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TEACHING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: SOME TRENDS IN EUROPE

It seems that four major trends are affecting our university teaching in general, and that of the field of public administration (PA) in particular: Europeanisation, public sector reform in member countries, globalisation, and marketisation. Each of these four trends may have a different impact in different European countries. However, the combination of these four trends, in their different intensities, will affect the field of Public Administration in a substantial way.

EUROPEANISATION AND TEACHING PA

The European political and administrative scene has changed dramatically in the last twenty years. The European Union has taken significant steps forward with a significant impact on the functioning of the public sector in its member countries. There is an increasing legal, political, and administrative reality which becomes a European Administrative Space. Even if there are variations between countries, there is a certain "acquis communautaire" which is visible. From a quality control point of view, there is even a Common Assessment Model (CAF) that is getting accepted as a major frame or reference for quality in the public sector in the member countries (and even beyond).

A second significant trend is obviously the fact that Central and Eastern European countries have joined. They are making choices to remodel, train and upgrade their civil service, but also their research capacity in the field of public administration. Establishing a new academic and administrative elite is a challenge. It brings the French daily *Le Monde* even to ask the key question: "who is shaping our elite?", i.e. the public sector elite [Floc'h 2008]. In 1991 the Polish government took a decision to have an explicit policy on shaping its administrative elite, also in the context of the European Union, and to invite the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) of Maastricht, the College of Europe in Bruges, and the European Institute in Florence [Jacqué 2008]. Today, Poland hosts the College of Europe in Natolin which focuses more on enlargement and integration, as well as an EIPA-antenna with a focus on financial management in the public sector.

A third irreversible trend which has affected the teaching of public administration is the Bologna process towards a bachelor-master structure within the European Educational Space. This Open Method of Coordination has resulted in one of the strongest converging momentums of change in national education policy across Europe. Obviously, the practice of exchanging students with Erasmus programmes, the transfer of credits as regulated within the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), the still hesitant but clear pilots to have diplomas offered by more than one university, are all expressions of a converging system with an enormous impact on teaching our field of PA. The fact that there is already a strongly emerging European

Research Space is another piece of evidence that generating, transferring, and using knowledge is and will be affected.

What are possible consequences of these trends?

The European project in itself has become a topic of research and teaching, and resulted in a new field of 'area studies', with interfaces to a range of disciplines such as history, economics, law, political science, policy sciences, management (of multi- or international organisations), and public administration.

This has added to the attractiveness of the European academic scene for students and scholars. National teaching programmes have become less closed or national, and have become more open and European oriented. 'European Studies' are broadening the scope of PA, they have resulted in separate classes, and even in master programmes as such. It also affected existing courses. The European level is not an isolated reality but is interfering with all other levels of government, including local government. Intergovernmental relations (IGR) now also include the European level, and Multi-Level Governance (MLG) became a key concept in the field. As a consequence, the sui generis reality of the European Union turns into a new (theoretical) model of PA.

A second consequence has to do with the organisation of teaching and the production of diplomas. The more teaching systems become open, the more there is an expectation to exchange (students), transfer (credits), share (courses), co-produce (joint or co-diplomas), and the more there is a need to guarantee reliable and predictable levels of quality. As a consequence there is a need for quality control. A logical next step is to set up quality assurance systems, such as accreditation. In this context the European Association of Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA) was established. The whole European agenda of guaranteeing quality seems to generate a new population of organisations at the European level: ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education), EUA (European University Association), EURASHE (European Association of Institutions in Higher Education), ESU (European Student's Union). These four new institutions have established an international non-profit-organisation EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register). This cascades down at the country level. Each country needs to have a separate organisation which regulates (and conducts) quality assurance and accreditations. In some countries separate agencies were established for that purpose. In the Netherlands the NVAO (Accreditation Organisation for the Netherlands and Flanders), and a separate operational agency to conduct reviews (QANU, Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities) were established. This all results in guidelines, memberships, reviews, assessments, audits, and accreditations which should allow for (more) quality in teaching.

PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM AND TEACHING PA

Public sector reform has been an issue within OECD countries in general for several decades. This was a very Anglo-American driven agenda, with key countries setting reform frames, such as, New Zealand and the UK. However, continental Europe was also influenced, and even if a 'maintain' position was initially dominant, reform did happen, even in the European Commission.

From an overview of reforms in OECD countries [OECD 2005; Pollitt and Bouckaert 2004] it seems that there has been a converging pattern of answers or solutions to a shared set of problems and challenges. This emphasises the importance of (bench) learning, and of conditions for successful transfers of knowledge and good practice.

These reforms of the research object of public administration have also impacted research and teaching. First, PA shifted its content from political science, policy, public administration in its strict institutional sense, and law to also including public management. Public management became a new pillar in teaching (and in research), as well as the interfaces of management and politics, policy, institutions, and law.

A second consequence was that comparing and comparisons became a normal part of teaching. The art and science of comparing itself, but also the results of comparisons became content for teaching PA. The purpose of comparisons was obviously to result in 'lessons learned'. Also the fact that many students got Erasmus exchange programmes encouraged the efforts of comparing countries, levels of government, policies, or specific organisations for papers or theses. To the extent that this was possible, English as a shared language facilitated comparisons even more.

A third consequence of these reforms was that all policy fields professionalised their policy and management cycles within their field. To train professionals in education, health, security, culture, sports, justice, etc. requires field experts who are exposed both to the management of schools, hospitals, police stations, museums, training centres, courts, etc., and also to policy expertise (strategic planning, monitoring, reporting, evaluation, etc.) in all relevant policy fields. Specialised master programmes have been established for policy and management in all these policy fields, mostly in the faculties that are equipped and related to these policy fields (Faculties of Arts, Sports, Criminology, Educational Sciences, Agriculture, etc.). This has an impact on PA and the way it is organised at universities. Whereas previously PA was predominantly a vertical department (linked to politics, law, or management), it now also has a horizontal dimension with modules in all other university faculties related to these policy fields. There is a significant increase of master's programmes in all these policy fields (environment, culture, education, social policy, leisure, etc.). As a consequence more management and policy courses are integrated in all these vertical programmes (e.g. strategy, implementation, evaluation) to strengthen management of museums, hospitals, schools, sports centres, natural parks, police, prisons, courts, etc. A final impact is that 'governance' becomes the new paradigm which is also expressed in master titles and courses. Recent examples are the Hertie School for Governance (Berlin), the Master of European Governance and Administration (Potsdam, IEP Paris), or the programmes at the Zeppelin University (Germany).

GLOBALISATION AND TEACHING PA

Globalisation has two major consequences on teaching.

First, the topic of interdependencies in fields of e.g. environment, economics, migration has influenced the offer of specialised courses of how to manage these

major and globalised societal problems. This includes policies and management of international organisations, and how this cascades down to national policies and administrative systems. Area studies remain important, but globalised policy field courses are added to this.

A second issue is that in a globalised world, teachers and students are moving constantly. There is first the European scenery. This mobility of students is not equalised. There is a net 'import' of Erasmus exchange students in Finland, Ireland, Malta, Sweden, and the UK. There is a net "export" of students for Bosnia Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Turkey. The other countries within the European exchange programmes have a more balanced number. It also seems that more American students are visiting programmes in Europe compared to the previous decades. Increasingly, many programmes are exposed to significant numbers of Chinese candidates. All this applies also to teachers, but perhaps to a lesser extent.

MARKETISATION AND TEACHING PA

Increasingly, education becomes part of market mechanisms. A market means that there is a supply of programmes with specific features that fit a marketing mix (price, product, place, promotion). The price of a programme is linked to prestige and quality (which is officially assessed). The product, a diploma, but also a network, and a channel for the job market, is derived from the content of research, the reputation of staff, the prestige of the institution. Attractiveness of a place remains an important factor. Websites and promotion on teaching markets become a standard operating procedure. There is an active demand of students that explore supply, especially after their bachelors.

Elements such as benchmarks, rankings, accreditations all add to quasi market mechanisms in the field of teaching in general, and teaching PA in particular. This is not a perfect open competition because of constraints in language, location, entrance requirements, recognition of diplomas, or fees. Nevertheless there is a shift away from a more monopolistic position of national programmes, to a more internationally competitive and global market.

In this context national schools within the public sector, who still have a clear monopoly, may come under pressure. Universities are increasingly capable of offering and shaping the administrative elites in countries.

A special aspect of the marketisation of programmes is the accreditation. An accredited and well ranked programme and school is able to increase its fees, especially since the students' willingness to pay increases if their chances on higher future earnings increase. As a consequence these programmes and schools are not only willing to invest in quality, but also they are willing to pay for accreditation, sometimes even for several accreditations e.g. also by USA bodies. Accreditation agencies know this and are not reluctant to charge huge fees for schools and programmes to get accredited. Even more these accreditation agencies are willing to pay to keep their reputation. To be able to accredit a programme there is an obligation to be registered in the EQAR. This requires a compulsory external review.

ENQA charges 30.000 Euros for this. To be a member of ENQA costs 4.500 Euros per year.

This results in a marketisation of programmes, of accreditation of these programmes, and of accreditation of accreditation bodies. It seems that a peer-reviewed system, based on voluntary efforts by professionals of the field, and driven by the discipline or the research field itself, has been wiped out by this market. It seems that the original purpose of assessments, i.e. learning and improving, has been replaced by a motivation to improve rankings and benchmarks. Finally, it seems that this market is controlled by newly created bureaucracies which have a firm interest to keep their monopoly to accredit programmes, and to accredit accreditation agencies.

IS THERE A EUROPEAN MODEL FOR PA?

There is not one model for teaching PA in Europe, but a broad range of models. The variety of models corresponds probably to the politico-administrative cultures in Europe. As a consequence, PA programmes are less generic and more contingent compared to e.g. MBA programmes.

These contingencies are crucial and result in some differences [Cepiku- Menezuzo 2007; Favre-Kilchenmann s.a.; Randma-Connaughton 2005], even if there are converging mechanisms.

A first difference between Anglo-American and European programmes is that Anglo-American programmes are more bottom up, more practice based, also they are more focused on empirical studies. European programmes are probably more deductive, i.e. based on law, on political models, and sometimes more normative (e.g. the Rechtsstaat).

A second difference is the influence of common law versus administrative law, which is driving the content of PA programmes. It results not only in the position and the weight of law in PA programmes but also in focusing on the difference of State of Law concepts versus general interest as a criteria to judge factual cases.

Third, there are differences in the politics of exporting models. Some countries are aware that their domestic models remain domestic, and have no ambition to export this, through teaching and training. Others have a clear mission to export their domestic models, e.g. the ENA. Finally there are countries that export their model which they consider to be generic. These different (non-) export strategies have an impact on the way programmes are designed and taught.

Fourth, scientifically PA is a field supported by disciplines, but it is not a discipline as such. As a consequence, the emphasis on different disciplines varies according to the politico-administrative context. Hajnal (2003) demonstrated clearly that in average continental programmes focus more on political science, nordic programmes emphasise more managerial components, and Central and East European programmes are more legal but are turning more managerial.

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