EGPA 2023 CONFERENCE

Zagreb, Croatia 5-8 September

Steering the European Union through poly-crises storms:
The role of Public Administration

EGPA
European Group
for Public Administration

University of Zagreb
Faculty of Law

CALL FOR PAPERS

PSG VI: Governance of Public Sector Organisation

Governing amidst crises:

Rethinking public sector organizations in an era of turbulence and uncertainty

The EGPA Study Group on the Governance of Public Sector Organizations explores all aspects of public sector organizations, their origin, nature, and change, as well as their role in policy-making and implementation. The Study Group is interested in classic questions in public administration, such as governance capacity and governance legitimacy, the trade-off between organizational specialization and coordination, or the intended and unintended consequences of different organizational and collaborative arrangements. The Study Group has a comparative outlook and is particularly interested in the effect of context, such as political, economic, or cultural factors on the performance of public sector organizations. More recently, the group has discussed the central role that public perceptions of government organizations play for their functioning; this includes issues of accountability, legitimacy, trust, and reputation.

For the 2023 conference, PSG VI invites research that seeks to better understand how public bureaucracies and organisations have adapted to and function in an era of poly-crises and permanent turbulence. Over the last years, crises seem to have become the new normal, with every EGPA conference discussing yet another crisis, from austerity to migration and the climate emergency, from Covid-19 to the security and energy crises of 2022. We aim to advance our theoretical and empirical understanding of these new times by moving from a focus on crisis management, or governance of a single crisis, to *public-sector governance amidst multiple or overlapping crises*.

We are particularly interested in new forms and practices of public-sector governance as responses to ongoing turbulence or overlapping crises. These might include innovative and agile forms of coordination and collaboration through technology and network arrangements, or new practices such as experimentation for more anticipatory forms of governance. Papers could analyse how future-looking and uncertainty-embracing approaches are implemented in the context of traditional bureaucracies. Or they could explore how government organizations handle the ever-growing amount of information, monitor warning signals and ensure that these reach decision makers in time. To what extent can public sector organizations be made future-proof and resilient through top-down decisions or formal arrangements, and how much do organizational styles, traditions, and identities matter? Which existing and new capacities are necessary in this challenging era and how far can new technologies help? What may be unintended consequences of these new tools and practices for public sector organizations?

We are also interested in the broader implications of governing amidst crises. We wish to discuss what the increased pace of challenges and shocks means for traditional modes of policy design and implementation and for political-administrative relations. How can states maintain governance capacity and efficiency, as well as legitimacy and trust in such contexts? From a comparative perspective, we seek to understand which organizational and contextual factors can explain variation in how well public sector organizations manoeuvre poly-crises and ongoing turbulence. Building on the classic distinction between positive and negative coordination, we could ask whether and why some public sector organizations are proactive rather than reactive in dealing with turbulences?

Papers can be theoretical or empirical, descriptive, or explanatory, but they should have a clear conceptual and theoretical basis and meet appropriate methodological standards. Papers that examine the above issues comparatively across time, countries, government levels or policy sectors are particularly appreciated. The study group welcomes researchers from different disciplines, from public administration to management research, organization studies, public policy and beyond.

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Practicalities

Practical information on the EGPA 2023 conference in Zagreb can be found at:
www.egpa-conference2023.org

Please submit a short abstract (max. 400 words, doc(x) or pdf format) outlining: the title of the paper; a short description of the contents of the paper; the theoretical framework and research method of your contribution; the empirical material to be used; and name, affiliation, and contact information of the author(s) via the Conference Management System : https://www.conftool.org/egpa-conference2023

Abstract submission	May 17, 2023
Author's notification	May 31, 2023
Full papers submission	August 17, 2023
PhD Symposium	September 5-6, 2023
EGPA Conference	September 6-8, 2023

Papers will be made available on the conference website. Paper presenters will be expected to prepare a short presentation and to act as a discussant for another paper in the sessions.

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