

*Book proposal to Palgrave  
submitted by*

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## **1. Proposed title**

Provision of public and social services in European countries  
From public/municipal to private sector provision – and then what?

### **2.1. General background of the proposal**

(The following section is a quote from the book proposal submitted to Palgrave by Sabine Kuhlmann and Geert Bouckaert. The quote should underline the connexion and sequence in which these two book projects and their underlying research have been conceived). Local self-government in European member states has gained increasing attention and relevance in the EU integration

process. This growing importance of the local level in EU politics is also reflected in the Lisbon Treaty of 2009, which for the first time legally recognized local self-government (cp. Art. 5 section 2 TEU). In the European multi-level system, local governments represent a level that ensures the close proximity of political problem solving and decision making to the citizens and provides an opportunity for the people to be involved in democratic processes. Eurobarometer surveys show that the level of trust in the local and regional authorities is considerably higher than the trust in national governments or parliaments. This underlines the importance of the local level in Europe for the stabilization of the political system of the EU. There are about 91,200 municipalities and 1,100 second-tier local governments in the EU-27. They employ roughly 50% of total public sector employees and their activities make up a significant portion of the GDP (Ø 16%) and of total public expenditure (Ø 34%) in the EU. However, in the current comparative research concerning public sector modernization, public management and governance the local level is blatantly absent. Databases on local public sector reforms are fragmented, incomparable, incoherent, nationally scattered and confined in their methodological approach.

The COST-Action LocRef is intended to remedy those deficits. It will generate coherent data bases for systematic comparison with a view to streamlining analytical approaches and synthesizing research outcomes. The Action provides a platform for establishing a new set of comparative (descriptive, explanatory, and evaluative) knowledge on public sector modernization and governance reforms at the local level and for integrating the fragmented research activities in this neglected area of investigation. It aims to enhance the scope of the conceptual foundations as well as the methodological rigor of comparative public administration. The Action prepares the basis for a systematic evaluation of local public management reforms, institutional modernization and democratic renewal within a European scale of comparison. Action activities will yield policy relevant knowledge concerning local reform measures from a European perspective, which can then be utilized to improve policy making for future public sector modernization.

LocRef is an EU-funded international research network on local public sector reforms with more than 100 senior and early stage researchers in 29 countries. Based on a shared European perspective, it brings together more than 200 senior and junior researchers and practitioners from about 50 renowned institutes in Europe. The period of funding runs from 2013-2017, and the total budget amounts to 700.000 Euro. The overall aim is to jointly assess the hitherto scattered and dispersed information bases on local public sector reforms, to generate new comparative knowledge, and develop policy-relevant frameworks for the design of future modernization processes in Europe. Networking activities of LocRef include inter alia international workshops and conferences, PhD training schools, high level seminars, short term scientific missions

(research stays for scholars in partner institutions) and joint publications. There are four thematic Working Groups (WG) studying various types of local-level reforms from a cross-countries comparative perspective:

*WG I: External (Post-) NPM:* This WG focuses on NPM-driven externalizations of local services to private or non-profit providers (contracting-out, functional/asset privatization, corporatization, competitive tendering). It also assesses the more recent Post-NPM reforms that are targeted towards re-municipalization and re-integration of previously externalized local functions.

*WG II: Internal (Post-) NPM:* Concentrating on the NPM-inspired principles of performance orientation and target steering, this WG scrutinizes various strategies of internal re-organization, process re-engineering, new budgeting and accounting systems, and Human Resource-related modernization, e.g. performance related pay.

*WG III: Territorial/Functional Re-Scaling:* European local governments have been – to varying degrees – subject both to territorial up-scaling (amalgamation) and/or trans-scaling (inter-local cooperation) of sub-national jurisdictions as well as to the re-allocation of responsibilities between levels of government. This WG examines both reform segments, as there is a close relationship between territorial consolidation and functional decentralization. With regard to territorial reforms, it concentrates on amalgamations and inter-local cooperation. Functional reforms include political decentralization, administrative decentralization and de-concentration of tasks.

*WG IV: Democratic Renewal:* Major attempts of local modernization have been directed at the revival of ‘old’ as well as to the introduction of ‘new’, participatory instruments at the local level of government and the inclusion of civil society into local policy making. This WG studies the strengthening of direct democracy (local referenda, direct election/recall of local executives) on the one hand and new forms of participatory and cooperative democracy on the other (citizen forums, consultations, youth/ neighbourhood councils, E-democracy).

## **2.2. Our book project**

This book proposal results from the work of a group of international researchers that have gathered and cooperated in the afore-mentioned Working Group 1 (in the following WG1) that has been formed in spring 2013 within the COST Action “Local Public Sector Reforms. An International Comparison – LocRef (IS 1207). Prof. Ivan Koprivic is “leader” of WG1, Prof. Gerard Marcou and Prof. Hellmut Wollmann are “co-leaders”.

While the COST Action of which our Working Group 1 (WG1) is one of the components addresses the “reorganization of the local public sector” in its

different aspects, including its “internal” organisational and instrumental changes the discussions within the WG1 and the ensuing articles address the “external” (institutional) reorganization which the (primarily local level) public sector has undergone particularly since the 1980s in European countries, In pursuing this focus the delivery of public and social services will take centre stage.

*Comprehensive scope of services.* The articles of this book aim at dealing comprehensively and connectedly with both with the public services (water, energy, waste management etc.) and with personal social services (such as elder care, health) in order to capture a broad picture thereof and to identify commonalities and differences in their organizational forms and logics. As in most other available literature these two service dimensions are treated separately our comprehensive analysis and discussion should provide some *novelty and added value*.

*Country selection:* Due to the fact that the countries that are involved in the COST Action in principle comprise all EU member countries (and in the case of Turkey even beyond) the selection of countries in this book has been conceptually purposeful in the sense that it has been meant to represent a broad of county profiles, first in the “West East” divide (in order to capture “old” West European EU member countries as well as “new” - formerly communist - Central Eastern European EU- accession countries) and, second, in the “North South” divide (in order to capture “Nordic” as well as “Mediterranean” countries). In pursuing this selection strategy the book has a good chance to generate *distinct added value* in an international discussion in which often merely the “usual suspects” or an otherwise narrower country sample are chosen.

*Developmental (“over time) approach.* The articles assembled in this book are guided by a developmental (“over time”) design in that the evolution and sequence of the institutional forms of public and social service provision is analysed in its historical evolution starting in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and extending to the present day situation. The conceptual and methodological assumption underlying this approach is that it allows to identify, through a “before and afterwards” analysis, institutional shifts if not ruptures and their determining factors.

Since the late 1990s (some, including the initial template of the COST Action, speak of a “post-NPM” phase) the until then largely convergent institutional development of the provision of public and social services appears to have given way to varied institutional trajectories.

*Focus on the most recent stage:* In the course of the discussions that have been conducted in the WG1 group in preparing the present volume it has decided and opted to focus the articles on the most recent (“post-NPM”, austerity policy etc.) stage while still paying adequate attention to the earlier stages and phases.

For one and most importantly, because of its “recentness” there is still no substantive research available leave alone published so that a book which concentrates on this period would generate a *significant novelty and added value*, while the earlier stages of this development have already been covered by research and by writing.

*Explanatory framework.* While in the “descriptive” component of studying the institutional development of service provision institution-building and institution choice are treated, methodologically speaking, as dependent variables (the “what?-question”), in its “analytical” dimension (and ambition) is directed at identifying the factors that have shaped and impinged upon the institutional development (as “independent”/“explanatory variables”). For embarking upon such “causal analysis” (the “why-question”) it has been proposed to draw on concepts drawn from “neo-institutionalism” and its variants

*Analytical and comparatist potential of “single country” reports.* Reflecting the methodological peculiarity (and weakness) of “single case studies”, the individual country reports, each addressing a single country, can achieve some “internal validity”, that is, generate country-specific “explanations” (within the methodological limits of “ad hoc” explanations), but are bound to fall short of attaining “external validity”, that is, truly “generalizable” statements and conclusions. In order to handle and overcome this methodological barrier it has been urged that the individual country reports follow and apply a common institutional(ist) and developmental design as well as focus on the most recent phase in order to achieve a degree of conceptual and textual consistency among the individual reports that would (hopefully) lend itself to tap the collective comparative potential and to approximate (at least “low range”) generalization.

*Methodology* The articles assembled in this book are primarily based on „secondary analysis“ as the authors or co-authors largely draw on already available research findings and literature, in part stemming from their own earlier work. As a significant part of the literature on which the articles are footed is written in the respective national tongue, that is in most cases in a non-Anglo-Saxon language a *valuable benefit and added value* of the book can be seen in that it thus mobilizes research findings and literature which would otherwise be hardly accessible and made available for the international scientific (as well as political) community.

### *3. Proposed content and expected time-table*

#### *3.1. Content*

The submitted book will come in three sections.

- The first section (and the main body of the book) will be made up of country chapters. As has been explained above in some detail, the individual country reports are guided by a common (institutional, developmental and focal) analytical scheme in order to make for a conceptual consistency among them which should allow comparative interpretation and conclusions.
- The three chapters in the second section come as (comparative) policy/sector reports. In addressing water, energy and hospitals there service fields are treated that rank prominently on the political agendas throughout Europe. All three sector reports deal with more than one country and are co-authored by experts from the respective countries.
- The chapters in the final section are “cross-cutting” in presenting overviews and summaries.

### **(Tentative) table of contents of the volume**

- *Introduction*

Wollmann, Hellmut/ Koprlic, Ivan/ Marcou, Gerard: Introduction by the volume editors

Wollmann, Hellmut: Definitional and conceptual framework of the volume

- *Country chapters*

McEldowney, John, Delivering public services in the United Kingdom in a period of austerity

Bönker, Frank/ Libbe, Jens/ Wollmann, Hellmut: Re-municipalization revisited: Long-term trends in the provision of local public services in Germany

Montin, Stig, Between market and hierarchy. The case of public utility and care for the elderly in Sweden

Citroni, Giulio/ Lippi, Andrea/ Profeti, Stefania, Local public service in Italy: still fragmentation

Tsekos, Theodore/Triantafyllopoulou, Athanasia: The deferred motion of the pendulum: Municipalization and Corporatization in Greece

Mikula, Lukacs: The evolution of local public services in Poland

Horvath, Tamás M., From municipalization to centralism. Changes in the Hungarian local public service delivery

Kopric, Ivan/ Dulabic, Vedran/ Musa, Anamarija/ Albergovic, Dubravka: Local Government and Local Public Services in Croatia

Tansug, Cagla/ Bayraktar, Ulas, Local service delivery in Turkey

- *(Comparative and coauthored) service sector chapters*

Allemand, Roselyn/ Dreyfus, Magali/ Magnusson, Magnus Arni/ McEldowney, John, Local governments and the energy sector. A comparison of France, Iceland and the United Kingdom

Lieberherr, Eva/ Lobina, Emanuele/ Viard, Claudine/ Uno, Jiro/ Herzberg, Carsten/ Muller-Quoy, Isabelle, Remunicipalization Trends in the Water Sector: Divergence across five countries

Reiter, Renate/ Klenk, Tanja/ Capellaro, Giulia/ Longo Francesco, Variants of privatization of hospitals in Germany, France and Italy

- *„Cross-cutting“ chapters*

Marcou, Gerard: The impact of EU legislation on the provision of public and social services

Bauby, Pierre/ Similie, Mihaela: Implementation and non-implementation of European Court decisions in the field of public and social service provision

Grossi, Giuseppe/ Reichard, Christoph, Institutional variants of local utility services – European countries

Wollmann, Hellmut: Summary: Reorganization of public and social services delivery in European countries: From public/municipal to private – and reverse or beyond?

### **3.2. Preliminary time table**

- Early versions of the papers were presented and discussed at a WG1 workshop held at the University of Potsdam in May 2014

- On 15.-16. January 2015 a workshop was held at the Université 1 Sorbonne in Paris (organized by Gerard Marcou) at which revised versions of the papers were presented and discussed.
- By the end of January the three editors of the volume will selected the papers which they assess to be publishable in the envisaged volume.
- Following the selection the editors will communicate with each of the authors to propose further revisions.
- The revised papers are expected to be turned in by the end of March 2015.
- Subsequently further revisions may be required.
- When finally accepted by the editors all papers insofar as they are written by not-English speaking (co-)author will undergo a language check by a native English speaker.
- Then the manuscripts will be processed (layout etc.) by one of Prof. Kopric's assistants.

#### 4. Market and competition

4a. We expect the book to be relevant and usable in educational teaching as well as in vocational/professional training. It should be useful for practitioners, particularly in local government and related local level activities as well as for journalists.

4c. As to already available and thus possibly “competing” literature reference should be made to Wollmann, Hellmut/ Marcou, Gerard (eds.) 2010, *The Provision of Public Services in Europe*, Edward Elgar. Its contributions on a range of services (water, energy, waste management, health, elder care etc.) are regionally restricted to the UK, France, Italy, Germany and (in part) Norway, while particularly Central Eastern European countries have not be included. As the relevant research for the book was done between 2005 and 2008, the book (naturally) does not address the more recent (“post-NPM” respectively austerity policy) phase.

Mention should furthermore be made of the chapter on Europe written by Pierre Baudy and Mihaela Similie and published in “Basic Services for All in an Urbanized World” (ed.UCLG) 2014, Routledge (so called “GOLD III”). The Baudy/Similie report provides an account on a broad spectrum of service provision and covering all EU member countries. The Chapter offers a well documented sectorally as well as regionally broad and up-date overview, but, being part of a “global” report, is written in a cursory and, as it were, “broad brush” manner. Thus, notwithstanding its analytical quality and merits, it lacks penetrating analyses of the country-specific and sector-specific developments and of their shaping factors.

Topically pertinent research has been pursued at the *Public Services International Research Unit* (PSIRU) at the University of Greenwich Business School directed by David Hall. Important studies have been published by him and his associates, but mostly in journals as internet downloads.

Reference should moreover be made of the “Yearbooks” (Annuaires) which have been published (in French language) by the *Groupe de Recherche sur l’Administration Locale en Europe* (GRALE) which operates at the Université Paris Panthéon-Sorbonne and is directed by Gérard Marcou. Each of the “Annuaires” has an international section which has been coordinated and coedited by Hellmut Wollmann since the early 2000s and each of which, in recent years, addressed a field of public and social service provision. By inviting specialists from the respective countries to write sector-specific country reports the “Annuaire” makes for a valuable information source in these subject matters.

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**Biographical information on the co-editors**

*Hellmut Wollmann*, Dr. jur., born 4.12.1936, emeritus professor of public administration at Freie Universität Berlin (1974-1993) Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (1993-2001). Kennedy Memorial Fellow at Harvard (1970-71). Visiting professor at numerous universities (Tokyo, Beijing, Moscow, Firenze, Göteborg etc.). Manifold memberships and activities in national and international academic associations. Chairman (1976-1993) of IPSA Research Committee on Local Government, Co-founder and President (1999-2001) of European Evaluation Society. Numerous articles and books, inter alia: *Introduction into Comparative Administration*. Edward Elgar 2014 (co-authored with Sabine Kuhlmann), *Provision of Public Services in Europe*, Edward Elgar (coedited with Gerard Marcou), *Evaluation in Public Sector Reform* (ed.) 2003 Edward Elgar

Entry Gerard Marcou

*Ivan Koprić*, Professor of Administrative Science, head of the Study Centre for Public Administration and Public Finances at the Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, Croatia; president of the Institute of Public Administration, Zagreb; editor-in-chief of the international scientific journal *Croatian and Comparative Public Administration*; member of several academic and public bodies in Croatia; author and editor of numerous books and articles, Recent books (in Croatian): *European Administrative Space* (co-author, 2012), *Reform of Local*

and Regional Self-Government in Croatia (ed., 2013), Administrative Science: Public Administration in Contemporary European Context (co-author, 2014), Europeanisation of the Croatian Public Administration (ed., 2014), Comparative Public Administration (ed., 2015, forthcoming).