



EGPA/IIAS

European Group
for Public Administration

2021

Annual Conference of the

***European Group for Public
Administration***

7-10 September 2021

PhD Symposium

7 September 2021

French-speaking Seminar

Call-for-Papers

EGPA French-speaking Seminar

The seminar provides a unique space for French-speaking exchanges within the Annual Conference of the European Group for Public Administration. It conveys specific political and administrative ideas, methods and traditions, with a wide European and international coverage.

The seminar is aware of administrators' expectations and its own mission of knowledge actualization. It invites conversations between scholars and confirmed practitioners through communication sessions, panel discussions, or accounts of fieldwork experiences.



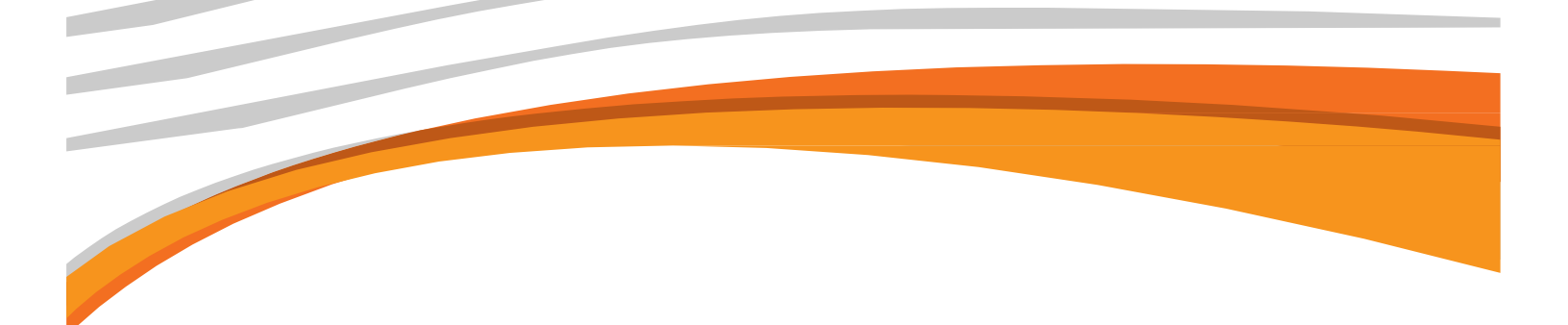
The Francophone Seminar is jointly organized with the Institut de la Gestion Publique et du Développement Economique, (IGPDE), a French Ministry of Economy and Finance organism dedicated to research, public officials training, and the accompaniment of reforms and public policies (Paris, Bercy).

« Administrative reforms and public policies: presenting comparative and complementary views »

More than thirty years after the first administrative reforms were implemented in most western countries, we still do not know much about their actual effects on public policies. Studies in social sciences are not many to analyze the effects of public administration reforms – such as NPM - on the formulation, implementation and efficacy of public policies.

This situation can be explained in part by the apparent disconnection between the research fields of administrative sciences – such as public management - and those of the analysis and evaluation of public policies. Both scientific communities seem to experience difficulties in developing a common research program, although their research objects would greatly benefit from such a study.

Research in public management has mostly been dedicated to analyzing the improvement of administrations' inner workings. This improvement has been approached in terms of effectiveness (the actual production of outputs and impacts on target groups) or productive efficiency (the cost-benefit ratio). In that respect, research have been conducted on: (1) the effects of the introduction of market instruments, service agreement/performance contracts, and indicator systems to evaluate the quality of administrative services (Wollmann, Kopic, Marcou 2016 ; Longo et Barbieri 2013); (2) the institutional or statutory reforms' contribution to improving public administrative services (Christensen et Laegreid 2006 ; Emery et Martin 2010); and (3) the impact that public management reforms have on the evaluation of public sector's performances or the effects they have on these performances' management (Van Dooren et Van de Walle 2008). Although these research programs have contributed to the fine assessment of the – often positive – effects that the reforms have on the efficiency of public administration, they fail to discuss straightforwardly the question of their impact on policy outcomes. However, this would make a crucial point in understanding contemporary issues in public action. In the Swiss case, Y. Emery, D. Giauque and A. Ritz (2009: 169-171) have outlined the



small number of existing studies dedicated to the full analysis of the effects that administrative reforms can have on substantial policies' outcomes. Indeed, it remains difficult to enable dialogue between studies in policy evaluation and those concerned with performance management (Gibert, 2002; Nielsen et Hunter, 2013).

As evidenced in reference works (e.g. Cairney 2020 ; Parsons, Sabatier, Weible 2014; Parsons 1997; Knill, Tosun 2012) – and with a few exceptions (e.g. Hill, Varone 2017 ; Hupe, Hill, Buffat 2015) – studies by political scientists scarcely take into account all the administrative reforms aspects that would explain or assess the efficacy of policy programs. In particular, the implications of the “State fragmentation” phenomenon that was identified more than 15 years ago by Knoepfel (2003), Pollitt (2003) or Christensen & Laegreid (2006) remain to explore. The gaps in knowledge of the articulation between institutional or constitutive policies (organizational and administrative reforms policies) and substantial policies answering public issues (Knoepfel, Larrue, Varone, 2006 ; Bezes & Le Lidec 2016) lead to a lack of knowledge about the effects that administrative reforms and the reorganization of political and administrative arrangements have on (1) the production of action plans dedicated to the spatial and time-based prioritization of the execution acts (outputs); (2) their actual impacts on target groups (effectiveness); (3) their real effects on the resolution of public issues (efficacy); and (4) the coordination of different sectorial policies (inter-policy coordination).

The aim of the 2020 edition of the EGPA seminar is to offer a common space for discussion between researchers working in public management and those working on policy analysis and evaluation. In so doing, we hope to reduce these gaps in knowledge.

The proposed “comparative and complementary views” perspective aims to examine the following questions:

1. To which extent did the different administrative reforms that were implemented in the past thirty years have actually contributed to strengthen the steering capacity of public authorities regarding policy implementation? In particular, did they have contributed to strengthen the impacts on target groups (effectiveness)? Did they contribute to expand the capacity of public authorities to efficiently address public issues?
2. To which extent did administrative reforms transform the role, the function, or the power of public administrations within public action's processes? To which extent does the “State fragmentation” thesis – including the atomization and/or the empowerment of (public and/or private) administrative entities – prove to be accurate in the field? When this is the case, what are the effects that these processes have on the efficacy and coordination of public policies?
3. To what extent do public policies' implementation outcomes feed back into administrative functioning and (re)organizations?
4. How do politicians approach these issues today? Administrative reforms based on NPM, like ‘agencification’ and contractualization of performance, find political support from politicians wanting to display positive results. Is it still the case with post-NPM reforms? How do politicians approach the implementation of institutional or constitutive policies?

According to the scientific quality and relevance of the proposed contributions, the seminar results may be subject to publication in a journal thematic issue.

Proposal submission

We invite researchers and practitioners working in the different domains of public action to submit contributions exploring one or several of the questions listed above. The contributions can take the form of case studies, thick descriptions, hypotheses tests, presentations of empirical data or theoretical reflections. We welcome all kind of contributions, including prospective contributions. In particular, comparative approaches as well as perspectives highlighting original fieldwork experiences and administrative or management doctrines and conceptions are encouraged.

Please note that your proposal must be submitted via the Conference website and must be comprised of a one to two pages (max.) summary including the following elements:

- Title
- Key words
- The problematic and main argument
- A theoretical and methodological approach summary (including sources and data)
- The main results
- A selection of bibliographical references
- The authors' names, affiliations and contacts details (professional address, email and telephone number)

Practicalities

Important dates:

- ✓ Deadline for submission of Abstracts: April 30, 2021
- ✓ Deadline for notification to the authors: no later than May 25, 2021
- ✓ Deadline for online submission of full papers: August 10, 2021
- ✓ EGPA 2021 Conference: September 7-10, 2021

EGPA 2021 Conference Website: <https://www.egpa-conference2021.org/>

EGPA 2021 Conference Management System: <https://www.conftool.org/egpa-conference2021>



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