

Is There Life Without Public Administration?

“60 Jahre Österreichische
Verwaltungswissenschaftliche
Gesellschaft (ÖVG)”

Wien, 17. März 2009

- 1. “Qui forme l’élite?” (Le Monde)
- 2. Short history of PA
- 3. Existing and Problems to Come
- 4. Possible Scenario’s
- 5. How to reinvent PA
- 6. How to get to 2049

1. “Qui forme l’élite?” (Le Monde de l’Education, May 2008)

Which profile for next generation of civil servants/decision makers and PA-researchers

Different answers from different countries

Supply for PA versus Demand for PA

2. Short history of PA

- Norway
 - Blend of political science and organisation studies
 - Large empirical research programmes (distribution of power (1972-82); LOS organisation and management (1987-97); ARENA Europeanisation of the nation-state (1993-2003))
 - Entrepreneurial role of Johan Olson

2. Short history of PA

- Denmark
- Topics:
 - Historical studies
 - Networks and processes
 - Comparative studies

2. Short history of PA

- Germany
- Strong tradition, incrementalism
- Teaching is very law based, but research is part of political science

2. Short history of PA

- The Netherlands
- Very visible research and teaching
- Historical and diverse, fragmented but forceful: importance of administrative history
- Focus on policy science, decision making, governance and complexity (including networks), ICT (including technical PA), cultural issues,
- Limited management topics
- All levels of government are well studied

2. Short history of PA

- Portugal
- Changing role of state and administration
- Ending of dictatorship: the transition
- Historical tradition of administrative law
- Education and training
- Focus: more management, more problem-driven, more comparative, more on ethics and social capital, more theoretical

2. Short history of PA

- A field, not a discipline
- Located in different parts of a university
- Increasingly broad term: public management, public policy, public administration sensu stricto

2. Short history of PA

- Law: Theories and practice
- Politics: Theories and practice
- Administrations: Theories and practice
 - Bureaucracy
 - Management
 - Economics

Contingencies: where you stand is where you sit

Who is a famous PA reseacher?

2. Short history of PA

- From linked to national histories and local circumstances, to more comparative
- Language matters for study and publications

3. Existing and Problems to Come

- Shifting research object: atrofying nation-state; internationalisation; MLG/IGR; PPP; crisis management (migration, environment, security, financial)
- Shifting disciplinary dominance: from Law to Economics and Management
- From contingent to generic to contingent
- SWOT: (Standing Committee for Social Sciences)

4. Possible Scenarios

- Elements for changes:
 - Strengthen the link (Law)-(Management and Policy)
 - Law as a policy instrument (including regulatory instruments)
 - International and European law versus national policy and management practices
 - Court management
 - Linking with new disciplines
 - From multi-disciplinary to inter-disciplinary
 - From describing to explaining, to predicting
 - Covering all ranges: Grand Theory, Meso, and Micro
 - Databases with long term time series (DNA of PA)
 - Cumulative research strategies leading to accumulating knowledge

4. Possible Scenarios

- Observation: BA, MA, PhD
 - From vertically concentrated to horizontally dispersed
 - Geographic (area studies), target groups (gender), policy (environment, health, etc.), organisations (hospitals, museum, library, police, etc.)
 - European convergence (ECTS) but still cultural identities
 - Accreditation: EAPAA
- Is the changing practical field driving the scientific activity or vice versa?
- Drivers for change in the field: changing
 - empirical reality: Crises, role of the state, ...
 - normative reality: Ethics, transitions, ...
 - knowledge reality: Technologies, ...

4. Possible Scenarios

- US: as a consequence of globalisation and governance (Klingner)
 - Renaissance of political economy
 - Redefining the debate between politics and economy
 - Unifying NPM and NPA
 - Covering new major topics
- Norway:
 - Revitalise debate on democracy and state, governance of complex networks
 - More comprehensive research networks
 - More synthesis
- Denmark: three scenarios
 - Conflictual: different strands
 - Complementary: co-habitate
 - Co-operation: cross fertilize

4. Possible Scenarios

- PA disappears
- PA disappears but is absorbed
 - Administration Umbrella: Private , Not for Profit, Public
- PA remains and changes its content and may be relabeled (Governance)
- PA fragments into a range of specialised fields of research and training (Policy, Management, Institutions)

5. How to reinvent PA

- 1. Organise a PA future's debate:
 - The Netherlands: Royal Academy
 - USA: challenges and future public service as driver for PA research (Minnowbrook I, 1968; II, 1988; III, 2008; Wye River Plantation, 1990; Building Bridges Tour, ASPA, 2000: Big Questions/Big Issues; The IBM Center for the Business of Government: Six trends transforming government, 2006)
- 2. Learn from others:
 - Economics: importing models and quantification
 - Psychology: importing experiments
 - Political science: importing surveys

5. How to reinvent PA

- 3. Strengthen European action:
 - ESF: Framework programmes, ECRP (European Collaborative Research Programmes), COST-networks
 - Norface: transnational Research Programmes
- 4. Turn weaknesses into strengths:
 - Interface practitioners and academics
 - Solving deficiencies
 - Comparing to learn (e.g. CAF); learning to innovate
- 5. Export PA:
 - the art and science of building administrations, nations and states: (NISPACEe)
 - to other disciplines

5. How to reinvent PA

- 6. Apply the Green Book of the Commission on the European Research Space to PA:
 - Adequate flow of competent researchers
 - World-class research infrastructures
 - Excellent research institutions
 - Effective knowledge sharing
 - Well coordinated research programmes and priorities
 - Opening of the European Research Space to the world
- 7. Strengthen EGPA:
 - Linking national and European platforms
 - Constructing the European voice in PA

5. How to reinvent PA

- 8. Push databases:
 - PA@BABEL (PA journals in Europe)
 - WOTPA (on BA, MA, PhD in PA)
- 9. Organise Dialogues:
 - within the field of PA between its defining disciplines
 - between PA scientists (TAD, TED, MED)

6. How to get to 2049

- How to get to the first century of ÖVG (1949-2049)?