise are European interinstitutional relations and the EU constitutional reform and legislative and non-legislative decision-making. She graduated with a thesis on treaty reform negotiations in the context of the European Constitutional Convention.

Parallel to her studies, and afterwards Maja has worked for the Brussels-based European federalist organisations, both at youth level (JEF) and subsequently in the main organisation (UEF) at European level. She has served two terms in the Executive Bureau as policy and campaign officer, and was later member of the Federal Committee of the Union of European Federalists as policy co-ordinator and rapporteur on European institutional reform. She has worked in-depth on the follow-up of the Constitutional Treaty was member of the UEF Lisbon Treaty task-force.

Within EIPA Maja specialises in European legislative processes (ordinary and special legislative procedures, delegated and implementation acts - with a closer eye on Lamfalussy and economic governance) and EU level expert groups. Maja is Polish native and has excellent knowledge of English, German and Italian language. She is fluent in Dutch, has reasonable French and basic Russian. Aside her academic education in Political Science she also holds a Bachelor of Arts in classical music from the Rotterdam School of Arts.



Astrid Guiffart

Public administration; organisational development; eGovernment; quality management

Astrid Guiffart (FR) joined EIPA Maastricht on 1 September 2010 as a Research Assistant in Unit II, European Public Management. In 2008, she obtained an MA in European Affairs from the Institute of Political Sciences of Bordeaux (FR). After completing her studies, Astrid Guiffart started working as Project Assistant for the European Regional Information Society Association (eris@) in Brussels (2008-2010). Here she gained experience in public administration by working closely with regional authorities across Europe, as well as dealing with project management and European policy-making in the field of eGovernment.

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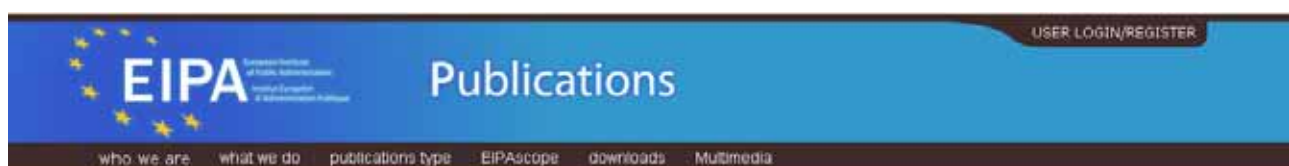
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