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**A European Public Management Profession in the Making? The Role
of Professional Academic Institutions in a
Changing Scene of Public Sector Training**

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„There was little sense of biology as a field before [the campaign to create it] in the early 1890s“ (Pauly, 1984, p. 392).

Introduction

This paper looks at the changing landscape of public sector training programs and institutions – particularly in continental European countries – from a primarily neo-institutionalist perspective. From that vantage point, the emerging European-wide patterns of new professional and academic networks of public management educators and researchers – supported by the waves of NPM-inspired public sector reforms during the past two or three decades -, the major overhaul of European university programs so as to fit the mold of the Bologna Declaration, and the mushrooming of newly-established “Public Management” and / or “Public Policy” degree courses at the graduate and undergraduate levels (sometimes offered by non-state institutions or recently established professional schools) have caught our eyes. Can those nicely dovetailing developments be interpreted as early precursors of a new ‘European public management profession’ – primarily consisting of academics from a variety of disciplines and countries plus a number of influential practitioners? Are we indeed witnessing a specific process of institution building as part of the broader trends of Europeanization and public sector change?

In search for an answer, we first turn to a variety of theoretical perspectives for conceptual guidance before attention shifts to what we believe to be particularly significant ‘change agents’ and ‘transmission belts’ in shaping and proliferating European-wide norms, values, and regulatory standards in the business of educating and training future public sector leaders: the slowly but steadily evolving ‘professional academic public management institutions’ (PAPIs). This category includes institutions ranging from the long-standing European Group of Public Administration (EGPA) to more recent organizations such as the European Public Administration Network (EPAN), the European Association of Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA) and – to lesser extent – the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee).

Emerging Contours of a European Public Management Landscape

Three key trends are instrumental in shaping the overall European public management landscape. These trends include the emergence of (a) a *European Higher Education Area*, (b) a *European Administrative Space*, (c) and the wave of recent *New Public Management Reforms*. Their combined forces set the framework for recent changes pertaining to the potential advent of a European-wide public management profession – plus a corresponding academic discipline, although our attention focuses on professional institutions for the purpose of this paper. Below we will introduce three distinct developments as relevant context conditions with a view of dissecting the role of *Professional Academic Public Management Institutions* in the following sections below.

The Bologna Process: Towards A European Higher Education Area

The European public management landscape is effectively shaped by the Bologna process and the creation of a *European Higher Education Area* (EHEA, Martens/Wolf 2006: 159, Teichler

1999). The Bologna process induces in many nation-states a “complete and revolutionary change of paradigms from a supply-side to a demand-oriented higher education policy” (Martens/Wolf 2006: 159). A new vision of employability of students, a spread of commercial actors offering degree programmes and a number of new – non-hierarchical – mechanisms especially in the field of quality orientation make observers speak of a process of *denationalisation* in the area of higher education (Teichler 2004 quoted in Martens/Wolf 2006: 154). These far-reaching changes are neither induced by a hierarchical mechanism of co-ordination nor a market-type one as the Bologna process is voluntary, has no directly binding consequences and is not furnished with legal sanctions (Enders 2004: 374/375). The process of Europeanization has resulted also in the area of higher education in the “emergence of a multi-level and multi-actor context” (Enders 2004: 375) in which academic institutions develop their own strategies to cope with these challenges. Universities in general and disciplines in particular do this balancing act between being international and local actors at the same time. Conceptualizing these mechanisms ‘at work’ between the European and the domestic level provides in our view challenging territory for empirical research. Though by no means a clear-cut and straightforward process, the trend towards a more harmonized universe of higher education in Europe (and, as a matter of fact, going well beyond the EU-borders) has done a great deal to make national educational system more susceptible to changes in line with a new European-wide public management profession: the introduction of new undergraduate and graduate degree programs (and - to a lesser extent – taught PhD programs) opened up the window of opportunity for an overhaul of the curriculum; the need for accredited programs provided a platform for new accreditation agencies and the general emphasis on exchange and peer-review with European partners shook up some national certainties and self-complacent attitudes.

An Emerging European Administrative Space

The European study of public administration is almost as diverse as its societies. It is characterized by different origins, phases of developments and traditions (Verheijen/Connaughton 2003: 838) and some even observe an “identity crisis” in their country (for the UK, Pollitt 1999: 118). Indeed, quite a few reasons have been suggested (Page 2000, Olsen 2002) why we need to be extra cautious to stipulate a common European framework for the public sector: national prerogatives are still paramount as – for example – the EU has no direct say in public administration. The EU itself only recently discovered public management reform as a policy field (see Schroeter 2005) and, in addition, the EU has never been able to develop a powerful role model for their member states in terms of public management. Quite the opposite: the core administration of the EU appears as a patchwork quilt representing various national traditions and styles. And yet, there is talk of a specific “European approach” to public management also due to a lot of “collective history” one cannot deny (Raadschelders/Rutgers 1999: 31). In part this is also attributed to the common idea of state, sovereignty and democracy – at least if compared to traditions on other Continents. Even in the face of a European diversity, more visible and palpable trends towards harmonization and standardization in matters of public administration and management cannot be denied (see in particular Olsen 2002 and 2003). Most notably, the ‘*aquis communautaire*’ as the body of EU-legislation – and increasingly enforced not only by the European Commission but by the European Court of Justice – provided an avenue for common administrative standards and procedures to make their inroads into national public management systems. On top of that the degree of administrative cooperation between EU member states has

reached unprecedented levels so that professional standards as well as reform ideas travel more easily.

In particular, many social scientists have put their hope into a more EU-centered vision for the Central Eastern European (CEE) countries after the end of the Cold War (Verheijen/Connaughton 2003). The CEE countries had not only to adjust their political system to democratic standards and the judicial system to the *Aquis Communautaire* of the European Union but they had to solve new social and economic problems under capitalistic conditions which they had not been confronted with before. This historic window of opportunity, replacing old cadres with well trained young “managers” with a social science or economy background and introducing social science based public management curricula in university departments, research shows, has been made indeed some progress (Verheijen/Connaughton 2003) – not the least supported by EU-sponsored programs designed to assist those states in transformation of their political and administrative institutions.

The Wave of New Public Management Reforms

The label ‘New Public Management’ (hereafter also NPM) is widely used as an ‘umbrella’ term covering a broad range of managerial reform strategies that have dominated the secular trend of public sector change since the early 1980s (for overviews see Bouckaert/Pollitt 2004, Hughes 2003, Schedler/Proeller 2002, Christensen/Laegreid 2002, Schröter/von Maravic 2007). Despite the considerable degree of variation among the broad church of NPM-inspired reform measures, the import of micro-economic thinking and methods into the management of public organizations as well as the leaning toward private sector management as a normative ideal can serve as a common denominator. Although the NPM doctrine does not prescribe a well-defined enumerative list of reform steps, the stereotypical tool box includes measures such as privatization, deregulation, contracting-out of public services, the use of competitive tendering and internal competition in service delivery, breaking-up of formerly monolithic organizations into semi-autonomous result- or service-centers and – particularly in view of central and federal government reform – the proliferation of executive agencies, introducing result-oriented performance standards and measures, strengthening the role of service consumers, increased emphasis on professional management in the public sector and the use of non-career staff in senior civil service positions. More fundamentally, protagonists of the NPM reform agenda share highly optimistic views of the steering capacity of the market as the preferred mechanism of social and economic coordination. As a corollary, the shift towards greater competition is seen as a key remedy to increase the efficiency and responsiveness in the provision and delivery of public services. By now an established reform approach, the life cycle of the NPM program includes phases of reform euphoria, but has also gone through fiercely critical debates. In the interim, the missionary zeal and almost naïve reform enthusiasm has given way to a more sober evaluation of the realistic achievements of administrative modernization and of the potential shortcomings and conceptual deficits of the NPM agenda. In particular, the concept of governance has arisen as a strong rival on the stage of public sector reform, promising to broaden the hitherto more narrowly-defined debate on markets and competition as major levers of reform so as to include more participatory elements and network approaches. In sum, the wave of NPM-inspired reforms helped at least in part to de-legitimize nationally entrenched ‘truths’ about how to do public management and created a demand for more social science- and management science-oriented training curricula for

future public sector managers.

It is those trends and their combined effects that effectively shape what we call the contours of a European public management landscape – a landscape that PAPIs operate in as we will discuss in the remainder of this paper.

Concepts of Professions and Professions of Public Management

Professions refer to work occupations and expert labor such as civil servants, lawyers, nurses or doctors, who claim formal and exclusive knowledge (Abbott 1988: 86). It is commonly understood that professions tend to have a monopoly of exercising certain functions or activities, that they enjoy a relatively high social status and have developed a distinct group ethic that is typically enshrined in a code of conduct and enforced by self-regulating and –governing bodies. Wilensky discussed in his seminal article “professionalization of everyone” (1964) a number of distinctive features of professions. He considered the *service ideal* to be pivotal around which the “moral claim to professional status revolves”, a “base of knowledge or doctrine” with exclusive technical competence¹, the role of clients as a marking difference to a science², the “heroic struggle for professional identification” (Wilensky 1964: 137-157) as a prerequisite for creating an “exclusive jurisdiction” and a mandate for monopoly (see Döhler 1997) as well as the support of norms of professional conduct. Professionals therefore share a

“(1) set of normative and principled beliefs, which provide a value-based rationale for the social action of community members; (2) shared causal beliefs [...]; (3) shared notions of validity [...];[and] (4) a common policy enterprise [...].“ (Haas 1992: 3)

One important characteristic feature of professions is therefore discussed under the label of “occupational imperialism” (see Döhler 1996: 63), which emphasizes the ability of a profession to control market access and exclude other providers by defining for example the content of curricula via veto-positions. It is obvious that these categories do not always offer a clear distinction and often boil down to a matter of degree. In our view we are here dealing rather with a continuum than with a clear separation between profession and discipline. Some academic disciplines, such as medicine or law, unite both and can come closer to being a profession. Others are clear disciplines, which we will discuss in more detail below. But is there something one might call a European public management profession?

¹ „Occupations which successfully identify themselves with the sacred may achieve as much of a mandate for monopoly as those which identify themselves with science. University teaching throughout modern history has combined both strategies“ (Wilensky 1964: 139/140).

² „A science, in contrast to a profession, has no clients except, in an ultimate sense, society; and bosses, if any, are often indeterminate. The main public for the scientist is fellow-scientists, who are in a position to judge competence; the main public for the professional is clients or employer-clients, who usually cannot judge competence. The ambiguity arises from the fact that the scientist as teacher or employee may come to view his students or other groups as clients and reduce his sensitivity to colleagues and reduce his openness to influence from clients and bosses.“ (141)

Describing the Mechanisms of Professionalization

What is the role that trans-national PAPIs play in the development of national public management curricula as well as in shaping a European Public Management identity for professionals and academics? Do they create a sense of identity and belonging and does this have any consequences for the domestic level? In this paper it is being assumed that they do, but how does this happen? We will introduce two ‘social mechanisms’ that link the independent variable (PAPIs) with our dependent variable (i.e. the change of professions and academic disciplines). In this context, social mechanisms are understood as “recurrent processes generating a specific kind of outcome or event” (Mayntz 2003: 1, see also Tilly 2001: 24, & Gerring 2005). Finally, the section offers a set of rival hypotheses from actor-centred and neo-institutional perspectives in order to explain this social phenomenon.



pea and national levels (see fig. 1). Though both developments could be labelled as “professionalization” (national and transnational-national), we will employ – for the sake of clarity – two different uses of the term “professionalization”:

Professionalization I is understood as the standardization of norms and conventions (Mayntz 2003: 10). Professionalization I aims at harmonizing and creating a certain set of objective standards of quality in a field or discipline. The proliferation and maintenance of objective standards is supported by the certification and licensing of products. This supports eventually the process of specialization (Wilensky 1965: 137). It follows the logic of economic production: defining the product, creating the standards and mechanisms to produce it, and bringing it on the market. From this analytical perspective we primarily analyze the impact of trans-national professional institutions on the development and convergence of standards (e.g. with regard to quality) in national Public Management degree programs for example as a consequence of accreditation processes supported by EAPAA on the national level. They more or less define what students of public management study in B.A. and M.A. programs across the Continent (see Hajnal, also Verheijen/Connaughton 2003).

Professionalization II: In a second version, the term is defined as the institutionalization of a profession or discipline in the sense of creating a joint “emotional commitment to the idea of a culture or community” (Henkel 2005: 166). This understanding seems also to be helpful when looking at the national-transnational disciplinary relationship. We then hypothesize that those PAPIs institutionalize an academic Public Management identity on the transnational European level,

which does not yet exist in highly fragmented national settings.³ These European institutions will not necessarily replace, override or integrate the domestic sub-disciplines, such as political science or law. Rather, a second disciplinary identity as a *composite European public management discipline* is being created on the transnational level. This leads us to the question whether the transnational engagement of national academics in multidisciplinary PAPIs (EGPA, EPAN, EA-PAA), influences the institutionalized disciplinary identity on the national level.

The two main descriptive assumptions that need to be tested empirically in later research argue that PAPIs fulfil two fundamental functions: standardization of norms for national curricula (professionalization I) and institutionalization of a European public management identity (professionalization II).

Explaining the mechanisms of professionalization

How can we conceptualize possible processes of professionalization? For a rough theoretical orientation we turn to classical bifurcation between actor-centered and structure-based approaches, including current cross-fertilizing lines of thought (see e.g. Scharpf's actor-centered institutionalism). If we follow those intellectual streams, we can try and deduce explanatory hypotheses for the mechanisms that drive professionalization from two principally opposing theoretical conceptions: actor-centred and neo-institutional ones.

Actors and Interests: Rational Choice-Driven Explanations of Professionalization

Actors and their interests count among the essential drivers for social and political change. If taken to its logical extreme, this approach is best embodied by the rational-choice driven school of thought. This family of theories relies on self-interested individual actors as the basic empirical and normative unit of analysis assuming behavioral patterns determined by the axioms of rational decision-making and benefit maximization as the main motives (Moe 1984: 741). Individual choice and 'agency' is considered to be the key variable (Goodin 1996: 7). Gary S. Becker concluded that whether individuals „be selfish, altruistic, loyal, spiteful, or masochistic“ (Becker 1993: 385), they always try to maximize their interest and evaluate their strategic options by focusing on the uncertain consequences of them. Whether we are here dealing with a neutral “method of analysis” or with assumptions about the motivation of actors (Becker 1993) cannot be discussed here but it illustrates the tensions that arise around this theoretical perspective. Not surprisingly, many authors have directed their critical fire against this deductive and parsimonious, but also reductionist approach for presenting an incomplete, distorted if not negative picture of man that has largely self-fulfilling tendencies if used to guide real-life policy programs (among others Hay 2004). The claim of rational ‘culture-free’ individual behavior as well as the rationality assumption at the very heart of this theoretical body have been further bones of contention and prompted a series of adaptations to the classical orthodoxy of rational-choice thinking (see Bates et al. 1998). Nonetheless, the individual quest for benefit maximization and the strong belief in actors’ agency serves as a powerful rival explanation to more structural and insti-

³ “Public Management Disciplines” are here understood as disciplines, which deal with the state and its function as its primary object of inquiry. To those disciplines we generally count political/administrative science, law, sociology, public management, and economics.

tutional approaches as presented below. We therefore deduce a number of hypotheses following this ‘logic of consequentiality’ (March and Olson) as follows. Guided by the question as to what kind of interest academics might have to pursue a European professionalization strategy for the public management sub-field.

Explanatory assumptions about professionalization I:

- a) In an increasingly internationally competitive environment in higher education, universities and their departments are interested in international “quality labels” provided by international accreditation agencies to attract international students willing to pay for their studies.
- b) National public management programs tend to cater more and more to internationally-oriented students and employers who expect graduates to have a competency profile that corresponds to the growing challenges of economic and political Europeanization.
- c) National public management programs accept the norms and standards set by transnational academic institutions as they lead to a level playing field among competing institutions and avoid a downward spiral of standards as a consequence of economic competition.

Explanatory assumptions about professionalization II:

- a) National incentives: Academics seek a European ‘public management identity’ as a way to respond to national incentive systems (competition among disciplines, performance related salary, reputation etc.) that promote international research co-operation with regard to major research funding, high-level publications etc.
- b) ‘Arena-Shopping’: In an effort to circumvent and by-pass unfavourable national decision-making structures and the power distribution therein, academics – primarily if marginalized in their own national professional associations – have an incentive in turning to the European level and foster coalitions with interested colleagues to gain ‘critical mass’.
- b) International incentives: Public management scholars are interested in strengthening a Public Management discipline on the European level *only* as a joint interest representation – *lobbying* - when it comes to negotiate with international publishers about specific PM journals, the distribution of European research funding, regulation of quality standards and indicators. This is especially important for a small and highly fragmented field of study. Its journals are relatively small compared to the established disciplines and do not always appear in the most influential rankings, such as the Social Science Citation Index, or score low on the so-called impact factor.

Structures and Institutions: Neo-Institutional Explanations of Professionalization

In contrary to interest-based theories, neo-institutional theories emphasize the embeddedness of individual preferences and action in collective social settings (DiMaggio/Powell 1991: 11, Goodin 1996: 7). Individual behavior is shaped by rules, symbols, routines, norms, scripts, and templates (Hall/Taylor 1996: 15). Institutions therefore make behavior predictable because they

mitigate ambiguity and unpredictability in complex and dynamic social settings (March/Olsen 1989: 22-24). Actors follow rules they consider legitimate. Legitimate rules are those who offer refer to a shared understanding of what is right, true, reasonable, and good. Seeking identity and fulfilling the expectations and obligations “encapsulated in a role” (March/Olsen 2006: 689) is a central element in this theory. Instead of calculating the net-benefit of alternative options conformity or appropriateness explains decisions (Hasse/Krücken 2005: 15). Not consequence, likelihood and value matter but “criteria of similarity and congruence” (March/Olsen 2006: 690). To act appropriately simply means to act in accordance with institutionalized practices of a collectivity.

The idea that *legitimacy* is more important for the survival of institutions than efficiency or productivity shakes the core assumptions of actor-centered interpretations (Hasse/Krücken 2006: 51). This legitimacy can be achieved through a variety of ways. DiMaggio and Powell differentiate three mechanisms of institutional change, which they call *coercive, mimetic or normative isomorphism* (1991: 67). The first one describes formal and informal pressures towards change, mimetic isomorphism captures standards or imitated responses to uncertainty. The latter, normative isomorphism, is closely associated with professionalization. Normative isomorphism is defined as “a collective struggle of members of an occupation to define the conditions and methods of their work [...] and to establish a cognitive base and legitimization for their occupational autonomy” (DiMaggio/Powell: 1991: 67).

Explanatory assumptions about Professionalization I:

- a) Instead of choosing existing accreditation agencies, PAPIs (such as EAPAA) operate successfully in accrediting public management programs because they enjoy a high reputation as being independent and non-profit oriented. They offer trustworthy public management expertise by peers who belong to the “same” discipline.
- b) Mimetic isomorphism explains that institutions are successful who offer standards that presumably enjoy a high credibility. Those are being copied by national programs and eventually lead to a convergence of standards.
- c) Normative isomorphism seeks the answer in showing that one tries to establish a pool of knowledge, methods, concepts, and programs in order to legitimize its own disciplinary autonomy and realm. Standardizing the quality among public management programs and licensing them is an expression of this.

Explanatory assumptions about professionalization II:

- a) Public sector scholars who work in a highly fragmented and isolated disciplinary (sitting between the chairs) domestic context seek recognition and self-esteem on the European level in a “new” Public Management discipline that shares a common set of methods, standards and concepts. This compensates for not being able to derive the status on the domestic level. We follow Mary Henkel in arguing that academics want to see themselves as “belonging to a distinctive and bounded sector society” (2005: 158).
- b) Domestic pressures on disciplines due to budget restraints and reform attempts in public universities, asking for the economic justification of each discipline or field of inquiry, creates an atmosphere of uncertainty and makes academics seek for a trans-national

community that provides self-esteem and status.

Researching Professionalization and the Role of PAPIs: Guiding Questions

We refer here to the emergence of a number of professional academic institutions on the European public management scene. We label them *Professional Academic Public Management Institution(s)* (PAPI), and we are particularly interested in their role and ability in shaping European public management as a profession *and* possibly as an academic discipline at the same time. A major player in this group is the European Group of Public Administration (EGPA), an almost 35 years-old institution with mainly representative functions. Other examples of this functional category are the European Public Administration Network (EPAN), the European Association of Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA), or the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPACEe). All three of them are the creation of the past fifteen years. Until now they have not attracted too much investigative attention at all and their importance in shaping developments of professionalization has been neglected in particular. This alone appears to be good reason to start asking questions about their role and function in the universe of European public management institutions. We argue that they are helpful variables in order to understand current trends of both convergence as well as persistent divergence of European Public Management professions and discipline. At the moment there is neither an overarching European public management profession nor is there a fully-fledged academic discipline. In recent years, however, an increasing dynamic development in those respects has been witnessed. We ask if these PAPIs have the potential to shape these developments effectively.

The role of PAPIs and their effects on the domestic level gain particular significance for the description and explanation of trends of convergence and fragmentation of professions and disciplines. Professions refer to work occupations, e.g. civil servants, lawyers or medical doctors, disciplines are fields of academic study in which the production of knowledge is being organized. PAPIs may eventually fulfil two major functions in shaping a European profession and discipline. PAPIs standardize the 'production' of professionals for the public service by regulating public management curricula across Europe and work towards a common European public management discipline by creating a transnational disciplinary identity that transcends the domestic disciplinary fragmentation without rendering it obsolete.

The research problem addressed here is the insufficient empirical and conceptual knowledge about the effects and role of professional academic institutions in a European multi-level setting. However, there is no need to reinvent the wheel. Students of European studies (e.g. Olsen 2002, 2003) and international relations have discussed extensively the socializing role of international institutions. Nevertheless, the focus has mainly been on governmental institutions such as the European Commission or international organizations, e.g. the Council of Europe (Checkel 2001) or the OECD (Martens/Wolf 2006). This paper focuses on the role of non-governmental organizations. This owes some credit to the debate on new governance structures and their relevance for the analysis of non-hierarchical forms of co-ordination - in this case academic/professional - instead of the traditional menu in the sector of higher education of state-induced or market-like co-ordination (Enders 2004: 372).

In particular, we will shift attention to the existing network of PAPIs as possible change agents and “transmission belts” effectively working towards European-wide norms, values, and regulatory standards in the business of educating and training future public sector leaders as a specific *profession* (fig. 1). There are a number of academic disciplines interested in the state and its administration and its function as its primary object of academic inquiry. To those disciplines we generally count political and administrative Science, law, sociology, public management, and economics. The argument advanced here is that a transnational European public management profession is in the making but not a European Public Management discipline. Domestic disciplinary boundaries do not seem to disappear but rather remain intact. A trans-national umbrella unites a number of domestically distinct disciplines and sub-fields, however, without dissolving them. PAPIs may play a crucial role in shaping this development and eventually tilting it in one or the other direction. So far one may rather talk about a *transnational composite* Public Management discipline than of an integrated discipline *sui generis*.

Taking a Closer Look: Four Portraits of Relevant PAPIs in Action

What kind of institutions are those PAPIs? In this section of the paper we will look more closely into the main functions and activities of four major identified European PAPIs: EGPA, EAPAA, NISPACee, and EPAN. PAPIs standardize the ‘production’ of professionals for the public service by regulating public management curricula across Europe and work towards a common European public management discipline by creating a transnational disciplinary identity that transcends the domestic disciplinary fragmentation, however, without rendering it obsolete. They fulfil different functions such as program accreditation, professional interest representation, networking, development of training schemes and educational programs, curricula development, establishing research networks etc. On top of that, they share the following characteristic features: they are trans-national, professional academic, non-profit organizations, and deal with phenomena of the public sector in general and, more specifically, with matters of public administration proper.

Table 1: Selected “Professional Academic Public Management Institutions”

	EGPA⁴	EAPAA⁵	EPAN⁶	NISPACee⁷
Founded in	1974 in Speyer	1999	1997	1995
Executive comm.. ⁸	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - G. Bouckaert, Leuven Univ. (BE) - Werner Jann, Potsdam Univ, Germany - Parrado Diez (UNED Spain), - S. Horton (Portsmouth, UK) - C. Spanou (Athens) - J. Ziller (EUI, Florence) - W. van den Donk (Tillburg, NL) - K. Holkeri (Helsinki, Ministry of Finance) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Christoph Reichard, Potsdam, chairman, Germany - Theo van der Krogt, Twente, the Netherlands, secretary/treasurer - G. Bouckaert, Leuven, Belgium, vice-chairman - Mrs. Ludmila Gajdosova, Executive Director NISPACee (representing NISPACee) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - T. Toonen, Leiden NL - P. Bogason, Roskilde (DK) - B. Connaughton, Limerick (Ireland) - M. Brans, Leuven - L. Gajdosova, NISPACee - M. Alda, University Rey Juan Carlos - T. van der Krogt, EAPAA Twente - T. Verheijen, World Bank - M. Leons, Leiden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mrs. Ludmila Gajdosova, Executive Director - L. Vass Institute of Social Sciences, Budapest - Sergei Pushkarev Faculty of Political Science & Sociology, Ural State University, Yekaterinburg, Russia - Stanka Setnikar-Cankar Faculty of Public Administration, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia - Wolfgang Drechsler Tallinn University of Technology, Tallinn, Estonia
Funded by	Membership fees, conference revenues	Accreditation fees; + hidden subsidy by Univ. Twente NL	Initial EU funding was phased out in 2005 - indirect support from EGPA by the way of joint conference organization	- seed money in large parts from NASPAA and USAID, also from UNDP, OECD, World Bank and foundations - The NISPACee revenues are membership fees, grants, donations, yields of its own activities and of its assets.
Members	- Individual and corporate from the following disciplines: public law, public management, administrative science, political science, sociology - plus practitioners	Membership is open to all academic public administration programs in universities and comparable institutes: 37 members	99 PA institutions in 27 EU member states	NISPACee membership encompasses Member Institutions and Associate Members. Individuals can apply for observer status approx. 1.000(?) institutional and individual members not only from CEE but also from Mediterranean countries
Aims	EGPA is a Regional Group of IIAS whose purpose is to strengthen contacts and exchanges among European specialists in public administration, both scholars and practitioners.	Implement and maintain a European system for the accreditation of academic public administration degree programs	- stimulating and promoting Europeanization in teaching PA - providing a platform for exchange of information and facilitating dialogue - improving links with the profession	- assisting, mediating and facilitating joint research, educational and training programmes - professionalizing of the civil service - strengthening the position of schools and institutes, public admin. programs
Instruments	Conferences, study groups, publications	- Evaluation by public administration peers - The Accreditation	- Representing the interests of PA programs in Europe	- conferences, working groups, summer schools, training programmes,

⁴ European Group of Public Administration

⁵ European Association of Public Administration Accreditation

⁶ European Public Administration Network

⁷ Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe

		Committee, an independent body of recognized public administration professors, decides upon accreditation.	- supporting the management and coordination of continued thematic network activities - providing PA programmes with an understanding of the implications of the Bologna declaration	reports on PA programs, youth forum, biannual Civil Service Forums
Activities	- The annual conference is the core activity of EGPA. - International Review of Administrative Sciences (IRAS) (published in coop. with IIAS)		- joint curriculum development, EMPA, MEGA - doctoral networks, summer schools, seminars	- annual conference since 1992 - 10 working groups - 1995-2003 8 summer schools - annual award since 2001

The organizations show a relatively high degree of overlapping institutional and individual membership, thus reinforcing their networking activities. In addition, PAPIs don't stand alone, but maintain crisscrossing inter-organizational linkages – in part fostered by ex officio membership of functionaries and / or by joint activities such as the organization of annual conferences. The cited commonalities make the existing division labor all the more visible: while NISPACee has by definition a clearly delineating regional focus, other PAPIs cover the whole of the continent. EPAN stands out for its single mission as accreditation agency, whereas other PAPIs have a broader portfolio, although the development of teaching standards and programs plays a major role across the board. As exemplified by the cases of EPAN and NISPACee, supra-national (such as the EU) or international organizations (UNDP, the World Bank, OECD) as well as national governments (e.g. USAID) have been known for playing a crucial role in providing 'seed money' for those organizations and assisting them during their formative phases.

Without downplaying the significant contributions to the European public management profession, one should be quick to make mention of the sometimes precarious financial situation that PAPIs find themselves in. Also, absolute and relative membership is still underdeveloped and is primarily anchored a limited number of institutional linchpins that hold the delicate architecture of those institutional networks together. In view of the relatively confined organizational capacity that PAPIs have at their disposal, their institutional future cannot be taken for granted. Rather than dealing with a robust and sustained development, we are witnessing a potentially powerful but still fragile fabric of European-wide professional associations in the public management domain – associations that are still competing with other national organizations as well as other European or international with a rivaling disciplinary focus.

Concluding Thoughts: Is there a Trend towards a European Public Management Profession?

It flows from the above discussion that any answer has to do justice to an inherent ambivalence of the current situation. Despite the commonalities amongst European public sector traditions, distinct national civil service identities and academic professions have developed over time and still shape contemporary identities of public sector practitioners and academics. At the same time, however, major and potentially far-reaching forces are at work to push national models in a similar direction of how to manage and conceive of government: the emergence of a European Administrative Space, a European Higher Education Area and New Public Management reform measures. The past two decades have not only been dominated by the debate on modernizing public administration by applying management tools from the private sector (Pollitt/Bouckaert

2004), but also by a debate on how to revamp the professional mind-set of the public sector workforce (Schedler/Reichard 2007). Rather than the internal restructuring of bureaucracies and their relation to societal and economic actors, a new “software of the mind” of civil servants is suggested and the issue of controversial debates (see Horton/Hondeghem). How shall civil servants be trained and educated? What do they need to know in order to cope with the challenges of complex (post-)modern societies? A healthy but limited dose of law studies, a larger chunk of genuine management studies, a bit of political science and a grain of leadership training – this mixed bag has been suggested to form the new stereo-typical public manager. The corresponding institutional laboratories for the creation of this new species have also been identified – sometimes self-assumingly called “schools of power” (Bertram et al. 2006: 539), i.e. practice-oriented professional schools (conceptually inspired by the more than 40 years-old tradition of professional public policy and public management schools in the US, see also Jann 1984).⁹ The overall picture, however, is one of competing national approaches and reference points, ad hoc cooperation, experimental projects coupled with traditional institutions, and all in all a patchy institutional universe of European public sector training and research organizations.

Against this ambivalent background, one seems to be on relatively safe ground to conclude that for the time being an institutionally well-established and socially close-knit academic profession representing the European public management sector – as measured by a shared set of academic standards, a common intellectual history, high social self-esteem, and self-regulatory bodies - exists only in rudimentary form. At the same time, however, the emerging contours of such a professional development are already clearly discernible. As crystallizing points of this development the ‘professional academic public management institutions’ can be identified. They perform important functions for the gradual change towards a common identity of and a set of professional standards for academic educators and researchers in the European public sector, fostered by networking activities, research projects, conferencing and publishing venues and – even more importantly – self-regulatory activities pertaining to degree programs that reinforce and perpetuate the social mechanisms of professionalization.

⁹ Public-sector specific training institutions for elite cadres are not foreign to European countries. Professional schools such as the *École Nationale d’Administration* (ENA) – and the *Institutes d’Études Politiques* (IEP) as its prep-school – have been successfully established in post-war France. The French occupational authorities tried to establish in Germany with the *Deutsche Hochschule für Öffentliche Verwaltung* (Speyer) a similar institution in Germany, though in the end not as successful as its role model.

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