

PROOF

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Towards NPM-ization of the Post-Communist State?

Attitudes of Public Officials towards Models of Bureaucracy in Central and Eastern Europe

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The establishment of Weberian-type bureaucracies has been one of the major objectives of the transformation of the post-communist state. Weberian bureaucracies with their emphasis on centralized hierarchies, office specialization, rule orientation and administrative staff characterized by merit recruitment, protection from political dismissal, predictable careers and salaries, and an elevated formal and social status have been a hallmark of the modernization in Western capitalist democracies. Weberian-type bureaucracies are typically seen as beneficial if not as a necessary condition for the consolidation of democracy (Linz and Stepan 1996), economic development and the prevention of public sector corruption (Evans and Rauch 1999).

The need for Weberian bureaucracies in Central and East European Countries (CEECs) has typically been discussed in opposition to the Leninist bureaucracy characteristic of communist regimes. The 'real-existing socialist administration' (Hesse 1993, König 1992) was characterized by the principle of democratic centralism, a general disregard for the rule of law and administrative staff based on the nomenclature system. Accordingly, ideological reliability, party membership and approval by the communist party prevail over expertise and experience when it comes to recruitment and promotion; careers in the bureaucracy, the economy and the party are interwoven; non-monetary rewards and parallel appointments are common in order to compensate for low salaries and the absence of a separate legal statute for state bureaucrats (Meyer-Sahling 2009a). The Leninist-type bureaucracy has been characterized

as 'over-politicised' (Goetz and Wollmann 2001) and as a 'partocracy' (Pakulski 1986). While a Weberian bureaucracy was turned into the developmental objective of administrative transformation in CEECs, the Leninist heritage was the anti-model that reformers sought to overcome.

In contrast to Western democracies, the New Public Management (NPM) had a peripheral status in the administrative reform discourse in post-communist CEECs. With its emphasis on organizational disaggregation, decentralization, output-orientation, performance measurement and managerial flexibility the NPM provided an alternative to a Weberian model of bureaucracy. Yet administrative reform discourse in the region commonly assumed that CEECs have to Weberianize first before they can start to consider the NPM (Verheijen and Coombes 1998, Meyer-Sahling 2011).

While the NPM has been increasingly challenged in the West by arguments such as the emergence of post-NPM and the emergence of a neo-Weberian state in continental Europe (see Christensen and Laegreid 2008, Dunleavy et al. 2005, Laegreid and Christensen 2007, Pollitt and Bouckaert 2004, for a critical review Lodge and Gill 2011), this chapter argues that the NPM has become increasingly popular in CEECs. More specifically, the chapter shows that public officials in CEECs demonstrate very favourable attitudes towards a performance-oriented, discretion-based yet politics-free model of bureaucracy.

This finding implies that the Weberian model of bureaucracy is largely considered as unattractive and rigid, which is puzzling when considering that it has been the dominant model in administrative reform discourse for most of the post-communist period. At the same time, the chapter reveals that there is very little acceptance of bureaucratic principles that are associated with the Leninist-type administration. Looking at the hearts and minds of public officials hence reveals that the Leninist legacy has clearly been overcome and the NPM is what officials like.

The executive politics perspective developed in this volume sheds light on the tension between models of bureaucracy in the politics of administrative reform in CEECs. More broadly, an executive politics lens explores how viable different models of bureaucracy are in different political contexts, especially when these contexts are in a process of transition and contestation. While the Weberian model of bureaucracy seemed to be largely uncontested, the analysis reveals the presence of contradictory ideas, interests and incentives among domestic political leaders and administrative policy-makers that have pushed CEECs directly towards the NPM rather than the Weberian route. It remains

to be seen to what extent and in what ways the favourable attitudes towards the NPM will find their way into structural reforms and the changing practices of managing public administration in CEECs.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section outlines three scenarios which are associated with the establishment of Weberian bureaucracies, the persistence of communist-type bureaucracies and the emergence of the NPM in CEECs. The second section provides the empirical analysis. The third section concludes and elaborates further on explanations for the NPM-ization of CEECs' bureaucracies.

Three models of bureaucracy for CEECs

This section develops three scenarios to capture the evolution of public administration in CEECs after the end of communism. Each of the scenarios is associated with one model of bureaucracy. First, the dominant model in the debate on the transformation of the post-communist state has been the Weberian model of bureaucracy (Goetz 2001). A rational-legal-type bureaucracy with an impartial and professional staff has been an essential feature of modernization in the Western capitalist world ever since Weber's writing (Weber 1980).

The debate on problems of 'transition and democratic consolidation' echoes the modernization paradigm. Linz and Stepan (1996) for instance include a 'usable state apparatus' as one of six arenas characterizing a fully consolidated democracy. Their understanding of the state is inspired by the Weberian model of bureaucracy, hence a reference to predictable, impartial and rule-bound bureaucracies whose staff is recruited and promoted on the basis of merit.

The debate on the economic transformation in CEECs provided additional support for the superiority of Weberian-type bureaucracies. Following a decade of neoliberal dominance, the state was brought back into the debate on the political economy of development. The impressive economic achievements of the Asian Tigers were at least partially explained with reference to the presence of a 'developmental state' (Evans 1995), which was assigned superior capacity, expertise as well as autonomy from societal and political pressures. Following the failure of structural adjustment programmes advocated by the World Bank and the IMF during the 1980s, even the World Bank shifted its attention towards 'good governance' and hence away from market-radical solutions to development (Grindle 2004). A Weberian approach was hence widely regarded as the superior solution to the post-communist problem.

The attractiveness of the Weberian model was reinforced when the prospect of accession to the European Union (EU) started to appear on the radar screen of policy-makers in CEECs, the European and other international institutions. When the EU formulated for the first time a realistic membership perspective for the CEECs at the 1993 Copenhagen Summit, the three core criteria were a consolidated democracy, a functioning democracy and the full implementation of the *acquis communautaire*. Public administration was not part of the first generation of membership conditions. Yet EU policy-makers became increasingly conscious of the need for administrative capacity in the CEECs in order to generate prospects for the successful transposition and implementation of the *acquis* (Dimitrova 2002). After all, the best laws are worth little if they are not implemented properly.

The credibility of the EU to promote public administration reform in CEECs suffered from the lack of treaty-based competencies over administrative affairs and the diversity in administrative configurations among member states. Initially the EU lacked a clear template for reform in CEECs. In the context of the accession process, SIGMA (Support for the Improvement of Governance and Management in Central and Eastern Europe, a joint initiative of the OECD and the EU, principally funded by the EU) became chiefly responsible for the development of a reform model. The result was the notion of a European Administrative Space, which assumes that public administration in the EU multi-level system of governance is based on shared principles such as legal predictability and legal accountability, impartiality and political neutrality, openness and transparency, effectiveness and efficiency. The concept did not assume a convergence of institutional configurations and processes but respects diversity. Yet it assumes that the European principles of administration are reflected in the culture and practice of public administration in the EU multi-level governance system (Cardona 1999).

More important in the current context the conceptualization of the European Administrative Space had a distinctly Weberian flavour. This was understandable given the dominance of the modernization paradigm at the time and the debate surrounding newly industrializing countries and transition countries. However, in the 1980s and 1990, the administrative reform discourse in Western capitalist democracies was dominated by the NPM, while the classic Weberian-type bureaucracy was associated with inefficiencies, rigidities and the inability to serve the needs of citizens and the economy.

Despite the presence of a potentially very attractive alternative (see below), the debate on administrative reform CEECs remained centred on

the need for a Weberian bureaucracy. It was commonly argued that it is 'too early' to pursue NPM-type reforms. The legacy of communism with its disregard for rules and the public interest would not provide suitable attitudes for the exercise of discretion that is central to the NPM. Instead, it is necessary to build rule-bound, predictable and accountable bureaucracies with politically neutral and impartial bureaucrats first. In other words, bureaucracies in CEECs needed to Weberianize first before they could take in a greater dose of NPM (Meyer-Sahling 2011, Verheijen and Coombes 1998).

Consequently, the EU approach to public administration reform placed particular emphasis on the rule of law, including the adoption of civil service laws, merit recruitment and promotion to professionalize personnel, predictable careers and salaries including seniority-based salary systems rather than performance-related pay, which was popular in the Western, especially Anglo-Saxon, democracies at that time.

Even if a basic consensus on the need for Weberian-type bureaucracies in CEECs emerged among policy-makers from the region and international organizations, it should not be inferred that all participants to the reform game promoted the same approach to public administration. In Latvia, for instance, the Minister for State Reform travelled with a delegation to New Zealand to learn from a public management reform 'champion', as a result of which an agency programme was established and so-called management contracts were introduced which allowed the free negotiations of salaries. Moreover, even among the administrative policy-makers in the CEECs the Weberian model was not uncontested. Reformers in several countries feared that an early stabilization of public administration could reduce the flexibility that is needed for privatization and the reform of the public sector. It would freeze in personnel that would lack both the skills and the attitude to work in the context of constitutional democracies and liberal market economies.

As the last paragraph indicates, the Weberian model of bureaucracy was not without alternatives. Two major alternatives are quickly identified. First, the main unwanted alternative in the debate on administrative reform in CEECs was the Leninist-type bureaucracy. The model of bureaucracy characterizing the communist regime, as outlined above, was in many respects the 'anti-model' and hence the legacy that had to be overcome. Yet the reform record in the region quickly raised worries that it may be more difficult to do so than expected. By the end of the 1990s, it was evident that several CEECs had not even managed to pass a civil service law. Even countries with good records in political and economic reforms such as the Czech Republic and Slovenia

failed to meet the most basic condition for the Weberianization of their administration.

Moreover, as public administration researchers moved on from discussing 'what has to be done after transition' to assessing 'what has actually been done since transition', it became evident that many core features of Leninist-type administrations persisted. Above all, party influence over personnel management remained widespread. Goetz and Wollmann (2001) even argued that the nature of public service politicization amounts to the emergence of a new type of executive governance that sets the CEECs apart from Western European traditions. Meyer-Sahling (2008) showed that the careers of senior civil servants in Hungary had more in common with late-communist career patterns than with Weberian-type careers. Appointees to top civil service positions tended to come and go with 'their' bloc of political parties. Many of them worked for political parties, had formerly been elected MPs or were elected after leaving their post as top official. In other words, the politico-administrative fusion of the late-communist days had apparently reproduced itself under democratic conditions.

Moreover, informal networks continued to exist within the state and between state and market. Stark and Bruszt (1998) identified the persistence of informal networks from the late-communist period as an asset that facilitated the implementation of economic reforms after transition. By contrast, Staniszkis (1991) associated the close connections between the state, the former nomenclature and the nascent private sector as a form of 'political capitalism' (also Ganev 2007 for a similar argument). Also, Hellman (1998) feared that the new class of oligarchs as the 'early winners' of the economic transition subsequently became the brakemen for further economic reform. In short, defining features of the communist administration continued to flourish in the post-communist context.

Theoretically, the persistence of features of the Leninist-type bureaucracy is not a surprise for many students of public administration and the new institutionalism. For instance, the uneven diffusion of the NPM across Western capitalist democracies is commonly related to the mediating effect of national administrative traditions (Painter and Peters 2010, Pollitt and Bouckaert 2004, Pollitt et al. 2007, but see Meyer-Sahling and Yesilkagit 2011 for a critical review). Moreover, both sociological and historical institutionalists tend to be sceptical with regard to the prospects of radical institutional transformations. Even if the transition to democracy and a market economy represented a critical juncture that set CEECs on a new path of political, economic

and administrative development, a change of attitudes and practices is typically seen as difficult to achieve. In particular, close observers were concerned that formal rules changed but the 'mentalities' of the communist legacy of the past persisted (Verheijen 2010). In other words, persisting values and attitudes were argued to prevent the successful transformation of public administration in CEECs.

The second alternative to the Weberianization of public administration in CEECs is the NPM. As mentioned above, the NPM was the dominant model in the discourse on administrative reform in the West (Hood 1991, 1995). With its emphasis on disaggregation, output-orientation, performance-measurement and giving managers the discretion over the management of resources and attainment of objectives, the NPM provided a clear alternative to proponents of Weberianization. Even if the NPM was peripheral to the administrative reform discourse in the early days after transition, there are at least three reasons why it was gradually becoming more and more attractive than a Weberian-type bureaucracy.

First, NPM dominated the administrative reform discourse in Western capitalist democracies at that time. Especially the reform programmes in the NPM 'benchmark cases' (Barzelay 2001) aimed to 'overcome' the Weberian legacy in order to create a more efficient approach to public sector management modelled on the private sector. As the transformation process in the CEECs was frequently labelled as a process of 'adaptation to the state of the art in the West' (Hesse 1998, Meyer-Sahling 2001), it would be only too natural to expect some form of diffusion of Western ideas and practices to the CEECs. Geographical proximity (Kopstein and Reilly 2000) facilitates the diffusion of norms across borders. Moreover, even if EU and SIGMA officials formally promoted a model of reform that was closer to a Weberian-type bureaucracy, an impressive army of consultants travelled to CEECs to give advice on economic policy reform, social policy reform and so on. Arguably, with each consultant arriving in CEECs the potential for the diffusion of NPM as the dominant model in the West grew.

Second, the economic transformation presents itself as an inspiration for public administration reform in CEECs. The debate on the economic transformation has largely been concerned with the tasks of transformation and questions surrounding the speed of reform. The initial debate for instance centred on the pros and cons of 'shock therapy' versus 'gradualist' approach to economic transformation. Even if the degree of state involvement in the economy differs quite significantly when looking at the outcomes of reform two decades after transition, the neoliberal paradigm was dominant among economic reformers in the early years

after transition (Bohle and Greskovits 2007). The glorification of markets in CEECs, it is argued here, spilled over into the public sector. That is, the belief in the superiority of the private sector has provided a vehicle for the import of private sector methods into public administration.

The glorification-of-markets-argument gains even more relevance when taking into account that several countries witnessed the ascendance of first-generation successful business managers into government positions. The former Prime Minister of Hungary Ferenc Gyurcsany, for instance, was a successful businessman (and former leader of the communist youth organization) before entering politics and becoming head of government in 2004. The former Minister of the Economy in the Gyurcsany government and then leader of the liberal party, SZDSZ, Koka, also was a businessman before joining government. In other words, the new generation of political leaders in CEECs frequently had a background in business.¹ They became so-called norm entrepreneurs and hence natural carriers of NPM ideas so that at least from the early 2000s onwards the scope for NPM-oriented reform expanded.

Third, we might argue that it is simply easier to institutionalize NPM-type methods on the ruins of the Leninist administration than a Weberian approach. As explained above, a Weberian-type bureaucracy is indeed fundamentally different from a Leninist-type administration. By contrast, the emphasis of NPM on strategic planning and performance management, output-orientation and discretion for managers to managers is, like it or not, much closer to the communist-era preference for central planning, output targets and discretionary governance. At the same time, it has to be recognized that NPM assumes a fundamental de-politicization of public administration, in that political leaders can set objectives but their implementation is left to public sector managers. To use terminology from the debate on the Europeanization of public administration, the 'goodness of fit' between the NPM and the communist legacy is much higher than between the communist legacy and a Weberian approach. Table 6.1 offers a brief overview of the three models of bureaucracy.

To be sure, this argument raises questions with regard to the sequencing of reforms in CEECs after the exit from communism. As outlined above, the discourse among international policy-makers assumed that the NPM should only be considered via, that is, *after* the institutionalization of a Weberian model of bureaucracy. By contrast, an institutionalist approach might be more comfortable with the direct progression from a Leninist-type bureaucracy towards the NPM by means of mechanisms of institutional 'layering' and 'conversion'. Streeck and Thelen

Table 6.1 Three models of bureaucracy

	Leninist	Weberian	NPM
Recruitment	Political reliability, merit secondary	Non-political, merit-based	Non-political, merit-based
Promotion	Discretionary, importance of political reliability	Non-discretionary, primarily seniority-based	With discretionary elements ('managerial flexibility'), performance-based
Pay	Discretionary, though with seniority elements, importance of non-monetary rewards	Non-discretionary, primarily seniority-based, exclusively monetary rewards	Discretionary ('managerial flexibility'), importance of performance-based elements, monetary rewards

(2005) define layering and conversion as mechanisms of endogenous institutional transformations that occur gradually as opposed to radical changes that occur suddenly after shocks and crises. They refer to the attachment of new elements to existing institutions and to the re-deployment of old institutions for new purposes respectively. Indeed, from an institutionalist point of view, the NPM becomes the middle ground between the (feared) institutional continuity of the Leninist-type bureaucracy and the (desired) radical institutional transformation towards the Weberian model of bureaucracy.

In summary, while the NPM remained in the periphery of the administrative reform discourse for much of the post-communist period, there are strong reasons to expect that the NPM has become increasingly prominent in the CEECs. Ironically, debate on public administration reform in Western democracies has recently moved towards the discussion of hybrid models such as the post-NPM and the neo-Weberian state (Christensen and Laegreid 2008, Dunleavy et al. 2005, Pollitt and Bouckaert 2004, but see Lodge and Gill 2011). The former identifies a partial return to Weberian features such as a centralization of government coordination and a re-aggregation of government operations. By contrast, the neo-Weberian model argues that, in particular,

continental Western European public administrations have undergone an incremental upgrade, which involved greater results- and citizen-orientation, but the core features of Weberian-type bureaucracies have persisted till today. Both perspectives on current administrative reform developments might therefore be better conceptualized as sub-types of the NPM and the Weberian model rather than models at the same level of abstraction. The remainder of this chapter therefore focuses on three core models of bureaucracy: the Weberian model, the Leninist model and the NPM. Specifically, it examines the attitudes of public officials towards these models.

Empirical analysis: predominance of the NPM

The analysis of civil servants' attitudes towards models of bureaucracy in CEECs relies on a survey of ministerial civil servants that was conducted in 2008 in the context of a SIGMA project on the 'sustainability of civil service reforms in Central and Eastern Europe after EU accession' (Meyer-Sahling 2009b). The survey was conducted in seven new member states, which joined the EU in 2004. They include Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia. It generated 2553 responses from civil servants employed in core structure of the ministerial bureaucracy. The survey was conducted as a web-based survey in local languages.² It was distributed via the Civil Service Departments or equivalent structures and targeted seven ministries and the office at the centre of government such as the prime minister's office, the government office or the state chancellery.

The survey consists of approximately 80 questions, which include questions regarding the attitudes of respondents vis-à-vis different principles of executive governance. The statements provide answers along the basic five-point Likert scale. Answers hence measure the intensity of a respondent's approval with a particular statement, which seeks to capture evidence for a particular concept.

In order to provide evidence for the extent to which the attitudes of officials correspond to one of the three models of bureaucracy, we examine four groups of questions as indicators (see Table 6.2).

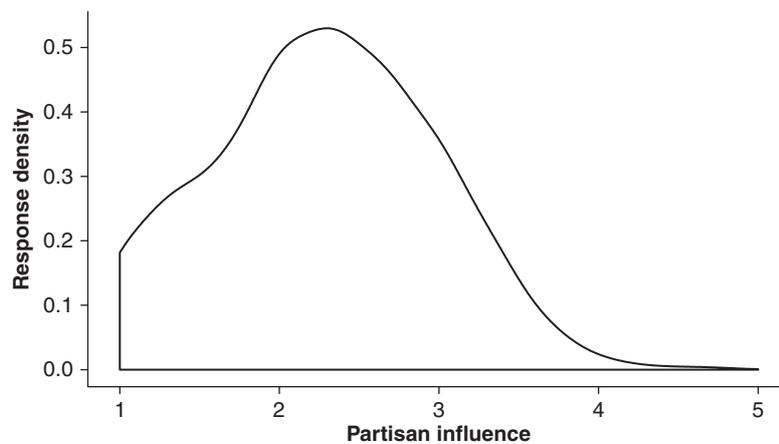
The first and second group of questions addresses the differences between Leninist-type bureaucracies on the one hand and Weberian and NPM-type bureaucracies on the other. As explained above, both the Weberian and the NPM model of bureaucracy assume that personnel management is based on merit and is free from political interference. By contrast, if the Leninist model of bureaucracy has persisted in CEECs,

Table 6.2 Assessment strategy for the distinction of models of bureaucracy

	Leninist	Weberian	NPM
'Partisan influence' over recruitment, appointment, promotion	Yes	No	No
'Merit institutions' regulate recruitment and selection	No	Yes	Yes
'Performance orientation' and managerial flexibility over promotion, pay and dismissal	?	No	Yes
'Seniority' determines promotions and pay; life-long careers, protection from dismissal	?	Yes	No

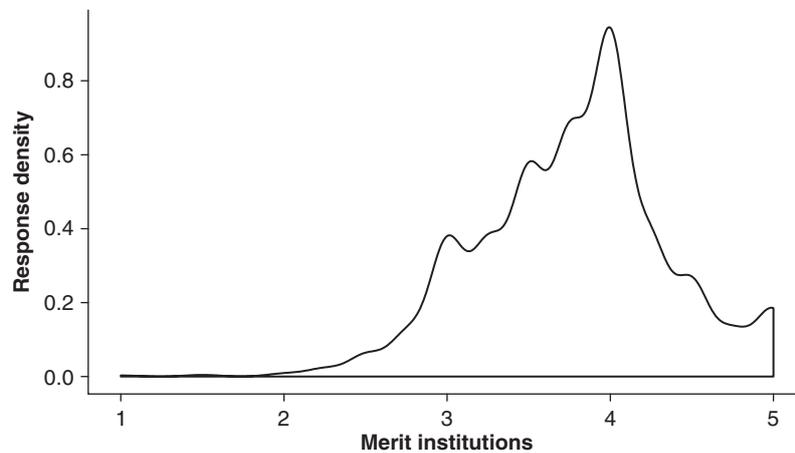
we should observe a general acceptance of partisan influence over recruitment and promotion decisions.

Accordingly, we label our first indicator 'partisan influence' and our second indicator 'merit institutions'. Attitudes towards partisan influence are based on three questions (listed below Figure 6.1), while



- It is acceptable that political parties that have won democratic elections give jobs in the ministry to people who supported them before/during the elections.
- It is acceptable that ministers appoint their own team of trusted senior officials in order to control the policy-making process.
- It is reasonable that party membership is a condition for promotion to a higher position.

Figure 6.1 Attitudes towards partisan influence over personnel management



- It is desirable that candidates for a vacancy in the civil service pass a written examination to test their qualification before taking on their job.
- The recruitment process should contain an oral examination.
- A possibility to appeal should always be permitted to candidates.
- Examiners should have certified competencies in the field of evaluation.

Figure 6.2 Attitudes towards merit institutions

attitudes towards merit institutions are measured on the basis of four questions (listed below Figure 6.2).

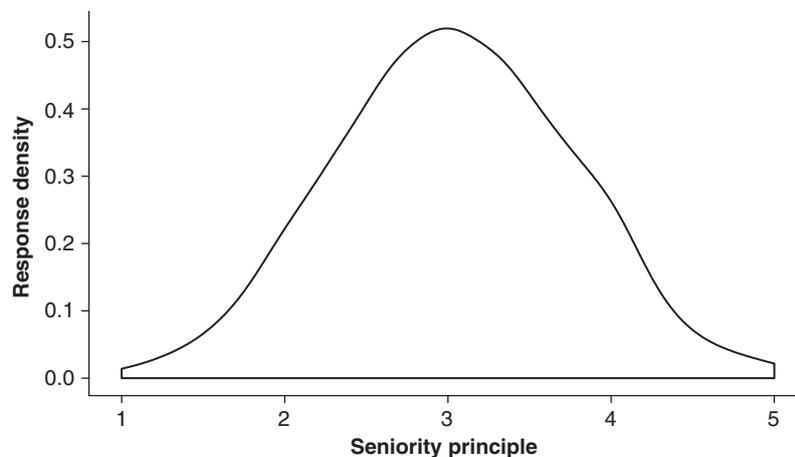
Figure 6.1 shows that civil servants in CEECs are by and large opposed to the concept of partisan influence over personnel management and hence to a key feature of Leninist-type bureaucracies. The figure shows the highest response density for a value just above 2, whereby 2 is equivalent to a 'disagreement' with the notion of partisan influence. The high response density for the value 1 indicates 'strong disagreement' and therefore that attitudes towards partisan influence are actually very negative.

Figure 6.2 shows that merit institutions enjoy a high degree of support among civil servants in CEECs. The questions regarding merit institutions concentrate on the presence and application of civil service examinations, including the presence of written exams, oral exams, certified examiners and the possibility to appeal against the outcomes of exams. These institutional features are typically associated with the presence of meritocratic bureaucracies. The median response to the questions is the value 4, which is equivalent to an 'agreement' with the survey questions. Figure 6.2 therefore complements Figure 6.1 well, in

that an opposition to partisan influence is matched by support for the presence of merit institutions in personnel management.

Our third and fourth group of questions refer specifically to the difference between the Weberian and NPM model of bureaucracy. Due to the emphasis of Weberianess on predictable careers and salaries as well as permanent tenure, we should observe a general preference for seniority-based features of personnel management. In particular, we associate Weberianess with favourable attitudes towards promotion and pay on the basis of seniority as well as life-long careers in public administration. Accordingly, we label our indicator ‘seniority’, which consists of three questions (see below Figure 6.3).

By contrast, if attitudes are positive to the NPM, we should observe support for performance orientation and managerial discretion in the area of personnel management. In particular, we expect a favourable evaluation of performance related pay in the civil service as one of the hallmarks of the NPM, discretion for manager to pay bonuses, strictly performance-based promotions and discretion for managers to fire subordinates that performs poorly. Our indicator is called ‘performance



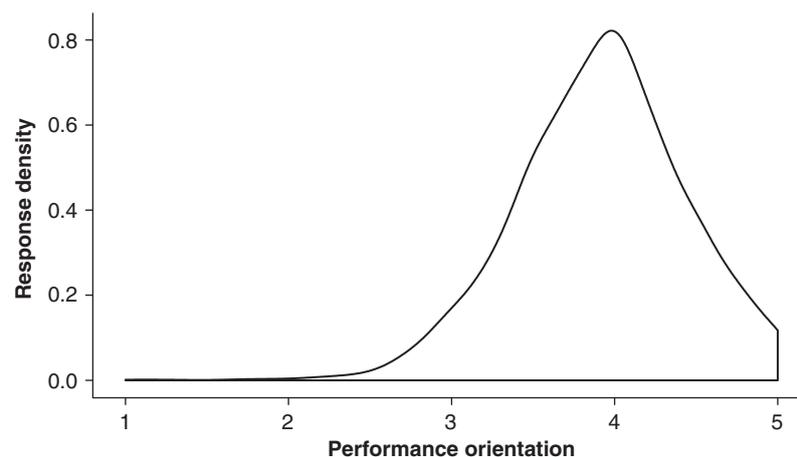
- Length of service (i.e. number of years in the ministry) in the organization should be an important criterion for promotion to a higher position.
- In the ministries, it is desirable that experience (i.e. number of years) counts more towards determining pay levels than other criteria.
- Life-long tenure is a good principle for employment in a government ministry

Figure 6.3 Attitudes towards Weberian-type institutions

orientation'. It consists of four questions, which strictly speaking refer to both managerial flexibility and to performance orientation.

Figure 6.3 shows a largely indifferent attitude towards seniority-based features of personnel management and hence a lukewarm support for Weberian features at the very best. The median response to the questions is the value 3, which stands for a 'neutral' answer towards the survey questions. The mean is just below 3 and hence tends towards a negative attitude. In short, there is neither enthusiastic support nor great opposition to classic Weberian features of personnel management.

Figure 6.4, by contrast, shows a highly positive attitude towards performance orientation and managerial flexibility in the civil service. The responses peak at the value 4, which stands for 'agreement' but there is also a considerable proportion of responses that indicates 'strong agreement' for performance orientation. At the same time there are hardly any civil servants in the region that are opposed to performance-oriented features in personnel management.



- Promotions to higher positions should strictly be on the basis of individual performance.
- Pay for performance is a good principle for the reward of civil servants.
- In the ministries, it is desirable that experience (i.e. number of years) counts more towards determining pay levels than other criteria.
- Directors must have discretion to pay bonuses in order to reward good performance.
- Directors of departments should have more freedom to fire staff who perform poorly.

Figure 6.4 Attitudes towards NPM-type institutions

Our chapter has concentrated on a regional pattern and does not address cross-country differences. A preliminary analysis suggests the officials in Central European states such as Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia are slightly more pro-NPM than their counterparts in the Baltic states. This may look surprising in that the Baltic States embraced the neoliberal model of economic reform far more enthusiastically after transition than the Central European states, in particular Slovenia (Bohle and Greskovits 2007).

Yet it has to be acknowledged that the differences between the countries are remarkably small. To be more precise, none of our seven countries shows a dramatically different pattern, in that predominantly positive attitudes towards partisan influence and seniority or predominantly negative attitudes towards performance orientation and merit institutions were identified. Our analysis therefore suggests that NPM-ization of the civil service may indeed be a regional trend that applies across CEECs.

Conclusion

This chapter examined the attitudes of civil servants in CEECs towards models of bureaucracy. It showed that attitudes are especially favourable vis-à-vis an NPM approach to public administration. Based on a survey of civil servants in seven CEECs, we found a general preference for de-politicization and the presence of merit institutions in combination with a preference for performance orientation and managerial flexibility in public administration.

The highly negative attitudes towards partisan influence over personnel management suggest that core features of the Leninist-type bureaucracy are no longer accepted among civil servants in CEECs. The argument that values, norms and mentalities of the communist times have persisted does therefore not find support by our assessment. In addition, the chapter identified an indifferent attitude of civil servants towards classic features of Weberian bureaucracies, such as an emphasis on seniority in pay and promotion decisions and a general preference for life-long careers in public administration.

Especially the lack of support for the Weberian model of bureaucracy is puzzling in the light of its dominance in administrative reform discourse since the transition from communism both within CEECs and among international policy-makers and academics. Our analysis does not imply that the Weberian model was unpopular in the early post-communist period. The lack of data does not allow us to make inferences

with regard to earlier points in time. Moreover, our analysis focused on only a few albeit key features of classic Weberian bureaucracies. There are other institutional features of personnel management, such as the focus on separate statutes for public officials, exclusively monetary salaries, the absence of parallel employment and a special disciplinary code, which might enjoy more support than seniority orientation and life-long careers. We can hence not exclude at this point the possibility that civil servants in CEECs prefer a blend of Weberian and NPM-type approaches to public administration, which might even point towards a neo-Weberian conception of public administration. Future research will have to examine these questions further. However, it can be suggested that years of advocacy of 'Weberian' bureaucracy that largely resulted in disappointing outcomes in addition to a generational change within the bureaucracies (and resultant attitude change) have led to a growing receptiveness of supposedly 'modern' NPM-related ideas.

It is also important to recognize that positive attitudes towards the NPM do not mean that civil services in CEECs are necessarily structured along NPM lines or that they function in accordance with NPM principles. Reform ideas, formal structures, internal processes and the attitudes of officials do not have to match but may indeed be incongruent. For instance, the study of executive politics in CEECs has shown that the practice of personnel management is deeply and intensely politicized in several CEECs, in particular in the new member states from Central Europe as opposed to the three Baltic States (Meyer-Sahling and Veen forthcoming). Highly positive attitudes towards the de-politicization of the civil service might therefore indicate dissatisfaction of civil servants with the status quo in their own place of employment. However, if we accept that attitudes have at least some impact on the behaviour of individuals as well as on their support and/or opposition towards structural reform, then it can be concluded that the prospects for the NPM-ization of CEECs are very positive.

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The favourable perspective regarding the NPM by civil servants in CEECs raises further questions with regard to the main carriers of NPM thinking and origins of NPM-ization. Taking an executive politics perspective, the chapter argued that there are at least three major driving forces behind the popularity of the NPM in CEECs. First, the dominance of the NPM in Western administrative reform discourse in the 1980s and 1990s has spilled over to the East. Second, economic transformation in CEECs has implied a glorification of markets that has diffused NPM thinking into public administration. Third, the rise of a new generation of political leaders in CEECs with experience in business and/or

simply a great appreciation of the private sector since the early 2000s has raised the political salience and popularity of NPM-type methods for the reform of the public administration.

It is difficult to say at this stage which of the processes is more or less important. They are closely connected and are relevant, even if to varying degrees, for all CEECs that joined the EU since 2004. The diffusion of ideas from the West, the glorification of markets and the rise of a new generation of political leaders have hence all plausibly affected the positive attitudes of civil servants towards NPM. Future research will have to examine in more detail the relative importance of these processes and the trajectories of individual countries.

Notes

1. Even among the non-businessmen we can find strong and outspoken proponents of the private sector such as the current (since 2010) and former (2002–2006) Finance Minister of Slovakia, Ivan Miklos.
2. It is inherently difficult to estimate 'response rates' in case of web-based surveys. However, judging by the total number of staff in the surveyed ministries, we estimate a response rate of between 15 and 25 per cent. The distribution is broadly identical across countries.

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AQ2

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Chapter 6

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