

Europeanisation of higher education in the area of administrative sciences in Romania

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EUROPEANISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE AREA OF ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCES IN ROMANIA

I. Introductory considerations

The higher education is fundamentally changing. The change has started and it continues in various stages of society development. Nowadays, the major preoccupation of the actors responsible for education development on European level, in the context of the great processes of change, globalisation, Europeanisation and knowledge-based society is to contribute to reaching the major objective of Lisbon Strategy (2002), so that the European Union becomes the most competitive knowledge-based economy by 2010.

The university has the mission to cultivate attitudes, to transmit knowledge, to train specialists in order to validate the higher education quality in the context of the political and economic imperatives that promote „a closer Union” between the European states. Knowing and responding to the specific education, training needs, the universities respond to the EC social and economic development requirements.

In this context, more often one discusses about Europeanisation as process, or as „status” of a system, geographic area, field or activity sector, public service etc. with European Union „dimensions”. Yes, it is the public service where we find also the service of education, situated in its own European area. It is under the influence of the effects of the Europeanisation process by means of the European public policies – the educational policy - subject both to institutional and social effects and continuous change. Thus, the Europeanisation of higher education represents the result of the political direct action. The specificity of the Europeanisation of higher education is provided by the dimensions of the formal national institutional and political changes of the European Union Member States and acceding countries and it is supported by activities that apply „Bologna Declaration” (1999) on creation of a common European Area for Higher Education by 2010, aimed to promote citizens’ mobility and employability, to increase the competitiveness of European higher education.

The Europeanisation process of higher education has concerned politicians even since 1950s, when documents on equivalent diplomas were adopted (European Convention for equivalent diplomas (1953) and Additional Protocol (1954), European Convention for equivalent periods of the academic studies (1956), European Convention for academic recognition of academic qualifications (1959). At the same time we mention the following moments:

- Convention for recognising the studies and diplomas in higher education in the states of Europe Region UNESCO in 1979;
- The Maastricht Treaty (1992) awards to EU responsibility in education and implicit in higher education;
- The Common Declaration concerning the harmonisation of European higher education system, Sorbonne, 25 May 1998;
- Bologna Declaration on 19 June 1999 on defining the „European Area of Higher Education”;
- The Prague Communiqué of the ministers responsible for higher education, 2001;
- Communiqué of the Conference of ministers responsible for higher education, Berlin, 2003.

Yes, our purpose is not to try to present models and concepts from the specialised literature on the Europeanisation, its dimensions and effects but to identify some effects of Europeanisation at higher education level and possible integration within a relevant indicator.

In this paper we shall try to make a radiography of what happens in the Romanian higher education area, especially in education in administrative sciences, a relative small sample, related to the educational system, concerning its Europeanisation.

1.1. Conceptual dimension of the Europeanisation of higher education – Applying Bologna Declaration in the Romanian educational area

1.1.1. Romanian legislative framework

The Romanian higher education proves openness and flexibility concerning Bologna process and its integration within the European Area of Higher Education.

The Bologna Process, initiated and supported both by the Common Declaration of the European Ministers responsible for education in Europe, agreed at Bologna on 19 June 1999, at which Romania is a signatory part, and by national normative deeds (*Law no. 288 from 24 June 2004* on the organization of the undergraduate studies and *Law no. 287 from 24 June 2004* on the academic consortia), is characterised by six main directions and diplomas recognition:

- a) Facilitating the compatibility and recognition of diplomas;
- b) Introducing a system based on two successive cycles;
- c) Implementing a credit transfer system;
- d) Facilitating the mobility for students, teachers and researchers;
- e) Promoting the European cooperation in the area of quality;
- f) Promoting the European dimension in higher education.

Conventions adopted in the European Credit Transfer System and national system

1. *Convention of allocation*: the year of study, with duration varying between 36 - 40 weeks has 60 credits allocated, 30 credits/semester, if they are equal. The credits are allocated on disciplines and activities that are independently evaluated. The credits are allocated as whole values, eventually with fractions of 0.5.

2. *Convention of standard student*: the standard student studies 40 hour/week; 1500 – 1600 is the annual work volume (36 – 40 weeks). In the national system it is recommended an annual work volume of 1500 hours and the allocation of a credit for 25 hours of study.

3. *Convention of awarding*: the credits allocated to a discipline are awarded integrally to the student together with the result of evaluation (mark), if the graduation condition is met.

4. *Convention of publicity*: all the elements describing the curricula and disciplines, namely the preliminary requirements, contents, objectives, credit allocation, methods of training and evaluation are public (modern, accessible and on the internet).

5. *Convention of transferability*: all the credits obtained in accredited institutions and programmes are recognized and potentially transferable in other institutions and programmes, if their contents and finality are relevant for the current programme. If the parties concluded an agreement/contract of study after ECTS model, it has legal power.

The academic autonomy has enabled to the Romanian universities to elaborate their own strategies concerning the approach of Bologna process.

1.1.2 Structure of the education process in the National School of Political Studies and Public Administration (NSPSPA)

A. BA, MA cycles

Similar with other European universities, the higher education is structured on **two main cycles** known as **Bachelor** and **Master**. In order to respond to this objective it is imperative to have a good understanding of the nature of various qualifications, the modalities and common terms of decision.

For NSPSPA, taking into account the structure for higher education, the implementation of the scheme 3 – 2 – 3 meant to accept the following structure starting with the academic year 2005/2006:

No.	Area	Specialization	No. credits	Duration (years)
1.	Political Sciences*	Political Sciences	180	3
2.	Sociology*	Sociology	180	3
3.	International Relations*	International Relations and European Studies	180	3
4.	Administrative Sciences**	Public Administration European Administration	180 180	3 3
5.	Sciences of communication***	Communication and Public Relations	180	3

* within the Faculty of Political Sciences

** within the Faculty of Public Administration

*** within the Faculty of Communication and Public Relations

The conception and organisation concerning the existence of a common branch for the specializations within the faculties of Public Administration and Political Sciences are adapted to the new structure so that the mentioned common branch is delivered during the first three semesters (90 credits).

In the academic year 2008/2009, the second cycle of master will have a duration of 2 years corresponding to 120 credits.

B. Competence in the European framework of qualifications

Understanding the competence as an ensemble of attributes (knowledge and their application, attitudes, skills and responsibilities) describing the level at which a person is able to practice, to perform those attributes, two important consequences occur: the first refers to the fact that **a competence may be achieved and evaluated**, and the second to the fact that each person is competent in a various degree. The competences may be **general** and **specific**, depending on the coverage area.

The general competences are transdisciplinary, generalisable and they may be developed by any study programme on a certain extent.

The specific competences are linked to a certain area of study, they make individual a study programme related to the others. Examples of general and specific competences are presented in Annex 1 A, 1B and 2 (Specialization sheet/Discipline sheet).

1.1.3 Curriculum design

The curriculum of each specialization should ensure training and developing general and specific competences related to the academic objectives (expressed in specializations) and the labour market requirements (expressed in qualifications).

The general competences may be found in the core curriculum and the specific competences in the specialised curriculum.

Consequently, in the curriculum design, the first step was to establish the corps of **general competences**, respectively **specific competences**, that each graduate is able to practice.

The next step consisted in **elaborating the packages of courses on a common branch of knowledge and specialised knowledge**, as well as the **strategies of training and developing the competences**.

From this prospect, in the curricula we find three categories of disciplines:

- a) Basic disciplines (compulsory) (Co);
- b) Associated disciplines (from related areas: economics, psychology etc) (As);
- c) Optional disciplines (specialised) (Op).

Based on this issue, the strategy for curriculum development took into account:

- a) The disciplines are progressive in the order of the years of study, starting with those providing the theoretical and conceptual fundamental issues in the very area, then those developing the specialised knowledge and the associated techniques/methods of investigation, and the third year is focused on diversification of the specialised options and achieving a research project, concluded with a graduation thesis.

- b) In the first year, the basic and associated disciplines are dominant, from the second year the optional disciplines occur, they are dominant in the third year.
- c) The compatibilisation with the curriculum of the same specialization or a related specialization existent in another university, recognised in the European higher education. In this respect, it was recommended to study the curricula of European universities, including the disciplines with the greatest frequency in our own curriculum;
- d) Supporting with priority the possibility of mobility between the faculties within NSPSPA.

The disciplines are completed in the annual curricula.

The volume of hours for each discipline, aiming the weekly activities is allocated so that 1500 represents the duration in hours of study of an academic year; 25 hours correspond to each credit.

The number of weeks of activity within an academic year is 36 weeks, and 18-22 hours represent the weekly volume of the direct activities.

1.1.4 Measures for applying the credit system

The Romanian accumulation and credit transfer system has the European Credit Transfer System as reference and it is regulated by the Ministry of Education and Research. At the university, faculties and departments level, coordinators for the accumulation and credit transfer system are appointed.

The credits and the credit allocation system, having ECTS and the national credit allocation system as reference were introduced compulsory starting with the academic year 2005/2006. They are applied integrally to the students admitted in the academic year 2004 and those assimilated. The application refers to all levels and forms of education.

II. The Europeanism degree of the curricular contents

In our opinion we may consider the following as specific elements for Europeanisation of higher education in the area of administrative sciences in Romania, relevant to express the Europeanism degree:

a) Openness degree towards the European studies

The variables belonging to this category are as follows:

- The disciplines having as theme one of the topics concerning the European Union;
- The weight they represent in the total of the disciplines as compulsory, associated or optional disciplines;
- The number of hours allocated by curriculum;
- The degree of student mobility on cycles of academic studies in the European Area of Higher Education;
- The degree of teaching staff mobility in the European Area of Higher Education.

b) The absorption capacity of the European funds designated to higher education

The variables belonging to this category are:

- Number of institutional contracts of NSPSPA - FPA within SOCRATES- ERASMUS programme and their value;
- Number of NSPSPA - FPA projects within LEONARDO DA VINCI programme and their value;
- Number of institutional contracts of NSPSPA - FPA within “ Jean Monnet” Action and their value;
- Number of institutional contracts of scientific research of NSPSPA - FPA.

c) Capacity to organise scientific events with European theme

The variables belonging to this category are as follows:

- Scientific events with international participation;
- Scientific events with cyclic feature;
- Study visits and training periods for foreign students;

- National scientific events;
- Summer schools.

d) Institutional capacity

The variables belonging to this category are as follows:

- Number of academic staff teaching disciplines with themes on European Union;
- Number of academic staff teaching in a foreign language;
- Number of foreign students studying at NSPSPA-FPA;
- Number of students enrolled at NSPSPA-FPA at specializations of European studies.

e. Level of interest provided by public and private institutions concerning the educational offer of NSPSPA-FPA on European Administration.

II.1. The European contents of the educational programmes

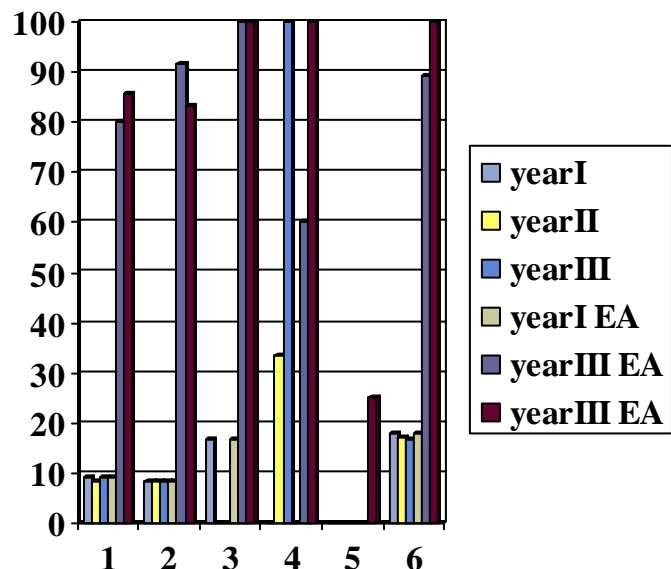
Based on the analysis concerning FPA curricula, analysis aiming on one hand to emphasise the representation degree of the disciplines with theme on European Union, the number of allocated hours for the study of these disciplines and the corresponding credits, the category to which they belong as compulsory, optional or associated disciplines, the ratio between the number of allocated hours (course, seminar, laboratory, project and individual study) and total number of hours/week, and on the other hand, the resources allocated for programme delivery, the following conclusions have been drawn:

II.1.1. Undergraduate studies of Bachelor of Arts degree

The study on the disciplines approaching topics specific for the European Union is insignificantly represented in the curriculum for the first year at the specialization of “Public Administration” (PA) by a single discipline (the Europeanism degree (ED) expresses the ratio between the disciplines with European contents and the total of disciplines on semester, ED = 9.09%), related to the total of the studied disciplines; at the “European Administration” specialization (EA), those topics represent 83.33% in the total of the disciplines studied in the first cycle. We mention that a common branch of study exists for the first three semesters of the first cycle for both specializations, fact revealed also from ED, in the first year being equal for the two specializations.

Undergraduate studies of Bachelor of Arts degree

- 1= Europeanism degree;
- 2 = Transfer credits;
- 3= Compulsory disciplines/
total of compulsory disciplines;
- 4 = Associated disciplines/
total of associated disciplines;
- 5= Optional disciplines/total of
optional disciplines;
- 6= Number of allocated
hours/week to the discipline
of European studies/total
hours/week



The subsystem of NSPSPA – FPA programmes of exchange, mobility and academic cooperation, within the Romanian national education system is defined as compatible, comparable, clear as significance and contents. In this respect, the application of the European Credit Transfer System within NSPSPA – FPA has enabled to harmonise the activities, to achieve courses, programmes and diplomas aiming their compatibilisation and similitude with the European ones.

The disciplines with themes on European studies are progressively in order of the years of study at the “*European Administration*” specialization, being compulsory disciplines, with a large number of hours (89.28%) allocated to the study in classroom and individual study, in the second and third year of study.

II.1.2. Academic studies of Master

The programmes of academic studies of Master are created by optimum combination of some legal, economic, managerial, social disciplines, responding to market requirements for the niche of public administration. In this respect, there are developed Master programmes focused on specialization in European administration and European studies, with a duration of two years, executive Master programmes with a duration of one year, addressing to those involved in activities specific for public administration, with European feature, as well as to those in national public administration and Master programmes of 1.5 years with applicative feature from the perspective of developing the practical skills for the public sector.

“Jean Monnet” Action, aimed to promote and develop teaching on European integration matters is represented in FPA actions, programmes:

- Master programme: “European Public Space”, organised on 3 ”Jean Monnet” European Modules: 1. “European Administrative Space”, 2. “European Economic Space”, 3. “Foreign Common and Security Policy of the European Union”;
- “Jean Monnet” Permanent Course: ”EU Policies for Public Management”;
- Since this year a “Jean Monnet” Chair, “Studies on Europeanisation of administration and civil service”.

The study of the disciplines approaching topics, especially from the European studies is significantly represented at the two Master programmes, each with a duration of two years: ”European Administrative Studies” and “European Public Space”, the latest being conceived on 3 European “Jean Monnet” Modules.

- While at the Master programme ”European Administrative Studies” we remark an increase of E.D. since the first year from 50% to 80%, in the second year of study, at the Master programme “European Public Space”, E.D. has remained constant as value of 100% during the two years of study, confirming and differentiating the contents of the study disciplines.
- Proportional with the Europeanism degree of each Master programme we remark also a proportional evaluation of the transfer credits, providing a complete overview from the perspective of the coverage degree of the hours of course, seminar, laboratory, individual study, reflected in the number of credits.

Academic studies of Master

A. Representation of the Europeanism degree

1=European Administrative Studies

2=European Public Space

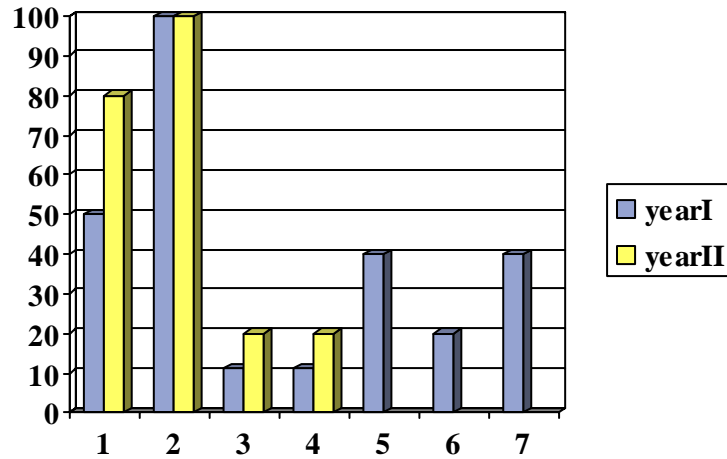
3=Public Sector Management

4=Executive Power and Public Administration

5=Good Governance and European Integration

6=Administrative Capacity and Acquis Communautaire

7=Management of Public Affairs



Analysing the other Master programmes that we identify in the trajectory for student professional education, as issues for the professionalisation direction, we remark the following dimensional aspects:

- There are Master programmes where the European theme is not individualised on study disciplines, as it is found implicitly in their contents, (E.D. with value between 11.11% and 20%), as they are conceived on the theme of public administration, or executive Master programmes, where the representation of the European theme is up to 60% from the total of the study disciplines, being Master programmes with duration of one year.
- The great majority of the disciplines on European studies are compulsory disciplines, the representation degree is between 25 and 100% from the total of the compulsory disciplines, one discipline has status of “Jean Monnet” Permanent course, and a small part comprises associated disciplines, with a representation degree between 33% and 60% in the total of the associated disciplines.
- The volume of the hours allocated to the study of these disciplines is larger at the Master programmes specialised on European studies (from 78.88% to 100%), medium at the executive Master programmes with European theme (from 40% to 60%) and lower at the Master programmes aiming the study of public administration (up to 20%).

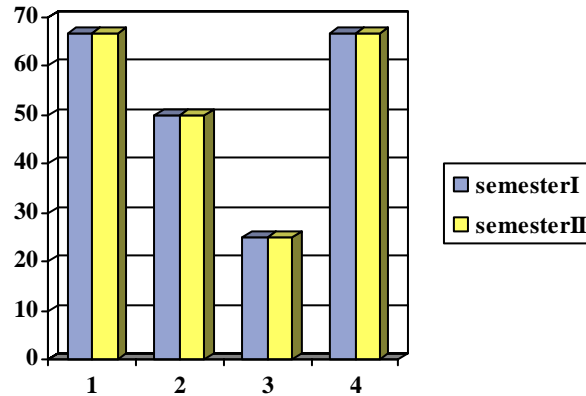
II.1.3. The academic doctoral studies

The first cycle of the academic doctoral studies dedicated to advanced studies, offers from the total of 6 advanced study disciplines, 2 disciplines with integral European contents, the other have partial European contents, to each discipline it is allocated an equal number of credits, i.e. 10 credits. The disciplines with integral European contents belong to the category of optional disciplines, with a number of hours/week equal with that of other disciplines, and on the whole covering almost $\frac{3}{4}$ from the total of weekly hours.

The second cycle is conceived as period to achieve the research project with thematic areas on European studies, corresponding to 120 credits.

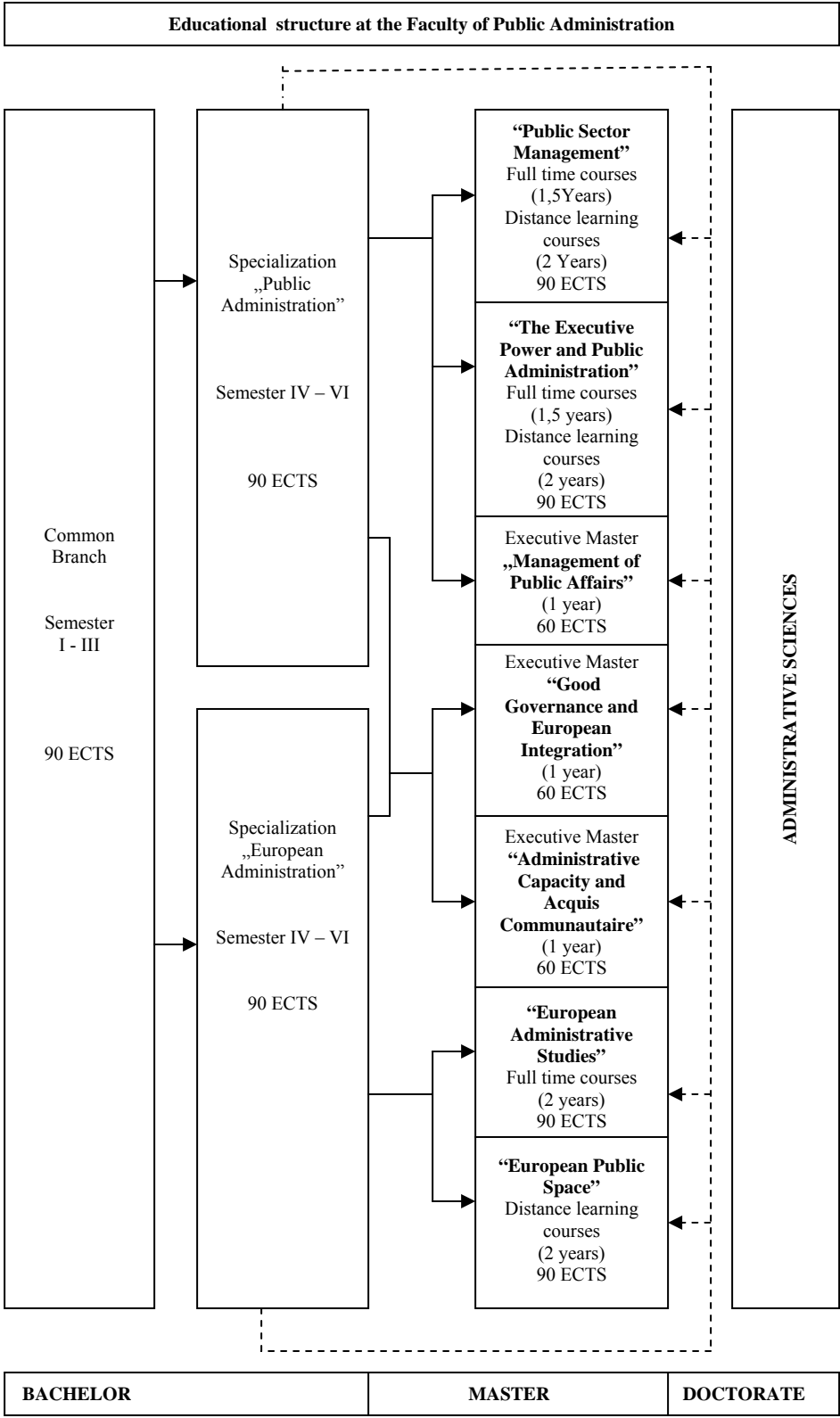
The academic doctoral studies

- 1= Europeanism degree;
- 2= Compulsory disciplines/
total of compulsory disciplines;
- 3= Optional disciplines/total of
optional disciplines;
- 4= Number of allocated
hours/week to the discipline
of European studies/total
hours/week



We appreciate that the FPA succeeded to impose an **integrated curriculum** for the graduate of “Public Administration” specialisation or “European Administration” specialisation.

We tried to respond to the fundamental questions of FPA “life cycle” and especially the new specialization of “European Administration”, that together with the specific master programmes have contributed to using the “market-type mechanisms” on the Romanian educational market, adapting it to the European integration process and transforming it into a part of the Europeanisation process.



III. Social perception of the educational programmes in the area of administrative sciences

As revealed by numerous studies, the correlated processes of Europeanisation and transition provide significant opportunities for the development of public administration education in Europe and provide a possibility to further the “emancipation” of this area.

In terms of Europeanisation, the increasing challenges of political-administrative interaction between national administrations and the institutions of the European Union illustrate that it is essential for Public Administration graduates to acquire an informed understanding of both the European context of policy-making and of the administrative organisation and culture of other Member States and countries associated with the EU. As a second element, the transition process in Central and Eastern European states could provide to the area of administrative sciences a further impetus to search for its own identity and approach in a European context.

The research, for which we present its results, reveals the key findings on the current direction in which Public Administration education is moving in Romania in the context of integration into the European Union.

The focus on the way and degree in which the European matters are reflected in the curriculum has high priority and it is correlated with the imminent and necessary compatibilisation with the contents and methods of education specific for European higher education in the area of administrative sciences.

III.1. The impact of education on public administration reform

In the context of accession to the European Union, Romania records genuine changes of the public administration, perceived also by the subjects of our study, appreciating that the European integration will contribute significantly to the public administration improvement; 83.1% answered affirmatively, while 38.9% consider that the current public administration system is well organised. The respondents perceive integration into the EU as the vector to make efficient the public administration (22.9%), to make the civil service more professional, on going process (19.8%), to stimulate the access to the European funds. The alignment to European standards and European managerial requirements (35.3%), getting knowledge and promoting the European „best practices” in managing the national problems (61.8%) represent dimensions of the European integration of Romania, dimensions confirmed also by the answers concerning the need to modernise the public administration for integration into the European administrative space (92.4%). We mention the fact that 60% of the subjects are not involved in actions or activities on the European integration issue.

III.2. Promoting the European standards in public administration

III.2.1. The coverage area

The higher education institutions respond to the challenges concerning the European studies, fact demonstrated by including the European dimension in creating faculties and developing specializations. Concerning the number of faculties studying the European matters we remark that from a total of 87 universities, out of which 55 are accredited public universities and 32 are accredited private universities, the undergraduate studies for Bachelor degree are organised in 18, respectively 7 faculties. The specialization on European matters is developed in the faculties of administrative sciences (12, respectively 8), political sciences (11, respectively 2), economic sciences (11), legal sciences (9, respectively 7) and other faculties (11, respectively 2).

For the second cycle – the academic studies of Master on European matters are organised in 36 faculties from the public universities and 11 faculties from the private universities.

In the Romanian academic spectrum, the “European Administration” specialization is organised only at NSPSA - FPA, specialization set up in 2004, operational with the academic year 2005-2006, at the same time with the application of the requirements imposed by Bologna process in Romania. The opportunity of delivery and finalisation of such a specialization both in the first cycle – undergraduate studies of Bachelor degree and for the second cycle – academic studies of Master is also confirmed by the

subjects of research in a percentage of 73.6%, respectively 82.9%. 70%, respectively 75.7% of the respondents are in favour to obtain the diploma for finalising the courses of the two cycles.

The specialization in “Administrative Sciences” by doctoral academic studies is necessary in the opinion of 53.8%, and 50.2% wish to finalise by obtaining the diploma of doctor in “Administrative Sciences”. 66% of the subjects wish to continue their own education by doctoral studies.

Beyond the academic education on cycles, 30% of the subjects consider also necessary the training programmes by short term courses, finalised with certificates, while around 45% have no answer.

At the same time, they (61.1%) consider necessary the continuous specialisation of the academic staff.

Including the European and international dimension by organising the “European Administration” specialisation or the master programmes with integral European contents and training by short term courses with foreign partners, some of them in English language were arguments for 88% of the subjects that evaluated very good and good the representation of the European dimension in FPA-NSPSA programmes. 52.2% show that it is necessary to introduce new disciplines with thematic contents, reflecting the European matters, 32.2% are for creating new faculties and/or specializations of European administration, while others (around 45%) responded in a negative way or not at all.

III.2.2. Training needs

The categories and level of the training needs for FPA, „European Administration” specialization represent the result of the analysis concerning the needs identified after processing the questionnaires, feedbacks of the training programmes, interviews, as well as the requirements expressed by the candidates for FPA in the first cycle within the session of July 2006.

The following categories of training needs are identified:

- category A: *introductory courses* with general notions about EU construction, EU institutions, EU development;
- category B: *courses to know* EU matters;
- category C: *courses of specialization*.

The levels of the training needs are as follows:

- Level *for beginners*, that we may develop from the pre-university education (46.4% of the respondents and ½ of this year candidates at the faculty wish to be students at the „European Administration” specialization or during the third semester of the first cycle of study (in the common branch) to develop a larger number of disciplines focused on European studies.
- Level *for advanced-specialization* developed for the students of the „European Studies” specialization, or those attending specialised master programmes of 2 years, or the executive master programmes of 1 year; for the latest it is imperative to increase the number of disciplines in the area of European administration, 69.3% of the respondents being in favour.
- Level *for professionalisation* through doctoral studies, for the graduates of „European Administration” specialization, young teaching staff and civil servants with preoccupations in European matters; 72.7% consider necessary education by doctoral studies in administrative sciences, with themes on European administration.

The trainees of the short term courses expressed the opinion that for the civil servants we identify both the training level by doctoral studies, their niche being relative small, and the level of *specific training needs* considered as main needs (specific themes, i.e. European affairs, European Project Cycle Management, Structural Funds, partnerships of development, strategic planning) as well as *training needs by information*.

III. 3 Graduates’ insertion on the labour market

The European labour market is changing, process reflected also on the Romanian labour market, with a major influence on the Europeanisation of higher education.

More precisely it is shaped the dimension of a new labour market for the graduates of higher education, characterised by a high degree of flexibility and mobility inside and outside the country, in public administration, national and European public institutions. In this respect, the graduates of the “European Administration” specialisation may have a high degree of penetration on the labour market, competing for

a job of civil servant or European civil servant, related to those from the “Public Administration” specialisation, or also those graduating the master programmes specialised on European administrative studies, European Public Space, related to those graduating European general studies, as revealed by the following:

- 68.3% of the subjects consider the importance of the degree in the area of administrative sciences, while almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of them emphasise the importance of the degree in European administration (73.1%).
- The diploma of Master in the area of European administrative studies, European Public Space is considered more attractive (66.9%) than the one obtained for the master programme in European studies (56.7%).
- Diploma of doctor in European studies (51.6%).

The creation of a professional career in national public administration is more accessible from the perspective of the profile of the specialization (54.7%), while only 23.9% of the respondents consider that they may create a professional career in public administration in other country.

The Romanian legislative system encourages specialization through doctoral studies; generally speaking the academic staff, researchers are those going through such a stage. In the public system, holding a Ph.D. title in national or European public administration is considered sometimes a criterion in promotion within the professional career, fact justifying the favourable answer of 77.6% respondents concerning access of other categories to doctoral studies.

III. 4. Bringing into line the educational programmes in the area of administrative sciences with the European practices

III.4.1 Supporting the education reform in the area of administrative sciences

The Bologna Process, initiated and supported both by the Common Declaration of the European Ministers responsible for education in Europe, agreed at Bologna on 19 June 1999, at which Romania is a signatory part, and by national normative deeds (*Law no. 288 from 24 June 2004* on the organization of the undergraduate studies and *Law no. 287 from 24 June 2004* on the academic consortia), is characterised by six main directions and diplomas recognition:

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- b) Introducing a system based on two successive cycles;
- c) Implementing a credit transfer system;
- d) Facilitating the mobility for students, teachers and researchers;
- e) Promoting the European cooperation in the area of quality;
- f) Promoting the European dimension in higher education.

The answers (90.4%) support the Romanian education reform and alignment to the European standards from the perspective of mutual recognition of diplomas, exams and credits for courses and creation of a common European area aimed to promote citizen mobility and employability.

III.4.2. Mobility in the European Area of Higher Education

The student and teaching staff mobility, the common bilateral or trilateral study programmes (SOCRATES, ERASMUS) represent a form of Europeanisation of higher education, considered useful also by 84.2% of the respondents, both for their own training and self development and for employment in a job in public institutions and authorities.

III.5. Participation at academic events on European topics

Enhancing the organisation of events in order to know the European values, to inform and debate on the European matters, to present the results of the scientific research anchored in the reality of the European space represents one of the preoccupations of the academic environment, from the prospect of its mission to cultivate attitudes, to transmit knowledge. Less penetrated by the employees in the public sector, meaning their low representation at the academic activities (41.3%), even non significant in the respect of publishing some specialised articles on European matters by the public administration employees (8.2%),

the activity to organise events (conferences, seminars, debates, scientific sessions) on European topics is very well represented by the participation of the representatives of the academic environment, both teaching staff and students (85%).

The actions with European themes, organised by the academic environment together with public institutions have started to begin (21.8%), situation due to the practitioners' fear to face theorists.

IV. Conclusions

The above presented study represents a premiere in the preoccupations of the managers, teaching staff and researchers in the area of administrative sciences in Romania. This situation is justified, on one hand, by the relative recent Romanian authorities' option to pass to implementation of the measures deriving from Bologna Declaration and on the other hand, by the lack of a methodological and systematic practice for researching the beneficiaries' perception on the contents and forms for organisation of academic studies.

The emphasis on the issue of Europeanisation of higher education in the area of administrative sciences is focused on the position of avant-garde held by the Faculty of Public Administration of the National School of Political Studies and Public Administration in the Romanian system of higher education within the area of political and administrative sciences as well as the necessity deriving from the close integration of Romania into the European Union, aimed to make compatible the contents of basic and in-service training with the contents of the prestigious institutions of the European Union countries.

In this context, the following are relevant:

a) The research initiated and presented here needs an extension both as theme and subjects approached in order to formulate conclusions and appreciations with a higher degree of generality. "NSPSPA experiment" is unique in the Romanian system of higher education in the area of administrative sciences. The training programmes for BA and MA are provided also by other universities.

The approach and conception, from the prospect of the contents of these programmes has distinct histories and directions, emphasising three major directions:

- normative, traditional approach, from the legal perspective, based on administrative law and other branches of law;
- the economic, managerial approach, based on a curriculum inspired from the area of economic sciences and management;
- organisational approach based on political sciences and organisational theories.

b) It is necessary to develop the comparative studies with universities and institutions from the European Union Member States and to undertake or formulate some relevant standards and criteria in order to describe exactly the contents and effects of Europeanisation of the higher education in administrative sciences.

c) The theme approached may represent the object of research of a team, specially created within EGPA to offer relevant data and indicators, unanimously accepted in order to quantify and describe the Europeanisation process mentioned in the present paper.

V. Coverage area and methodology of research

The sample for the conducted questionnaires comprised a number of 500 subjects, out of which 450 were valid respondents, and for the interviews at group level the sample comprised a number of 60 civil servants,

The period for collecting data was January-July 2006.

The profile of our sample has the following features that may be stated in the results of the research:

- ¾ of the total number of subjects are employees of the public sector, out of which 40.4% holding managing civil service positions;
- 64% of the subjects have a labour length no more than 10 years, indicator correlated with their age under 35 years (55.1%);

- characteristic for the training level of the sample, over 80% are graduates of academic studies, BA, MA or Ph.D.;
- if we interpret the age represented in the sample we may appreciate that the public sector in Romania is young, supported by the fact that 4.7 % are over 50 years, the majority being in the range of 18-35 years (more than a half of the number of subjects);
- as the educational environment is more feminine, we remark that our sample is well represented by women, 58.7%

V.1. The target groups of research

1. *students of the academic studies of Master programmes* (full time courses and distance learning);
2. *students of the undergraduate studies* in the first, second and third year of study, “*Public Administration*” specialization and *students of the undergraduate studies* in the third year of study, “*European Administration*” specialization (full time courses);
3. *graduates of Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts programmes* - (full time courses and distance learning);
4. *doctoral students in “Administrative Sciences”*;
5. *civil servants and employees of central and local public administration* – trainees of the short time programmes;
6. *students beneficiary of the mobility and scholarship programmes, practical stages* in EU countries – SOCRATES, ERASMUS, LEONARDO DA VINCI, UNIDEM, TEMPUS.
7. *teaching staff* involved in the reform process of higher education.

V.2. Levels of academic education, represented by the target groups

b1. academic studies:

A1 academic studies for Bachelor of Art degree;

B1 academic studies for Master of Art degree;

C1 academic doctoral studies.

b2. other training forms:

A2 short time courses

B2 short time courses within the European or bilateral programmes.

V.3. Methods of research that were used:

- Questionnaires conducted by field operators;
- Interviews at group level (graduates of the courses A2 and B2);
- Desk research (thematic analyses on curricula, comparative analyses on the academic offers, studies of the Training Center for Public Administration (TCPA) of NSPSPA, reports of the previous projects of TCPA and FPA).

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