

GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT SERIES



PUBLIC AND SOCIAL SERVICES IN EUROPE

FROM PUBLIC AND
MUNICIPAL TO PRIVATE
SECTOR PROVISION

EDITED BY HELLMUT WOLLMANN,
IVAN KOPRIĆ, GÉRARD MARCOU



IIAS
International Institute
of Administrative Sciences



Governance and Public Management

Series Editor

Robert Fouchet
Universite Aix Marseille
France

Taco Brandsen
Radboud University Nijmegen
The Netherlands

The Governance and Public Management series, published in conjunction with the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS), brings the best research in public administration and management to a global audience. Encouraging a diversity of approach and perspective, the series reflects the Institute's conviction for a neutral and objective voice, grounded in the exigency of fact. How is governance conducted now? How could it be done better? What defines the law of administration and the management of public affairs, and can their implementation be enhanced? Such questions lie behind the Institute's core value of accountability: those who exercise authority must account for its use to those on whose behalf they act.

More information about this series at
<http://www.springer.com/series/15021>

Hellmut Wollmann • Ivan Koprić • Gérard Maréou
Editors

Public and Social Services in Europe

From Public and Municipal to Private Sector
Provision

palgrave
macmillan

Editors

Hellmut Wollmann
Institute for Social Sciences
Humboldt University (HU) Berlin
Germany

Gérard Maréou
Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne
France

Ivan Koprić
University of Zagreb
Croatia

The Governance and Public Management Series

ISBN 978-1-137-57498-5 ISBN 978-1-137-57499-2 (eBook)

DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-57499-2

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016945752

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s) 2016

The author(s) has/have asserted their right(s) to be identified as the author(s) of this work in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made.

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Macmillan Publishers Ltd. London.

EDITORS' FOREWORD

This book comprises chapters written, discussed and prepared under the aegis of Working Group 1 (WG1) of the *COST Action IS1207* Local Public Sector Reforms: An International Comparison (LocRef). The chair of the Action is Professor Sabine Kuhlmann (University of Potsdam, Germany) and the vice-chair is Professor Geert Bouckaert (University of Leuven, Belgium). The Action works as four thematic working groups (WGs) which study various types of local level reforms from a comparative, cross-country perspective, as described in the Action's Memorandum of Understanding of 21 November 2012.

We serve as chair (Professor Ivan Koprić) and co-chairs (Professor Gérard Maréou and Professor Hellmut Wollmann) of the COST Action's WG1 which has focused on the reorganisation of the public, especially municipal, sector in the provision of public services (public utilities and personal social services) across European countries, with special emphasis on the most recent developments.

The work of WG1 has essentially been conducted under the umbrella (and with the financial support) of the LocRef Action; however, it has also benefited noticeably from the participation and sponsorship of GRALE (*Groupement de Recherche sur l'Administration Locale en Europe*), CNRS, Paris, which is under the direction of Gérard Maréou and counts Hellmut Wollmann and Sabine Kuhlmann among the members of its *Conseil Scientifique*. The initial formulation of the theme of WG1 drew heavily on earlier work conceived, pursued and published under the auspices of GRALE.¹

The papers proposed and written as part of the activity of WG1 were prepared and developed in several rounds of discussion which began during the kickoff session of the COST Action in Brussels in March 2013, continued in Edinburgh (11 September 2013), Potsdam (15–16 May 2014) and Paris (15–16 January 2015). The discussions were brought to a conclusion at the Action's conference in Dubrovnik, Croatia, in May 2015. At the outset, a conceptual framework was put forward and the aim of the group discussions was to promote conceptual and thematic consistency across the chapters.

Out of the 25 papers prepared in WG1, 19 have been selected for publication in this volume whilst others were published in a special issue (No. 3/2015) of the journal *Croatian and Comparative Public Administration* of which Ivan Koprić is chief editor. We thank the authors for the high quality of the contributions to both this volume and the special issue of the journal.

The final preparations for publication of this book were supported by the Study Centre for Public Administration and Public Finances of the Faculty of Law in Zagreb which is chaired by Ivan Koprić. We give particular thanks to Assistant Professor Goranka Lalić Novak for undertaking the important task of the technical editing of the manuscripts and to Dr Teo Giljević for producing the index.

We also wish to thank our publisher, Palgrave, and professors Taco Brandsen and Robert Fouchet, the co-editors of the Palgrave Series *Governance and Public Management*, for including our volume in the series.

Last but not least, we wish to thank Christian Schwab, MA (who was the Academic Project Coordinator and Secretary of the COST Action) for his valuable support throughout our project and in the publication of this volume.

Hellmut Wollmann
Berlin, Germany
Ivan Koprić
Zagreb, Croatia
Gérard Maréou
Paris, France

NOTE

1. See Wollmann H. and Maréou G. (eds.) (2010) *The Provision of Public Services in Europe. Between State, Local Government and Market*. Cheltenham, Edward Elgar.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS OF COUNTRY NAMES¹ AND AUTHORS

HR	Croatia
CZ	Czech Republic
F	France
D	Germany
GR	Greece
H	Hungary
IS	Iceland
I	Italy
PL	Poland
SK	Slovakia
E	Spain
S	Sweden
CH	Switzerland
TR	Turkey
GB	United Kingdom
HB & FM	Hartmut Bauer, Friedrich Markmann, Local Public Service Delivery between Privatization and Publicization: The Renaissance of the Cooperative?
PB & MS	Pierre Bauby, Mihaela M. Similie, What impact of European Court of Justice decisions in the field of local public services provision?
GG & CR	Giuseppe Grossi, Christoph Reichard, Institutional variants of local utility services: Evidence from several European countries
GM	G�rard Mar��ou, The impact of EU law on local public service provision: competition and public service
INTRO	Hellmut Wollmann, Comparative Study of public and social services provision: Definitional, conceptual and methodological frame

SUM Hellmut Wollmann, Provision of public and social services in Europe
From public to private—and reverse or beyond?

NOTE

1. <http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/conventn/Distsigns.pdf>

CONTENTS

- 1 Comparative Study of Public and Social Services Provision:
Definitions, Concepts and Methodologies** 1
Hellmut Wollmann
- 2 The Impact of EU Law on Local Public Service Provision:
Competition and Public Service** 13
Gérard Maréou
- 3 What Impact Have the European Court of Justice Decisions
Had on Local Public Services?** 27
Pierre Bauby and Mihaela M. Similie
- 4 Delivering Public Services in the United Kingdom in a Period
of Austerity** 41
John McEldowney
- 5 Local Government Public Service Provision in France:
Diversification of Management Patterns and Decentralisation
Reforms** 55
Gérard Maréou

6	Remunicipalisation Revisited: Long-Term Trends in the Provision of Local Public Services in Germany	71
	Frank Bönker, Jens Libbe, and Hellmut Wollmann	
7	Local Government and the Market. The Case of Public Services and Care for the Elderly in Sweden	87
	Stig Montin	
8	Local Public Services in Italy: Still Fragmentation	103
	Giulio Citroni, Andrea Lippi, and Stefania Profeti	
9	Delivery of Municipal Services in Spain: An Uncertain Picture	119
	Jaume Magre Ferran and Esther Pano Puey	
10	From Municipal Socialism to the Sovereign Debt Crisis: Local Services in Greece 1980–2015	135
	Theodore N. Tsekos and Athanasia Triantafyllopoulou	
11	Mixed System: Transformation and Current Trends in the Provision of Local Public Services in the Czech and Slovak Republics	151
	Juraj Nemec and Jana Soukopová	
12	The Evolution of Local Public Service Provision in Poland	169
	Łukasz Miłkuła and Marzena Walaszek	
13	From Municipalisation to Centralism: Changes to Local Public Service Delivery in Hungary	185
	Tamás M. Horváth	
14	Local Government and Local Public Services in Croatia	201
	Ivan Koprić, Anamarija Musa, and Vedran Đulabić	

15	Local Service Delivery in Turkey	217
	Ulaş Bayraktar and Çağla Tansug	
16	Local Government and the Energy Sector: A Comparison of France, Iceland and the United Kingdom	233
	Roselyne Allemand, Magali Dreyfus, Magnús Árni Skjöld Magnússon, and John McEldowney	
17	Water Provision in France, Germany and Switzerland: Convergence and Divergence	249
	Eva Lieberherr, Claudine Viard, and Carsten Herzberg	
18	Hospital Privatisation in Germany and France: Marketisation Without Deregulation?	265
	Tanja Klenk and Renate Reiter	
19	Models of Local Public Service Delivery: Privatisation, Publicisation and the Renaissance of the Cooperative?	281
	Hartmut Bauer and Friedrich Markmann	
20	Variance in the Institutions of Local Utility Services: Evidence from Several European Countries	297
	Giuseppe Grossi and Christoph Reichard	
21	Public and Social Services in Europe: From Public and Municipal to Private Provision—And Reverse?	313
	Hellmut Wollmann	
	Index	335

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Roselyne Allemand Reims University, Reims, France

Pierre Bauby RAP, Paris, France

Hartmut Bauer Potsdam University, Potsdam, Germany

Ulaş Bayraktar Mersin University, Mersin, Turkey

Frank Bönker Saxonian University of Co-operative Education, Riesa, Germany

Giulio Citroni Università della Calabria, Rende, Italy

Magali Dreyfus CERAPS-Lille 2 University, Lille, France

Vedran Đulabić Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia

Jaume Magre Ferran Barcelona University, Barcelona, Spain

Giuseppe Grossi Kristianstad University, Kristianstad, Sweden

Kozminski University, Warszawa, Poland

Carsten Herzberg Institute for Cooperation Management and Interdisciplinary Research, Berlin, Germany

Tamás M. Horváth MTA-DE Public Service Research Group, Debrecen, Hungary

Tanja Klenk Potsdam University, Potsdam, Germany

Ivan Koprić Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia

Jens Libbe German Institute of Urban Affairs, Berlin, Germany

Eva Lieberherr Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland

- Andrea Lippi* University of Firenze, Firenze, Italy
- Magnús Árni Skjöld Magnússon* Bifröst University, Borgarnes, Iceland
- Gérard Maréou* University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, Paris, France
- Friedrich Markmann* Potsdam University, Potsdam, Germany
- John McEldowney* Warwick University, Coventry, UK
- Łukasz Mikula* Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
- Stig Montin* Gothenburg University, Gothenburg, Sweden
- Anamarija Musa* Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia
- Juraj Nemec* Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic
- Stefania Profeti* University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy
- Esther Pano Puey* Barcelona University, Barcelona, Spain
- Christoph Reichard* University of Potsdam, Potsdam, Germany
- Renate Reiter* Faculty for Cultural and Social Studies, FernUniversität Hagen, Hagen, Germany
- Mihaela M. Similie* RAP, Paris, France
- Jana Soukopová* Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic
- Çagla Tansug* Galatasaray University, İstanbul, Turkey
- Athanasia Triantafyllopoulou* Peloponnese Institute of Technological Education, Kalamata, Greece
- Theodore N. Tsekos* Peloponnese Institute of Technological Education, Kalamata, Greece
- Claudine Viard* University of Cergy-Pontoise, Cergy-Pontoise, France
- Marzena Walaszek* Human Geography and Spatial Management, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
- Hellmut Wollmann* Humboldt University Berlin, Berlin, Germany

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 8.1	Percentage of nursery schools under public and private management	112
Fig. 8.2	Percentage of beds provided in residential care structures under public, private and NPO management	113
Fig. 11.1	The organisation of the local economy	154
Fig. 13.1	Development scheme of municipality-owned companies in ECE	191
Fig. 13.2	Basic types of recent public service management initiative and their movement in the case of Hungary in 2010s	197
Fig. 15.1	Social expenditure in Turkey	228
Fig. 15.2	Social expenditure of different public bodies (percentage of GDP)	228
Fig. 19.1	Two-tier cooperative model	291
Fig. 19.2	Two-tier cooperative model with voting rights according to equity investment	292

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1	Problems with assessment of public aid for municipal services	30
Table 5.1	UK central and local institutions and responsibilities for waste	47
Table 6.1	Profile of providers of long-term care in Germany, 1999–2011 (percentage share)	77
Table 6.2	Profile of providers of services for children and young people in Germany, 1990–1991 to 2010–2011 (percentage share)	78
Table 7.1	Employment in education, healthcare and social services by type of organisation in 2000 and 2012 (number of employees)	94
Table 9.1	Municipalities and population in Spain (2013)	120
Table 9.2	Modes of public service delivery in Spain	121
Table 9.3	Functional decentralisation in Spain (2007–13)	121
Table 9.4	Inter-institutional service provision in Spain (2007–13)	121
Table 9.5	Main characteristics of the studies and data sources	127
Table 9.6	Modes of municipal service delivery in Catalonia (N = 620)	128
Table 9.7	Modes of municipal services delivery in Spain (%) n = 150	129
Table 9.8	Modes of municipal service delivery in social and personal services	130
Table 11.1	The scale of the local economy in Czechoslovakia	154
Table 11.2	Profiles of the five largest foreign companies involved in water supply in the Czech Republic (2014)	159
Table 11.3	Profile of organisations providing waste management services in the Czech Republic, ranked in ascending order of cost to the user (2010–13)	160

Table 11.4	Profile of organisations providing waste management services in Slovakia, ranked in ascending order of cost to the user (2003)	161
Table 11.5	Capacities of main forms of in-house elderly care in the CR and Slovakia	163
Table 11.6	Ownership of hospitals in Slovakia (all types of hospitals, 2012)	164
Table 11.7	Regional education system in the Czech Republic (school year 2013–14)	165
Table 12.1	Distribution of responsibilities and functions across governmental levels in Poland	171
Table 12.2	Comparison of public and non-public education in Poland	179
Table 13.1	Places in residential care homes in Hungary, 2006–2012	196
Table 14.1	Communal services recognised in the CSA	206
Table 14.2	Residential care for the elderly in Croatia in 2013	209
Table 14.3	Modalities of accommodation payment	210
Table 14.4	Profile of the founders of educational institutions by sector	211
Table 18.1	Relationship between form of state governance and hospital policies	268
Table 20.1	Comparison of models of local utility service delivery	300

Comparative Study of Public and Social Services Provision: Definitions, Concepts and Methodologies

Hellmut Wollmann

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This brief introduction sets out the definitions, concepts and methodology underpinning the chapters assembled in this volume.

Selection of Countries

The chapters of this book deal with some 20 countries representing a wide range of European (EU) member states (plus Switzerland and Iceland); they cover the west-east axis, including both western European (WE) countries and central eastern European (CEE) countries, and the north-south axis, from the Nordic to the Mediterranean countries. Besides being broadly representative, this spread of countries should be conducive to cross-country and cross-policy comparisons.

1.2 SELECTION OF SECTORS OF SERVICE PROVISION

The chapters assembled in this volume discuss institutional developments in the provision of public services and personal social services.

H. Wollmann (✉)
Humboldt University Berlin, Berlin, Germany

The term *public services* is used to refer to water supply, sewage treatment, waste management, public transport and energy provision (for the French administration's legally derived notion of *service public* see Marcoum, Public service provision in France, *in this volume*). In English and in the British context, these services are usually referred to as *public utilities*; in France, they are *services publics industriels et commerciaux*; in Italy, *servizi pubblici* or *servizi di pubblica utilità* and in Germany, *Daseinsvorsorge* ('provision of the necessities of existence'). The EU introduced the term *services of general economic interest* (SGEI) to refer to this service sector (see European Commission 2011; see also Bauby and Similie 2014; Marcou, 'The Impact of EU Law', *in this volume*).

In contrast, *personal social services* and *health services* relate to individual social or health needs and in EU terminology, are referred to as *social services of general interest* (SSGI), a category which encompasses 'health care, childcare, care for the elderly, assistance to disabled persons or social housing' (see European Commission 2011: 2).

These two broad service sectors are usually treated separately in the literature, but the country chapters of this volume make a point of considering both sectors to facilitate a much more comprehensive analysis and thus, yield new empirical and theoretical insights.

1.3 INSTITUTIONAL APPROACH

Within political science, distinctions are drawn between *polity*, *politics* and *policy*. The term *policy* refers to the content and results of political decision-making, *politics* to the processes and conflicts surrounding political decision-making and *polity* to the *institutional/organisational* structure and context in which policies are decided and implemented.

The chapters of this book take an *institutionalist* perspective to focus on the *polity*, that is, on service provision at the *institutional level*, first on the *subnational/local level*.

Variance in the Institutions Involved in Public and Social Services Provision

A kind of taxonomy (and "glossary") of the institutions involved in service provision is given here to encourage the use of common terminology throughout the book. Whilst this attempt to construct a *lingua franca* may entail some loss in the substantive and cognitive differentiation and subtlety inherent in country-specific terms, it should improve readability and facilitate comparisons between countries.

- *Public sector*—used as a generic term—comprises the state, sub-national and, in particular, municipal sectors. Where public and social services are delivered directly by public sector’s (particularly municipal sector) administrative units and personnel, one can also refer to *in-house* delivery or provision of services.
- The sometimes monolithic public sector may be disaggregated and decentralised at the organisational level by (horizontally) *hiving off* administrative units. Drawing on the *principal agent theory* and vocabulary, this process may also be termed *agentification* or *agencification* (see Van Thiel 2012; Torsteinsen and van Genutsen 2016).¹
- The model of service provision that organisationally distances and disaggregates service provision from core administrative functions of the responsible public sector body, whilst ensuring that this body remains legally responsible and that services are under the aegis of an elected council and/or chief executive is called *régie* or *régie directe* (in France), *municipalizzate* (in Italy), *Eigenbetriebe* (in Germany) or *direct labour organisation* (in the UK) (see Marcou, ‘The Impact of EU Law’, *in this volume*; Grossi et al. 2010, especially Table 10.1). In the terminology of principal agent theory, one might refer to *internal agentification* (see Torsteinsen and van Genutsen 2016).
- The term *corporatisation* (see Grossi and Reichard *in this volume*) has come to be widely used (also in most chapters of *this volume*) to describe horizontal organisational decentralisation which is directed at the creation of legally independent (private law- or public law-based) organisations or enterprises with managerial autonomy. When corporatisation is based on private law, the corporatised units are usually organised as limited companies or stock companies; public law-based corporatisation (*Eigengesellschaften* in Germany) makes it easier for private investors to acquire minority or majority shares in the corporation and thus, form *mixed (public-private) companies* and can be used to promote *asset privatisation* (see below). The term *municipally owned enterprises (MOEs)* has also gained widespread currency as well.² In the terminology of principal agent theory, corporatisation may also be referred to as *external agentification*.³
- Municipalities (and/or other public authorities) may establish *inter-municipal/inter-organisational companies* (sometimes legally independent) for the purpose of collaborative service provision.

- *Mixed companies* combine public (municipal) and private ownership.⁴ A variant of the *mixed company* which has recently gained prominence is the *organisational public-private partnership* (PPP) which is made up of public/municipal and private shareholders and can be distinguished from *contractual PPPs* in which the organisation remains in public (municipal) ownership and the involvement of private investors is based on often complicated contractual arrangements. In a *contractual PPP*, a municipality solicits private finance for an infrastructure project and in many cases, private sector companies will also build the facilities and operate the relevant services (see Grossi and Reichard *in this volume*).
- The *not-for-profit* or *third sector* is essentially made up of non-public, usually non-profit-making organisations (sometimes referred to as *non-governmental organisations*, NGOs) that have salaried staff although they depend mainly on voluntary, unpaid labour. Some of these organisations receive significant public funding and thus, in practice, function as *quasi-public* organisations.
- Overlapping with the formally organised third sector is an ‘*informal*’ sector (see Munday 2000: 268) made up of *societal* and civic groups such as charities, self-help groups, family and neighbourhood networks which do not usually have a formal institutional structure and whose workers are normally unpaid.
- *Outsourcing* (*contracting out*) of public functions or services is a term used to denote the transfer of responsibility for delivery of public and social services from a public/municipal authority to an outside provider (which may be public, semi-public, private or non-public and non-profit-making). Outsourcing is usually based on a competitive procedure based on the awarding of a (usually time-limited) concession contract. In France, outsourcing (*gestion déléguée*, which includes recent variants) has traditionally been a core strategy for municipal service provision (see Marcou, Public service provision in France, *in this volume*). Outsourcing may also be referred to as *functional privatisation* (see Kuhlmann and Wollmann 2014: 189), but to avoid terminological confusion, it seems best to eschew the term *privatisation* in this context, restricting its use to *material privatisation* (see below).
- *Material* or *asset privatisation* occurs when public (state or municipal) assets are sold to private sector investors. Privatisation can be partial or complete; partial privatisation may result in the formation of *mixed companies* or *organisational PPPs*.

- *Municipalisation* is the transfer of state- or privately owned service provision assets or operations to the municipalities/local authorities; *remunicipalisation* is the transfer of assets (usually privately owned) and operations back to municipalities or companies controlled by them.
- Similarly, transfer from municipal (or private) ownership to the state is termed *nationalisation*⁵ or, in reverse, *re-nationalisation*.⁶

Operational Rationalities Governing Service Provision

A distinction can be made between *economic* and *political* rationality for decisions about service provision.

- Economic rationality is typically one of economic efficiency and is couched in terms of maximisation of economic benefits/profits and minimisation of economic costs (possibly by ‘externalising’ social, ecological and other non-economic costs). Private sector decision-making is usually governed by an economic rationality of the actors who are primarily driven by profit-seeking and ‘private-regarding’ goals and whose spatial area is the (possibly transnational) market.
- In contrast, a *political* rationality ideally or typically refers to a wide range of political, social and ecological goals and effects (‘welfare effects’, Mühlenkamp 2013: 3). Elected, publicly accountable decision-makers in national parliaments or local councils usually use a political rationality to justify their decisions; these bodies should ideally be ‘public-regarding’ and geared to the ‘common good’ and ‘best interests’ of, say, the local community and thus, motivated to prioritise more general ‘public interest’ concerns over strictly economic ones.
- Under certain conditions, an *amalgam* of political and economic rationalities (see Wollmann 2014: 68) may be used to usher in an organisation with a hybrid profile which combines public- and private-regarding perspectives (see Montin *in this volume*).

1.4 DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The chapters of this book take a developmental or chronological approach to the analysis of institutional changes in service provision. In accordance with other literature on institutional change (see Millward 2005; Röber 2009;

Wollmann and Marcou 2010; Wollmann 2014), the contributors to this volume recognise four distinct historical phases of institutional development:

- Development in the (late) nineteenth century;
- In western European (WE) countries, advancing and advanced welfare state climaxing in the 1970s, and in central and eastern European (CEE) countries, the centralist Socialist State (unto the post-1990 transformation),
- New public management (NPM) and market-driven ‘liberalisation’ or reorganisation of services in both WE and CEE countries; and
- Recent (post-NPM) development (since the mid/late 1990s).

There has been little comparative research on recent institutional developments so the chapters assembled in this book pay particular attention to this phase in an attempt to address this gap in the literature.

1.5 COMPARATIVE APPROACH

The analytical approach pursued in this book focuses on comparisons at three levels:

- Cross-country comparisons;
- Cross-policy and cross-sector comparisons; and
- Chronological comparisons.

Cross-Country Comparison

Taken together, the chapters in this volume cover a diverse range of European countries and span the west-east and north-south axes; thus, they represent a sample which appears suited to the ‘most different cases’ methodology proposed by Preworski and Teune (1970) for comparative research. With an eye on west-east comparisons, a methodologically pertinent difference that may lie in the *starting conditions* during the 1970s, respectively 1980s (of the advanced welfare state in the WE countries versus the centralist socialist state in the CEE countries) is relevant. Moreover, since the mid-1990s, a methodologically relevant difference may show the effects of the sovereign debt crisis in the Mediterranean countries versus the relatively solid financial and socio-economic situations in the ‘Nordic’ countries. Hence, this volume focuses on WE/CEE and Nordic/Mediterranean comparisons in preference to the comparison categories

previously favoured in political science (e.g. Page and Goldsmith 1987; Hesse and Sharpe 1990; for an overview, see Heinelt and Hlepas 2006), as such, categorisations do not any more adequately capture the current socio-economic and financial configurations of European countries.

Policy-Specific Cross-Country Comparison

Three chapters are devoted to cross-country comparisons with respect to policy in specific sectors, namely energy, water and hospital health care, which loom large on the public sector reform agenda in European countries. The analytical dividend from these policy-specific cross-country comparisons should be increased by the emphasis on these sectors in the country-specific chapters.

Longitudinal Comparisons

Conceptually and methodologically, longitudinal comparisons rely on a ‘before and after’ logic, first ascertaining the *starting conditions* (e.g. advanced welfare state or centralist socialist state) and then identifying subsequent institutional changes (such as NPM-driven or ‘post-NPM’ restructuring) and the factors influencing such changes.

1.6 EXPLANATORY FRAMEWORK

The *neo-institutionalist* debate (see Peters 2011; Kuhlmann and Wollmann 2014) provides the conceptual framework for the accounts of institutional development offered by contributors to this volume.

Historical Institutionalism

The concept of historical institutionalism is based on the assumption that the preferences and choices of actors are influenced by enduring institutional structures. It emphasises the *structural* impact of institutional, political and cultural traditions on *institution building* and *institutional choice* (see Pierson 2000); this impact may extend to the creation of *path dependencies*. Historical institutionalism also draws attention to ‘critical junctures’ (see Kuhlmann and Wollmann 2014: 48 with references) in institutional development, that is, points at which external impulses and events occur that may cause a change in institutional trajectory (which may, in turn, generate a new *path dependency*).

Actor-Centred Institutionalism

The *actor-centred* (or rational choice) variant of institutionalism (see Scharpf 1997) emphasises the influence which the decisions and interests, the political *will* and *skill* of the relevant political and economic actors can exert over the course of institutional development. Key decision-makers and decision-making processes can be identified at all intergovernmental levels. By promoting European integration, and particularly by pushing for market liberalisation in EU member states, the EU has exercised growing actor-centred influence on service provision by setting EU norms and through the rulings of the European Court of Justice (see Bauby and Similie *in this volume*). At national level, actor-centred (political, legal and so on) decisions and actions can have a decisive impact on hitherto path-dependent institutional trajectories. Of such political actor-driven changes and ruptures, the neoliberal ‘Thatcherist’ policy shift in the UK after 1979 is exemplar.

Discursive Institutionalism

Discursive institutionalism emphasises the ideas (political, ideological and so on) and discourses which—by framing and amplifying political and ideological beliefs and concepts (see Schmidt 2008)—set the context in which decisions in the international (EU), national and subnational arenas are shaped and legitimised. In a similar vein, normative *isomorphism* emphasises the explanatory potential of ideas, discourses and concepts (see DiMaggio and Powell 1991). Such discourses are typically the product of *advocacy coalitions* (Sabatier 1993) made up of academics, consultants and policy-makers and often linked to influential international organisations (such as the World Bank and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD). The triumph of NPM in national and international discourse and policy arenas in the 1980s, which lasted until the mid-late 1990s, exemplifies the ascent and descent typically experienced by discourses.

1.7 METHODS

The contributions to this volume are based on primary research carried out by their authors and on *secondary* analysis of empirical data from other sources.

The primary research is particularly valuable as it pertains to the most recent developments (since the mid/late 1990s) on which little research is currently available. In many cases, the authors have carried out original empirical work and thus, their contributions are valuable sources of *primary* findings and insights.

Secondary analysis, particularly of data on non-Anglophone countries, is also important. To date, this body of evidence—mostly published in the relevant native language—has been largely neglected by the predominantly Anglophone international research community. It may not be the least important contribution of this volume that most chapters deal with non-Anglophone countries and it thus makes accessible to the Anglophone international research community and academic audience, research findings and insights which would otherwise remain in national knowledge silos rather than being integrated into a transnational corpus of knowledge.

1.8 GUIDING QUESTIONS

The common question addressed by the chapters assembled in this volume is the nature of the pattern (convergence, divergence, variance) of developmental changes in the provision of public and social services at institutional level across countries and/or time (for the convergence vs. divergence debate, see Kuhlmann and Wollmann 2014).

From a chronological perspective, one important issue is whether there has been a pendulum-like pattern of development. The pendulum metaphor dates back to Polanyi's seminal work on the 'Great Transformation' (Polanyi 1944) which hypothesised the long-term swings from state regulation to the market and reverse (see Stewart 2010). The pendulum metaphor was revived by Millward (2005) and has been used in some international comparative research on stage models of development of service provision, particularly with regard to so-called *remunicipalisation* (see Röber 2009; Wollmann and Marcou 2010; Hall 2012; Wollmann 2014; for a cautious revisiting of the remunicipalisation thesis which relates it to the pendulum metaphor, see Bönker et al. *in this volume*).

NOTES

1. The concept of *agencification* and the related classification set out by Van Thiel 2012 have been elaborated collectively within the previous COST Action (*Comparative Research into Current Trends in Public Sector*

Organizations, CRIPO) which focused on public sector reorganisation at national government level. It has been applied to local level service provision (Torsteinsen and van Genugtsen 2016).

2. In a research community or discourse focused on developments at national government level, the term *state-owned enterprises* (SOEs) is used (see for example the discussion in the *EURAM Public and Non-Profit Management Strategy Interest Group*).
3. *Corporatisation* effected on the basis of private law is sometimes also referred to as *formal* or *organisational privatisation*, but to avoid terminological confusion and conceptual misunderstandings, it seems advisable to restrict use of the term *privatisation* to *material/asset privatisation*.
4. For recent variations in the organisational form of the French *société d'économie mixte locale*, SEML see Marcou, 'Public service provision in France', *in this volume*.
5. Or *etatization*.
6. It has been suggested that the somewhat unwieldy term *re-publicisation* should be used to describe the process of returning assets to private ownership by the state or municipal/local authorities, see Bauer and Markmann *in this volume*.

REFERENCES

- Bauby, P., & Similie, M. (2014). Europe. In UCLG (Ed.), *Basic services for all in an urbanizing world (GOLD III)* (pp. 94–130). London/New York: Routledge.
- DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. W. (1991). *The New institutionalism in organizational analysis*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- European Commission. (2011). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions*. A quality framework for services of general interest in Europe. Available from http://ec.europa.eu/services_general_interest/docs/comm_quality_framework_en.pdf. Accessed 17 July 2015.
- Grossi, G., Marcou, G., & Reichard, C. (2010). Comparative aspects of institutional variants for local public service provision. In H. Wollmann & G. Marcou (Eds.), *The provision of public services in Europe. Between state, local government and market* (pp. 217–239). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Hall, D. (2012). *Re-municipalising municipal services in Europe*. A report commissioned by EPSU to Public Services International Research Unit (PSIRU). Available from www.epsu.org/IMG/pdf/Redraft_DH_remunicipalization.pdf. Accessed 17 July 2015.
- Heinelt, H., & Hlepas, N. (2006). Typologies of local government systems. In H. Bäck, H. Heinelt, & A. Magnier (Eds.), *The European Mayor* (pp. 21–42). Wiesbaden: Verlag.

- Hesse, J. J., & Sharpe, L. J. (1990). Local government in international perspective. In J. J. Hesse & L. J. Sharpe (Eds.), *Local government and urban affairs in international perspective* (pp. 603–621). Baden-Baden: Nomos.
- Kuhlmann, S., & Wollmann, H. (2014). *Public administration and administrative reforms in Europe. An introduction in comparative public administration*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Millward, M. (2005). *Public and private enterprise in Europe: Energy, telecommunication and transport 1830–1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mühlenkamp, H. (2013). *From state to market revisited. Empirical evidence on the efficiency of public (and privately-owned) enterprises*, MPRA paper. Available from <http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/47570>. Accessed 17 July 2015.
- Munday, B. (2000). Privatisation of social services in the United Kingdom. In H. Wollmann & E. Schröter (Eds.), *Comparing public sector reform in Britain and Germany* (pp. 264–284). Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Page, E., & Goldsmith, M. (1987). *Central and local government relations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Peters, B. G. (2011). *Institutional theory in political science. The 'New Institutionalism'* (3rd ed.). London: Bloomsbury.
- Pierson, P. (2000). Increasing returns. Path dependence and the study of politics. *American Political Science Review*, 94, 251–267.
- Polanyi, K. (1944). *The great transformation*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Preworski, A., & Teune, H. (1970). *The logic of comparative social inquiry*. New York: Wiley-Interscience.
- Röber, M. (2009). Privatisierung oder Rekommunalisierung öffentlicher Dienstleistungen im Lichte des Public Managements. *Verwaltung und Management*, 15(5), 227–240.
- Sabatier, P. (1993). *Policy change and learning. An advocacy coalition approach*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Scharpf, F. W. (1997). *Games real actors play: Actor-centred institutionalism in policy research*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Schmidt, V. A. (2008). Discursive institutionalism. The explanatory power of ideas and discourses. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 11, 303–326.
- Stewart, F. (2010). Power and progress. The swing of the pendulum. *Journal of Human Development and Capacities*, 11(3), 371–395.
- Torsteinsen, H., & van Genugtsen, M. (2016). Municipal waste management in Norway and the Netherlands—From in-house provision to intermunicipal cooperation. In S. Kuhlmann & G. Bouckaert (Eds.), *Local public sector reforms in times of crisis*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Van Thiel, S. (2012). Comparing agencies across countries. In K. Verhoest, S. Van Thiel, G. Bouckaert, & P. Lægreid (Eds.), *Government agencies: Practices and lessons from 30 countries* (pp. 18–26). Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.