



SAPIENZA  
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA

# EGPA2026 CONFERENCE

24-27 August Rome, Italy

CALL FOR PANELS



Public Governance for the  
Common Good: Human Intelligence  
Serving the Global Community

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## EGPA Permanent Study Group 16 on Welfare State Governance and Professionalism

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### *Description*

The permanent study group Welfare State Governance & Professionalism is dedicated to analysis of welfare state reform and of transitions in welfare state arrangements – with particular attention to health care, welfare and education –, as well as analysis of the accompanying restructuring of such professional services. The aim is to provide an intellectual platform for scholars of public administration, public management, organization research, social policy, sociology of professions, health care management and educational sciences, to work together to describe, to explain and to study the impact of the recent restructuring of European welfare states for professional services and the quality of the services they render.

The objectives of the Study Group are to:

- To understand which welfare state reforms have been adopted in European countries in recent years and, it is hoped, compare them with trends in non-European countries;
- To investigate the impact of societal changes on welfare policies and services and how these are adapting to new social needs;
- To analyse the critical issue of reform processes, in particular with regard to the relationship between theories, policies, policy design, decision making and implementation processes;
- To study the implications of reform for professional services, professionalism and professional action, within changing administrative and organizational settings;



- To relate reforms to the quality of services rendered, in order to understand whether and how welfare state reforms are ‘improving’ services;
- To explore the evolution of concepts such as societal value when applied to welfare policies and services;
- To elaborate new conceptual frameworks that should be interdisciplinary and to propose policy statements and coherent implementation strategies, relating processes to outcomes.

### *Call for paper 2026: Public Governance, Professionalism and the Common Good in Welfare States*

Contemporary welfare states are undergoing profound transformations driven by demographic change, social inequalities, fiscal constraints, digitalisation and evolving societal expectations. In this context, public governance is increasingly called upon to serve the common good by mobilising not only institutional capacities, but also human intelligence, professional knowledge and collective responsibility.

The permanent study group Welfare State Governance & Professionalism invites paper proposals that explore how governance reforms in welfare states are reshaping professional services in welfare settings, and how these changes affect the quality, equity and societal value of services delivered to communities.

The panel aims to provide an interdisciplinary forum for scholars in public administration, public management, social policy, sociology of professions, health care management and educational sciences to critically examine how welfare governance can reconcile efficiency, accountability and innovation with professional autonomy, ethical responsibility and responsiveness to social needs.

Key themes and questions include, but are not limited to:

- Governance reforms and the common good: How do recent welfare state reforms redefine societal value, public purpose and collective well-being?
- Human intelligence and professional judgement: What is the role of professional knowledge, discretion and ethical reasoning in governance arrangements increasingly shaped by rules, performance metrics and digital tools?
- Policy design and implementation: How do theories of public governance translate into welfare policies and implementation practices, and with what consequences for professionals and service users?



- Professionalism under transformation: How are roles, identities and practices of welfare professionals evolving within changing administrative, organisational and inter-organisational settings?
- Quality and outcomes of services: Do governance and welfare reforms improve service quality, accessibility and equity? For whom, and under which conditions?
- Societal change and new needs: How are welfare systems adapting to emerging social risks, ageing populations, migration, vulnerability and inequality?

The panel welcomes theoretical, empirical and comparative contributions, as well as qualitative and mixed-methods research, that critically engage with the governance of welfare states and the future of professional services in serving the common good. Contributions that propose interdisciplinary conceptual frameworks, policy lessons and coherent implementation strategies linking governance processes to social outcomes are particularly welcome.

### *References*

- Klenk T., Noordergraaf M., Notarnicola E., & Vrangbæk K. (2024), Societal value of welfare politics, policies and services, Palgrave MacMillan, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-70969-2>  
<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=xgpV38MAAAAJ&hl=fr&oi=ao>  
<https://scholar.google.com/citations?hl=fr&user=gBSGkFgAAAAJ>  
<https://scholar.google.com/citations?hl=fr&user=wRIs4bcAAAAJ>



## Practicalities

If you wish to present a paper in one of the Permanent Study Group's, Ad Hoc Group's, or Specialized Panel's sessions at the conference, please upload an abstract outlining your proposed conference paper. This may be done through the conference website.

## Important dates

- Deadline for submission of abstracts: April 6, 2026
- Deadline for submission of EGPA Booster Grant applications: April 15, 2026
- Acceptance notification and opening of registrations: April 20, 2026
- Deadline for submission of EGPA Travel Grant applications: April 26, 2026
- Full paper submission deadline and registration deadline: July 19, 2026

## Website

- <https://www.iias-iisa.org/egpa-2026-conference/>

## Submission

- <https://www.conftool.org/egpa2026/>
- Unless specified otherwise, 500-words limit for abstracts

## Contact

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