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## **PAQUALITY**

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### **ASSESSMENT OF METHODOLOGY AND MATERIALS OF PA TEACHING AND ITS RELEVANCE FOR PRACTICE –**

**Hungary**

**The analysis of practical relevance of programme competencies  
February 2019**

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*Note: The report expresses an opinion of the authors. The EC doesn't have responsibility for any utilization of included information.*

# CONTENT

1	Introduction .....	3
2	Research questions and Methodology .....	3
3	An Overview on the content and targeted competencies of the Existing PA study programmes .....	5
3.1	BA in Public Administration, National university of public service.....	6
3.2	Msc in Public Policy and Management (Corvinus) .....	8
3.3	MA in Public Administration (NUPS).....	11
3.4	MA in Public Policy and Management (NUPS) .....	12
3.5	MA in State Science and Public Governance (NUPS).....	13
3.6	European and International Administration (Andrássy University Budapest).....	14
4	QUESTIONNAIRES – Results & Discussion .....	15
4.1	Results – Competences SCREENING BY ALUMNI .....	30
4.2	Discussion and RECOmmendations.....	37
5	CONCLUDING REMARKS & CHALLENGES.....	38
6	REFERENCES.....	40
7.	Appendix .....	41
7.1.	QUESTIONNAIRE OF THE ONLINE SURVEY CONDUCTED BY HUNGARIAN PARTNER.....	41
7.2.	Summarizing the Results of the online survey.....	45

# 1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the project in this IO1 phase is »to provide data for an analyses how the PA curricula is linked to practice, and to analyse of the gap between competencies needed in practical work in public administration and those obtained in the educational programmes«. I.e., we should assess the relevance of the competences of our programmes for practice – and our programmes differ substantially, if you scrutinize them, which means that we have also different competences listed. Thus, programme competences are starting points. Not to mention, that needs for practice might differ across different contexts too. Furthermore, this output of IO1 serves also as **an input for IO5** (Methodological framework for development of competencies relevant for practice), finally as international evaluations of PA programmes and feasibility studies for suggested improvements.

According to the foreseen framework we should scrutinize and review only our own programmes, and, furthermore, **PA related programmes** exclusively (not as parts of mainly legally or policy or economics oriented but autonomous programmes; i.e., a rough benchmark should be EAPAA accreditation eligibility criteria – these criteria should be taken under consideration in advance). Scrutinized should be, if possible, **MA level programmes** only, due to the application's theoretical grounds (*Staronova & Gajduschek, Brans & Coenen, etc.*), a more developed PA specifics competences on this level and more convergent state of the art to gain comparable results; and only **programme-specific competencies**, that is PA (in general, as stated in accredited programmes) are in the core study of this project.

## 2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

This analysis aims to address the following research questions which are in line with the project's comprehensive research questions<sup>12</sup>.

**(RQ1) From the viewpoint of the content of the programme curricula, to what extent are different academic disciplines are represented in the different PA programmes in Hungary?**

The following classification was used in order to arrange study programme courses into clusters based on the subject field:

0	Research methodology, analytical skills, computing
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<sup>1</sup> Which are the most salient items to address when assuring a feedback loop (PDCA cycle) regarding quality in PA study programmes and HE in general? Based on this, are there and in which elements/competences significant gaps between declared and real competences of graduates? Which are the missing competences?

Do – if yes, in which dimensions – objectives, opinions and experiences of various stakeholders groups differ, especially groups of graduates and employers? How to develop programmes for a better transfer of academic knowledge into practice? Which competences are the most crucial for PA practical requirements, and which (also) for a disciplinary development? What are the main requirements to mitigate presently identified deficiencies in terms of Europeanised QA, in both levels, national and European (EAPAA)?

<sup>2</sup> Intellectual Output 1: Assessment of Methodology and Materials of PA teaching and its Relevance for Practice (2018.December)

1	Law
2	Management
3	Sociology
4	Political science
5	Information technology
6	Communication studies
7	Economics
8	Specific policy fields
9	Public admin and public policy in general
11	Other

The available literature on PA education in CEE (cf. Staroňová and Gajduschek 2016, Hajnal 2015, 2003, 1999, Hajnal and Jenei 2007) typically emphasizes the dominant role of legal approaches, even if this pattern may be gradually declining in most countries in the region. The classification and the appearance of the above mentioned disciplines in the PA programmes is examined by clustering the courses listed in the study programme curricula. Only the mandatory courses were included into the analyses. In order to do so course descriptions (as far as they were available) were utilized as a main source of the judgment. The research ambition of the study focuses on mapping the competences acquired through the PA study programmes and to finding out the extent to which these competences seem to be useful in daily work, especially in a job related to public administration. In this context, the following additional research questions were formulated:

**RQ2: Which skills and competences have the students developed during to the study programme, and to what extent?**

**RQ3: To what extent did the acquired competences match competencies needed in graduates' daily work?**

We measured and analysed the level and importance of gained and utilized competencies based on the perceptions of graduated students and senior civil servants (those who are potential employers of alumni students graduated from PA programmes). The data collection is done by conducting an on-line survey among alumni and organizing three focus group interviews.

These data collection exercises were applied to students graduated in one of the following three programmes:

- BA in Public Administration (run by NUPS or its predecessor HEI)
- MA in Public Administration (run by NUPS or its predecessor HEI)
- MSc in Public Policy and Management (run by Corvinus University)

The relevant competencies on the specific PA-domain were identified and listed based on PA –relevant categories and competence list offered by Reichard and van der Krogt (2014) in the frame of Tuning-PA project:

<b>Main competences</b>	<b>Description of the competency</b>
Competences related to manage in public governance:	Competences related to understanding the way organisations in the public domain work, develop and can be changed, as well in its internal as in its external

	aspects. Competences related to the understanding and use of different functions, concepts and instruments of the organisation and of its management. Competences related to the understanding and effective handling of relations between organisations and between organisations and the public.
Competences related to participate in and contribute to the policy and administrative processes:	Competences related to the recognition, analysis and interpretation of problems in the public domain and their multi-disciplinary character. Competences related to understanding an effective formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policies.
Competences related to articulate and apply a public service perspective:	Competences related to the very specific nature of the public domain (public interest and interest groups) and the accompanying attitudes and values (like integrity).
Competences to communicate and interact productively in the public domain:	Competences related to interaction and communication with diverse and changing groups of internal and external stakeholders.
Competences related to analyse and solve PA-related problems by applying appropriate scientific methods:	Competences related to conduct research and to apply scientific proven methods.
Competences to understand the public domain:	Competences related to the (comparative) understanding of the basic theories and principles underlying the public domain, its historical socio-economic dynamics, and the skills to use this understanding for the solution of present-day problems in the public domain.

Source: Reichard and van der Krogt (2014)

### **3 AN OVEVIEW ON THE CONTENT AND TARGETED COMPETENCIES OF THE EXISTING PA STUDY PROGRAMMES**

Although there are global flows of competence-based approaches in higher education, which has not avoided Hungary either, the development process of PA educational programmes are still frequently dominated by content- or discipline-based approaches, primarily focusing on the knowledge itself rather than how students could mobilize this knowledge. It is important to mention however that there are important respects in which curriculum design practices depart from this tradition approaches. In particular, the international accreditation (EAPAA) of the CUB PUMA MSc programme in 2012 led to a series of institutional and process changes, which were later reinforced by the quality assurance guidelines developed at the university level in 2015.

The general competencies those are aimed to be provided by the programme are usually described by the HEI, but many case there are discrepancy between the course portfolio and the targeted competencies, or at least the programme content just some extent reflect the competencies aimed to reach by the programme declaration.

Hence, in order to provide a realistic overview on PA programme content we present a short description on the competencies those are listed by the HEI as a targeted competence of the study programme and we also present an overview of the course portfolio of the PA programme.

### **3.1 BA IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

#### **3.1.1 PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION**

There is only one BA programme on PA which is ran by the National University of Public Service. It is called “BA in Public Administration Management”. It is a 3-year-long programme where students are required to achieve 180 ECTS. The programme is only available in Hungarian. Although the study programme underwent significant changes in the last years, it can be still considered as the most traditional PA programme in the country. Its root originates from the pre-Bologna Higher Education System, when students entered to the civil service usually trained in college’s in three years education programme. The main thematic focuses of the BA programme show some similarities with this college education programme like the teaching of different policy fields are mainly based on legal approach or the historical perspective is still relevant in the subjects. Nevertheless there are major transformations also applied to the programme. One of those is that the programme provides the students with the opportunity of specializations after 2 years in:

- General Administration
- International Public Administration
- Tax Administration

Around 300 students graduate in every year on this programme. Half of the students are undergraduates , the other half of the students take part in the evening classes, working as a lower lever civil servants.

#### **3.1.2 LIST OF COMPETENCIES FOR THE PROGRAMME**

According to the programme’s document “the graduated students gain general skills and knowledge (so called “generalists” civil servants) that enable them to lead, manage and organize various tasks at different levels of central and local government administration.” According to the NUPS declaration the programme objectives to enable students to fulfil various expectations in the fields of public service such as in customer services, human resources, financial management and controlling, along with having adequate competence in IT and project management .

The table below provides an overview on the structure of the programme and an analysis of disciplinary linkage of the core courses based on the curricula.

**Table 1: The structural overview of the BA programme in Public Administration (NUPS)**

<b>BA in Public Administration/ National University of Public Service</b>				
Disciplinary orientation of the course	Number of credit courses	Number of courses	Percentage of total number of courses	Percentage of total number of credits
Research, research methodology, analytical skills, computing	4	1	1.8%	1.3%

Law	93	34	42.3%	45.3%
Management	11	5	5.0%	6.7%
Sociology	4	2	1.8%	2.7%
Political science	4	2	1.8%	2.7%
Information technology	11	3	5.0%	4.0%
Communication	2	1	0.9%	1.3%
Economics	12	3	5.5%	4.0%
Specific policy field	10	3	4.5%	4.0%
Public admin and public policy in general	13	5	5.9%	6.7%
Other	56	16	25.5%	21.3%
Total <sup>3</sup>	220	75	100,0%	100,0%

Based on the above composition of the study programme in terms of different academic disciplines we can conclude the following:

- The programme covers a high number of different courses with a relatively low number of credits. The number of mandatory courses is 42. 60 courses out of the 75 are with two or three credits.
- Although the study programme aims to provide courses with a broader approach including courses offering knowledge of law, management, administration and economics, the programme is rather highly dominated by courses largely based on (public) law and related legal subjects. These courses covers a number of different field of administrative law such as regulatory bases on national and EU public finance and taxation (10 courses), the legal system, institutions and policies of the European Union (5 courses), civil service law and labor law (3 courses ), the legal framework of local government (2 courses).
- The programme involves a number of courses that fall under the label of “other” category. It is worth to investigate further the composition of these “other” courses, because they show some specific patterns: first of all by the establishment of the NUPS the government aimed to facilitate the professionals’ transition and compatibility between state service sectors such as between armed forces, police and law enforcement and civil servants. To familiarize the PA students with the fields of military and law enforcement the programme integrated such mandatory courses like “The theories of military and military operations” , “Law enforcement and the instruments of law enforcement” or “Study of National Security”.
- The other academic disciplines such as the management studies, sociology, political science or economics are underrepresented in the course portfolio.
- The intention of the programme has been – and is – to strike a balance between the legal, public policy and other social science approach. The disciplinary orientation of the Programme has remained more or less the same. A little more emphasis can be observed with respect to the “other” sciences and “public policy elements.

<sup>3</sup> The total number of credits of the courses listed in the curricula might be greater number than the required courses’ credit sum ,because depending ont he specialization students are offered different courses.

## **3.2 MSC IN PUBLIC POLICY AND MANAGEMENT (CORVINUS)**

### **3.2.1 PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION**

The master programme in Hungarian language (Közgazdálkodás és Közpolitika/KGKP) offered by the BCE is offered to Hungarian students, while the PUMA English language programme is mainly – but not exclusively - advertised and offered to international students. The two programmes (KGKP and PUMA) share many similarities in terms of aims and objectives, design, didactics and administrative and support functions. From a strictly legal perspective KGKP and PUMA are not two separate programmes. Rather, PUMA is the English language variant of KGKP. This lack of legal distinction has significance in the process of Hungarian national accreditation as PUMA is not accredited separately but together with KGKP (actually as a part of it). The large similarity of the two programmes makes it possible that KGKP students can complete most of their KGKP coursework through completing the English language PUMA equivalents of the KGKP courses. Likewise, both programmes take part in international study collaborations (such as double degree or certificate programmes) under identical conditions.

### **3.2.2 LIST OF COMPETENCIES FOR THE PROGRAMME**

The goal of the programmes is to train graduates capable of applying their gained knowledge in the areas of public management, policy-making, economics, social sciences and law in practice, taking managerial positions that require analysing issues primarily in public policy and state administration, but also in other entities exercising public governance or interacting closely therewith, such as private consulting companies, think-tanks, non-governmental organisations, inter- and supranational organisations (e.g. EU, UN), and private or government-owned companies in heavily regulated industries (such as public utilities or telecommunications).

The programmes apply a comparative perspective to questions of public administration, public management and public policy in the context of contemporary challenges, e.g. globalisation, democratic deficit or even backsliding, and financial crisis. The Hungarian language programme (KGKP) focuses on Hungary in the context of other countries in the region (East-Central Europe) and Europe (EU). The international, English language programme (PUMA), in turn, applies a more international perspective in order to meet the needs of the international student community (note that a majority of PUMA students are from non-European countries: Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Africa). Moreover, students enrolled in both the KGKP and the PUMA programmes are offered the possibility of taking part in the European Master's in Public Administration (EMPA) international certificate programme; this aims to give them an opportunity to gain international experience at one of the EMPA partner institutions.

The design of the programmes reflects the aim of providing a comprehensive understanding of public sector structures, processes and functions in a comparative perspective. It is also focused on equipping students and graduates in methodological skills essential for analysing public policies and dealing with various structures and processes in public sector management.

Graduates of both programmes are expected to understand major theories of policy-making and policy change, governance and public management and their practical applications, as well as key organisational features of the public sector. They are able to apply cross-disciplinary approaches to public issues as well as a comparative perspective, i.e. they can reflect on how and why similar policy issues are framed differently in different contexts

(geographical, temporal). Graduates demonstrate extensive knowledge of institutions, processes and problems of modern government and policy-making processes and are able to analyse various local, regional, national and international policy problems. Through the use of right methodological approaches and formulating results of inquiries of acceptable academic content and format, they are able to formulate and analyse specific policy problems and develop plausible solutions, consisting of policies translated into tangible programmes.

In order to achieve the aforementioned goals, the programme involves all major disciplines in the area of governance and aims to integrate them in a comprehensive and coherent programme focused on international and European theory and practice.

**Table 2: The structural overview of the MsC in Public Policy and Management (CUB)**

Disciplinary orientation of the course	Number of credit courses	Number of courses	Percentage of total number of courses	Percentage of total number of credits
Research, research methodology, analytical skills, computing	36	5	25,0%	22,7%
Law*	0	0	0,0%	0,0%
Management	12	2	8,3%	9,1%
Sociology	6	1	4,2%	4,5%
Political science	0	0	0,0%	0,0%
Information technology	0	0	0,0%	0,0%
Communication	0	0	0,0%	0,0%
Economics	30	4	20,8%	18,2%
Specific policy field	6	1	4,2%	4,5%
Public admin and public policy in general	54	9	37,5%	40,9%
Other	0	0	0,0%	0,0%
Total <sup>4</sup>	144	22	100,0%	100,0%

*\*The Hungarian language version contains a compulsory course on Comparative Administrative Law (6 ECTS). This course will be (re-)introduced in the English language variant from Fall 2019*

- The intention of the programme is to strike a balance between the research, analytical skills, the economic and the general public administration and public policy approach.
- The law-based approach seems to be completely out of the scope of the programme. However as the above footnote suggests in reality there is a notable Law component in the programme curricula; moreover, the regulatory measures and legal frameworks might be discussed as public policy instruments at least in smaller extent.
- There is a balanced way of how courses discuss public policy instruments and processes from a general perspective (on a conceptual, more theoretical level) versus analysing and evaluating specific and diverse policy fields and programmes (extending to most human policies such as health, education and social policy).

<sup>4</sup> The total number of credits of the courses listed in the curricula might be greater number than the required courses' credit sum, because depending on the specialization students are offered different courses.

Based on the focus group interview the following table summarizes how the respondents) valuated the importance of the major competencies in the PA working field and to what extent did the acquired competences match competencies need in their daily work life.

### 3.3 MA IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (NUPS)

#### 3.3.1 PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

The first master programme launched by the NUPS called MA in Public Administration 2-year-long programme (120 ECTS). The following specialisations might be chosen after the 1 year by the student:

- Executive for Administration
- International and European Public Administration
- Science of Public Administration

#### 3.3.2 LIST OF COMPETENCIES FOR THE PROGRAMME

According to the programme description the MA programme aims to enable the graduates of MA in Public Administration to get familiar with the goals, processes and practices of public administration and get knowledge and competence in state sciences, basics of legal disciplinary, law making and law enforcement and prepare the students to understand the operation of the fundamental institutions of the state and public administration. The goal of the programme is to train graduates capable of applying their gained knowledge mainly in the areas of public administration in higher /mid – or top management positions where due to their expertise they are capable of leading, overseeing and controlling various tasks and processes, thus supporting decision- making and management activities.

Disciplinary orientation of the course	Number of credit courses	Number of courses	Percentage of total number of courses	Percentage of total number of credits
Research, research methodology, analytical skills, computing	4	1	2,7%	2,1%
Law	38	15	25,3%	31,3%
Management	12	2	8,0%	4,2%
Sociology	4	1	2,7%	2,1%
Political science	0	0	0,0%	0,0%
Information technology	4	2	2,7%	4,2%
Communication	4	1	2,7%	2,1%
Economics	6	2	4,0%	4,2%
Specific policy field	18	7	12,0%	14,6%
Public admin and public policy in general	24	10	16,0%	20,8%
Other	36	7	24,0%	14,6%
Total <sup>5</sup>	150	48	100,0%	100,0%

- The main characteristic of this programme is the strong intension to provide the student with more specialized knowledge focusing on one of the narrower fields of public administration, while the common mandatory courses (obligatory regardless any specification) are still covering the basic fields of administrative law (constitutional law, EU law, civil servant law) and provide a basis for public policy and public management studies.

<sup>5</sup> The total number of credits of the courses listed in the curricula might be greater number than the required courses' credit sum, because depending on the specialization students are offered different courses.

- 12 courses focus on international and EU law and policies mainly from a legal , regulatory perspective. 9 out of them are integrated into the course portfolio of the International and European Public Administration.
- The other specialization, namely the Executive for Administration/ PA MANAGER are dominated with courses related to public policy analysis, modernization and innovation in the public sector and courses with the intention to improve management and communication skills.
- The third specialization aims to prepare students for an academic carrier by offering courses that provide an overview on the state and state functions and government models mainly either from a theoretical/conceptual approach or from a rather historical and legal perspective (for instance Hungarian and European social history, Administrative Court, The theories of constitutions).

### 3.4 MA IN PUBLIC POLICY AND MANAGEMENT (NUPS)

#### 3.4.1 PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

The other master programme of NUPS named MA in Public Policy and Management 2-year-long programme. In 2017 the National University of Public Service (NUPS) made a decision to broaden the educational portfolio of the Faculty of State Science and Public Administration by developing and launching a new MA programme called “Public Policy and Management” (120 ECTS) from the academic year 2018/19. The introduction of this new MA programme seems to be notable at least for two reasons.

First of all, without any deeper analyses on the content of the programme, it is worth to note that the NUPS is the only higher education institution that launched the “Public Policy and Management” MA programme beyond the Corvinus University of Budapest. (Even though the content of two curricula and the course selections significantly different).

The programme was originally created and accredited a decade ago by CUB and there were other few institutions that used to launch this MA programme in the past.

#### 3.4.2 LIST OF COMPETENCIES FOR THE PROGRAMME

According to the declaration the programme aims to enable graduates of MA in Public Policy and Management to be knowledgeable in economics, social sciences, management, law and methodology. “In line with their technical and theoretical experience, graduates might be capable of analysing complex questions and issues in public administration, executing planning, coordination and management tasks and contribute to public projects in public and private institutions, non-profits, central and local governments and national and international (European) organisations.” (NUPS website<sup>6</sup>)

Based on the course portfolio an interesting feature of this programme is that the disciplinary orientation seems to remarkably stand out from the other educational programmes run by the NUPS. While the other MA programme of the NUPS includes extremely high number, nearly 50 different mandatory courses with high diversity, this programme contains only half of it (nearly 25 mandatory courses) with a more homogeneous interest dominated by economics and public finance.

Disciplinary orientation of the course	Number of credit	Number of courses	Percentage of total	Percentage of total
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<sup>6</sup> <https://en.uni-nke.hu/about-nups/faculties-and-institutes/faculty-of-science-of-public-governance-and-administration/degree-programmes>

	<b>courses</b>		<b>number of courses</b>	<b>number of credits</b>
Research, research methodology, analytical skills, computing	8	4	8,4%	17,4%
Law	15	3	15,8%	13,0%
Management	7	2	7,4%	8,7%
Sociology	0	0	0,0%	0,0%
Political science	5	1	5,3%	4,3%
Information technology	3	1	3,2%	4,3%
Communication	0	0	0,0%	0,0%
Economics	19	4	20,0%	17,4%
Specific policy field	28	6	29,5%	26,1%
Public admin and public policy in general	10	2	10,5%	8,7%
Other	0	0	0,0%	0,0%
Total <sup>7</sup>	95	23	100,0%	100,0%

This course portfolio is dominated by subjects related to the state budget, public finance, and economics of the public sector. (However it's not totally clear to what extent legal knowledge actually dominates course material seemingly covering policy related subjects). The other novelty of the programme compared with the other NUPS' programmes that it puts a higher emphasize on analytical skills.

Regarding the composition and academic backgrounds of the course leaders, mainly economists, lawyers and former civil servants from the fields of public finance and state property management are included. So it seems that the disciplinary orientation of the study programme shifted from the legal domination to a more economist and financial managerial approach.

Comparing the two Public Policy and Management programmes offered by the Corvinus and the NUPS, one of the mayor differences is that the general public policy courses get less emphasis in the NUPS's programme, while the Corvinus programme offers a wide range of courses on public policy subjects. While the Corvinus programme aims to bring the students closer to different policy fields and provide an insight on policy programmes from various policy field, the NUPS programme rather aims to get a deeper insight on policy fields relating to public finance, budgeting and accounting.

### **3.5 MA IN STATE SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (NUPS)**

#### **3.5.1 PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION**

The unified 5-year-long (300 ECTS) PA programme was launched in 2016 with the intention of increasing the prestige of degrees on the field of public administration and government studies. The programme is only available in Hungarian. Only the National University of Public Service is authorized to launch this programme, even though the Dean's Committee was opposing this monopoly and they requested its withdrawal in 2015.

#### **3.5.2 LIST OF COMPETENCIES FOR THE PROGRAMME**

According to the study programme declaration the programme aims to facilitate students to gain *competences* and knowledge that enable them to be experts who are able to manage

<sup>7</sup> The total number of credits of the courses listed in the curricula might be greater number than the required courses' credit sum, because depending on the specialization students are offered different courses.

strategic planning, conduct systematic programme evaluation from policy and economical aspects, who are familiar with research and analytical methods and techniques and can understand the framework of administrative law. In contradiction, the programme mainly focuses on legal subjects , rather than managerial or analytical courses .

Disciplinary orientation of the course	Number of credit courses	Number of courses	Percentage of total number of courses	Percentage of total number of credits
Research, research methodology, analytical skills, computing	4	2	1,7%	2,9%
Law	122	29	53,0%	42,0%
Management	16	6	7,0%	8,7%
Sociology	7	3	3,0%	4,3%
Political science	4	2	1,7%	2,9%
Information technology	12	5	5,2%	7,2%
Communication	0	0	0,0%	0,0%
Economics	21	6	9,1%	8,7%
Specific policy field	3	1	1,3%	1,4%
Public admin and public policy in general	7	2	3,0%	2,9%
Other	34	13	14,8%	18,8%
Total <sup>8</sup>	230	69	100,0%	100,0%

There seems to be some discrepancy between the declared aim of the study programme and the content and study fields of the courses included in the programme. Although according to the programme statement the study programme aims to develop high level analytical, methodological skills there are only two courses falling into the category that might develop such competencies. The programme is rather highly dominated by law –related courses such as constitutional law, civil service law, Civil/private law, administrative law. Under the label of “other” category there are courses dealing with the function and evolution of state from a mainly historical or/and philosophical perspective. The specific subject focusing (not purely from legal perspective) on Public administration and public policy in general and on special policy fields in special are significantly underrepresented in the programme.

### **3.6 EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL ADMINISTRATION (ANDRÁSSY UNIVERSITY BUDAPEST)**

#### **3.6.1 PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION**

The “European and International Administration” German-language master's degree programme is aimed at students with a Bachelor's degree who see their professional futures in administration or with international organisations. The focus lies on knowledge about the European Union and administrative sciences, whereby political science and public-service study contents are woven tightly together. The programme mainly offer courses focusing on EU Law and diplomacy, such as the EU Administrative Law, Public Finance in European Union, Public management in the EU, Diplomacy and international relations, Democracy and the Rule of Law , Comparative Constitutional Law.

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<sup>8</sup> The total number of credits of the courses listed in the curricula might be greater number than the required courses' credit sum ,because depending ont he specialization students are offered different courses.

### **3.6.2 LIST OF COMPETENCIES FOR THE PROGRAMME**

According to the programme description the programme aims to prepare well-qualified administrative professionals both to the European institutions and in the member state administrations, who are able to deal with the complexity of the European Union and they can understand the increasing needs for integration. Graduates are provided with the general and stable knowledge of European law, in particular European administrative law, member state legal systems. At the same time, graduates gain qualification in the fields of politics, administration and finance. This MA programme is focused on law to a large extent. Core courses include approaches of other disciplines (all together 3 courses), such as political science or economics, can be found only on an introductory level, with the basic purpose of broadening the students' perspective. Although courses in political and administrative sciences are the main pillars of the programme, students also have the opportunity to take further facultative courses from the field of cultural, historical or economics knowledge.

## **4 COMPETENCE SCREENING HISTORY AT THE DEPARTMENT OR FACULTY LEVEL**

### **4.1 HISTORY OF PREVIOUS COMPETENCE/PROGRAMME STRUCTURE SCREENING ENDEAVOURS: QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION (PROGRAMME ACCOMPLISHMENT, CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, EXTERNAL REVIEWS)**

#### **4.1.1 Evaluating the Programme accomplishment**

In the decade of 2010s, the programme has been a subject to continuous significant improvements. First, an International Advisory Board has been established to advise on international developments and trends in the context of strategic development of the programme. Second, a Programme Development Committee operates, meeting regularly on a yearly basis to discuss the most important changes in the programme environment on a domestic level. Third, the programme and its mission monitoring and adjustment to the external changes are ensured by the internal bodies of the University (most importantly, the Faculty Council, the Dean's Cabinet, and the Departmental Meetings).

The most important informal feedback comes from alumni. The Department has been running Public Policy and Management programmes in various forms since 1992. Over the past three decades, a growing group of alumni have been the most important source of feedback about the accomplishment of the teaching efforts. The University has a professionally managed Alumni Association which provides a framework for a regular exchange of ideas.

Another important source of feedback to programme management is the system of anonymous student evaluations ("HalVel"). After the end of each semester each student is asked to fill out a questionnaire about the courses completed (one questionnaire per course). This happens through an online anonymous evaluation portal. The assessment data are taken seriously and are used to improve the quality of the courses in terms of content, didactics and organisation. The results are delivered to the dean and each faculty member can see his/her own evaluation as well as others. Students and professors have the possibility to meet formally at different occasions (e.g. orientation days), and also, they are encouraged to approach the professors with any questions or suggestions they may have.

### **4.1.2 The process of Curriculum Development**

Within the CUB major revisions of programme curricula have to be proposed by the Dean of the Faculty and to be approved by the University Senate. The Dean's proposal is prepared and backed by the decisions of the Faculty Council where a resolution should be approved concerning the changes in the curriculum. In order to submit any proposal to the Faculty Council a narrow body the so-called Faculty Cabinet need to have formed an opinion on it. Such fundamental changes - requiring the approval of the Senate - are very infrequent, however. They occur predominantly in the process of launching new programmes or during transferring existing programmes from one Faculty to the other, thereby fundamentally changing their character.

More minor changes (such as changing / adding / deleting individual courses or specializations/modules) are approved by the Faculty Council. As a general rule such decisions are proposed by the Academic Director of the programme. In the case of more substantive changes such proposals are discussed at the Dean's Cabinet and in the Faculty Council, possibly amended by modifications put forward by Faculty Council members, and finally approved by the Faculty Council by simple majority voting.

At departmental level, innovations arise from individual initiatives or plans that often rely on certain research outputs or teaching experiences.

### **4.1.3 External reviews**

At the CUB level in the last years, a great deal of effort was devoted to improving the quality management system in which the quality of core and support activities are not only occasionally but continuously monitored. Although the CUB is well aware of its strengths and weaknesses and the position and role it plays in Hungarian higher education, a professional evaluation with a broader European perspective helped the University to face international competition successfully.

The department of Public Policy and Management also has been working with foreign partners for many years. Developing common and joint curricula have made it a necessity to enhance the presence of external expertise in the programmes and to continuously have the program evaluated according to the standards of partner organizations, universities as well.

Secondly, the national (HAC) accreditation in 2016 - focusing to a large extent on formal criteria - resulted in a number of additional, mostly administrative changes. Tasks related to course leadership have been re-shuffled in order to comply with administrative rules. A permanent Programme Development Committee has been set up (on the basis of the pre-existing Permanent Consultative Committee) in line with HAC requirements. Finally, the allocation of tasks related to programme management among core faculty has been slightly re-allocated to improve compliance.

## **4.2 MAIN FINDINGS**

Alumni students and their experiences play an important role in program evaluation and their feedback is an important source of quality improvement activities.

Another important part of performance assessment is the system of anonymous student evaluations ("HaVel").

External evaluators play also a significant role in quality management and improvement of the program. The national accreditation process focusing on the execution of formal criteria and quality standards. Beside the domestic processes, the department of Public Policy and

Management has been working with foreign partners in order to enhance the presence of external expertise in programmes and to continuously have the program evaluated according to the standards of partner organizations, universities as well.

### **4.3 CORRECTIVE ACTIONS ALREADY UNDERTAKEN**

Key elements of external review and their results are as follows:

Firstly, the EAPAA accreditation of KGKP in 2012 resulted in numerous significant changes, some of them having occurred already in the process of self-evaluation, other in the years following the accreditation. Changes include the following.

- The multi- and interdisciplinary character of the programme has been significantly strengthened (thereby weakening the emphasis on Economics). In particular, an entirely new mandatory course on Comparative Administrative Law has been developed. Other new courses grounded in political and administrative science (Institutions and Process of Public Policy, Multi-Level Governance etc.) have been added to the compulsory course list. As a result of these changes the core curriculum became definitely more balanced, featuring significant emphases on different disciplines other than Economics.
- The mission statement has been developed further , partly reflecting the criticism received, but partly the significant changes having occurred in the programmes' environment.
- Reflexive to the criticism received in the 2012 accreditation the former system of specialization has changed into the current module system. As a result, the modules announced can, in practically all cases, be completed by interested students, at the same time the diversity and the breadth of choice having improved.
- Significant changes took place in terms of systematising the monitoring of programme accomplishment and curriculum development, and in particular of involving external stakeholders in these processes. Already years before the topic appeared in the University's Quality Management Guidelines, we established a Permanent Consultative Committee (involving external stakeholders of employing organizations and alumni) advising the programme management on curricular and similar issues. We also called into existence a high-profile International Advisor Board, with similar purposes.
- Despite hard constraints we managed, as a result of years of conscious efforts, to balance the gender composition of the faculty. Compared to the 2012 situation (when we had only one to two female colleagues in the programme's academic staff) this proportion has 30% among total teaching staff).

- Taking the 2012 assessment findings seriously we made long-term and very serious efforts at broadening the recruitment base of the incoming students, despite the - frequently - harsh financial and legal-institutional environment of the programmes. As a result, the total enrolment grew significantly. The student body of the PUMA programme is characterised by a high degree of ethnic/racial diversity (more than 80% of students come from Latin American, Asian, Middle East or African contexts).

The focus on methodological skills - enabling students to engage in academic research as well as to handle qualitative and quantitative evidence in practical settings - is reflected in the recent (2017/2018) modification of the programme. This modification included the creation of a new mandatory course on qualitative social science research methods and academic writing.

## **5 AN OVERVIEW ON THE METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION**

As we emphasized in the Section 2 both qualitative (focus group interview) and quantitative (on- line survey) methods were used to collect and analyse data in order to get a deeper insight of which skills and competences have the students developed during to the study programme (RQ2) and to what extent did the acquired competences match competencies needed in graduates' daily work (RQ3). The following subsections providing an overview on the data collection process.

### **5.1.1 On –line survey**

In order to conduct a survey among the alumni of the two HEIs a questionnaire instrument (see Appendix) was developed and administered on using the Google Survey platform. The list of the competencies that the questionnaire investigated was based on the above mentioned PA competence classification introduced by Reichard and van der Krogt (2014).

In order to ensure that the questions are well worded and understandable the questionnaire was tested by six alumni before the larger distribution to the full sample.

In order to distribute the questionnaire to the alumni student group we used direct e- mail and posted on the social media (in three alumni Facebook communities). Altogether we handed out direct e-mails to ask graduates for filling out the questionnaires. A total of 644 graduates were contacted and asked to participate. These included

- BA graduates from National University of Public Service, graduated in 2015 or 2016,
- MA graduates from National University of Public Service, graduated in 2016,
- MsC graduates from Corvinus University of Budapest graduated between 2014 – 2018.

Altogether we received 71 responses. The survey was conducted at the beginning of March 2019.

### 5.1.2 Focus group interview

In order to get a deeper, qualitative insight into the data and to understand more the graduates' and employers' from the public sector experiences, needs and preferences regarding PA-related competencies three focus group interviews – two with Alumni students and one with employers from the public sectors - were organized at the end of February 2019. In order to guarantee a theoretical soundness and provide some for comparability of qualitative and quantitative data the semi – structured focus group interviews' question blocks were thematically focusing and embraced the PA –related competence cluster (Reichard and van der Krogt ,2014).

The following tables include some information on the composition of the focus groups and on the respondents' professional background.

<b>National University of Public Service (BA and MA graduates)</b>		
<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Year of the study</b>	<b>Relevant professional experiences (Public administration field / business sector)</b>
Interviewee 1	2011-2014 (BA), 2014 -2016 (MA)	PA: administrative and project management position Educational Authority, Budapest Local Government Office Business: multinational company (operational management)
Interviewee 2	2011-2014 (BA), 2014 -2016 (MA)	PA: Local Government Office, Parliament Office Business: Law Firm
Interviewee 3	2012-2015 (BA), 2016 -2018 (MA)	PA: National Tax Authority Business: public procurement consultant Ltd.
Interviewee 4	2007-2010 (BA), 2012 -2014 (MA)	PA: Hungarian Economic Development Agency, Ministry of Public Administration and Justice, Local Government Office (mid-manager )
Interviewee 5	2012-2015 (BA)	Local Government Office, Interior Ministry
Interviewee 6	2014- 2017 (BA) 2017- 2019 (MA)	Budapest Local Government Office

<b>Corvinus University of Budapest (Msc graduates)</b>		
<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Year of the study</b>	<b>Relevant professional experiences (Public administration field / business sector)</b>
Interviewee 1	2012 -2014 (Msc)	PA: Prime Minister Office Business: multinational company (Customer Service, Logistics)
Interviewee 2	2012 -2014 (Msc)	Business: Governemnt think- thank
Interviewee 3	2012 -2014 (Msc)	PA: Prime Minister Office, Ministry of Innovation
Interviewee 4	2012 -2014 (Msc)	PA: Hungarian Economic Development Agency, Regional Development Agency, The Hungarian Official Journal Publication
Interviewee 5	2014 -2018 (Msc)	PA: Educational Authority, University

		Business: Real Estate Company
Interviewee 6	2012 -2014 (Msc)	PA: Ministry of Human Resources Business: multinational company

<b>Employers from the Public Sector</b>	
Respondents	Professional background
Interviewee 1	The first interviewee is working on the local government level in Budapest in a senior civil service position since 2008. She got her BA degree in predecessor organization of the NKE and than she got a post – graduate degree in one of the Law Faculty.
Interviewee 2	The second interviewee has been working in the public sector for ten years. He has been in senior civil servant position since eight years. He is a director of one of the territorial level public institution responsible for social protection and childcare. He has also experience in the private sector as an entrepreneur, so he tries to enforce to adapt some business management attitude in his public institution. He graduated from management school and has a degree in engineering.
Interviewee 3	The third interviewee was a senior civil servant ( Head of Department) on Ministerial level between 2010 – 2016. Recently he is a top manager in a state owned company. He graduated from the predecessor HEI of the NKE and than he got a post – graduate degree in one of the Law Faculty.

## **6 COMPETENCE SCREENING WITH QUALITATIVE ANALYSES - RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

We measured and analysed the level and importance of gained and utilized competencies based on the perceptions of graduated students and senior civil servants (those who are employers of alumni students graduated from PA programmes). The data collection was done by conducting three focus group interviews with the following interviewees:

- Alumni students graduated from BA or MA Program in Public Administration (run by NUPS or its predecessor HEI) and who gained at least some experience in working in the public sector.
- Alumni students graduated from MSc in Public Policy and Management (run by Corvinus University) and gained at least some experience in working in the public sector.
- Senior civil servants representing the employers of the alumni students in the public sector

The relevant competencies on the specific PA-domain were identified and listed based on PA –relevant categories and competence list offered by Reichard and van der Krogt (2014) in the frame of Tuning-PA project (presented in the Section 2)

## 6.1 COMPETENCE SCREENING BY GRADUATED STUDENTS FROM THE BA AND MA PROGRAM IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (NUPS)

Based on the focus group interview the following table summarizes how the respondents (graduate students) evaluated the importance of the major competencies in the PA working field and to what extent did they gained those competences during their studies.

Six graduate students were invited to the focus group interview. One of them graduated from BA programme, 5 of them graduated both from BA and MA programme of NUPS in 5 different years. All of them has work experience in the public administration either on the local or ministerial /central level.

<b>Clusters of the PA relevant main competencies</b>	<b>Competencies need in daily work life</b>	<b>Developed/ acquired competencies</b>
Competences related to manage in public governance	The importance of the competence for executing some management functions within the organization was ranged among respondents mainly depended on their position in the PA. Those who already had some management experience rather considered it as a relevant competence. While for the other in lower position the managerial skills as such were out of their focus.	Many respondents confirmed that they had management courses and they had rather good experience with the course , but those who had a management position pointed out they could not utilize anything from those courses in the real life. Gaining managerial skills was a self- learning process for them based on work experience.
Competences related to participate in and contribute to the policy and administrative processes	The competence for recognition and analysis of policy problems from different perspectives (social, economic, bureaucratic, political or legal problems) are mainly out of respondents scope. As an interview even noted “I felt the other courses besides of legal and economic courses, like social psychology, communication totally unimportant”. It seems that their understanding and interpretation of policy problem is narrowed and restricted mainly to legal and bureaucratic approach .	The programme enabled graduates to approach policy problems mainly (if not exclusively) from legal perspectives. Students get insight mainly on how to interpret and implement legislation. As one interviewee noted “ the first time I recognized how much I learned from the study programme when I started to work in an educational authority where my peers were mainly former teachers without PA education. I was outstanding from them because I was the only one who could properly interpret and implement laws, search and refer the regulatory background of an administrative case, or I was able to prepare proposals.” Another interviewee had somewhat contradictory experience: “when I started

		<p>to work I had to recognize that public administration does not operate the way we learnt from the text book.(...) The study programme provides so “generalist” knowledge that is good for nothing.” One of the interviewee expressed his concerns about effectiveness of didactics used in many courses: “graduates are not properly prepared for executing the law and making administrative decisions based on the Administrative Procedural Act , because instead of proceeding case studies, we needed to learn the law word by word.” According to the graduates’ experiences mainly facultative courses offers practical knowledge and skill (how to prepare administrative decision or local government decree)</p>
<p>Competences related to articulate and apply a public service perspective</p>	<p>Understanding the logic and will of politicians or high-ranking officials did not mentioned as a relevant competence. The other relevant issue linked to public service perspective is the competences to incorporate public service ethics and public values. Most of the interviewee agreed that usually those who working in the public administration needs to be committed for the public good.</p>	<p>Graduates did not mention any relevant skills or competencies that prepared them for understanding better the logic and will of politicians or how to deal with the conflict of interest. They were not prepared for that. Regarding the public service ethics and values they stated that most of them internalised the value of civil service and they considered themselves as committed for working for the public. Some of them already had the inner value before the study (actually that motivated her to choose PA programme) ,but the education also had a positive influence on it. Others rather pointed out a contradictory effect of (over)promoting service ethics and public value on him. “You rather bring this value set with you from home. I was even upset when the concept of public service attitude or ethic was invented at the Uni and it was forced to apply on everything. For instance it was stated that &gt;&gt; you can’t attend in other educational programme at the same time, because it does not meet the public service attitude&lt;&lt;”.</p>

<p>Competences to communicate and interact productively in the public domain</p>	<p>The written and oral competencies considered as the most relevant, core competencies by interviewees. Based on their experience civil servants need to be prepared to communicate with bureaucratic apparatus, citizens, politicians, and experts from special fields, such as IT even under stress. They pointed out the common educational background and graduated from the same university makes easier to understand each other within the public sector. As one interviewee pointed out that once he recruited a graduated student with degree with distinction, but after a couple of months he resigned because he was not able to properly communicate with the peers.</p>	<p>There are communication trainings provided by the programme, but it should be increased. Also the oral exam situations developed the communication skills and stress tolerance level of the graduates. The programme mainly prepared students how to communicate in a bureaucratic environment and also how to handle customers. One of the interviewee highlighted an important and special communication skill was developed by (not necessarily directly ) the programme. The NUPs put an emphasis on making PA students familiar with military and law enforcement studies at some level. It enables the student to learn the special law enforcement terms and military ranks. It made him easier the inter-sectoral/ and inter-organization communication with high ranked military officials during his work.</p>
<p>Competences related to analyse and solve PA-related problems by applying appropriate scientific methods</p>	<p>The importance the competences to conduct applied research with regard to a given problem and the ability to select analytical techniques to analyse policy problems was debated by respondents. They agreed that different competences are necessary in manager and executive position. Two respondents who are in PA (mid)managers positions emphasised that the programme does not focus enough on the development of such skills, although gaining experience how to prepare an analyses is an inevitable for managers and without these skills you cant be promoted for managerial position. "When I started my career besides the executive work it was me who prepared summaries and proposals for decision- makers. This ability made me recognized by managers and accelerated my career path." While the other who hold executive positions did not considered this competences as a highly important one.</p>	<p>The programme has not provided sufficient knowledge on analytical competencies or methods. Graduates learned statistics at some level, but they claimed they cannot really utilize this knowledge. One Master course on public policy analysis and the BA management course (at some extent) dealt with analytical techniques and methods, but broadening the course portfolio with courses which focusing on analyses and preparing summaries and policy or legal proposals are supported by respondents.</p>

Competences to understand the public domain	As PA-related disciplines the “science of the state” or the legal principles from international law or civil law were mentioned as somewhat relevant, because these might need to understand and interpret the logic of legislation.	General knowledge on theories and concept mainly related to the law study and philosophical theories on the state.
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## 6.2 COMPETENCE SCREENING BY GRADUATED STUDENTS FROM MSC PROGRAM IN PUBLIC POLICY AND MANAGEMENT (CORVINUS)

Based on the focus group interview the following table summarizes how the respondents evaluated the importance of the major competencies in the PA working field and to what extent did they gained those competences during their studies.

<b>Clusters of the PA relevant main competencies</b>	<b>Competencies need in daily work life</b>	<b>Developed/ acquired competencies</b>
Competences related to manage in public governance	The competence for executing some management functions within the organization was considered highly relevant by respondents. This competence encompasses such skills as strategic thinking both in the decision-making and the implementation process, managing conflicts of interests within the PA organization, and the ability for cooperation.	Almost every interviewee confirmed that the ability of strategic thinking was highly developed by the programme, but courses (or rather trainings) aiming to improve soft skills, such as conflict management, or cooperation were insufficiently represented in the curriculum
Competences related to participate in and contribute to the policy and administrative processes	The competence for recognition and analysis of policy problems from different perspectives (social, economic, bureaucratic, political or legal problems) was considered as highly relevant in the field of PA related field such as consultancy or ministerial work. 4 interviewees out the 6 claimed to utilize in his work competencies for policy formulation and evaluation. In their case these competencies were considered relevant. None of them work on the field of policy implementation however.	The programme enabled graduates to approach policy problems mainly from economic perspectives. Understanding bureaucratic logic or using a legal perspective is considered as problematic for them, while the logic of sociologist or political scientist is closer to the approach that they gained during the study. As an interviewee noted: “Lawyers have a completely different approach and vision on policy problems, and this results in a lot of problems. It is not easy to understand them (...). I consider almost everything from an economist’s perspective.” On the one hand one of the major competences

		gained during the programme is the ability to understand, interpret and evaluate policies in a comprehensive, evidence- based manner, which is the basis of policy formulation and evaluation. But on the other hand, they pointed out as an insufficiency of the programme that it doesn't provide enough knowledge on how the draft a legal proposal or policy proposals.
Competences related to articulate and apply a public service perspective	<p>Competences for understanding the logic and will of politicians or high- ranking officials who are usually political appointees were considered very important. But interestingly the graduates were somewhat cynical about the importance of the competence for “evidence-based decision making”. As one of them noted: “...(evidence-based decision making) is useful competence, but the reality doesn't work as described in the textbooks”.</p> <p>The other relevant issue linked to public service perspective is the competences to incorporate public service ethics and public values. Most of the interviewees agreed that usually those who work in the public administration needs to be at least some extant committed for the public good.</p>	<p>Graduates gained heavy competencies in how to develop evidence based decisions, but they were struggling with the fact that political will or bureaucratic logic prove more powerful than evidence or common sense. They were not prepared for that. As they pointed out “... it would be helpful to have some preparatory training for what kind of role the civil servants play in PA in reality and introduce student with the bureaucratic culture. It can help student to reflect on what they can expect in the reality of PA”.</p> <p>Regarding the public service ethics and values they clearly stated that they consider them rather as an inner value which they already had before the study (actually this inner value motivated them to choose PA programme) and the education had no influence (neither negative nor positive) on it.</p>
Competences to communicate and interact productively in the public domain	<p>The written and oral competencies were considered as the most relevant competencies by interviewees. The ability of changing someone's mind by powerful arguments, successfully negotiating and bargaining, effective rhetorical skills, managing conflict were the most relevant oral communication skills that were mentioned. Writing substantial summaries for decision-makers in “everyday language” or in contrary, using and understanding specific bureaucratic language and terms in the written-</p>	<p>The interviewees emphasise that the programme does not focus enough on the development of oral communication skills. Although the courses require some presentation exercise from student, “in real life, it is not enough to provide and share information like in a presentation, but you need to be able to argue and convince people. And this is skills were not developed during the programme”.</p> <p>Regarding the written communication skills the programme was focusing to some extent to make</p>

	communication with peer were conflict were the most relevant written communication skills that were mentioned.	familiar the students with the so called “bureaucratic” language. The programme also enabled students to identify and highlight the relevant information which is a useful skill in preparing summaries. (Note however that since the graduation of the interviewees a new compulsory course – “Academic writing” – was introduced to improve written communication skills.)
Competences related to analyse and solve PA-related problems by applying appropriate scientific methods	Competences to conduct applied research with regard to a given problem and the ability to select and apply appropriate methods, analytical techniques and tools to analyse policy problems were considered as a relevant competence, even though some of the interviewees pointed out that in reality of PA such analyses were not always useful, or even were conflicting, because “the reality of policies was not influenced by public policy knowledge based on scientific methods. Decisions were often made on grounds of political rationality. Moreover, the other colleagues rather hated me, because I was considered behaving like a smartass. “	The programme provided sufficient knowledge on qualitative and quantitative analytical techniques including cost–benefit analyses, or techniques indicating and evaluating the output and the effects of a programme, or predicting the externalities. General knowledge on public policy concepts, analyses, instruments and evaluation were substantially developed by the courses. It may be noted nevertheless that graduates would expect greater emphasis on analyses on specific policy programmes and the actual processes of policy making. (Note however that since the graduation of the respondents new courses and course components on particular policy areas were developed.)
Competences to understand the public domain	Competences to make use of the theoretical knowledge of the PA-related disciplines to analyse and solve problems in the public domain or the ability to understand the disciplines dealing with public administration were out of the scope of graduates’ mind when they discussed the most relevant competencies utilized in their work.	General knowledge on public policy concepts, and theories were substantially developed by the courses.

### 6.3 COMPETENCE SCREENING BY EMPLOYER FROM THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Based on the focus group interviews with three senior civil servants who were representing employers from the public sphere the following table summarizes how the respondents evaluated the importance of the major competencies in the PA working field and to what extent graduated students developed these competences during their studies.

<b>Clusters of the PA relevant main competencies</b>	<b>Competencies need in daily work life</b>	<b>Developed/ acquired competencies</b>
Competences related to manage in public governance	According to the interviewees' experiences the essential criteria for getting appointed to management position in the public administration are rather the seniority and having a degree in law. The importance of having the competencies for executing management function was not mentioned by the interviewee as crucial selection criteria. Only the Interviewee 2 noted that he tries to imply some strategic management approach in his organization that he gained in a Business Management School.	According to the interviewees' experience the PA programs, in general, do not prepare students for management position and do not really develop management skills and competencies. If a senior civil servant has a managerial attitude s/he usually developed it "naturally" or adopted from the business sector during the past experience.
Competences related to participate in and contribute to the policy and administrative processes	Two interviewees' interpretation of policy process is narrowed and restricted mainly to legal and bureaucratic approach and focused on delivering administrative tasks and precise execution of the law as a core competence of a good civil servant. However the Interview 2 considered the competences for recognition, and interpretation of social problems, providing cares for people, especially for children in needs and the implementation of childcare policies as the most important competencies on the field of social protection and childcare.	The interviewees agreed that the PA education should be built on the idea of dual education system which combines a long -term apprenticeships in one of the PA organizations and a theoretical learning part ,because the freshmen graduates enter to the public organization without the skills to properly execute administrative tasks. They require a long training or tutorial almost from the scratch. As two interviewee agreed the graduates are usually not familiar handling the IT programs and registration systems that are used in the public administration on a daily bases. The Interviewee 2 added that in particular field of PA specific work related competencies can be gained rather in specific educational program (e.g. social workers or psychologist) rather than in the PA

		programmes. He said it can be an additional benefit if an employee has a degree in public management and public administration, but it is not the primary priority.
Competences related to articulate and apply a public service perspective	Communicating and interacting with politicians were considered as a management function by the interviewees. So according to their point of views not every civil servants required to gain such a competence which are necessary for understanding the logic and will of politicians. But interacting effectively with peers on the same level across organizations was considered as a very important competence by interviewees. Most of the interviewees agreed that usually those who work in the public administration needs to be at least some extant committed for the public sector.	The interviewees agreed that they rather experienced that the employees show some loyalty and commitment to the organizations and to the working community rather than to public values itself.
Competences to communicate and interact productively in the public domain	The written and oral competencies were considered as one of the most relevant competencies by interviewees. And as they also noted that beyond the formal , bureaucratic language, the „ user –friendly“, clear and simply communication with customer is getting more and more important as one of our interviewee noted. „ In our office there is anew policy on introducing simply, user –friendly communication. Our employee get communication training and they are required to provide the decision of the authority in away that people even with lowe education background don't struggle to understand the meaning of it.	The interviewees emphasised that the graduates' communication skills are very poor in general. As one of the interviewee illustrated the poor communication level of graduates with a work practice: “Our experience in the government office is that the young employee cannot communicate properly with the customer over the phone, not even on a basic level. So the management issued a special directive on the phone etiquette for customer calls and on how to interact with customers. For quality assurance reason we make test calls with our employees from time to time.”
Competences related to analyse and solve PA-related problems by applying appropriate scientific methods	In reality of PA analyses based on scientific method are rarely used. According the Interviewee 1 it depends on the organization and its management to what extent they are open for systematic analyses or evidence –based decision making. One of the	The interviewees could not really form an opinion about the analytical skills and knowledge of graduates, because these competencies were rarely tested in their work environment.

	<p>interviewee illustrated the (non)application of such a practice through the performance assessment system: “In our current organization we don't take the time for performing the evaluation in a useful manner. We rather take it as a necessary thing that need to be ready, and put a check mark on the to do list. While in my previous workplace we took it seriously, because it was the bases for salary calculation”.</p>	
<p>Competences to understand the public domain</p>	<p>Competences to make use of the theoretical knowledge of the PA-related disciplines to analyse and solve problems in the public domain or the ability to understand the disciplines dealing with public administration were out of the scope of interviewee mind when they discussed the most relevant competencies utilized in the work.</p>	<p>The interviewees could not really form an opinion about the graduates' general knowledge on public policy concepts, and theories were substantially developed by the courses.</p>

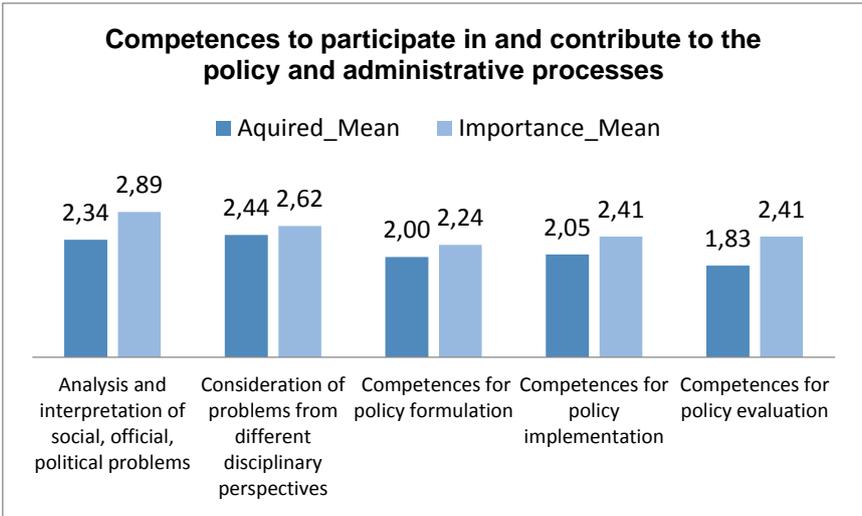
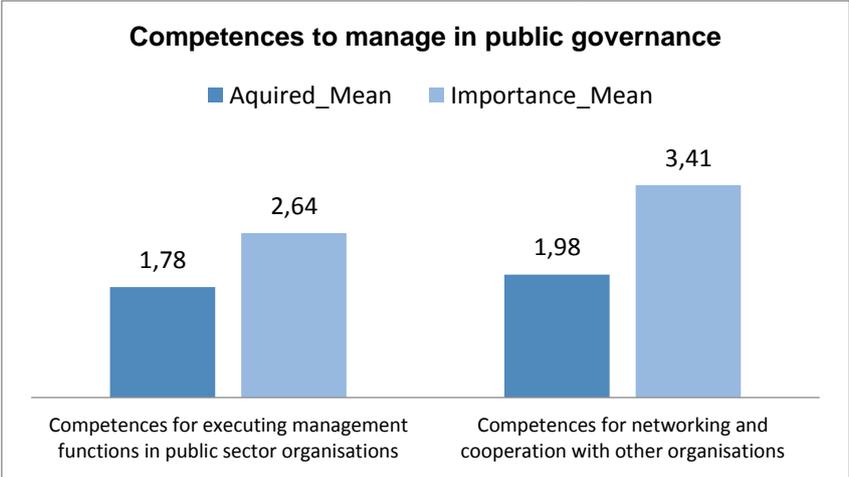
# 7 COMPETENCE SCREENING WITH QUESTIONNAIRES – RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In the following we highlight the convergence/ divergence between the level of acquired competencies due to the study programme and the importance/ needs of those competencies in the real work based on the perceptions of graduated students. The data collected by on-line survey.

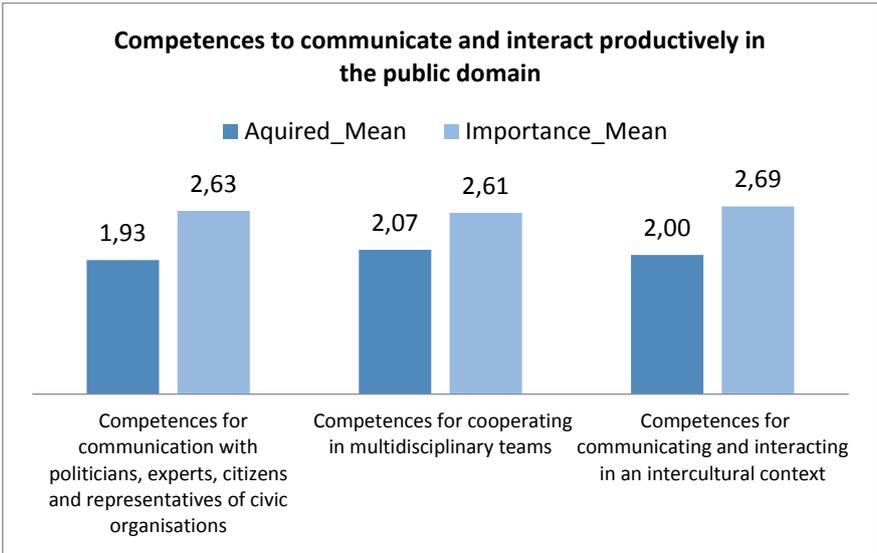
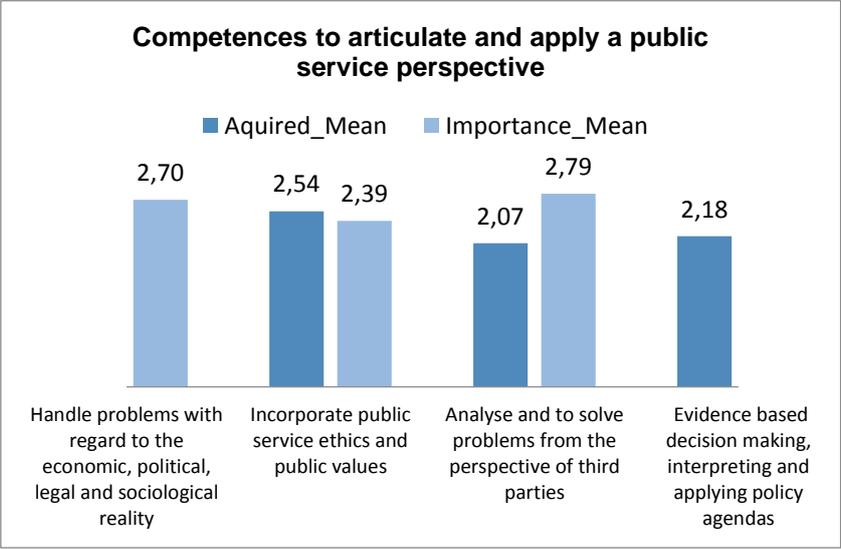
The responses range on a 4 scale (Not at all (1) – little/ to some extent on the surface (2) - mostly (3) - to a large extent (4))

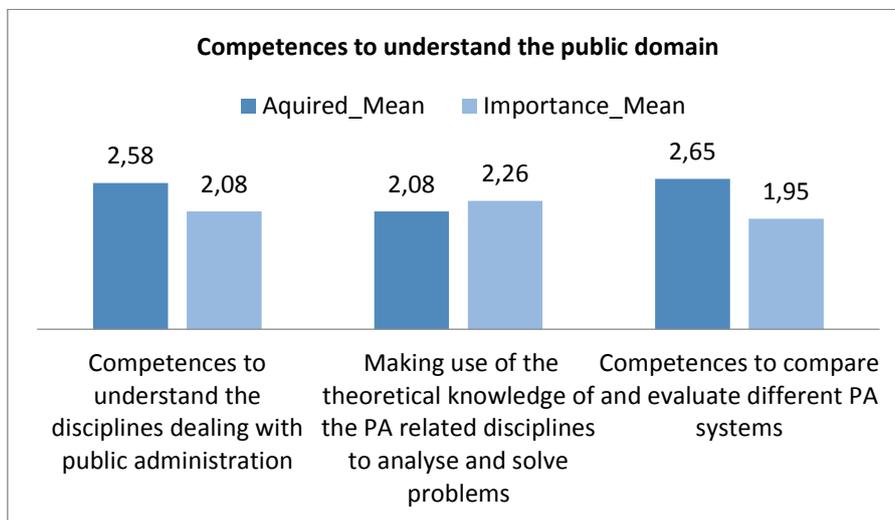
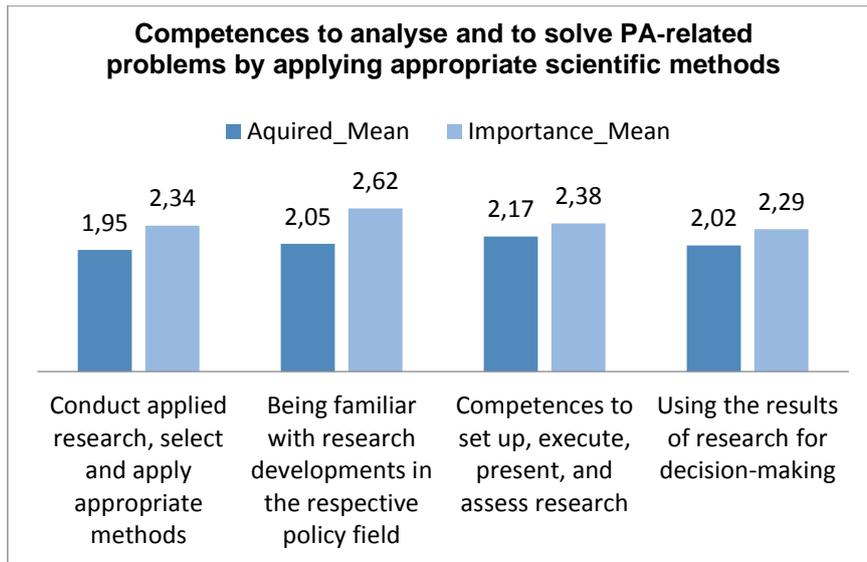
## 7.1 RESULTS – COMPETENCES SCREENING BY ALUMNI

### 7.1.1 BA in Public Administration, National University of Public Service



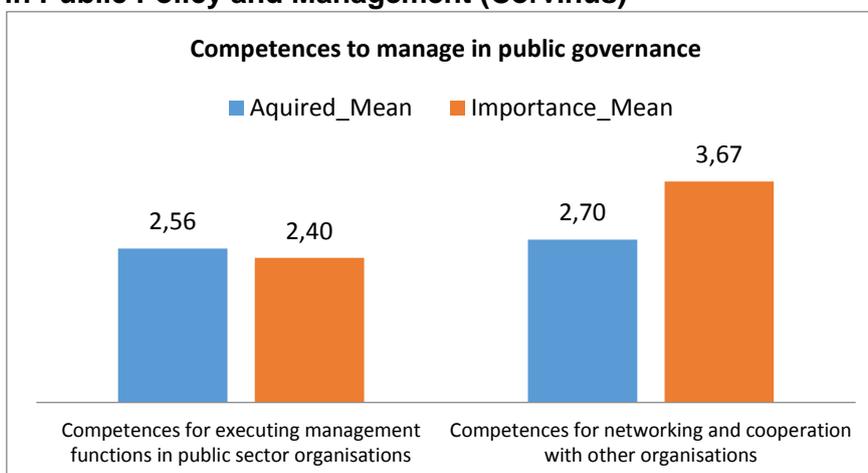
Interestingly, the responses regarding all the above competences homogeneous in the sense that the actual acquisition of each competence lagged behind its perceived importance.

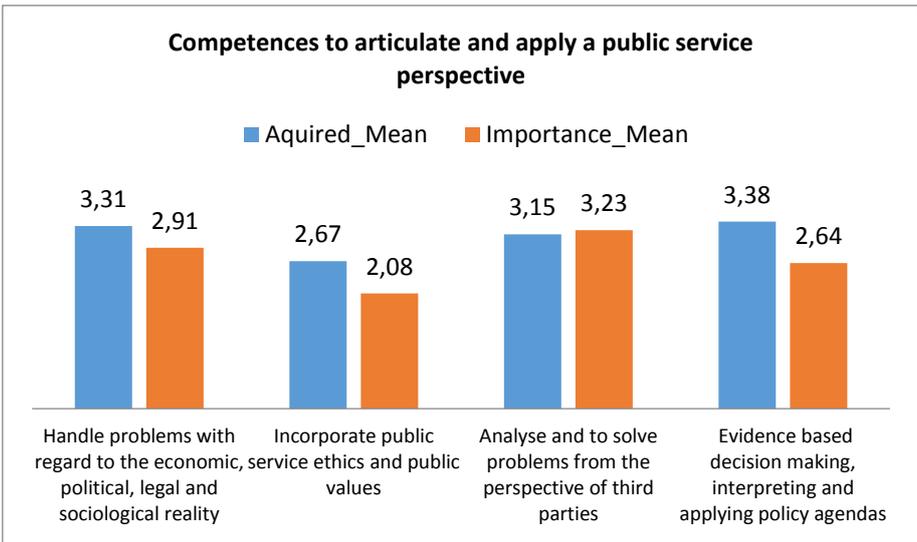
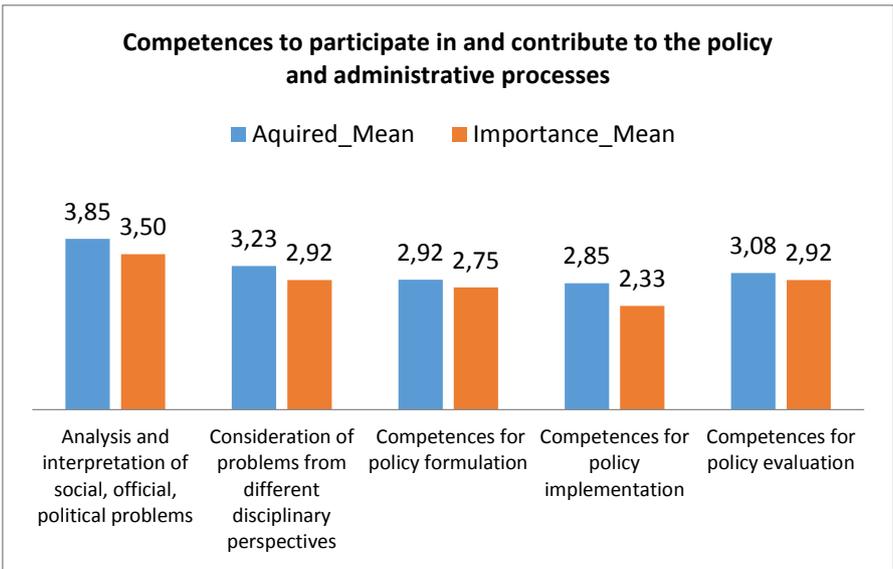


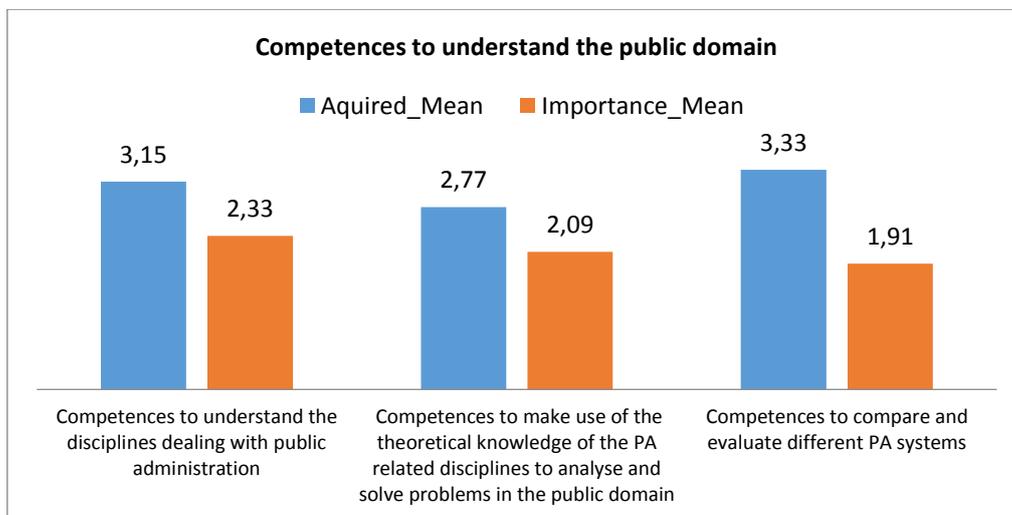
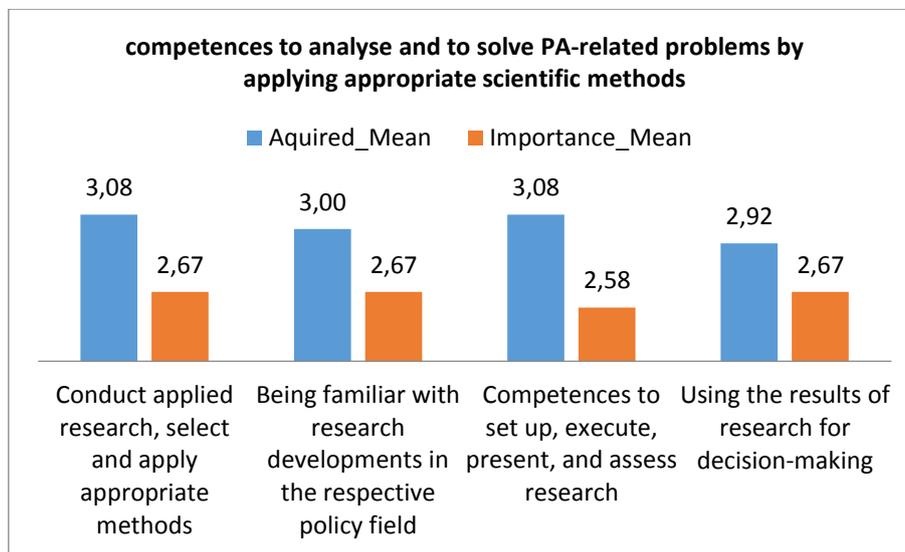
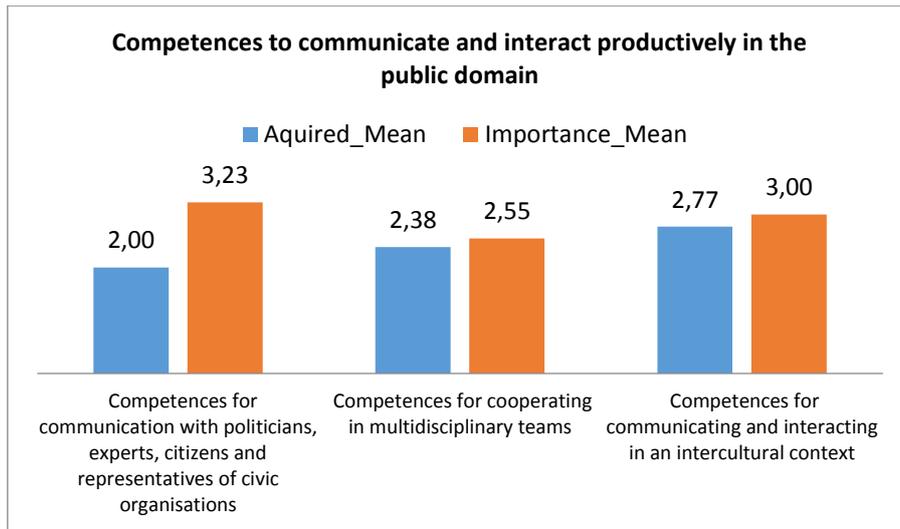


The above noted trend is less homogeneous in this second set of competences; here the actual acquisition of certain competences sometimes supersedes its perceived importance.

### 7.1.2 MSc in Public Policy and Management (Corvinus)



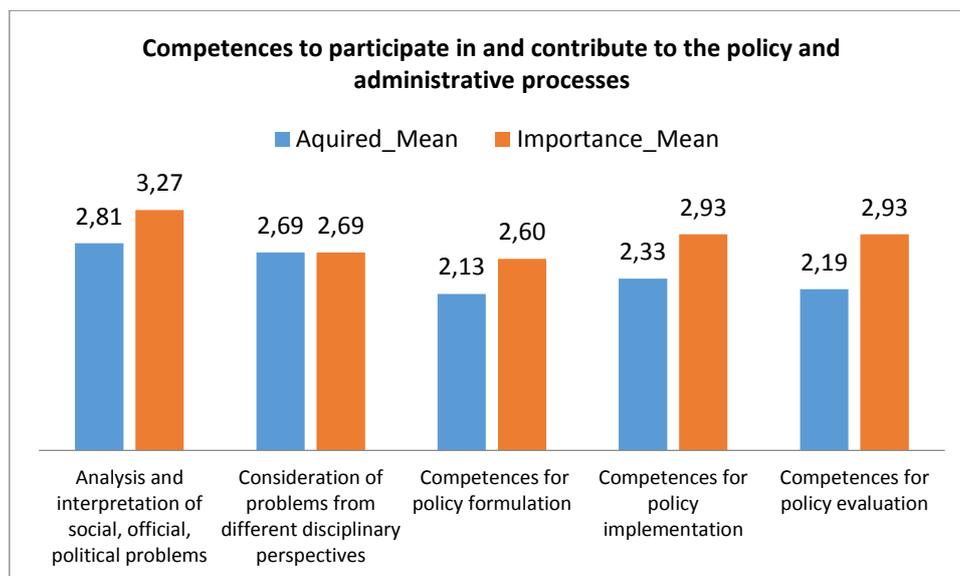
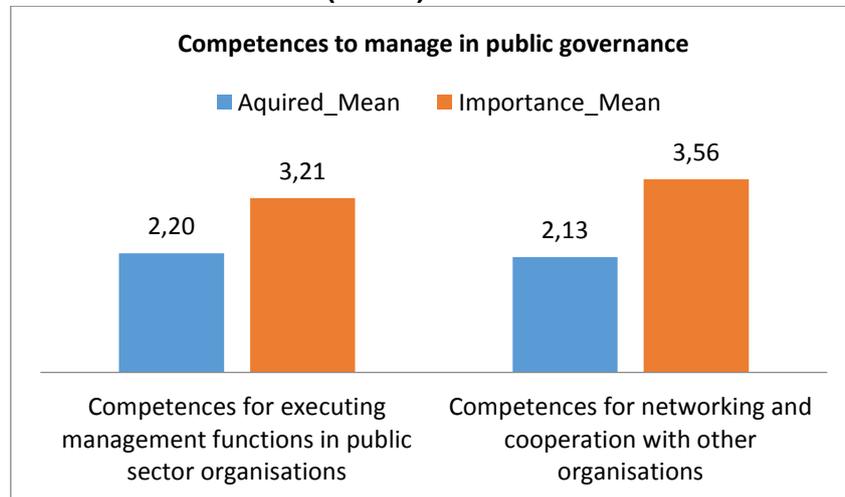


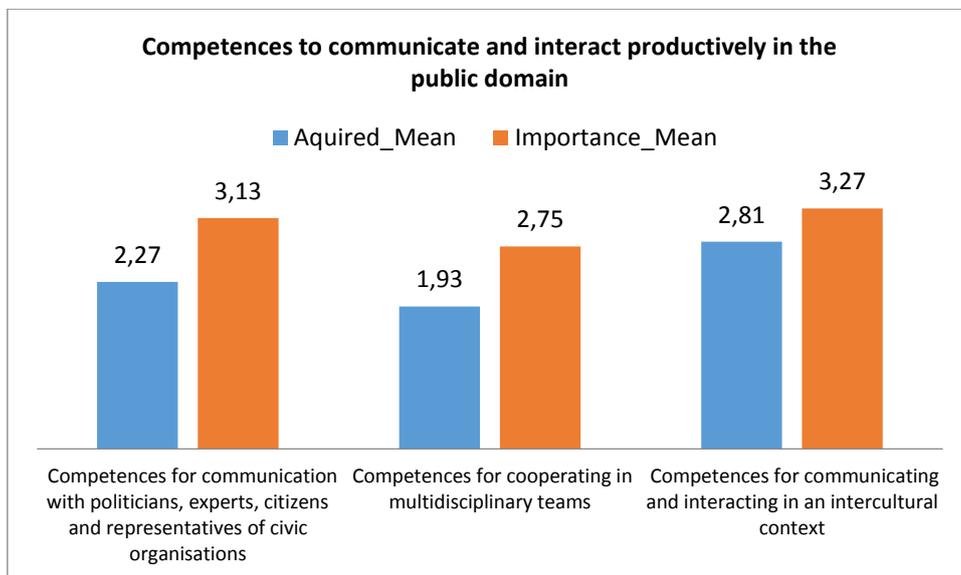
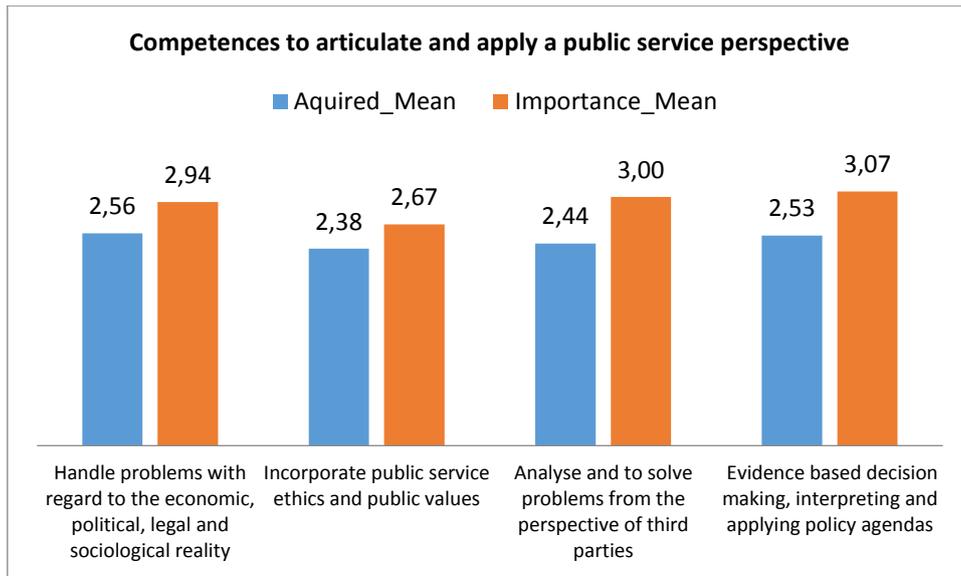


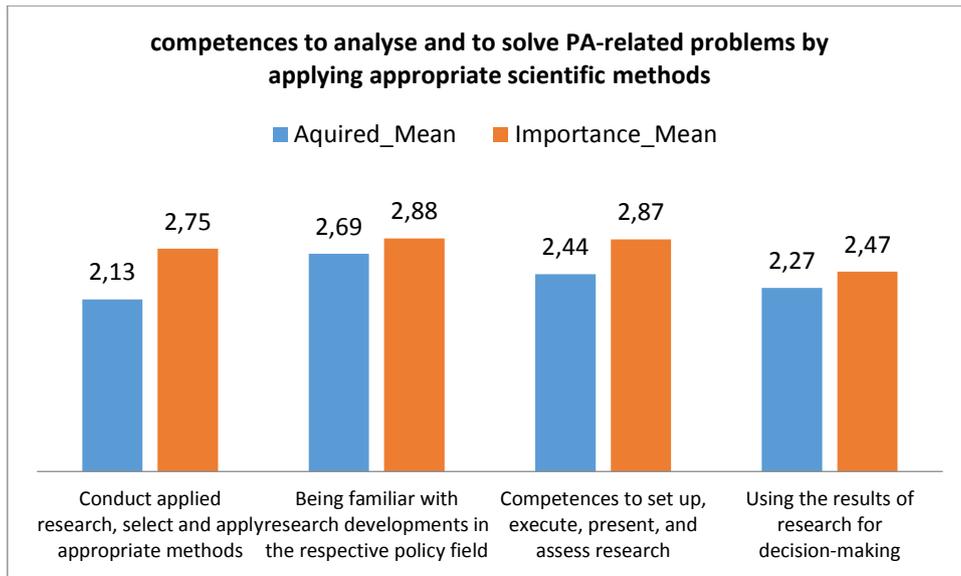
The figures are markedly different from those found for the previous NUPS programme:

- Absolute (mean) values attached to perceived competence acquisition are generally higher than among alumni of the NUPS BA programme;
- Not less importantly, the relationship between perceived importance and acquired level of skills is systematically the opposite: skills/competence acquisition usually supersedes the importance attached to the given competence.

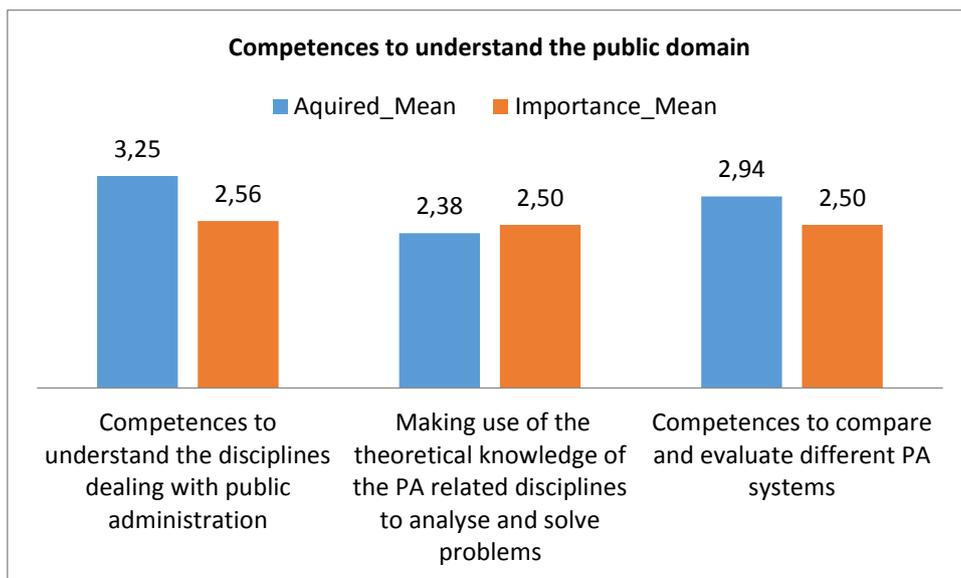
### 7.1.3 MA in Public Administration (NUPS)







As it can be seen the competence profile of the Master's program is similar to the one found in the NUPS Bachelor's programme. That is, actual competence acquisition usually lags behind the perceived importance of the given competence.



## 7.2 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the empirical material available – strongly limited in terms of sample size as well as non-response / selection biases – it seems that the CUB programme meets, in the view of graduates' experience, real-life expectations to an extent definitely large that the NUPS programmes do.

It must be noted however that these findings are based on perceptual data only. These perceptions may (and presumably do) differ from actual "hard" measurements in several respects.

## 8 CONCLUDING REMARKS & CHALLENGES

Based on the analyses of the educational programmes and curricula of the above mentioned HEIs the following finding can be concluded:

In terms of content the three HEIs provide very different education and prepare their student very different field of the public sector. The NUPS BA programme highly dominated by national law and mainly focusing on the interpretation and implementation regulations on a PA executive level. Public administration and public policies mainly interpreted by graduates who get NUPS BA degree as a field of law execution and implementation. The NUPS MA programmes aims to diversify this purely legalistic approach at some level by introducing courses from the other disciplines, like public policy, economy or the hardly defined “state science”. The students graduated at NUPS usually work in the national public administration mainly in executive positions with BA degree or in (mid) managerial position with MA degree.

Contrary, students graduated from CUB M.Sc. more often find a job in the private sector as analysts or consultants, or they might work for government think – tanks developing public policy analyses or programme evaluations. This might be resulted from the particular competencies that student acquired during the study programme which seem to be highly different than the competencies developed by NUPS programme. The CUB M.Sc. put a great emphasis on economic approach, analytical skills and understanding and investigating PA as a field of policy programmes. The curricula includes many courses focusing on public policy instruments and processes from a general perspective, rather on a conceptual, more theoretical level and there are many course aims to develop methodological and analytical skills.

The Andrásy University targets a special student group and also a special field of labour market by offering its education programme in German which mainly – or almost exclusively – covers courses with international and EU law and regulatory policies and knowledge linked to international relationship and diplomacy.

Our empirical research emphasized relatively high discrepancies between the competences acquired/developed during the educational programme and the competencies perceived as important skill in the daily work. PA programme should develop a more competency-based education approach that allows students to advance competencies that might better prepare them to deal with daily public administration challenges, handling public policy issues or delivering management or executive function.

One of the key point for HEIs to better identify their target groups and be more aware to which field or position they aim to educate their student and tailor the education programme, course curricula and teaching method to meet the necessary competency requirements.

The second key lessons is that the public administration encompass very different tasks and professions and the critical competencies vary depending on the profile of the public organizations, the specific position and the particular responsibilities and activities of individuals in the position. When developing a training program, it is important to determine to what type of professional the university wants to train and which specific position and then identify the competencies are most essential for that position.

Concluding from on the interviews’ experiences, the PA education should utilize more the idea of dual education system which combines a long -term apprenticeships in one of the PA organizations and a theoretical learning part at the University. In a dual education system the student could benefit from the knowledge of more experienced co-workers and develops skills and competences necessary under real working conditions during internship. Due to

the dual education training the students could be better prepared to enter the public sphere, while public organizations would be more willing to hire them when they graduated, because it does not require so much effort to train them for the real work.

<i>For all/any research questions, please provide (if applicable):</i>			
FG	Main sub/issues debated	Key joint findings	Improvement proposals
A.			
B.			
C.			

## 9 REFERENCES

Reichard, C., & Van der Krogt, T. (2014). Towards a Set of Specific Competences for Academic Degree Programmes in Public Administration in Europe.

Staroňová, K. and Gajduscsek, Gy. (2016): Politico - Administrative Relations in Slovakia and Hungary:: Road to professionalization of Civil Service ?

## 7. APPENDIX

### 7.1. QUESTIONNAIRE OF THE ONLINE SURVEY CONDUCTED BY HUNGARIAN PARTNER

1. **Sex**
2. **Age**
3. **From which University did you received your PA degree?**
  - Public Administration College (predecessor of NUPS)
  - CUB Faculty of Economics
  - CUB Faculty of Public Administration (predecessor of NUPS)
  - National University of Public Service
4. **The level of your education programme:**
  - BA
  - MsC/ MA
  - Unified (5 years )
5. **Year of starting the study programme**
6. **Year of graduation**
7. **What is your current job? (Or what was your last job if you are not working?)**
  - Public Administration / Local Government
  - Public administration / territorial level (e.g. government office, district office)
  - Public administration / national level (ministry,agency, central administration)
  - Business enterprise, that is linked to the public sector or to the public service provision
  - Business enterprise (not affiliated with the public sector)
  - Nonprofit sector
  - Other (please specify)
  - I haven't had any job yet
8. **What is your current position (or what was your last position)?**
  - Politically appointed or elected official (eg Minister, Political State Secretary , Mayor)
  - Top - manager of the public organization (e.g. director, chairman, state secretary, notary)

- Head of Department
- Deputy Head of Department
- Clerk at Customer service
- Executive civil servant not dealing with clients
- Other ( please specify )

**9. What kind of tasks do you do in your current (or recent) position? (more than one answers can be selected)**

- Public Policy Planning and Formulation (e.g. Drafting of Legislation, Decision Making)
- Implementing public policies and decisions.
- Activities related to finance, financial, economic tasks.
- Audit, controlling, supervision.
- Providing services, serving customers.
- Internal management of the organization (HR, operational management, internal communication).
- Research and analyses.
- Other ( please specify )

**10. How many years have you been working in the public sector so far?**

**11. How many years have you been working in private sector?**

**12. How many years have you been working in nonprofit sector ?**

**13. Question block 1: To what degree have you acquired the following types of knowledge from your studies?**

Scale: 4 scale (Not at all (1) - little (2) - mostly (3) - to a large extent (4))

**A: Competences to manage in public governance”**

1. Competences for executing management functions in public sector organisations
2. Competences for networking and cooperation with other organisations

**B. Competences to participate in and contribute to the policy and administrative processes”**

3. Competences for recognition, analysis and interpretation of social, official, political or administrative problems
4. Competences for consideration of problems from different disciplinary perspectives
5. Competences for policy formulation

6. Competences for policy implementation
7. Competences for policy evaluation

**C. Competences to articulate and apply a public service perspective”**

8. Competences to handle problems with regard to the economic, political, legal and sociological reality
9. Competences to incorporate public service ethics and public values
10. Competences to analyse and to solve problems from the perspective of third parties, particularly politicians, professionals, citizens and representatives of civic organisations
11. Competences for evidence based decision making, interpreting and applying policy agendas, anticipating future trends in public services, and adapting activities to suit specific public services contexts

**D. Competences to communicate and interact productively in the public domain”**

12. Competences for communication with politicians, experts, citizens and representatives of civic organisations
13. Competences for cooperating in multidisciplinary teams
14. Competences for communicating and interacting in an intercultural context

**E. “competences to analyse and to solve PA-related problems by applying appropriate scientific methods”**

15. Competences to conduct applied research, select and apply appropriate methods, techniques and tools to analyse and solve a problem
16. Competences to be familiar with research developments in the respective policy field
17. Competences to set up, execute, present, and assess research
18. Competences to use the results of research for decision-making or policy proposals

**F. Competences to understand the public domain”**

19. Competences to understand the disciplines dealing with public administration
20. Competences to make use of the theoretical knowledge of the PA related disciplines to analyse and solve problems in the public domain
21. Competences to compare and evaluate different PA systems

**14 . Question block2: To what extent are the following type of knowledge important/ useful in your current position?**

Scale: 4-degree scale (Not at all (1) - little / tangential (2) - mostly (3) - to a large extent (4))

**A: Competences to manage in public governance”**

1. Competences for executing management functions in public sector organisations
2. Competences for networking and cooperation with other organisations

**B. Competences to participate in and contribute to the policy and administrative processes”**

3. Competences for recognition, analysis and interpretation of social, official, political or administrative problems
4. Competences for consideration of problems from different disciplinary perspectives
5. Competences for policy formulation
6. Competences for policy implementation
7. Competences for policy evaluation

**C. Competences to articulate and apply a public service perspective”**

8. Competences to handle problems with regard to the economic, political, legal and sociological reality
9. Competences to incorporate public service ethics and public values
10. Competences to analyse and to solve problems from the perspective of third parties, particularly politicians, professionals, citizens and representatives of civic organisations
11. Competences for evidence based decision making, interpreting and applying policy agendas, anticipating future trends in public services, and adapting activities to suit specific public services contexts

**D. Competences to communicate and interact productively in the public domain”**

12. Competences for communication with politicians, experts, citizens and representatives of civic organisations
13. Competences for cooperating in multidisciplinary teams
14. Competences for communicating and interacting in an intercultural context

**E. Competences to analyse and to solve PA-related problems by applying appropriate scientific methods**

15. Competences to conduct applied research, select and apply appropriate methods, techniques and tools to analyse and solve a problem
16. Competences to be familiar with research developments in the respective policy field
17. Competences to set up, execute, present, and assess research
18. Competences to use the results of research for decision-making or policy proposals

**F. Competences to understand the public domain”**

19. Competences to understand the disciplines dealing with public administration

20. Competences to make use of the theoretical knowledge of the PA related disciplines to analyse and solve problems in the public domain

21. Competences to compare and evaluate different PA systems

**15. All together what extant are the acquired competencies important/ useful in the work on the field of PA ?**

**16. Any other comments, notes**

## 7.2. SUMMARIZING THE RESULTS OF THE ONLINE SURVEY

<b>BA IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE</b>							
Category	Competences	Question 13: To what degree have you acquired the following types of knowledge from your studies?			Question 14: To what extant are the following type of knowledge important/ useful in your current position		
		N	Mean	Median	N	Mean	Median
Competences to manage in public governance	Competences for executing management functions in public sector organisations	40	1,78	2,00	39	2,64	3,00
	Competences for networking and cooperation with other organisations	41	1,98	2,00	39	3,41	4,00
Competences to participate in and contribute to the policy and administrative processes	Competences for recognition, analysis and interpretation of social, official, political or administrative problems	41	2,34	2,00	38	2,89	3,00
	Competences for consideration of problems from different disciplinary perspectives	41	2,44	2,00	39	2,62	3,00
	Competences for policy formulation	41	2,00	2,00	37	2,24	2,00
	Competences for policy implementation	42	2,05	2,00	37	2,41	2,00
	Competences for policy evaluation	40	1,83	1,50	37	2,41	2,00
Competences to articulate and apply a public service perspective	Competences to handle problems with regard to the economic, political, legal and sociological reality	40	2,33	2,00	37	2,70	3,00
	Competences to incorporate public service ethics and public values	41	2,54	3,00	38	2,39	2,00

	Competences to analyse and to solve problems from the perspective of third parties, particularly politicians, professionals, citizens and representatives of civic organisations	41	2,07	2,00	38	2,79	3,00
	Competences for evidence based decision making, interpreting and applying policy agendas, anticipating future trends in public services, and adapting activities to suit specific public services contexts	40	2,18	2,00	38	2,63	3,00
Competences to communicate and interact productively in the public domain	Competences for communication with politicians, experts, citizens and representatives of civic organisations	41	1,93	2,00	38	2,63	3,00
	Competences for cooperating in multidisciplinary teams	41	2,07	2,00	38	2,61	2,50
	Competences for communicating and interacting in an intercultural context	41	2,00	2,00	36	2,69	3,00
competences to analyse and to solve PA-related problems by applying appropriate scientific methods	Competences to conduct applied research, select and apply appropriate methods, techniques and tools to analyse and solve a problem	41	1,95	2,00	38	2,34	2,00
	Competences to be familiar with research developments in the respective policy field	41	2,05	2,00	37	2,62	3,00
	Competences to set up, execute, present, and assess research	42	2,17	2,00	37	2,38	2,00
	Competences to use the results of research for decision-making or policy proposals	41	2,02	2,00	35	2,29	2,00
Competences to understand the public domain	Competences to understand the disciplines dealing with public administration	38	2,58	3,00	38	2,08	2,00
	Competences to make use of the theoretical knowledge of the PA related disciplines to analyse and solve problems in the public domain	40	2,08	2,00	38	2,26	2,00
	Competences to compare and evaluate different PA systems	40	2,65	3,00	37	1,95	2,00

**MA IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION  
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

Category	Competences	Question 13: To what degree have you acquired the following types of knowledge from your studies?			Question 14: To what extent are the following type of knowledge important/ useful in your current position		
		N	Mean	Median	N	Mean	Median
Competences to manage in public governance	Competences for executing management functions in public sector organisations	15	2,20	2,00	14	3,21	3,50
	Competences for networking and cooperation with other organisations	16	2,13	2,00	16	3,56	4,00
Competences to participate in and contribute to the policy and administrative processes	Competences for recognition, analysis and interpretation of social, official, political or administrative problems	16	2,81	3,00	15	3,27	4,00
	Competences for consideration of problems from different disciplinary perspectives	16	2,69	3,00	16	2,69	3,00
	Competences for policy formulation	16	2,13	2,00	15	2,60	3,00
	Competences for policy implementation	15	2,33	2,00	15	2,93	3,00
	Competences for policy evaluation	16	2,19	2,00	15	2,93	3,00
Competences to articulate and apply a public service perspective	Competences to handle problems with regard to the economic, political, legal and sociological reality	16	2,56	3,00	16	2,94	3,00
	Competences to incorporate public service ethics and public values	16	2,38	2,50	15	2,67	3,00
	Competences to analyse and to solve problems from the perspective of third parties, particularly politicians, professionals, citizens and representatives of civic organisations	16	2,44	3,00	16	3,00	3,00
	Competences for evidence based decision making, interpreting and applying policy agendas, anticipating future trends in public services, and adapting activities to suit specific public services	15	2,53	3,00	15	3,07	4,00

	contexts						
Competences to communicate and interact productively in the public domain	Competences for communication with politicians, experts, citizens and representatives of civic organisations	15	2,27	2,00	15	3,13	3,00
	Competences for cooperating in multidisciplinary teams	15	1,93	2,00	16	2,75	3,00
	Competences for communicating and interacting in an intercultural context	16	2,81	3,00	15	3,27	4,00
competences to analyse and to solve PA-related problems by applying appropriate scientific methods	Competences to conduct applied research, select and apply appropriate methods, techniques and tools to analyse and solve a problem	16	2,13	2,00	16	2,75	3,00
	Competences to be familiar with research developments in the respective policy field	16	2,69	2,50	16	2,88	3,50
	Competences to set up, execute, present, and assess research	16	2,44	2,50	15	2,87	3,00
	Competences to use the results of research for decision-making or policy proposals	15	2,27	2,00	15	2,47	2,00
Competences to understand the public domain	Competences to understand the disciplines dealing with public administration	16	3,25	3,50	16	2,56	3,00
	Competences to make use of the theoretical knowledge of the PA related disciplines to analyse and solve problems in the public domain	16	2,38	2,00	16	2,50	3,00
	Competences to compare and evaluate different PA systems	16	2,94	3,00	16	2,50	2,50

**MSC IN PUBLIC POLICY AND MANAGEMENT  
CORVINUS UNIVERSITY OF BUDAPEST**

Category	Competences	Question 13: To what degree have you acquired the following types of knowledge from your studies?			Question 14: To what extent are the following type of knowledge important/ useful in your current position		
		N	Mean	Median	N	Mean	Median
Competences to manage in public governance	Competences for executing management functions in public sector organisations	9	2,56	3,00	10	2,40	2,50
	Competences for networking and cooperation with other organisations	10	2,70	2,50	12	3,67	4,00
Competences to participate in and contribute to the policy and administrative processes	Competences for recognition, analysis and interpretation of social, official, political or administrative problems	13	3,85	4,00	12	3,50	4,00
	Competences for consideration of problems from different disciplinary perspectives	13	3,23	3,00	12	2,92	3,00
	Competences for policy formulation	13	2,92	3,00	12	2,75	3,00
	Competences for policy implementation	13	2,85	3,00	12	2,33	1,50
	Competences for policy evaluation	13	3,08	3,00	12	2,92	4,00
Competences to articulate and apply a public service perspective	Competences to handle problems with regard to the economic, political, legal and sociological reality	13	3,31	3,00	11	2,91	3,00
	Competences to incorporate public service ethics and public values	12	2,67	3,00	12	2,08	2,00
	Competences to analyse and to solve problems from the perspective of third parties, particularly politicians, professionals, citizens and representatives of civic organisations	13	3,15	3,00	13	3,23	3,00
	Competences for evidence based decision making, interpreting and applying policy agendas, anticipating future trends in public services, and adapting activities to suit specific public services contexts	13	3,38	3,00	11	2,64	3,00
	Competences to communicate and interact productively in the public domain	Competences for communication with politicians, experts, citizens and representatives of civic organisations	13	2,00	2,00	13	3,23
	Competences for cooperating in multidisciplinary teams	13	2,38	2,00	11	2,55	3,00

	Competences for communicating and interacting in an intercultural context	13	2,77	3,00	12	3,00	3,00
competences to analyse and to solve PA-related problems by applying appropriate scientific methods	Competences to conduct applied research, select and apply appropriate methods, techniques and tools to analyse and solve a problem	13	3,08	3,00	12	2,67	3,00
	Competences to be familiar with research developments in the respective policy field	13	3,00	3,00	12	2,67	3,00
	Competences to set up, execute, present, and assess research	13	3,08	3,00	12	2,58	3,00
	Competences to use the results of research for decision-making or policy proposals	13	2,92	3,00	12	2,67	2,50
Competences to understand the public domain	Competences to understand the disciplines dealing with public administration	13	3,15	3,00	12	2,33	2,50
	Competences to make use of the theoretical knowledge of the PA related disciplines to analyse and solve problems in the public domain	13	2,77	3,00	11	2,09	2,00
	Competences to compare and evaluate different PA systems	12	3,33	3,00	11	1,91	2,00