

University Diploma “International & Comparative Studies”

“Comparative Government & Public Administrations in Europe”

Course by

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Introduction: Why is it interesting to compare Governments and Public Administrations in Europe?

Key-words: Comparison. Ethnocentrism. Research questions. Regularities and singularities. Homogenisation and differentiation.

First Part:

The politico-administrative organisation of European States

Chapter 1: Various forms of “distribution of powers” amongst layers of government.

Outline:

1.1. An evident observation : the differentiation of the forms of state in the EU

- 1.1.1. Unitary states.
- 1.1.2. Regionalized states.
- 1.1.3. Federal states.

1.2. A double evolution: increasing devolution of competencies to sub-national entities and particularization of their status.

- 1.2.1. A *continuum* of causes
- 1.2.2. A discourse of legitimization : the principle of subsidiarity in a “Europe of regions”

1.3. A reality too often ignored: overlapping of competencies, forced partnership, and “cooperative federalism”

- 1.3.1. Who does what? Incomplete overview of the competencies of the layers of government within the EU
- 1.3.2. Which autonomy for each level? The controls from state officials and courts
- 1.3.3. The reality of a partnership in public policy and a “cooperative federalism”

Key-words: State, layers of government, centralisation, decentralisation, autonomies, devolution, federalism, principle of subsidiarity. Overlapping of competencies, interdependency, cooperation-conflict, controls, partnership.

Chapter 2 : In the heart of the states : central governments and administrations

Outline :

2.1. Elements for a general analysis

- 2.1.1. The common model of parliamentary government with some variants
- 2.1.2. A very different governmental stability
- 2.1.3. Inside governments : a variable equilibrium of hierarchy and collegiality
- 2.1.4. The governmental structures : between coordination and departmental compartmentalization

2.2. Four types of organisation of central state administrations

- 2.2.1. The French case
- 2.2.2. The British case
- 2.2.3. The German case
- 2.2.4. The Swedish case

Key-words: Parliamentary regime. Effects of governmental stability and instability. Hierarchy and collegiality within government. Ministerial departments. Organisation. Three-level administrative pyramid. Secretaries-General. Ministerial *cabinets*. In France: *cabinets*, directorates, *sous-directions* and *bureaux*. In the United Kingdom: apolitical Permanent Secretary and executive agencies. In Germany: federalism and *Ressortprinzip*. In Sweden: mini-ministerial departments and independent agencies.

Second Part: The administrative people: comparing civil services.

Chapter 3: How to become a civil servant? Recruitment, education and socialisation

Outline:

3.1. Statutory public officials and contractual public agents: a major distinction with various forms.

- 3.1.1. The status of statutory public officials
- 3.1.2. Contractual public agents and a trend towards a “normalisation” of public employment

3.2. Recruitments by *concours* and *ad hoc* recruitments: a true difference

- 3.2.1. The recruitment by *concours*: a common scheme with major variants
- 3.2.2. The German originality: sovereignty of diploma but free recruitment
- 3.2.3. The *ad hoc* recruitments in position systems of public administration

3.3. Administrative schools and “learning by doing”: a false opposition?

- 3.3.1. The administrative training schools, an exception.
- 3.3.2. Is there such an opposition?

- 3.4. The recruitments' results : quick overview of public officials' different profiles in Europe
- 3.4.1. The gender balance and social origins of senior civil servants in Europe
 - 3.4.2. The different educational backgrounds of top civil servants and their consequences

Key-words: Statutory public officials. Contractual agents. *Concours*. Position system. *Ad hoc* recruitment. Administrative schools. Social and educational background of senior civil servants. Elitism. Generalists vs. experts.

Chapter 4: The civil servants' career paths as revelatory of administrative dynamics

Outline:

- 4.1. Do top civil servants become such because they had a successful career or is it since they are already top civil servants that they enjoy a successful career?
- 4.2. Making one's career... but at what speed?
- 4.3. Are administrative careers mobile or segmented?
- 4.4. Autonomous or politicised careers?

Key-words: Career. Age. Rhythm. Mobility. "Second career". "*Pantouflage*". Co-optation. Politicisation (various forms of).

Third part: Public administrations in action

Chapter 5: An insight into the politico-administrative policy-making at national level

Outline:

- 5.1. Some significant cases
 - 5.1.1. The British case: from politico-administrative dyarchy to the difficult coordination of the *core executive*
 - 5.1.2. The Swedish case: permanence of a negotiated style of government
 - 5.1.3. The Dutch case: from "pillarisation" to "governance" or the enlargement of governing interactions
- 5.2. Different governing interactions and policy styles

Key-words: For the UK: governing civil servants, Next Steps, executive agencies, accountability, Core Executive. For Sweden: collegiality, agencies, "preliminary cooking", consensus-orientation. For The Netherlands: "*g en g sector*", Dutch-style compromise. In general: Governing interactions, different national policy styles.

Chapter 6: The increasing territorialisation of policy making and implementation (skipped)

Chapter 7 (and final): Public administrations under permanent “reform”: between New Public Management and a renewed quest for cohesion.

Outline:

- 7.1. The expansion of New Public Management
- 7.2. Administrative reform policies...in the plural
- 7.3. The logic behind administrative reforms : a quest for a renewed cohesion of the State

Key-words: New Public Management (NPM). Administrative reforms. Heterogeneity of national situations. Cooperation-conflict within central institutions. The State as a differentiated conglomerate. Search for a new cohesion and principle of order. Re-regulation. Permanent reformism and the problem of legitimacy.

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