

INVITATION & CALL FOR PAPERS

The 12th NISPAcee Annual Conference, 2004

“Central and Eastern European Countries Inside and Outside the European Union: Avoiding a New Divide”

Vilnius, Lithuania, May 13 – 15, 2004

Conference venue: Hotel Reval Lietuva, Vilnius, Lithuania

Organized in cooperation with the Lithuanian Public Administration Training Association, Vilnius, Lithuania

Notice: Information on the Conference is regularly updated on the NISPAcee website: www.NISPA.sk

PRELIMINARY CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Wednesday, May 12, 2004

Pre-conference meetings:

- 15.00 - 19.00 NISPAcee Steering Committee meeting
- 20.00 - 21.00 Meeting of members of the NISPAcee Steering Committee and the Conference Coordinators
- 17.00 – 21.00 **Registration of participants**

Thursday, May 13, 2004

- 07.30 - 09.00 Registration of participants
- 09.00 - 09.30 **Plenary Session**
Official opening (Greetings and Welcome)
- 09.30 - 10.30 **Keynote presentations**
- 10.30 - 11.00 Coffee break
- 11.00 - 11.40 Presentations on the main conference theme
- 11.40 - 12.10 **Ceremony of the Alena Brunovská Award for Teaching Excellence in Public Administration**
Presentation of the award to the recipient
- 12.10 - 12.30 **Call for participation in new projects; organizational announcements**
- 12.30 - 14.00 Lunch
- 14.00 - 15.30 **Panel sessions and Forums**
- 15.30 - 16.00 Coffee break
- 16.00 - 17.30 **Working sessions** on the main conference themes
Meetings of **Working groups**

19.30 Reception

Friday, May 14, 2004

09.00 - 10.30 **Working sessions** on the main conference themes
Meetings of **Working groups**

10.30 - 11.00 Coffee break

11.00 - 12.30 **Working sessions** on the main conference themes
Meetings of **Working groups**

12.30 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00 - 15.30 **Working sessions** on the main conference themes
Meetings of **Working groups**

15.30 – 16.00 Coffee break

16.00 - 17.00 **Working sessions** on the main conference themes
Meetings of **Working groups**

17.15 – 19.00 **NISPAcee Business Meeting**
Opening
Annual Report of activities
Financial report
Future Plans
Elections
Others
Discussions
Representatives of the NISPAcee Member Institutions are expected to participate in the Business Meeting
All other participants are warmly invited and welcome to join the meeting.

20.00 Dinner

Saturday, May 15, 2004

09.00 - 10.30 **Working sessions** on the main conference themes
Meetings of **Working groups**

10.30 – 11.00 Coffee break

11.00 - 13.00 **Closing Plenary Session**
Reports of the coordinators of the Working Session/Groups
Report of the general rapporteur

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

15.00 Sightseeing trip

CONFERENCE FORMAT

The NISPAcee Conference provides a forum to encourage the exchange of information and developments in the theory and practice of public administration. The Conference addresses experts, scholars and practitioners who work in the field of public administration in Central

and Eastern Europe (including all countries covered by the NISPAcee membership, the Russian Federation, Caucasus and Central Asia).

The Conference will be structured as follows:

- plenary session
- panel sessions and forums
- working sessions on the main Conference theme
- parallel meetings of the NISPAcee Working Groups...

Papers are invited on the main Conference theme or on the themes of the Working Groups.

Most of the **NISPAcee working groups** have now been running for several years in the form of projects. Several of the current working groups were established as a result of previous conferences and others were based on proposals put forward by NISPAcee members or partners. Members of the working groups usually meet during the NISPAcee conference in order to present and discuss their research findings and identify themes for further research. These meetings are also open to other conference participants. In many cases, the working groups aim to publish their papers in individual publication form. Additional information on the background of the groups can be obtained on the NISPAcee website.

The WG Programme Coordinators are generally responsible for the research agenda and the quality of project outcomes. They select their group members based on their applications; coordinate the content of papers prepared by the group members and chair the meetings of the group.

NISPAcee Project Manager, a member of the NISPAcee staff, is identified for a working group and is responsible for the administration of a working group project and organizational issues.

CONFERENCE THEMES:

Main Conference Theme “Central and Eastern European Countries inside and outside the European Union: Avoiding a new divide”:

Working sessions on the Main Conference theme

Topic A. Problems facing the New Member States

Topic B. Problems facing the States outside the enlarged European Union.....

Topic C. Common problems

Panel Session and Forums

- Panel Session on European Accreditation of Public Administration Programmes
- Panel Session on Joint NASPAA – NISPAcee Governance Improvement Cooperative Project
- Forum for Heads of Training Centers and Institutes of Public Administration
- Forum for Young Professionals in Public Administration
- Others

Working groups

- I. Working Group on Politico-Administrative Relations
- II. Working Group on Public Sector Quality
- III. Working Group on Strategic Leadership in Central Government
- IV. Working Group on Democratic Governance of Multiethnic Communities
- V. Working Group on Public Sector Finance and Accounting
- VI. Working Group on e-Government
- VII. Working Group on Capacity Building of Civil Servants' Training System according to EU Requirements

THE MAIN CONFERENCE THEME:

As we meet in May 2004, an historical change will have taken place in Europe. Several former communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe will have joined the European Union, an unprecedented voluntary association of democratic states with market economies, and its emerging Constitutional identity. The entire structure of political, economic, and social relations in Europe will change. What will be the impact of this change to public policy and administration in countries both inside and outside the EU borders? What will the challenges of this new membership be to public policy and administration of the new member states? What actions will need to be taken to avoid the new divide between them and the other countries of the region, and to harmonize the way in which public interests are followed throughout the entire continent?

Papers are invited on the main themes of the conference:

A. Problems facing the New Member States

Administrations of the new member states (NMS) have focused more on gaining accession rather than preparing a solid base for membership. They have concentrated more on "becoming" rather than "being" during the preparatory period. Thus, there is a real danger that there will be *de facto* two European Administrative Spaces.

Specific themes will include:

- The Convention and its implications for the future of European administration.
- The competences of central public administrations vis-à-vis enlargement.
- Building NMS capacities to enforce the *acquis communautaire*.
- The roles and competences of the representatives of NMS in European institutions.
- The capacities of regional public administrations to participate in EU programs and the risks of mismanagement of EU funds.
- The hopes and fears of the population associated with enlargement.
- The Lisbon strategy and its implementation, the social and economic consequences of membership and what new institutions and approaches will be required to cope with them.
- The potential for a coordinated effort of the NMS to face the challenges of membership.

B. Problems facing the States outside the enlarged European Union

Outside the enlarged European Union, there will remain a large number of states, each at different stages of development, with different relationships both with the EU and with each other. What potential will there be for further enlargement? What are the developmental risks and opportunities for them, their public policies and administrations in the new situation throughout the continent?

Specific themes will include:

- How to accelerate institution building and administrative learning and adaptation (e.g. learning from the administrative transformation strategies applied recently in the NMS).
- Strengthening specific administrative capacities to collaborate with the EU.
- The efficiency of such programs as Accession Partnerships and the activities covered by the Stabilization and Association Processes

C. Common problems

All CEE countries face a set of common challenges in public policy and administration. NISPAcee is a natural setting for mutual inspiration and learning how to cope with them. Not only can we learn from positive experiences, but also from one another's mistakes.

Specific themes will include:

- The role of NMS in bridging EU states and CEE countries:
 - Information exchange and sharing of experiences.
 - Common administration capacity building.
- Paralysis of policy-making, particularly of its strategic dimension.
- How to fight against corruption and conflicts of interests.
- Facilitating administrative learning and adaptation through transfer of knowledge and experience from the old to the NMS, and from the NMS to other CEE countries:
 - Networking of training and educational institutions;
 - Improvement of public service exchange programmes;
 - New roles and responsibilities for NISPAcee member institutions in training and research.

PANEL SESSIONS AND FORUMS (speakers to be invited)

- Panel Session on European Accreditation of Public Administration Programmes

The quality of government has a major impact on the lives of individual citizens and the orderly functioning of society. Systematic training programs are essential to ensure the quality of (future) government officials. Through accreditation, the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA) wants to make a contribution to the quality improvement and assurance of academic level Public Administration programs in Europe. The European Accreditation of Programs on Public Administration by EAPAA refers to: the evaluation and continuous improvement of Public Administration programs that are offered by European universities and other academic level institutes with regard to their ability to satisfy stated or implied standards of quality followed by a formal decision to recognize or not to recognize the program.

Information about the EAPAA, established in 2000, and all related documents for accreditation of public administration programmes can be accessed through their website www.eapaa.org. The panel session aims to provide conference participants with additional information and an opportunity to discuss any questions and to learn about the experiences of ongoing accreditations from invited panelists. These panelists include the General Secretary of EAPAA, members of the Accreditation Committee and representatives of programmes which have already been accredited. Opportunities for accreditation of PA programmes from CEE countries will be discussed.

- Panel Session on Joint NASPAA – NISPAcee Governance Improvement Cooperative Project

The primary activity of the joint NASPAA (National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration, USA)/NISPAcee Project (2000 –2004) is to implement a program of applied policy research and technical assistance conducted by NISPAcee Schools and Institutes of Public Administration that links CEE/NIS governments and higher education institutions, with assistance from the NASPAA Schools of Public Affairs and Administration. These partnership projects have introduced CEE/NIS public administration centers to their local, regional, and national governments as sources of technical capacity for applied research in government problem-solving. More than 20 different projects have been chosen and implemented in almost every CEE country.

The aim of this panel session is a wide dissemination of the most relevant and sustainable outcomes of implemented projects. Speakers will include researchers as well as representatives of involved governmental institutions of the most successful projects, which resulted in outcomes with a high potential for transferability to other institutions or countries. Presenters will identify “best practices,” “lessons learned,” and other useful outcomes and recommendations.

- Forum for Heads of Training Centers and Institutes of Public Administration

In many central and eastern European countries, public administration reforms are in progress. Public servants’ training and development of their qualifications are amongst the areas of concern. Making an attempt to solve complicated problems, the focus is on increasing the efficiency of governing structures, on the stability of the management apparatus and on development of public servants’ professionalism.

Training of civil servants of state institutions and municipalities is closely related to the creation of a new quality concept. The objective is to create an integrated and easily manageable training system as well as to consolidate the development of this system and related activity programs. Development of a civil servants’ training system is an inevitable measure for strengthening the efficiency of the public service and an important element of public administration reform. The development of a long-term civil servants’ training policy is therefore of the utmost importance.

The main objective of this Forum is to invite Heads of Training Centers and Institutes of Public Administration from Central and Eastern Europe to discuss civil servants’ training policy and development of training systems under the new conditions of public administration reforms in central and eastern European countries both inside and outside the European Union and to share the experiences of their Centers and Institutes. The Forum, while

pursuing the main objectives and mission of NISPAcee, should also help in fostering of co-operation among institutions within these countries and the development of their programmes. Several Heads will be invited to share their experiences but more time will be devoted to the active discussion of all participants presented at the session.

- Forum for Young Professionals in Public Administration

NISPAcee is an open and democratically steered network with over 120 member institutions. It aims to serve its members' needs and tries to meet them through new initiatives. Inspired by the Steering Committee and the Secretariat, a group of young researchers and instructors from NISPAcee member institutions is happy to announce the opportunity to create a FORUM FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS across European countries and beyond, which aims to bring together people who are at the beginning of their PA career. The goal of the Forum is to bring young researchers and instructors together in order to address the specific needs and challenges they face. NISPAcee believes that young professionals can significantly contribute to the public administration reforms in the region; therefore, it is critical for the future of NISPAcee to assist in their professional development and organization.

As a result of a questionnaire distributed by NISPAcee, more than 50 young professionals have subscribed to take part in the Forum activities which will be open to all individuals interested in participating, via the NISPAcee website, from September 2003.

The Forum session at the NISPAcee Conference will provide the group with an opportunity to discuss future activities of the Forum and to invite guest speakers on a selected theme. Further information about the speakers and themes will be available on the NISPAcee website when the detailed conference programme is developed, in the fall of 2003.

- Others

Presentation of different projects and relevant activities could be included during the finalization stage of the programme.

Working Groups

I. Working Group on Politico-Administrative Relations

WG Programme Coordinators:

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Theme 2004: "Various decision and discourse arenas at different level and stages of the policy process"

The permanent Working Group on Politico-Administrative Relations was created during the 1998 NISPAcee conference in Prague. Four years of intensive research resulted in two books and numerous articles in NISPA proceedings. At the 11th Annual NISPAcee conference in

Bucharest, April 2003, the group broadened its research focus. At this conference, almost twenty papers/presentations were gathered, helping us to reach our objective: to publish a book in which new approaches will be demonstrated.

This new focus was not merely an enhancement of the scope of study, but rather a major advancement in the methodology of the study. The traditional approach considered the roles of politicians and civil servants in the framework of top-down policymaking and implementation. This approach is appropriate for the study of a traditional, “positive” state and useful in studies aimed to establish, compare and describe the general institutional framework of *governments*. The modern process of *governance* is, however, much more dynamic and complicated, even if the traditional core actors – as is frequently the case in CEE countries -- do not agree to recognize that.

The contemporary focus on governance can be understood in part as a response to the challenge of governing complex and fragmented societies, and the difficulties faced by the state in attempting to solve complicated and intractable social problems through direct forms of intervention. Therefore, in addition to the traditional focus on the relationship between the principal actors - politicians and civil servants - the concept of *governance* implies the presence, impact of, necessity and contribution of a variety of other actors in the policy-making arena.

This means that instead of the well-structured and hierarchical structure of the policy process, we will have increasingly loosely linked networks of collective actors that shape policy outcomes. These networks should be carefully studied and effectively managed if the government of the day wishes to take responsibility for policy aims and if researchers wish to better understand how these goals could be achieved.

It may be argued that in the case of Central and Eastern Europe the development of channels, access and the roles of these actors is weak. This in turn has a negative impacts on the institutionalization of public policies in CEE countries and capacities to govern, given that traditional devices of political, as well as administrative, responsibility and accountability do not optimally work in the region.

From this general definition of the problem are derived the **aims** of the WG and individual researchers.

The main subjects of the analysis are *various decision and discourse arenas* at different levels and stages of the policy process in a specific sector or dimension of governance. In order to study these arenas, main *channels and styles of government – civil society interactions* (consultations, participation, feedback, impact, manipulation etc.) in the policy process and *the diverse configurations of stakeholders, patterns* have to be identified.

Researchers should use the *case study method* in developing empirical research and presenting papers. These should not be traditional area or country studies or descriptive general reports. Case studies are used to acquire detailed and unique information about single events or processes that will be interpreted departing from empirically established causal links. Case studies should focus on an in-depth analysis of people, decisions, actions, programs and assessments.

The basic framework of the case study should consist of the following:

1. **Brief description of background.** Description of conceptual core and context of the policy formation process in general.
2. **Analysis of stakeholders:**
 - Mapping the policy network around the policy.
 - Understanding the interests and aims of the stakeholders.
 - Analysis of the historical and social background of these interests and aims.
3. Analysis of the **organization** of stakeholders or participants, i.e. analyzing the logic of collective actions.
4. **Channels and means of involvement:** for instance, official–unofficial, open–closed etc.
5. **Style of participation and involvement.** For instance, the decision/ discourse could be more or less consensual, with a broad set of bilateral consultations; but it could also be competitive, aiming to win a majority, and in this case, coalition building could be one of the most striking features of the process.

Because of the large number of participants and diverse directions of their research interests/ experiences, the following **sub-groups** within the working groups were established at the Bucharest meeting:

1. Institutional-administrative policy (public administration reforms)
2. Changing roles of civil servants
3. Telecommunication policy
4. Environmental and agricultural sector
5. Human resources policy (education, health, labour)
6. Policy arenas in central local relations, especially in the context of EU accession

Despite a rather wide variety of sectors, **papers should clearly focus on the aspects that are defined as the main subject.** Coordinators of the WG will select papers primarily on the basis of their fit with defined subject of study and, later, with research protocol. Our final aim is to develop comparative and integrated papers to be published as a book.

Detailed outlines of analysis and methodology are described *in research protocol*.

Contributions from both CEE and western countries are welcome, especially from those who have not had any previous contact with the WG. More detailed information about our WG is available on the NISPA website.

II. Working Group on Public Sector Quality

WG Programme Coordinators:

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Theme 2004: Public Sector Quality in Policy Making: quality of policy analysis, research, expertise, and citizen consultation in decision-making and implementation.

Background

The Working Group on Public Sector Quality throughout its existence since 1999 has discussed the basic principles of quality in public administration. Among the issues addressed by this working group have been: the promotion and measurement of quality in public administration; the role of public consultation and e-government in improving the quality of service delivery, and finally how to assess the quality of public governance. The working group intends to shift its focus from the quality of service delivery to the policy making processes, notably to the quality of the preparation of policies as a prerequisite for ensuring quality public services.

Call for Papers

Establishing principles, institutions and procedures of good governance is one of the greatest challenges facing both western democracies and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (“CEE”). This challenge includes the development of professional policy making. The concept of ‘good governance’ – not readily translatable in most of the languages in the CEE region – has become increasingly associated with the capacity to develop and deliver public policies based on participatory principles as well as respecting the principles of effectiveness and efficiency. In other words, professional and high quality public policy making is transparent and open to broad societal participation but, at the same time, addresses societal problems timely and with a minimum waste of available resources.

In most countries in Europe, there is not a coherent modernizing agenda in relation to quality policy making and policy capacity development – indeed, sometimes there is not even a clear modernizing agenda at all. However, a number of themes can be identified, each of which is important in a number of European countries. We would, therefore, particularly like to invite papers which combine conceptual and empirical research on the issues described below.

Papers presenting single case studies or comparative, policy-relevant empirical research on how to improve quality of policy making in the good governance perspective in western democracies, CEE and the NIS are sought by this working group. This includes studies that identify significant obstacles to effective policy-making; factors that may help or hinder the development and implementation of effective policies at the national, regional or local level or the contingent conditions that encourage or hinder effective policy implementation. To what extent do policy-makers, including elected officials and civil servants, make use of policy analysis, policy relevant research, experts and consultants, and/or citizen participation or consultation? What impact has EU accession (or the pursuit of EU accession) had on policy-making and public administration at the national, regional or local level? Has the

accession process helped or hindered the improvement of public administration and policy-making in the member states, accession states and states outside of the accession process? We hope that a range of papers drawing on the empirical experience in a variety of countries and at various levels of government will provide a valuable basis for accumulating our current knowledge about the range of variation and factors contributing to or hindering the improvement of policy-making and implementation.

We are calling for two sorts of papers. First, we are seeking evaluations/analyses of the quality of the policy making process or one of its stages (policy analysis, public participation in decision making, etc.) that assess the performance or demonstrate progress in policy making. Second, we are seeking studies that provide suggestions for the improvement in how public officials are educated and trained to respond to the challenges of evidence-based and participatory policy making with practical examples and recommendations of how such training and education might be improved.

Discussions of the working group will be organized around five sub-topics:

1. The impact of EU accession on the quality of national policy making
2. Evaluation of the quality of the policy making process and its individual phases
3. Monitoring the performance of civil servants and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of the policies
4. Training as a tool to improve the quality of policy making and policy making capacity (assessment of methods, main approaches)
5. Decentralization and the quality of policy making on local and regional levels

Research Guidelines are available at the NISPAcee web.

III. Working Group on Strategic Leadership in Central Government

WG Programme Coordinators:

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Introduction

The aim of the working group is to investigate the institutional underpinnings of strategic leadership in central government. The working group provides a forum for scholars and practitioners to exchange ideas and experience with strategic decision-making in Central and Eastern Europe.

Strategic leadership is understood here as a capacity of the central government to make and implement policy decisions that are anticipatory, future-committed, integrative and welfare-maximizing; that are knowledge-based and consider dynamic policy externalities and

interdependencies; and that are informed by a longer-term perspective going beyond immediate re-election concerns.

Strategic leadership is normally the preserve of the core executive - all those institutions located at the centre of government that are attached to the chief executive or the cabinet. For a core to provide this leadership, it must ensure a strategic orientation at all stages of the policy process.

Background

This research initiative is taken against the following empirical/conceptual background:

- Over the last decade most transition countries in Central and Eastern Europe have tried to 'governmentalize' their executives or transform them from subordinate administrative bodies into 'political government' after the disappearance of the communist party. In essence this process has been about reconfiguring political guidance mechanisms within the executive with a view to ensuring a smooth translation of the political leadership's priorities into sound public policies. The working group will position its research within this broad tradition of core executive studies.
- If political government is to prevail over a government of technical bureaucrats on the one hand and a government of vote-maximizing politicians on the other, the 'central minds of government' need to be reinforced. In the first place this involves the reinforcement of the core executive's capacity to ensure a strategic orientation in decision-making. Ways to develop strategic capacities at the centre of government are the key theme for the working group.
- The negative legacies of central planning have contributed to a wider neglect of strategically guided policy-making in Central and Eastern Europe. At present strategic decision-making is weakly developed in the region for reasons of skills, structures and knowledge. The role models of a technocratic expert or political advisor with limited policy know-how have dominated policy-making. Ministerial administration has continued to be sectoralized and vertically segmented, with horizontal integration confined to the top level. This has undermined inter-agency coordination and has discouraged attempts to introduce horizontal, cross-cutting aspects into the preparation and implementation of policies. Finally, the knowledge base of decision-making has been weak, given the intransparency and lack of communication between ministerial bureaucracies. Policies to overcome these deficiencies will be discussed in the working group.
- The effects of institutional arrangements on policy performance have recently become subject to more systematic research. Recognizing the relevance of institutions for policy performance, international agencies are applying new diagnostic and monitoring instruments. The World Bank and the OECD are developing second generation governance indicators; the EU Commission has elaborated detailed indicators of progress in EU accession and uses benchmarks in its open method of coordination. The working group will provide a vehicle for the further development of

performance diagnostics in order to improve the knowledge base for decision-makers and planners in CEE governments.

Research Guidelines are available at the NISPAcee web.

IV. Working Group on Democratic Governance of Multiethnic Communities

WG Programme Coordinators:

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Theme 2004: Diversity and Public Services: Introducing New Standards of Diversity Management in Changing Europe

Background

The Working Group (WG) on Governing Multiethnic Communities had its fourth gathering at the 11th Annual Meeting of the NISPAcee. The working group continued its discussions about promoting inclusive policies responsive to the needs of ethnically diverse communities, and about the design, implementation, and administration of public services that help to advance the status of minority communities and promote the well-being of the majority and minority groups together.

For its fifth gathering at the 12th Annual Meeting of NISPAcee, the WG decided both (1) to continue its focus on developing a series of policy studies to provide suggestions by which local governments and their agencies or institutions might regularly assess their performance or demonstrate progress; and (2) to expand its attention to focus on the ways that public officials are prepared for managing public services in a multiethnic environment and specific steps that might be taken to improve this training. By adding to the field research available that can identify key factors of successful practice in providing equitable access to public services for minorities, and by applying these lessons to effective development of good basic education and training techniques for preparing public servants to manage in a diverse world, we hope to combine scholarship and practice, leading to meaningful long-term change in public administration and its response to ethnic diversity, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, particularly at the sub-national levels of government.

Call for Papers

Officials, as well as citizens, are often frustrated in their attempts to get a clear picture on the performance of government's achievement in promoting inclusive policies responsive to the needs of ethnically diverse communities. Comprehensive information and analysis is rarely available on the issue equity in public service delivery. And public officials are often untrained or unprepared to deal with the new and complex demands of managing public services in the face of ethnic diversity and majority-minority conflict.

We are calling for papers of two kinds. First, we continue to seek policy studies that provide suggestions by which local governments and their agencies or institutions might regularly assess their performance or demonstrate progress. Second, we seek evaluations of the ways in which public officials are educated and trained to respond to the challenges of public service delivery in multi-ethnic democracies and practical examples and recommendations of how such training and education might be improved.

The aim of our inquiry is both to add to the stock of knowledge about what policy actions are effective in improving particular situations, and then to apply that knowledge to concrete understanding of how public officials are educated and trained, and how that process of preparing public officials can be improved.

In particular the papers with a focus on curriculum and training issues would be important that NISPAcee might lead in developing -- questions of how to help current public administrators, and future ones now in the PA schools, to learn to manage in a multiethnic environment, steps to assess and advance how the PS schools and training centers are doing in recruiting diverse classes of students, from all ethnic groups, into their programs, how active they are in having faculties or available speakers and experts on these questions, and how they can evaluate their own training and education programs to assure they are responsive to these needs.

Discussions of the working group will be organized around five sub-topics:

1. The impact of the EU Race Directive (legally binding as of July 2003) on public service delivery in EU accession countries
2. Evaluation of the local impact of central governmental programs aiming at social integration of minorities
3. Monitoring the performance of local initiatives for managing ethnic and social diversity (donor and central government perspectives)
4. Training as a tool to improve performance in diversity management and equal opportunities (assessment of methods, main approaches)
5. Regional experiences in training civil servants on diversity management and equal opportunity policies
6. Designing public administration degree programs through new curricula, minority student recruiting, and faculty development to prepare public servants for managing in a diverse environment

A preference will be given to papers based on empirical research (case studies), on papers that provide empirical evaluation of education and training practices, and of papers that link an understanding of policy experiences with the education and training needs they call for.

Guidelines for writing papers are available on the NISPAcee website.

For further information, please contact the coordinators (see the contact information above), or write to the email list of the working group nispawg4@yahoogroups.com

V. Working Group on Public Sector Finance and Accounting

WG Programme Coordinators:

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The Public Sector Finance and Accounting Working Group will focus **on user charges and fees for the next 12th NISPAcee conference** to be held in 2004. The **detailed research protocol** is available from the NISPAcee web site. The project should provide an in-depth analysis of the current practices with regard to user charges and fees practised in transitional countries. Particular emphasis will be paid to locally imposed and/or collected charges and fees. Prospective authors are invited to prepare country studies that will not only describe the current practices in this domain, but also provide an authoritative historical account and contribute to better theoretical understanding of non-tax revenue sources for reforming local governments. The research will be comprehensive, as the authors are expected to provide a comprehensive account of all user charges and fees applied in their respective country. It is expected that the authors will be able to supply a consistent dataset covering the period of transition, from 1987 to 2002, and, if appropriate, provide a detailed comment on whether there were any changes in the way user charges and fees are used in the national fiscal system. The papers have to be analytical and critical, where a description of current practices and situation is just an initial step.

From 2004, the Group will also consider papers that do not address the main topic, but assistance will not be sought for those papers and authors are responsible to ensure funding for their participation at the NISPAcee conference. One of the WG sessions will be devoted to unsolicited papers. It is expected that a book will be produced with selected and fully referenced papers presented at the 12th NISPAcee conference.

VI. Working Group on e-Government

WG Programme Coordinators:

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Detailed information on the WG will be available on the NISPAcee website: www.nispa.sk from mid-September 2003.

VII. Working Group on Capacity Building of a Civil Servants' Training System according to EU Requirements

WG Programme Coordinators

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Contemporary public administration is inherent of reforms, changes and innovations. Seeking solutions to the problems arising, most attention is paid to increasing state structures' efficiency, stability of governance bodies and the professionalism and efficiency of civil servants' training systems in state institutions in central and eastern European countries, inside as well as outside the European Union. The development of civil servants' administration skills is one of the conditions for an increase in public service efficiency. The civil servants' continuous training system, which consists of selection and recruitment of specialists, career planning, payment and promotion, introductory and continuous training, re-skilling and assessment of specialists, is closely related to the strengthening of administrative capacities and new quality creation according to the conditions of the EU. The main objectives of civil servants' training systems are: to create a civil servants' training system, which would be integrated and governed by central and local government and to evaluate the development of the system and related programmes.

The principal goals of the newly established working group is to research and identify new approaches towards capacity building of civil servants' training systems according to EU requirements. The following questions should be highlighted:

- What are the present conditions of the training of civil servants?
Civil servants' training systems should be based on the principles of systematic, continuous training and financial rationale. The systematic principle is: the training of civil servants should be implemented systematically and should include all public institutions and municipalities. The principle of continuous training: the training of civil servants should be oriented towards the permanent strengthening of administrative capacities of institutions. The principle of financial rationality: the financial resources that are allocated for the training of civil servants should ensure the efficiency of such training.
- What should be the most effective civil servants' training system according to EU standards?

Institutions that are participating in the training of civil servants must guarantee that training programmes comprise a variety of social, economic and cultural changes, good quality and the accessibility of supplied services to civil servants. What should the new approaches be towards the capacity building of a civil servants' training system according to EU requirements?

Using case study methodology, working group papers are invited which analyse the key factors of successful practices in creating civil servants' training systems according to EU requirements together with new approaches towards improving the quality of services delivery. Comparative research papers focusing on other countries are also welcome.

APPLICATIONS WITH PAPERS AND SELECTION OF PAPERS

Deadline for applications: October 15, 2003

ON-LINE Applications – on the NISPAcee web site: www.nispa.sk

Applicants should complete an application form on the NISPAcee web (all in English) and input an abstract of a paper that is relevant to the main conference theme or Working Group themes (maximum 2 pages - 3600 characters and attach the CV file (maximum 2MB).

Participants

Scholars and practitioners of public administration/public policy are invited to submit analytical papers either on the conference main theme or for a selected working group. Junior researchers (Ph.D. candidates and research assistants) are particularly encouraged to apply. Participants may be of any nationality.

Selection criteria

The NISPAcee Conference Selection Committee, in cooperation with working group coordinators, will select the papers to be presented at the conference using the following criteria:

- The nature of the topic and its relevance to the main theme of the conference or a working group
- The specificity of the research topic and/or case example
- The scholarly quality of the paper - strong preference will be given to analytical papers based on empirical evidence.

Work plan and papers

The authors whose drafts have been **accepted** will be informed by **November 15th 2003**.

Special deadline for accepted papers for WG II and WG III – more developed abstracts of papers (about 4 pages) should be submitted to WG Programme Coordinators by DECEMBER 5, 2003.

The final version of the completed paper should be prepared according to **NISPAcee MANUSCRIPT GUIDELINES** (posted on the NISPAcee web) and submitted via the NISPAcee website by **April 10, 2004 at the latest**.

Papers will be accessible for all conference participants on the NISPAcee website prior to the event. Copies of papers will not be provided by NISPAcee during the Conference. Authors of the papers are welcome to bring copies of their papers for distribution at their working session or working group.

Papers which are not accepted for the presentation may be duplicated and distributed during the Conference to interested participants by the authors themselves.

The most representative papers of the Conference will be submitted to the selection process and published in the Conference Proceedings.

The publication of speeches or papers presented at the Conference requires the authorization of NISPAcee. This means that the authors should contact the President of the Association, or the Executive Director, prior to giving their agreement for publication of their paper by some source other than NISPAcee.

Support

NISPAcee, in co-operation with the working groups' coordinators, intends to develop projects and seeks funds to support applicants with the selected papers of the working groups in the conference. However, this funding is uncertain and therefore all participants are encouraged to find their own financing.

REGISTRATION AND HOTEL RESERVATIONS

ON-LINE registration and hotel reservations will be available from **November 2003** on the NISPAcee website. *All participants, including authors of the accepted papers for the conference, are kindly asked to register for the conference and make their hotel reservations.*

Deadline for registration: February 28, 2004 at the latest. (<http://www.nispa.sk>)

Conference Registration Fees in EURO:

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| <i>NISPAcee Institutional Members (Principal Representative or designated alternate)</i> | <i>free of charge</i> |
| <i>NISPAcee Non-Members (from Eastern countries)</i> | <i>50 EURO</i> |
| <i>NISPAcee Observers (from Eastern Europe) and other participants of member institutions</i> | <i>20 EURO</i> |
| <i>NISPAcee Associate Members (Principal Representative or designated alternate)</i> | <i>100 EURO</i> |
| <i>NISPAcee Observers (from Western countries) and other participants of Associate Members</i> | <i>150 EURO</i> |
| <i>NISPAcee Non-Members (from Western countries)</i> | <i>200 EURO</i> |
| Additional fees after registration deadline | 50 EURO |

The fee covers conference organizational costs, full conference documentation and access to all scientific activities and conference proceedings.

Accommodation

Special rates for accommodation have been negotiated for conference participants in two hotels:

- **Reval Hotel Lietuva**, which is also the conference venue. (single room - 60 Euro; double - 76 Euro) – on-line reservation via the NISPAcee website

Deadline for reservation: February 28, 2004 at the latest. (<http://www.nispa.sk>)

Deadline for payment: March 15, 2004

Cancellations in the Hotel Reval Lietuva:

- Reservations will be cancelled if advance payment has not been made **by March 15, 2004.**
- Cancellation fees will be charged from **May 1, 2004.**

- **Ecotel Vilnius**: located in the same area, about 10 minutes' walking distance from the conference venue (single room-30 Euro; double room -35 Euro; triple room - 40 Euro). Interested participants should make their **own reservation** (not via NISPAcee website) with the hotel management.

Contact information about this hotel and the reservation number you will obtain at the on-line registration for the conference on the NISPAcee website from November 2003.

Deadline for reservation: March 30, 2004.

ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

Visa: A visa may be required for citizens from certain countries. Participants must personally arrange their visas in their countries. Please contact **the NISPAcee Secretariat** if you require an *Invitation Letter* from the Lithuanian co-organizer.

Insurance: Each participant at the NISPAcee Conference is responsible for arranging his/her health or any other necessary insurance. NISPAcee will not take any responsibility for participants in this matter.

Local transportation should be arranged individually by the participants themselves

There is easy access to the conference venue by public transport from the airport and from the railway station or participants may wish to take a taxi.

Working language: English

**Information on all conference logistics is available on the Internet:
NISPAcee homepage <http://www.nispa.sk>**

Contact person:

Inquiries should be addressed to:

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