



5th International Specialised Conference

July 2009

Helsinki – Finland

Report of the Conference

Acknowledgments

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THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCES

The IIAS is an international association with scientific purpose whose seat is in Brussels. Established in 1930 by the International Congress of Administrative Sciences held in Madrid, the IIAS is the first of the specialised institutions to affirm, worldwide, its scientific willingness to resolve the problems and challenges of national and international administration. It is today the only international institution specialised in administrative sciences and public administration, the primary meeting place for research and co-operation, and open to academics and practitioners from all regions of the world.

The Institute is represented in approximately one hundred countries and counts among its members States, National Sections, International Organisations, Corporate and Individual Members. The Institute also has Consultative Status with Unesco and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and is a member of the International Social Science Council. It thus develops its programmes in synergy with the major organisations to promote international co-operation in the field of Public Administration.

The purpose of the IIAS is to promote the development of administrative sciences, the better operation of public administrative agencies, the improvement of administrative methods and techniques and the progress of international administration. A large part of IIAS activities is devoted to *analysis and research* (Conferences, Working Groups, Seminars, etc.) *information* (its publications, quarterly International Review of Administrative Sciences - published in Spanish, English and French, Newsletter, website) and *expertise and consultancy* (the Institute responds to specific requests of governments, international organisations, or any other agency).

The Institute's Specialised Association and Regional Group also develop and follow-up research in their specific field of interest. The International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA) aims to respond to the institutional development needs of public management and public administration. The European Group of Public Administration (EGPA) is responsible for the development of public administration and administrative theory relative to the European environment.

Most IIAS research activities are carried out in the framework of its Working Groups and annual Major Meetings (Congresses, Conferences, Round Tables).



INTRODUCTION

The theme of the 5th International Specialized Conference, **THE HISTORY AND FUTURE OF NATIONBUILDING, THE ROLE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS, CIVIL SERVANTS AND PUBLIC FINANCES** could have not been a more appropriate time to investigate the concept of nationhood. On the one hand, the individual nation state appears to be undermined by the forces of globalization. On the other we see strong claims to national identity springing up in many parts of the world. For the most part, public officials are obliged to operate somewhere in between these powerful forces.

The main theme was organized in three categories of workshops corresponding to the following sub-themes:

- A. The changing nation: citizens, visitors, neighbours headed by the rapporteur Professor Turo Virtanen;

Embracing both past and future, stressing that the self-concept of a nation seldom stands still. Confronting the questions of:

- Citizens: what does it take to become a citizen of this country – what are the rights and duties pertaining to that status? These issues lead on to questions of political participation, civic education, the rights and supports for different language communities, the role of the state in combating racism, sexism and other forms of prejudice. In Europe we also have the fascinating question of multiple political identities – one is a citizen of country X but at the same time a citizen of the European Union.
- Visitors: what are their rights, and under what conditions? This question has become ever more important as the volume of economic and political migration has grown, and as international terrorism has cast its shadow. Again, the EU introduces another dimension to this old question – it means that some visitors have more rights or privileges than others (Schengen and so on).
- Neighbours: if a nation defines itself as different, unique, how does it do that whilst retaining good relations with neighbouring states? Do neighbours also have rights, if so what are they? How do small states manage in the proximity of much larger and more powerful states (e.g. Mexico/USA; Ireland/UK; Finland/Russia; Sri Lanka/India).

- B. Exemplifying good governance: the future of the public service and democracy headed by the rapporteur Dr Dele Olowu;

In many (but not all) countries the public service is seen as the concrete embodiment of the state. It is supposed to act 'in the national interest'.

In certain historical periods that seems to have meant that high public servants were 'above' the common citizen – that they had special rights and privileges, both formal and informal. But as the nature of government and politics has changed (as the electorate has become richer, more mobile and better educated) so has there been a shift in the relationship of public service to society. It is not just a shift to treating the citizen as a 'consumer' of public services who expects and wants high quality (though that in itself has been important).

The change also embraces the need for public servants to engage citizens in decision-making through a wide range of consultative and participatory devices and for public servants to meet higher standards of transparency and accountability in their own conduct. Today's public servant



is expected visibly to exemplify the government's espoused values of integrity, lawfulness, efficiency, non-discrimination and so on. And this is not just an individual matter, it also has collective implications for the public service. How representative is it of society (what are the proportions of women, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and so on)? How far is it able to attract 'all the talents', not just groups with one kind of educational or disciplinary background?

C. Public money: 'whole of government' budgeting, accounting and audit headed by Ms Christina Andrews

The state is unique in possessing the legal authority to extract money from its citizens, whether they like it or not (taxation). How much it taxes, how those funds are allocated, and how effectively they are spent have formed a major focus for political debate since medieval times or even earlier.

Recently, in a number of countries, strong interest has grown in conceptualizing and managing the state's finances in a more coherent, strategic 'joined-up' way. One manifestation of this has been the spread of 'whole of government' budgeting and accounting (and therefore also the appearance of its auditing counterpart). More generally, over the past two decades many if not most countries have attempted to modernize their budgeting and financial planning systems. Some have tried to link these processes more closely to measures of 'results' (usually measured through some set of performance indicators). Even in the most 'advanced' countries this has often turned out to be more difficult and time-consuming than was initially supposed.

It is a good time to take stock of what is by now extensive and varied international experience.



REPORT OF THE RAPPORTEURS

Process

The IIAS originally received 115 abstracts, proposing papers. The second subtheme (Exemplifying good governance) proved easily the most popular, attracting roughly 60% of the proposals. The first (Nation-building) attracted about 15%, the third (Public money) about 25%.

Rapporteurs' comments were then sent to all authors of abstracts, suggesting possible improvements. Authors accordingly submitted revised abstracts, which were again assessed and commented upon by the rapporteurs. Some authors fell out during these stages, and some were rejected (because their revised abstracts did not meet the conference criteria). We finally accepted roughly 80 abstracts for development into full papers, although as usual some of these fell out (for personal or professional reasons) between acceptance and the conference itself. An even higher percentage of these pertained to subtheme 2 (although unfortunately quite a few of these proposers eventually could not attend the conference)

These papers were very varied indeed – some wide and philosophical, some local case studies; some highly quantitative and some entirely qualitative. Paper givers came from countries all over the world. The rapporteurs nevertheless attempted to draw together some broad themes in their report in the plenary session at the end of the conference.

Some papers were lost, most probably because the global economic crisis is already impacting on institutional conference budgets, so there were a few late withdrawals.

Quality and quantity

Both quality and quantity appeared to be somewhat better than at the previous (Ankara) conference. Perhaps a dozen or so of the papers were of high scientific quality, and many more were perfectly adequate. However, there is still a quality problem at IIAS conferences. They do not yet generate anywhere near as many high quality papers as, say, EGPA conferences, or those of the International Research Seminar in Public Management (IRSPM), or the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR – which has study groups on public policy and management).

At Helsinki, this weakness comprised several elements:

1. Too large a 'tail' of papers that were just generally weak. Typically, these lack any sense of research focus, of scientific methods of enquiry, or of a critical attitude to evidence. Some of them are just general, context-free argument without any real supporting evidence at all. The good news, however, is that this 'tail' seemed smaller in Helsinki than it had been in either Abu Dhabi or Ankara.
2. Too many papers that, even if they are scholarly, do not fully conform to the terms of reference of the conference. For example, hardly any of the papers submitted to subtheme 3 actually addressed 'whole of government' issues, although it was the headline element in the subtheme. And in the first subtheme there were few contributions that dealt centrally with 'visitors and neighbours'.
3. There are still a few papers which are essentially uncritical descriptions of government policies – 'laundry lists' of measures passed. There is little point travelling all the way to an



international conference to listen to such material – one could simply look at the relevant government’s website.

4. There is a shortage of papers which are genuinely comparative, or which focus explicitly on international issues – although this should be an IIAS forte.

In the plenary meetings it was also noticeable that the great majority of conference attendees were men over the age of 50. The implication is that IIAS needs to reach out more vigorously to women and to younger people. If a more varied attendance could be attained much of the quality problem with the papers would probably solve itself. One idea (which has been successful for some other international organizations) would be to have a special workshop for Ph.D students, who would be charged a reduced rate. However, such workshops would need careful organization and experienced leadership.

There is also the perennial issue of attendance from developing countries. IIAS Helsinki would have been a very expensive proposition to many scholars in these countries. IIAS might like to consider organizing focused, smaller scale events at centres in the developing world. These too, of course would need careful planning and sensitive leadership.

Some emerging themes

For the reasons indicated above, it is very difficult to draw out general lessons or themes from such a diverse set of papers. Nevertheless, the rapporteurs selected certain points which seemed to them to be of particular importance. These included the following:

Subtheme 1: ‘The changing nation: citizens, visitors, neighbours’

It is possible to present the concerns of many (if not all) the papers in this subtheme in a schematic form:

Our nation/institution is being built...	WHERE?	WHERE?	WHERE?
BY WHOM?	Inside (at home)	Outside (abroad)	From above
By us alone	1	2	3
By us, with them	4	5	6
By them, alone	7	8	9
By them, with us	10	11	12

Different cells in this matrix have different values. A ‘progressive’ position might be to favour cells 4, 5 and 6 as the best case scenario. A strong nationalist, however, might favour only cell 1. Most of us would probably resist cell 7. Some international aid projects fail because from the perspective of the recipient country, they claim to be cell 4, but end up as effectively cell 7. We can apply this matrix to many international problems – Kosovo, Israel/Palestine, Iraq, and so on. But it is not only these ‘flashpoints’ where such an analysis may be applied. We can also think of much more routine administrative and organizational issues, such as the regulation of financial institutions, European identity cards, World Bank conditionalities, international observers attending elections, international passport regulations, the control of infectious diseases and so on. We live in an age where there is a rapidly emerging Global Administrative Space (GAS). Increasing internationalization includes the emergence, on cultural borders, of communities that cross national borders. These are new challenges for institution building, as adequate correspondence between identities and institutions is required if problems of trust and accountability are to be manageable.



And they are even more important when one considers the design of the new international institutions needed for GAS.

These dynamics urgently need impartial scientific study and analysis.

Subtheme 2: 'Exemplifying good governance: the future of public service and democracy'

A number of papers addressed (in different ways and different countries) the now well-publicized limitations of a pure 'New Public Management' (NPM) approach. Privatisation, downsizing the state apparatus and contracting out major public services can only work well in contexts where sophisticated skills are available to the public service (strategic co-ordination, contract management) and corruption is low. In many parts of the world these conditions do not apply.

Meanwhile the issue of basic, long term reform of the public service is one that many elected politicians either avoid or do not adequately understand. Even when promising programmes are launched, failures at the implementation stage are not unusual. The question of how constructively to engage politicians in such institutional reforms was emergent in a number of papers and was also a central feature of the Braibant Lecture by Mr Derry Ormond. Rebuilding the human capital of the public services was also a core theme in the presentation concerning the new book Winning the needed change: saving our planet earth: a global public service, edited by Ignacio Pichardo Pagaza and Demetrios Argiades. Some papers also focused on the role of international organizations such as the EU and the World Bank in shaping public service reforms. At the same time other papers emphasized the desirability of developing countries building their own, independent capacity for managing policies and reforms.

At the level of measurement and technique it was clear that narrow measurement of efficiency alone was problematic. Issues of ultimate effectiveness, and also of equity, needed to be part of measurement and reporting systems. Cross-sectoral co-ordination was increasingly necessary, but still very difficult to achieve in administrative systems where both civil service hierarchies and political responsibilities were divided into vertical sectors. At the same time several papers explored issues of performance, trust and participation, advancing the argument that citizens are more likely to trust and co-operate with programmes and projects in which they feel they have had, or can have, a voice.

Subtheme 3: 'Public money: whole of government budgeting and accounting'

A range of papers showed that there is still much to be done in subjecting public expenditures to proper democratic procedures that will ensure transparency and, it is hoped, consequent legitimacy. The challenges of achieving transparent procedures and adequate control by the elected legislature are particularly acute in developing countries, several of which were represented among the paper-givers.

Financial sustainability is naturally a prominent topic at this time. New sources of revenue may need to be explored, and traditional sources may require tighter management to minimize 'leakage' and tax avoidance.

Budgeting and accounting have always depended on particular techniques of calculation, assessment and presentation. These have undergone substantial changes in the past decade or so, although the international and sectoral spread of new techniques (such as whole of government accounting, programme budgeting etc) has been very uneven. One interesting development has been the combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques, as in a Dutch



paper that combined statistical analysis of performance with case studies of particular contexts and organizations.

General overview

It emerged from several of the key presentations and papers that buildings *nations* was perhaps a misnomer. Nations usually emerge over long time periods, from a range of influences and accidents. They are not *designed* and, indeed, it is hard to imagine how a government could formulate and implement such a process.

What the public authorities can do, however, is to build, or help to build specific *institutions*. And those institutions may then play vital roles in clarifying, sustaining or re-shaping the sense of national identity – of ‘who we are’. Major public services and regulatory bodies become, in effect, part of our identities, just like the landscape and the weather. It matters very much to our collective identity whether we perceive our major public institutions as fair or unfair, clean or corrupt, reliable or unreliable, responsive or rigid.

However, the nation state is no longer the only ‘site’ where these relationships and attitudes are formed. Increasingly, individuals experience and practice forms of multi-level and sometimes even multi-national citizenship. International organizations directly and indirectly affect more and more of our lives (The EU, NATO, the World Bank, the IMF, the UN). What is more, public purposes and programmes are sometimes entrusted to international non-governmental bodies (Oxfam, Friends of the Earth, International Red Cross, World Wildlife Fund). More and more of us travel internationally, for work or social reasons, and more and more of us have family members in other countries, or ourselves may spend parts of our careers outside our own nation state.

In addition, many of the most pressing contemporary problems are self-evidently international rather than national. Climate change, terrorism, crime, migration, pandemics, and several other issues fall into this category.

The implication is that we need to think of building institutions that can cope with this more internationalized, multi-level world. This is a huge challenge, not merely because many political leaders are reluctant to risk much political capital on international institutional reform (Braibant lecture) but also because the academic world has scarcely begun to research these issues. At the moment therefore, one could say we are low on political motivation and weak in our knowledge of the design principles and implementation problems. The most optimistic aspect of the Helsinki conference, perhaps, was that, here and there, a number of presenters made a bold start on tackling these issues. This is certainly a continuing agenda for the IIAS.



LIST OF PAPERS

Subtheme 1: The Changing Nation: citizens, visitors, neighbours

- 1. Virpi Juppo and Sari Niemi – Finland**
Formal Participation Devices of Finnish Ethnic Minorities: The Case of the Sami and the Roma
- 2. Hans Peter Bull – Germany**
Nation-Building and the role of public administration: The case of Germany
- 3. Steven Van de Walle and Zoe Scott – respectively from The Netherlands and United Kingdom**
The Role of Public Services in State and Nation Building: Exploring Lessons from European History
- 4. Kalu N Kalu – USA**
Institution-Building, Not Nation-Building: A Structural-Functional Model
- 5. Hannele Isola-Miettinen – Finland**
Citizen' right to good administration – the right to use her/his own language before administrative authorities?
- 6. Randal G Stewart – Australia**
Australia - a nation building state changes its mind, back?
- 7. Pertti P Ahonen – Finland**
Citizens, Visitors and Neighbours: Finland's today and tomorrow in the light of her yesterday
- 8. Berry Tholen – The Netherlands**
The Changing Border
- 9. Steven Van de Walle and Sandra Groeneveld – The Netherlands**
Contingent Representativity: Rival Views of Representative Bureaucracy and the Challenges for Nation Builders

Subtheme 2: Exemplifying good governance: The future of the public service and democracy

- 1. Geert Bouckaert and John Halligan – respectively from Belgium and Australia**
The Roles of Trust and Performance in the Evolving Relationship between Public Servants and Citizens
- 2. Enrique Saravia – Brazil**
Citizen engagement in public policy decision-making: overcoming illiteracy and the digital divide in Minas Gerais, Brazil
- 3. Pradeep K Saxena – India**
Good Governance - How much Developing Countries Achieved: A case study of Rajasthan (India) with special rference to the Power (Electricity) sector



4. Hiroko Kudo – Japan

Public Service in particular territories: from Experiences in Italian Special Autonomous Regions

5. Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi and Demetrios Argyriades – USA

Good Democratic Governance *with* Government
Scope, Objectives and Significance - a New Paradigm Shift?

6. Francesca Gains and Gerry Stoker – United Kingdom

Delivering 'public value': Implications for Accountability and Legitimacy

7. Claude Rochet – France

Pas de philosophie, SVP, nous sommes des gestionnaires; Management public et bien commun :
Convergences Euro-Atlantiques

8. Masahiro Horie – Japan

Changes of Public Servants and Public Service Systems in Japan

9. Jianglan Chen – China

Towards a more transparent and democratic government. Practice, Progresses and barriers in
China

10. Jan-Erik Johanson – Finland

Three modes of strategy formation in public agencies

11. Markku Kiviniemi and Tarja Saarelainen – Finland

Perspectives on the Potential of Local Partnerships: Conceptual and Empirical Considerations

12. Marcel Guenoun – France

Mesurer la qualité des services publics (QSP): le nécessaire aménagement des modèles existants

13. Heungsik Park – Korea

Moderating Role of Transparency between Corruption, Trust and Citizens' Satisfaction

14. Daan Brummer and Berry Tholen – The Netherlands

Civic engagement in EU decision-making: a critical assessment of criteria for NGO involvement in
the field of migration regulation

15. Augustine O Okafor – Nigeria

Good Governance: Transparency, Accountability and Citizen Engagement in Public Service - Core
Issues in Nigerian Public Service Reforms

16. Claudia Carvalho and Carlos Brito – Portugal

Innovative Public Service Delivery - how to access the new relationship between public agencies
and society?

17. Catalin Vrabie – Romania

Developing e-government in reforming Romania



18. Gabriela Varia and Emil Balan – Romania

The views of citizens and civil servants on the Romanian public service - how to surpass the gap for achieving good administration?

19. Lucica Matei and Corina Lazar – Romania

Development and regulation of civil service in Central and Eastern European States. A comparative analysis in view of good governance

20. Kim Moloney – USA

The World Bank's public sector management' projects influence the administrative priorities of developing countries

Subtheme 3: Public money: 'whole of government' budgeting, accounting and audit

1. Frank Naert – Belgium

How performant are European governments in their housing policies?

2. Hélio Janny Teixeira, Roy Martelanc, Hélio Costa and Maria Odeth Pereira de Almeida Teixeira – Brazil

Standardized Economic-Social-Environmental. Selection of Projects in Sao Paulo

3. Yuko Kaneko – Japan

Reform of Special Accounts and the Postal Privatization

4. Michael S de Vries – The Netherlands

Performance measurement of effective and robust policies and the search for best practices

5. Danielle Morin – Canada

The "Communion" of the French *Cour des comptes* with the Administration and Parliament: The profession of faith in performance audit

6. Judith Hoffmann – Germany

The role of the legislature and its administration to enhance transparency and accountability in the budgeting process - enabling factors and constraints

7. Mohamed Harakat – Morocco

La nouvelle gouvernance financière et budgétaire et les impératifs de la réforme : cad de l'expérience Marocaine

8. Johan Christiaens and Jan Rommel – Belgium

Whole of government budgeting and accounting: conceptual issues

9. Ching-Mei Lin – Taiwan, China

Market-based Capital Market and Readiness for a Municipal Bonds in Taiwan, China

10. Guang-Xu Wang – Taiwan, China

Facing the Unsolvible Problem: The Experience of Taiwan's NHI Financial Sustainability

11. Francesca Mattassoglio – Italy

Sustainable development and public money: a comparison between Italian and Dutch water policy



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