

EGPA 2025 CONFERENCE

Glasgow, Scotland, UK 26-29 August

EGPA at 50: prospects for public
administration across Europe

CALL FOR PAPERS

Special NISPAcee-EGPA Joint Panel:

Common and Diverging Trends for Public Administration Across Western,
Central, and Eastern Europe: Navigating External Shocks and
Transformations Across Europe





For the **EGPA Annual Conference** held at the Centre for Public Policy at the University of Glasgow, from 26 - 29 August 2025, the **Special NISPAcee-EGPA Joint Panel** presents its call for papers on:

Common and Diverging Trends for Public Administration Across Western, Central, and Eastern Europe: Navigating External Shocks and Transformations Across Europe.

Selected papers from the Panel will be featured in a Special Issue of the International Review of Administrative Sciences (IRAS)

Panel co-Chairs:

Prof. Dr. Eka Akobia, Dean, Caucasus School of Governance, Caucasus University, and President of Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee).

Prof. Dr. Jean-Michel Eymeri-Douzans, Vice-Rector of Sciences Po Toulouse and President of European Group for Public Administration (EGPA).

Prof. Dr. Sabine Kuhlmann, Chair of Political Science, Administration and Organisation, Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Sciences, University of Potsdam; editor-in-chief of the International Review of Administrative Sciences (IRAS)

Prof. Dr. Calin Hintea, Dean of the Faculty of Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences, Babes Bolyai University; Senior Editor of the Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences; Chair of EAPAA; immediate past-president of NISPAcee.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the European Group for Public Administration (EGPA), we find ourselves at a critical juncture. The theory and practice of public administration is facing significant transformations due to external shocks such as global pandemics, climate change, security crises, attacks on democratic institutions, and the rapid technological transformations (generative AI and big data, etc.) that are reshaping



governance. While these external challenges affect the entire continent, we must ask whether they have varied implications for the functioning of public administration in Western, Central, and Eastern Europe? Do the rise of populism, disinformation and propaganda and the erosion of democratic norms have the same roots in western, central and eastern Europe? Are the external challenges such as populism and disinformation truly similar across countries or are there differences and idiosyncrasies due to diverging historical, institutional, societal and geopolitical contexts? Are the institutional responses given to these challenges similar? Do different historical and institutional settings generate same or different responses?

This joint NISPAcee-EGPA special panel invites scholars to explore the complex and multifaceted ways in which public administration is being shaped by the prevalent external developments. In particular, the panel aims to identify both commonalities and divergences or singularities in how administrative systems across Europe respond to these challenges and to draw lessons that can inform future PA practices and governance models. The overarching theme of the panel is to critically examine the challenges faced by public administration across Europe, especially in relation of security crises, attacks on democracy, and technological transformations. Central to our analysis is a focus on the varying ways in which these external shocks affect Western, Central, and Eastern Europe, and the lessons that can be drawn from these different contexts.

The panel invites papers that engage with either of the following key questions:

1. **Security Crises and the Functioning of Public Administration across Europe:** The rise of geopolitical tensions, particularly after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, has put significant strain on public administration and governance across Europe. What are some of the highlights and vulnerabilities of governance systems under stress? Papers should address the varying capacity of public administrations in different regions of Europe to respond to security crises. How do Western, Central, and Eastern European countries compare in terms of their administrative resilience, response mechanisms, and the adaptation of public service delivery during



crises? Are there similarities or key differences in these responses, and what insights can be drawn for enhancing administrative capacity in the face of external threats? What regional differences are evident, and how can these be explained by historical, cultural, or institutional factors? What comparative lessons can be drawn from these varying responses, particularly regarding administrative reform in the face of crisis management?

2. Attacks on Democracy and the Erosion of Trust in Governance Across Europe: Democratic institutions and norms are under pressure from populist movements, authoritarian tendencies, and disinformation campaigns. Populist politics challenge the functioning of public administration and of democratic governance. The rise of populism impacts on institutional frameworks, governance practices, and public service delivery as tensions grow up between populist demands for direct democracy and the professionalization of public administration, with looming threats that weaken impartial administrative processes, equal treatment of citizens and businesses and democratic institutions. However, opportunities also arise to make bureaucracies more efficient in the face of higher and direct public scrutiny. Notably, populism in different regions, particularly Western Europe, Central and Eastern Europe, and the United States, is shaped by distinct historical, social, and geopolitical dynamics. In Western Europe and the U.S., populism is often a response to societal evolution, particularly globalization, economic inequality, and cultural changes. In contrast, populism in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) often intersects with issues of disinformation and is amplified by external authoritarian involvement with distinct geopolitical objectives presenting us with the contrast between the “post-materialist” populism of Western Europe and the U.S. with the more authoritarian and reactive populism in CEE, which is often shaped by external actors with an aim to support anti-EU sentiments and authoritarian populist regimes towards geopolitical ends.

Papers should explore how these democratic challenges impact public administrations in Western, Central, and Eastern Europe. Do different regions exhibit similar vulnerabilities to democratic erosion, or do the legacies of past political systems (e.g., post-communist transitions in CEE)



create distinct challenges for public administration in these contexts? How do administrative systems navigate the erosion of trust, and what lessons can be learned from different European responses?

3. Technological Transformations and the Impact on Governance across Europe: The rise of digital governance and artificial intelligence (AI) presents both opportunities and great risks for public administration. Scholars have explored the transformative potential of technology in public administration, including automation, data-driven decision-making, and the increasing role of AI in service delivery. Scholars and practitioners have pondered on the challenges posed by ethical and legitimacy questions (e.g. AI discrimination, lack of fairness, privacy issues), organizational challenges (e.g. organizational resistance, limited ability to integrate AI-based solutions into existing processes), and data issues (e.g. limited data quality and quantity, data storage challenges, unstructured data). How are public administrations in different regions of Europe responding to these technological disruptions? Are the challenges of technology adoption and governance innovation more pronounced in certain regions (e.g., Eastern Europe's post-communist legacy) compared to others? Papers should examine how technological transformations are affecting public administration structures, and how these changes vary across Western, Central, and Eastern European contexts.

Overall, the joint NISPACEE-EGPA panel provides an important opportunity to explore the dynamic challenges faced by public administration across our continent. By examining the effects of security crises, attacks on democracy, and technological transformations, we aim to deepen our understanding of the similarities and differences in how governance and administrative systems and academics are responding to these shocks. What can be learnt from how public administration in different regions is responding to external shocks? How do these lessons challenge or support rival PA theories, such as New Public Management (NPM), Neo-Weberian State (NWS), New Public Governance (NPG) or Public Value Theory? Are there new theoretical insights emerging from these responses, particularly in the context of the EU's evolving role in shaping governance standards across the continent? Papers should critically engage with these questions, contributing to the



development of more resilient and adaptive public administration models for the future across Europe.

By engaging with the panel, selected authors will have a unique opportunity to get their research outcomes published in a **Special Issue of the *International Review of Administrative Sciences (IRAS)***. The panel aims to gather excellent papers that demonstrate innovative research perspectives, sound theoretical and methodological foundations as well as fresh empirical material. To this end, papers accepted for the panel are pre-reviewed by the panel chairs to identify those who are eligible for potential inclusion in a **Special Issue of IRAS** after a successful double-blind review. The Special Issue will be guest-edited by the four-panel co-chairs: **Prof. Dr. Eka Akobia, Prof. Dr. Jean-Michel Eymeri-Douzans, Prof. Dr. Sabine Kuhlmann, and Prof. Dr. Calin Hinteá.**

After approval by the four guest editors, the selected manuscripts will be invited for submission to the IRAS Special Issue, where they will undergo the double-blind peer review process. The first selection will be made based on abstracts, their quality, and relevance to the panel.

The *International Review of Administrative Sciences (IRAS)* is a Clarivate-ranked public administration journal with an international comparative focus. Prof. Dr. Sabine Kuhlmann is the Editor-in-Chief of IRAS. It is owned by the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS) and has been published since 1927.

Submission Guidelines:

We invite submissions that critically engage with these themes, drawing on both empirical research and theoretical frameworks from modern public administration scholarship. Contributions should be grounded in either case studies or represent a comparative approach and offer theoretical insights into how the external shocks discussed above are shaping public administration across Europe.

Please submit an abstract of approx. one A4 page.



If you need to discuss the content or focus of your abstract before sending it, do not hesitate to contact the co-chairs:

Prof. Dr. Eka Akobia: eakobia@cu.edu.ge

Prof. Dr. J.-M. Eymeri-Douzans: jean-michel.eymeri-douzans@sciencespo-toulouse.fr

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Practicalities

Important dates:

- ✓ Deadline for submission of abstracts: **March 30, 2025**
- ✓ Deadline for acceptance notifications to the authors: **April 20, 2025**
- ✓ Deadline for online submission of full papers: **July 25, 2025**
- ✓ EGPA 2025 Conference: August 27-29, 2025

EGPA 2025 Conference Website:

<https://ias-iisa.org/egpa-2025-conference/>

EGPA 2025 Conference Management System

<https://www.conftool.org/egpa2025conference>

For any questions regarding EGPA 2025, please get in touch with us at:

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