

## **The training of civil servants and the training in public affairs**

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### **General Introduction to European Civil Servant Training: Do civil servant training methods in European countries share resemblances or do they differ greatly from one another?**

It depends. There are a lot of resemblances concerning the international (for example United Nations- or World Trade Organization related) tasks and the tasks concerning the European Union.

The European Union challenges the member states civil services in many respects, for example regarding “effective implementation of Union law by the Member States, which is essential for the proper functioning of the Union” (Art. 197 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union) by “facilitating the exchange of information and of civil servants as well as supporting training schemes”. But in this respect “no Member State shall be obliged to avail itself of such support”.

For example, have a look at the European Union Programme Fiscalis 2013 covers the period 2008-2013, following up from previous programmes starting in 1993. Participating countries include EU Member States as well as Candidate countries and potential candidate countries (having concluded a bilateral agreement with the Commission on the conditions for participating in the programmes). The programme was established by the Decision No 1482/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2007 establishing a Community programme to improve the operation of taxation systems in the internal market, with objectives as follow: (1) Enhancing the fight against tax fraud; (2) Continuously improving administrative procedures and practices to the benefit of administrations and business within the EU; (3) Ensuring the exchange of information between national tax administrations as well as with traders through projects such as trans-European tax IT systems. The Commission is responsible for the implementation of the programme, assisted by the Fiscalis Committee, composed of delegates from each EU Member State. There are different types of actions funded, first of all including events bringing together officials from Participating Countries: Seminars (one off events, where administrations of all the participating countries meet to examine specific topics); Workshops (small-scale seminars without interpretation); Multilateral Controls (coordinated control of the tax liability of one or more related taxable persons, organised by two or more participating countries); Project groups (composed of a limited number of interested countries [5-10 participants] meeting several times during a fixed period of time to achieve specific

predefined objectives; a Compliance Risk Management Guide for tax administrations (developed by the Fiscalis Risk Management Platform [Project] Group); Working visits (exchanges of officials between participating countries' administrations to share knowledge and good practice. In a closer view: Working visits give the opportunity to officials of national administrations to study any agreed kind of activity or subject (operational, technical, strategic, policy level) within the scope of the programme and more specifically, related to the Annual Work Programme. The working visit is considered as the most flexible tool under the programmes and allows reasonably quick reaction to national needs. From a national point of view, there are two possible types of working visits, namely incoming and outgoing working visits. For each national working visit co-ordinator, an "Incoming working visit" means a working visit where a participant from another participating country is hosted by the own administration; and "Outgoing working visit" stands for working visits where participants from the own administration visit other participating countries. For these types of actions, the Fiscalis programme finances costs relating to organising and participating in an event (travel costs, accommodation costs, daily allowance). In addition, Fiscalis programme finances development and maintenance costs of appropriate Trans-European IT systems and Training modules (eLearning).

As another example of working together let me refer to the

One of the very typical differentiation for example follows the more centralised versus the more decentralised performance assessment systems, or the differentiation between career- and position-based systems of civil services or within the same civil service system (like in Germany).

**Do public administration schools in Europe have frequent exchanges and communication (e.g. holding meetings and seminars once or twice a year)?**

Yes, there is a process of dialogue and meetings spread over the European Union (and some of their neighbor states).

For example the "Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe" organises the "NISPAcee Annual Conferences", as a "forum to encourage the exchange of information and developments in the theory and practice of public administration", and therefore these meetings "address experts, scholars and practitioners who work in the field of public administration in Central and Eastern Europe (including all countries covered by the NISPAcee membership, the Russian Federation, Caucasus and Central Asia)". Civil Service is the main topic of one of the present working groups within. NISPAcee Summer Schools were arranged in various countries belonging to this network (for example "Public Administration education and training: Innovations in the teaching techniques and process of education" in 2007)

The German Federal Academy of Public Administration, the Federal Government's central institution for further training, is involved in exchange programmes.

**Do they have a coordination mechanism?**

The title and position of the schools or institutes may vary from country to country. Some of them are part of central government (for example incorporated within the ministry of internal affairs), partially independent or fully autonomous (like German Universities), but all countries do have schools/ institutes specialising in public administration.

For this reason coordination mechanisms are not as common as one could presume. But there are standing committees of the presidents, rectors (in particular: "Hochschulrektorenkonfer-

enz » [The German Rectors' Conference]), etc. as well as of the chancellors and other leading staff of the schools and universities. In Germany there is a tradition in separate perception of schools (and universities of applied sciences) on the one hand and Universities on the other.

### **Is there a public administration school in every European country?**

Germany: On the federal level:

On the regional level of the “Länder” (state) there is at least one School of Public Administration in every state; some of them working close together, some of them in a deconcentrated organisation (with several dependances). On the federal level as well as on the state level there are some specialized institutions teaching and training in specific items of public administration (for example financial administration; police).

On the federal level one of the most important examples is the Federal Academy of Public Administration is the central advanced training institution for the federal administration. It was founded in 1969 and is an independent part of the [Federal Ministry of the Interior](#). The Federal Academy’s headquarters are located in [Brühl](#), in Germany’s Rhineland region. The main [task](#) is to provide practical advanced training for federal administration staff. The Academy works closely together with the public administration, the private sector and the research community. An [advisory board](#) provides expert guidance. The Federal Academy of Public Administration is the central advanced training institution for the federal administration. The Federal Academy’s inter-ministerial approach promotes the exchange of ideas and experience between different branches of the federal administration. Advanced training courses are aimed in particular at maintaining and improving staff performance, at ensuring that staff can serve in a variety of functions within the administration, and thus at enhancing the administration’s quality and flexibility. The Federal Academy is subdivided into eight training divisions. Organisationally, the Federal Academy can draw on the administrative cooperation of the Federal College for Public Administration in Brühl near Bonn (Northrhine-Westphalia).

To be mentioned is the autonomous “university”-typus, like German University of Administrative Sciences Speyer, in 1950 by law passed by the government of Rhineland-Palatinate reaffirmed in its status as an institution of public law with legal capacity. As a result of a special public agreement in 1952, the national and state (Länder) governments assumed joint responsibility for the University.

There are not only public administration schools, but also branches or chairs dealing with public administration and public management as well as public administrative sciences in some of German universities (state universities as well as private universities).

In Europe (on the member states level) there is at least one institution dealing with teaching public administration and training public officials.

### **Are civil servants in Europe required to attend training in public administration schools every year or every other year?**

Public officials on the federal level have the general duty in further training. Similar principles rule the civil services in the states. In Germany, there is no compulsory or mandatory element to attend every year in specific public administration schools. On the state (“Länder”) level is a reform trend to simplify the step-by-step civil service career-systems and to give more responsibility to civil servants themselves in planning and organising the qualification needed to achieve the next career step. They should book training and learning modules prepared by the schools of public administration (as now for example in the state of Bavaria). So a stronger connection between career and training will occur.

### **What's the relationship between public administration schools and universities?**

In Germany there are some universities (public as well as private) teaching public administrative sciences up to the degree of Bachelor as well as Master-degree. The studies are offered to normal students, not especially to civil servants or aspirants/candidates.

In addition, some (very few) schools/universities of public administration (like Speyer, for example) offer postgraduate courses of complementary training in administrative sciences (partly as an one-term supplementary course, partly as an one-year post-graduate course, sometimes completed by a doctorate). These courses may form an integral part of the preparatory training of young civil service lawyers and economists. These courses may also be opened to other students with educational backgrounds in broad variety who may be interested in a future career in public administration.

In some respect only universities offer the indispensable scientific base and condition to obtain specific positions in the public administrative sector (for example in the health sector, in material testing, and so on).

### **Do teachers in public administration schools work full-time or part-time?**

In Germany, in principle we work with full time teaching staff. In addition, on most schools, senior civil servants, judges and business executives holding part-time lectureships teach applied administration. This close association between the theoretical background of administration and its practical application seems to be extremely useful for teaching, but has also provided the impetus for numerous improvements of curricula as well as research projects.

### **Why doesn't ENA appoint any full-time teachers? (This is different from the case of public administration schools in China.)**

The joining together of theory and practical application given by senior civil servants, judges and business executives as well as the integration into a specific culture of administration and leadership let part-time lectureships appear as the ideal teaching and training instrument, I presume.

### **Function and application of Case Study in civil servant training: Where do the case studies for civil servant training come from?**

Case studies occur in a broad variety of types. Very typical for example is the stage-system as an integral element in the preparatory training of young civil service lawyers and economists: For at least two years (mostly up to three years) the university educated lawyers have to obtain a compact program of training-on-the-job oriented on the most important functions and skills which may occur in the later professional life. There are in several branches of the civil services case studies (some of them regular, in a periodical order, some of them without announcement) to strengthen for example the information and communication capabilities between administrative units on the same level, on different levels or between the public and the private sector (may be in the field of disaster control or prevention).

### **What are the criteria for selection of such case studies?**

The selection of criteria depends on the administrative context. In general, decisive are the appropriateness and relevance to the area especially whether added values for the training can be recognized. Furthermore, a realistic approach as well as professional relevance are needed. The case studies should be repeatable (to facilitate comparison processes); they should be able

to be implemented into the running administrative processes without causing far-reaching difficulties. But due to the current financial crisis the costs are even a relevant factor.

**In my understanding, case studies are widely applied in the training of civil servants in Europe.**

The usefulness of case studies and scenarios depends on the opportunities given within the administrative organisations as well as in the schools. It depends further on the expectations in the learning outcomes and may not be appropriate in some areas.

For example (given by the German Federal Academy of Public Administration) case studies may be useful in strengthening Personnel development strategies (aims and targets of personnel development as a systematic process enabling staff members and superiors to develop their qualification, skills and potentials in such a way as to comply with current and future job requirements, ensuring quality and satisfaction with their work), by (1) project organization to draw up personnel development strategies; (2) the implementation of personnel development strategies and promoting their acceptance; (3) projects on the evaluation of personnel development measures; (4) training events on individual personnel development tools or on the development of individual and social skills.

A further Example: The Federal Foreign Office's training courses for international diplomats: The Training for International Diplomats programme was established in 1992, the aim being to promote the development of foreign services in the young democracies with courses for diplomats from Central and Eastern Europe. Later courses for diplomats from Afghanistan, Iraq, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America were added, as well as courses for young diplomats from Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Belarus and at least programmes for the Caribbean and Pacific island states and for Francophone Africa. The courses offer a varied interactive programme covering everything from the principles of international law in diplomacy to modern negotiating techniques and topical issues of European integration. Meetings with young German diplomats, internships at the Federal Foreign Office, language courses, excursions and study trips within Germany and to Brussels are integral parts of the programmes. The seminars are usually led by former ambassadors familiar with the region from which the participants come. Practical training in public speaking and negotiation techniques are also part of the programme, as well as media training, cultural diplomacy, intercultural competence. The International Executive Seminar even offers an internship with the Federal Foreign Office.

**Why and what are the benefits?**

It comes near to training on the job.

For example (given by the German Federal Academy of Public Administration): "the training of new staff members as a personnel development tool is intended to introduce the person concerned to the new sphere of activity and to ensure the social integration into the working environment".

In the areas of communication techniques and technologies as well as in the training with new computer-based procedures sometimes case studies are indispensable.

**Are case studies welcomed by civil servants?**

It depends. Case studies have to be fitted into the career, into the time management, into the main tasks the civil servant has to obtain within the administrative organisation. Case studies when integrated into the "real" administration, need a lot of attention; they cause stress within the working organisation.

One further aspect the application of the learned methods and the experiences gained during the case study may be.

**What's the proportion of case studies versus theoretical teaching?**

It may depend on educational level found or expected in adjusting case studies; it may depend on the needs of direct illustration of the course of events, etc. Most case studies absolutely need the methodical and theoretical background making the case transferable and applicable in different situations.

**How can one improve the effectiveness of civil servant training?**

First of all the feedback of participants;

Effective evaluation for example may be carried out by European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), using TQM or CAF-methods and criteria.

**How should research on training requirements and needs of civil servants be conducted?**

Analysis of the administrative tasks and main aims; investigation of motivation of staff; the connection between career elements/steps and module-assembling.

**What factors should be taken into consideration when designing curriculums for civil servants in Europe?**

The differentiation between career- and position-based systems;

the criteria and skills of administrative leadership;

the need of internalizing good governance criteria;

the Europeanization of administrative tasks; the growing responsibility for effective implementation of Union law by the Member States public administration;

the international context: UN and WTO for example;

feedback and effective evaluation;

**Are civil servants really interested in such curriculums?**

It depends: Civil servants really interested,

if the curricula are close to the professional demands;

if the demands given in the curriculum in question will cause stronger effects on career expectations, for example in the shape of compulsory modules;

if there will be a (not necessarily monetary) incentive to make use of the offered training modules;

if civil servants were encouraged to take part in these programs.

**Will their skills be noticeably improved after training?**

Not in every case the effectiveness of a realized internship will become visible or above evident in short time; may be internship is only one element within a broader spectrum of qualifications flourishing in the fitting context.

**How can one evaluate civil servant training and what are the evaluation methods?**

First of all the feedback of participants;

Effective evaluation for example may be carried out by European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), using TQM or CAF-methods and criteria.

Evaluation may take aim at the training unit as well as at the trained civil servants.

**Application of internship and experiential teaching. What is the role of internships in civil servant training and their proportion in the overall training process?**

Internships play a significant role in the transnational and supranational training of member states civil services concerning administrative tasks in implementing European Union law (directives, regulations, programs, etc.) and concerning the administrative coordination of bilateral or multilateral tasks within the Union (for example in the European social security coordination system) or concerning administrative cooperation work between member states (for example in respect to judicial cooperation). Transnational training programs based on exchange internships, and supranational training programs enabling guest performances within the EU Commission or in EU Agencies, should be integral elements of national (and regional as well) civil servant training within the integrated administrative services.

Their proportion within the overall training process depends on several factors like for example availability/dispensability, or the capability in empathizing with the host organisation.

**How are internships arranged for civil servants?**

In the German civil service laws arrangements could be made by delegation (“Abordnung”); the delegating body keeps responsible for the status, the payment, the social security; the host organisation is responsible for directing, enabling to work within the host organisation. In the European Union level perspective there exist types of delegation as well; the payment arrangements may be based on certain EU-program-guidelines and directives.

**How can one evaluate their effectiveness?**

Not in every case the effectiveness of a realized internship will become visible or above evident in short time; may be internship is only one element within a broader spectrum of qualifications flourishing in the fitting context.

**How do public administration schools organize experiential teaching in civil servant training and how do they incorporate these internships with theoretical teaching?**

Experiential teaching – learning by doing – is a widely used method to strengthen the methodical basis and the prevailing topic as well in the real situation or in an situation simulating the real challenges. In the fields of communication and the training of information technologies as well as in teamwork training or leadership improvement this method works cost-effective and efficient.