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Lutsk National Technical University



PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE
WITHIN EUROPEAN UNION

Lecture Notes

for students pursuing the second (Master's) level of higher education in the field of knowledge D "Business, Administration, and Law", specialty D4 "Public Management and Administration", under the educational program "Public Management and Administration of Youth Policy" (full-time and part-time modes of study)

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B65 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE WITHIN EUROPEAN UNION: Lecture notes for students pursuing the second (master's) level of higher education in the "Public Management and Administration of Youth Policy" educational program within the field of knowledge D "Business, Administration, and Law" and the specialty D4 "Public Management and Administration" for full-time and part-time study modes / Compiled by M. Voichuk. Lutsk: LNTU, 2026. 152 p.
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PREFACE

European integration is not limited to the adoption of common rules, institutional arrangements or individual public policies. It also involves a gradual transformation of the ways in which public institutions operate, interact with society, formulate policies and implement public decisions. For Ukraine, this process has acquired particular importance as European integration has become a strategic direction of state development and a central element of institutional transformation.

The course “Public Administration and Governance within European Union” is designed to provide a systematic understanding of the principles, institutions, mechanisms and contemporary approaches that shape public administration and governance in the European context. Its focus is not limited to the institutional structure of the European Union. Particular attention is given to the interaction between public authorities, different levels of governance, civil society, business, academia and other stakeholders.

The course is based on the understanding that contemporary public administration cannot be considered exclusively as a hierarchical system of executive authorities. European governance combines hierarchical administration with multi-level governance, networks, partnerships, participation, evidence-informed policymaking and increasingly digital forms of interaction. Such a combination requires public managers to understand not only formal competences and procedures but also the functional roles of different actors and the mechanisms through which collective public decisions are developed and implemented.

The lecture course consists of two interconnected content modules. The first module focuses on the European approaches to public administration and governance. It examines the evolution of administrative concepts, the institutional system of the European Union, multi-level governance, the European

Administrative Space, administrative reforms, democracy, transparency, citizen participation and major EU policies and governance instruments.

The second module focuses on European integration and public administration in Ukraine. It considers regional and local governance, administrative traditions and reforms in EU Member States and candidate countries, the institutional and administrative dimensions of Ukraine's European integration, European standards of public decision-making, cooperation and governance networks, and the future of European governance and public administration.

Particular attention is paid to the practical dimension of European governance. The course considers how European principles are translated into administrative procedures, policy instruments, management decisions, territorial development mechanisms and institutional reforms. This perspective is especially important for understanding the difference between the formal adoption of European standards and their effective implementation in public administration.

The Ukrainian context is an integral part of the course. Ukraine's movement towards membership in the European Union creates new requirements for institutional capacity, policy coordination, professional public service, regulatory quality, public finance, decentralisation, digital governance and the implementation of European standards. At the same time, Ukraine's own experience of institutional adaptation, decentralisation, digital transformation and governance under extraordinary conditions provides important lessons for understanding the capacity of public institutions to operate in an uncertain and rapidly changing environment.

The course also emphasises the changing role of public managers. Contemporary public managers increasingly act not only as administrators responsible for implementing established decisions, but also as policy coordinators, facilitators of cooperation, managers of organisational change, analysts, network participants and actors responsible for achieving public results.

This requires a combination of legal, analytical, managerial, digital and communication competencies.

An important principle of the course is that European experience should not be understood as a collection of institutional models to be mechanically transferred to Ukraine. European countries have different administrative traditions, territorial structures and institutional arrangements. Therefore, the value of European experience lies primarily in understanding common principles, standards and mechanisms and in determining how they can be appropriately adapted to specific national and territorial conditions.

The lecture course is intended primarily for students of master's programmes in Public Management and Administration, as well as for those who are interested in European governance, public policy, administrative reform and Ukraine's European integration. It can also be useful for public servants, representatives of local government, civil society organisations and other stakeholders involved in public policy and institutional development.

The structure of the course follows a gradual movement from concepts and institutions to mechanisms and practical challenges: from understanding European public administration and governance to examining how these approaches operate at different levels, how they influence public decisions and how they can contribute to the transformation of Ukrainian public administration.

The ultimate purpose of the course is therefore not simply to provide knowledge about the European Union. It is to develop an understanding of how European governance works, why particular institutional and managerial mechanisms are used, how different actors perform their functions, and how European principles can be applied to improve the quality of public administration in Ukraine.

CONTENT MODULE 1. EUROPEAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

Topic 1. European Approaches and Concepts of Public Administration and Governance

Methodological guidelines

Understanding contemporary European public administration requires consideration of the historical evolution of approaches to the organisation and functioning of public authority. Public administration in Europe has developed under the influence of different political traditions, constitutional systems, administrative cultures and relationships between the state and society. Therefore, there is no single European model of public administration. Instead, European public administration represents a combination of national administrative traditions and common principles that have developed through European integration.

The classical European approach to public administration was strongly influenced by the development of the modern bureaucratic state. The state gradually acquired responsibility for maintaining public order, providing public services, implementing legislation and regulating social and economic relations. As the functions of the state expanded, there emerged a need for professional administrative structures, clearly defined competences and stable procedures.

A major theoretical contribution to the understanding of modern bureaucracy was made by Max Weber, who described bureaucracy as a rational-legal form of organisation. Its principal characteristics include a hierarchical structure, clearly defined competences, formal rules, professional administration, impersonality of administrative decisions and recruitment based on qualifications.

The bureaucratic model contributed significantly to the professionalisation and institutionalisation of public administration. At the same time, its strong

orientation towards rules and procedures could result in excessive formalisation, administrative rigidity and insufficient attention to the needs of citizens.

During the second half of the twentieth century, European public administrations increasingly faced new expectations. Citizens demanded better public services, greater transparency and accountability, while governments had to respond to economic transformation, fiscal constraints and growing social complexity. These developments stimulated the emergence of new approaches to public administration.

From the 1980s, New Public Management (NPM) became particularly influential. It emphasised managerial autonomy, performance measurement, efficiency, competition, results-oriented management and the use of private-sector management techniques in the public sector.

Subsequently, the limitations of both traditional bureaucracy and purely managerial approaches contributed to the development of the governance approach. Governance emphasised interaction between public authorities, business, civil society and citizens. Public problems increasingly came to be understood as issues that cannot be effectively addressed by government institutions acting independently.

Contemporary European public administration therefore combines several intellectual and practical traditions. Hierarchy, legality and professional bureaucracy remain important, while managerial instruments, networks, participation, digitalisation, evidence-informed policymaking and co-production of public services have become increasingly significant.

The evolution can therefore be presented as a movement:

Bureaucratic administration → New Public Management → Governance → contemporary integrated public administration.

This sequence should not be interpreted as a complete replacement of one model by another. Contemporary public administrations usually combine

elements of all these approaches depending on the policy field, institutional level and national administrative tradition.

Second question. Traditional public administration and the bureaucratic model

Traditional public administration is based on the idea that public authority should operate through formally established institutions, clearly defined competences and legally regulated procedures.

The central principles of this approach include:

- legality;
- hierarchy;
- division of administrative competences;
- formalisation of procedures;
- political responsibility of elected authorities;
- professional administration;
- stability and continuity of public institutions;
- administrative impartiality;
- accountability through established institutional mechanisms.

The bureaucratic model provides a clear distinction between political decision-making and administrative implementation. Political authorities determine public policy, while professional administrators are expected to implement decisions according to legislation and established procedures.

One of the major advantages of this model is predictability. Citizens and organisations can understand how administrative decisions should be made, which institution is responsible and which procedures should be followed.

The bureaucratic model also creates institutional continuity. Political leadership may change after elections, but the administrative apparatus remains capable of performing its functions.

However, traditional bureaucracy also has limitations. Excessive proceduralisation may slow decision-making, create administrative burdens and

distance public institutions from citizens. A system focused primarily on compliance with procedures may pay insufficient attention to the actual results of public policies.

Consequently, contemporary European administrative reforms do not generally aim to eliminate bureaucracy. Rather, they seek to combine legal certainty and institutional stability with flexibility, performance orientation, innovation and citizen-centred administration.

This distinction is particularly important for understanding contemporary European public administration: the objective is not simply to replace bureaucracy, but to modernise it.

Third question. New Public Management and its influence on European public administration

New Public Management emerged as a response to perceived inefficiencies of traditional bureaucratic administration. Its development was associated with public-sector reforms in several countries from the 1980s and subsequently influenced administrative reforms across Europe.

The central idea of NPM is that public organisations can improve their performance by adopting selected management techniques traditionally associated with the private sector.

The main characteristics of New Public Management include:

1. orientation towards results rather than exclusively towards procedures;
2. performance measurement using indicators and targets;
3. managerial autonomy for public-sector managers;
4. decentralisation of decision-making;
5. competition and quasi-market mechanisms;
6. contractualisation of relationships;
7. customer orientation in public service delivery;
8. evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness.

NPM changed the understanding of administrative performance. The question was no longer only whether an institution had correctly followed established procedures. Increasingly, attention was paid to whether public resources had produced the intended outcomes.

For example, instead of evaluating a public employment service only according to the number of applications processed, an NPM-oriented approach may focus on the number of people successfully integrated into employment.

However, the NPM approach also generated significant criticism. Public administration cannot be reduced to an economic organisation whose performance can always be measured through simple quantitative indicators. Public institutions have responsibilities related to equality, justice, democratic accountability, social cohesion and protection of public interests.

Excessive fragmentation of public administration can also make coordination more difficult. Competition between public organisations may sometimes undermine cooperation, while the extensive use of outsourcing may reduce institutional capacity.

Therefore, contemporary European public administration increasingly moves beyond a purely NPM-oriented approach. Managerial tools remain important, but they are incorporated into broader systems grounded in governance, coordination, participation, integrity, and public value.

Fourth question. Governance and the transition from government to governance

The concept of governance reflects a broader understanding of how collective decisions are made and implemented.

Government traditionally refers primarily to formal public institutions exercising legally defined authority. Governance, in contrast, emphasises the interaction of different actors involved in addressing public problems.

These actors may include:

- national governments;

- regional and local authorities;
- EU institutions;
- independent public bodies;
- businesses;
- civil society organisations;
- professional associations;
- universities and research institutions;
- citizens and informal communities.

The transition from government to governance does not mean the disappearance of the state. Public authorities remain central actors because they possess legal authority, public resources and democratic legitimacy. However, their role increasingly changes from sole decision-maker to coordinator, regulator, facilitator and partner.

Governance is particularly important in the European Union because European policies are implemented through multiple institutional levels. Decisions and policies may involve EU institutions, national governments, regional authorities and local governments simultaneously.

The European governance model therefore requires mechanisms of:

- coordination;
- consultation;
- partnership;
- information exchange;
- joint implementation;
- monitoring;
- accountability;
- participation.

An important characteristic of governance is the recognition that public problems are often too complex to be solved by a single institution. Climate

change, digital transformation, regional development, migration, social inclusion and economic competitiveness require interaction between multiple actors.

The governance approach also changes the understanding of citizens. Citizens are no longer considered exclusively recipients of administrative services. They can participate in policymaking, monitoring and evaluation and, in some areas, directly contribute to the creation and delivery of public value.

This approach corresponds with the democratic principles of the European Union. Article 10 of the Treaty on European Union establishes representative democracy as a foundation of the Union and recognises the right of citizens to participate in the democratic life of the EU. It also requires decisions to be taken as openly and as closely as possible to citizens.

Fifth question. Contemporary European approaches to public administration and good governance

Contemporary European public administration cannot be described by a single administrative doctrine. It is better understood as an integrated system combining legality, professionalism, managerial capacity, democratic accountability, participation, coordination and orientation towards public value.

A particularly important concept is the European Administrative Space (EAS). It does not establish a uniform administrative system for all Member States. National administrations retain their own institutional structures and administrative traditions. At the same time, they increasingly share common principles, standards and practices.

The European Commission's 2023 ComPAct initiative explicitly links the quality of public administration with the effectiveness of EU and Member State action. It identifies common principles including strategic leadership, evidence-informed and participatory policymaking, an impartial and merit-based civil

service, accessible public services, subsidiarity, accountability, openness, integrity and effective oversight.

This approach demonstrates an important contemporary shift: administrative quality is assessed not only through the internal organisation of institutions but also through their ability to produce public value and respond effectively to citizens' needs.

Contemporary European public administration can therefore be characterised by several interconnected approaches.

1. Rule of law and legality

Public authorities must act within the limits of their legally defined powers. Administrative discretion must be balanced by appropriate mechanisms of accountability and judicial or institutional oversight.

2. Good governance

Good governance emphasises effectiveness, accountability, transparency, participation, integrity and responsiveness.

3. Evidence-informed policymaking

Public decisions should increasingly be based on reliable data, research, evaluation and analysis of alternative policy options.

4. Citizen-centred administration

Public services should be accessible, understandable and oriented towards the needs of citizens rather than the internal convenience of administrative institutions.

5. Digital government

Digital technologies have become an essential component of modern public administration. Digitalisation concerns not only electronic services but also administrative processes, data management, interoperability and new forms of interaction between government and society.

6. Network governance

Public administration increasingly operates through horizontal and vertical networks. Cooperation between institutions and sectors becomes an important administrative capacity.

7. Professional and merit-based public service

Professional competence, impartiality and integrity are essential conditions for administrative capacity.

8. Multi-level governance

European public administration increasingly functions through interaction between EU, national, regional and local levels. This requires effective coordination rather than simple hierarchical control.

The SIGMA Principles of Public Administration, updated in 2023, provide a particularly useful framework for understanding these developments. They contain 32 principles grouped into six areas: strategy; policy development and coordination; public service and human resource management; organisation, accountability and oversight; service delivery and digitalisation; and public financial management.

The contemporary European approach therefore represents a synthesis of several traditions rather than the dominance of one model.

A useful analytical formula is:

European public administration = legality + professional bureaucracy + managerial capacity + governance + participation + digitalisation + accountability.

This formula also explains why administrative reform in Europe is increasingly understood as a process of developing institutional capacity, rather than simply changing organisational structures.

The EU Treaties themselves recognise administrative capacity as a matter of common interest. Article 197 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union states that effective implementation of Union law by Member States is

essential to the functioning of the Union and allows the EU to support Member States in improving their administrative capacity.

Thus, contemporary European public administration should be viewed as a system in which institutions, people, procedures, resources, technologies and networks are combined to transform public policies into concrete results for citizens.

Conclusions

The evolution of European public administration demonstrates a gradual expansion of the understanding of public authority and administrative capacity. The traditional bureaucratic model established the foundations of legality, hierarchy, professionalism and institutional continuity. New Public Management introduced a stronger orientation towards performance, efficiency and results. The governance approach subsequently emphasised cooperation, networks, participation and the interaction of multiple actors.

Contemporary European public administration combines elements of these approaches. It does not reject bureaucracy or managerialism but integrates their useful instruments into a broader framework based on democratic governance, rule of law, institutional capacity, citizen orientation, digitalisation and accountability.

The European Union does not impose a single administrative model on its Member States. Instead, European integration contributes to the formation of a common administrative space based on shared principles and standards while preserving national institutional diversity. The European Administrative Space and contemporary initiatives such as ComPAct demonstrate the growing importance of administrative capacity and cooperation between public administrations.

For future public managers, understanding these approaches is important because European public administration is not simply a system of institutions. It is a system of functional relationships, decision-making mechanisms and

interactions between public authorities and other actors aimed at achieving public value.

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Topic 2. Institutional System of the European Union

First question. The institutional system of the European Union

The institutional system of the European Union is formed by a combination of institutions, bodies, agencies and other organisational structures that perform different functions in the process of European governance. Unlike a traditional state administration, the EU does not have a single centre of political and administrative authority. Its institutional system is based on the distribution of competences and cooperation between different institutions.

According to Article 13 of the Treaty on European Union, the institutional framework of the EU consists of seven institutions:

- the European Parliament;
- the European Council;
- the Council of the European Union;
- the European Commission;
- the Court of Justice of the European Union;
- the European Central Bank;
- the European Court of Auditors.

Each institution acts within the powers assigned to it by the Treaties. At the same time, the institutions are required to cooperate with each other in good faith.

The institutional system reflects the specific nature of the European Union as a political and legal organisation based on both supranational and intergovernmental elements.

The European Parliament represents the citizens of the EU. The Council of the European Union represents the governments of the Member States, while the European Council determines the general political direction and priorities of the Union. The European Commission represents the general interests of the EU and performs important executive and administrative functions.

The institutional system also includes judicial and financial control mechanisms. The Court of Justice ensures the interpretation and application of EU law, the European Central Bank performs monetary functions, and the European Court of Auditors provides external financial control.

Therefore, the EU institutional system can be understood as a system of division of competences, institutional balance and cooperation.

This principle is important for understanding European public administration. Decisions made at the EU level are rarely the result of the activity of one institution. They are usually produced through interaction between several institutions and subsequently implemented through the administrative systems of the Member States.

Second question. The European Council, the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament

The European Council, the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament are three key institutions involved in the political and legislative process of the European Union.

European Council

The European Council brings together the heads of state or government of the EU Member States, its President and the President of the European Commission.

Its main task is to provide the Union with the necessary impetus for its development and to define its general political directions and priorities.

The European Council therefore performs primarily a strategic and political function. It does not normally adopt EU legislation.

Its role is particularly important in areas requiring political coordination between Member States, including major questions concerning European integration, foreign policy, security, institutional development and responses to major crises.

Council of the European Union

The Council of the European Union represents the governments of the Member States. Depending on the issue being discussed, national ministers participate in its meetings.

The Council performs several important functions. Together with the European Parliament, it adopts EU legislation and the EU budget. It also coordinates Member State policies and develops the Union's common policies in a number of areas.

The Council therefore represents the intergovernmental component of EU decision-making.

An important characteristic of the Council is that national governments participate directly in the formation of European policies. At the same time, after decisions have been adopted, Member States are responsible for implementing many EU policies through their national administrative systems.

European Parliament

The European Parliament is the directly elected institution of the European Union.

Its main responsibilities include:

- adopting legislation jointly with the Council;
- exercising budgetary powers;
- exercising democratic control over EU institutions;
- scrutinising the activities of the European Commission;
- participating in the appointment of the European Commission.

The Parliament therefore performs not only a legislative function but also an important function of democratic representation and accountability.

The interaction between the three institutions demonstrates the principle of institutional balance.

In a simplified form, their roles can be presented as:

European Council → strategic political direction

European Commission → policy initiation and implementation

European Parliament + Council → legislative decision-making

This division is not absolute, because the institutional responsibilities vary depending on the policy area and the legal basis of EU action. Nevertheless, it provides a useful framework for understanding the European decision-making system.

Third question. The European Commission and its role in the system of EU governance

The European Commission occupies a central position in the system of European governance. It represents the general interest of the European Union and performs a wide range of political, executive and administrative functions.

One of its most important responsibilities is the initiation of EU legislation. In most areas of EU policy, the Commission prepares legislative proposals that are subsequently considered by the European Parliament and the Council.

The Commission therefore plays a significant role in the initial stages of the policy process.

Another important function is the implementation of EU policies and legislation. The Commission manages numerous EU programmes, coordinates implementation with Member States and oversees the practical application of EU decisions.

The Commission also performs the function of guardian of the Treaties. It monitors whether Member States correctly apply EU law and may initiate infringement procedures when it considers that a Member State has failed to fulfil its obligations.

An important area of the Commission's work is the management of the EU budget and financial programmes. This involves planning, allocation of resources, implementation of programmes, monitoring and financial control.

The Commission also performs a coordination function. It interacts with national governments and administrations and contributes to the coordination of policies in areas where European and national competences intersect.

Consequently, the European Commission combines several dimensions of public administration:

- policy development;
- administrative implementation;
- coordination;
- regulation;
- monitoring;
- financial management;
- international representation.

This combination makes the Commission one of the most important actors for understanding the functioning of the European Administrative Space.

At the same time, the Commission does not replace national administrations. A substantial part of EU legislation and policy is implemented by Member States through their own public administration systems. European governance therefore depends on continuous interaction between the Commission and national administrations.

Fourth question. The Court of Justice of the European Union, the European Central Bank and the European Court of Auditors

Three EU institutions perform particularly important specialised functions: judicial, monetary and financial.

Court of Justice of the European Union

The Court of Justice of the European Union ensures that EU law is interpreted and applied consistently in all Member States.

Its responsibilities include:

- interpreting EU law;
- reviewing the legality of acts of EU institutions;
- considering cases concerning Member States' compliance with EU obligations;
- cooperating with national courts through the preliminary ruling procedure.

The Court therefore contributes to the rule of law and legal uniformity within the European Union.

Its activities are especially important for public administration because administrative decisions and actions undertaken by national authorities must comply with EU law in areas falling within the scope of Union competence.

European Central Bank

The European Central Bank is responsible for monetary policy in the euro area.

Its primary objective is maintaining price stability. The ECB also performs a number of other functions connected with the monetary and financial system of the European Union.

The ECB demonstrates that some areas of European governance require specialised institutions with a significant degree of functional independence and professional expertise.

European Court of Auditors

The European Court of Auditors is the EU's external auditor.

Its principal task is to examine whether EU funds are properly collected and spent and whether financial management is carried out in accordance with the applicable rules.

The Court of Auditors therefore contributes to:

- financial accountability;
- transparency;
- responsible management of public resources;
- protection of the EU's financial interests.

These three institutions demonstrate that European governance requires not only political decision-making and policy implementation but also legal, monetary and financial control.

Fifth question. EU agencies and other bodies in the European governance system

The institutional system of the European Union is complemented by numerous specialised agencies and other bodies.

EU agencies are established to perform specific technical, scientific, regulatory or administrative tasks. Their development reflects the increasing complexity of European policies and the need for specialised expertise.

Agencies operate in areas such as:

- public health;
- food safety;
- environmental protection;
- migration and asylum;
- transport;
- financial supervision;
- employment;
- cybersecurity;
- scientific and technical regulation.

Their main advantage is the concentration of professional expertise in particular policy fields.

EU agencies also contribute to cooperation between European and national administrations. National experts and representatives often participate in their activities, allowing agencies to serve as platforms for the exchange of information, professional standards and administrative practices.

In addition to agencies, the EU institutional system includes a number of advisory and specialised bodies.

The European Economic and Social Committee represents organised civil society and provides opinions on European policy and legislative initiatives.

The European Committee of the Regions represents regional and local authorities and provides a territorial perspective in EU policymaking.

The European Ombudsman contributes to administrative accountability by investigating complaints concerning maladministration within EU institutions and bodies.

These bodies demonstrate that European governance extends beyond the formal institutions of the Union. It involves interaction with regional and local authorities, organised civil society, professional communities and specialised experts.

The development of agencies and other bodies also illustrates an important trend in contemporary public administration: increasing functional specialisation and decentralisation of administrative tasks.

At the same time, these organisations remain part of the broader EU governance system and operate within the legal and institutional framework established by the Treaties.

Conclusions

The institutional system of the European Union represents a complex combination of institutions, agencies and bodies performing different political, legislative, executive, judicial, financial and advisory functions.

The European Council provides strategic political direction, the Council of the European Union represents Member State governments, and the European Parliament provides democratic representation and participates in legislative and budgetary decision-making.

The European Commission occupies a central position in policy initiation, implementation, coordination and monitoring. The Court of Justice, European Central Bank and European Court of Auditors perform specialised judicial, monetary and financial functions.

EU agencies and other bodies provide specialised expertise and create additional mechanisms for cooperation between European, national, regional and local actors.

The most important characteristic of this institutional system is therefore functional differentiation combined with institutional cooperation. Understanding these relationships is essential for analysing how European policies are developed and implemented and how national public administrations interact with the EU.

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Topic 3. Multi-Level Governance in the European Union

First question. The concept and principles of multi-level governance in the European Union

The development of the European Union has significantly changed the traditional understanding of public administration. Public decisions affecting citizens are increasingly developed and implemented at several interconnected levels. This phenomenon is described by the concept of multi-level governance.

Multi-level governance refers to a system in which decision-making and policy implementation are distributed among different territorial and institutional levels. In the European Union, these levels primarily include the EU level, the national level, the regional level and the local level.

At the same time, governance cannot be reduced exclusively to territorial levels. Public authorities interact with businesses, civil society organisations, professional associations, research institutions and citizens. Therefore, multi-level governance is simultaneously characterised by vertical interaction between levels and horizontal interaction between actors .

The concept became particularly important in the context of European integration because many EU policies cannot be implemented effectively by European institutions alone. Their practical implementation depends on national administrations and, in many cases, regional and local authorities.

Multi-level governance is based on several principles.

First, distribution of competences. Different levels of governance have different areas of responsibility established by EU law and national legislation.

Second, cooperation. Effective policymaking requires cooperation between institutions operating at different levels.

Third, subsidiarity. Decisions should be taken as closely as possible to citizens, while action at a higher level should be justified when objectives cannot be sufficiently achieved at a lower level.

Fourth, proportionality. The content and form of EU action should not exceed what is necessary to achieve the objectives of the Treaties.

Fifth, partnership. European policies increasingly involve cooperation between public authorities and non-governmental actors.

Sixth, accountability. Each actor participating in governance should be accountable for the competences and resources entrusted to it.

Multi-level governance therefore changes the role of public administration. Public authorities must not only exercise their own competences but also be capable of coordinating actions with other levels of governance .

For Member States, this creates additional requirements for administrative capacity. National administrations need to understand European processes, coordinate positions at the EU level and ensure effective implementation of European decisions within the country.

Second question. Distribution of powers and competences between the EU and Member States

The European Union does not possess unlimited powers. Its competences are defined by the Treaties and are based on the principle of conferral .

According to Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union, the Union acts only within the limits of the competences conferred upon it by the Member States in the Treaties. Competences not conferred upon the Union remain with the Member States.

EU competences are traditionally divided into three main categories:

1. exclusive competences of the European Union ;
2. shared competences between the EU and Member States ;
3. areas in which the EU supports, coordinates or supplements Member State action.

In areas of exclusive competence, only the EU may legislate and adopt legally binding acts, while Member States may act only where empowered by the Union or for the implementation of EU acts.

Examples include the customs union, competition rules necessary for the functioning of the internal market, monetary policy for euro-area countries, common commercial policy and certain aspects of marine biological resources.

In areas of shared competence, both the EU and Member States may legislate. However, Member States exercise their competence to the extent that the EU has not exercised its own competence.

Shared competences cover important areas such as:

- internal market;
- social policy in specified aspects;
- economic, social and territorial cohesion;
- agriculture and fisheries;
- environment;
- consumer protection;
- transport;
- energy;
- area of freedom, security and justice.

This category is particularly important for public administration because many European policies are implemented through a combination of EU and national action.

A third category consists of areas where the EU supports or coordinates Member State action. In such areas, the EU does not replace national competence but provides frameworks for cooperation and exchange of experience.

The distribution of competences therefore creates a specific relationship between European and national administration.

The EU level establishes common rules, objectives and instruments in areas within Union competence, while national administrations remain responsible for a substantial part of implementation.

This means that European integration does not simply transfer administrative functions from Member States to the EU. Rather, it creates new relationships between levels of public authority.

Third question. The role of regional and local authorities in European governance

Regional and local authorities occupy an important position in the European governance system because many public policies are ultimately implemented at the territorial level.

Their role varies significantly between Member States because the organisation of territorial administration differs according to national constitutional and administrative traditions.

Nevertheless, regional and local authorities participate in European governance through several mechanisms.

First, they implement European policies and programmes. Areas such as regional development, environmental protection, transport, social inclusion, education and local economic development often have a strong territorial dimension.

Second, regional and local authorities participate in the preparation and implementation of projects financed through EU programmes and funds.

Third, they provide information about local conditions and needs. This territorial knowledge is important for developing policies that are responsive to differences between regions and communities.

Fourth, local and regional authorities participate in European networks and partnerships. Such cooperation allows them to exchange administrative practices, develop joint projects and build institutional capacity.

An important institutional mechanism is the European Committee of the Regions, which represents regional and local authorities at the EU level and provides opinions on proposals affecting regional and local interests.

The involvement of territorial authorities reflects the principle that European governance should not be concentrated exclusively at the supranational and national levels.

The territorial dimension is particularly relevant for cohesion policy. Economic, social and territorial disparities cannot be addressed effectively through uniform solutions alone. European regional policy therefore relies heavily on cooperation between EU institutions, Member States and territorial authorities.

For public managers, this means that participation in European governance requires not only knowledge of national administrative procedures but also the ability to operate within territorial partnerships and European networks .

Fourth question. The principle of subsidiarity and its application in the EU

The principle of subsidiarity is one of the fundamental principles governing the exercise of EU competences.

According to Article 5 TEU, in areas that do not fall within the EU's exclusive competence, the Union should act only when the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States at central, regional or local level and can be better achieved at Union level because of the scale or effects of the proposed action.

Subsidiarity therefore addresses the question:

At which level should a particular public decision be taken?

The principle does not automatically mean that decisions should always be taken at the lowest possible level. Rather, it requires determining which level is most capable of achieving the relevant objective effectively .

This distinction is important.

For example, certain issues may require common European action because they have cross-border effects. Other issues may be addressed more effectively by national, regional or local authorities because they are closely connected to local circumstances.

Subsidiarity therefore creates a mechanism for balancing:

European interests ↔ national interests ↔ regional interests ↔ local interests.

The principle is closely connected with proportionality. While subsidiarity concerns whether the EU should act, proportionality concerns how far the EU should go when it acts.

The application of subsidiarity also involves institutional mechanisms. National parliaments have a role in monitoring whether legislative proposals comply with the principle. This mechanism is commonly referred to as the early warning system.

The principle of subsidiarity is particularly important for public administration because it prevents unnecessary concentration of decision-making at the European level while recognising that certain challenges require collective European action.

For future public managers, understanding subsidiarity is therefore important not only as a legal principle but also as a practical principle of allocation of public responsibilities.

Fifth question. Interaction between different levels of governance and coordination of public policies

Multi-level governance requires continuous coordination between institutions operating at different levels.

The need for coordination arises because the responsibilities of the EU, national, regional and local authorities often intersect.

For example, a regional development programme may involve:

- strategic priorities defined at EU level;
- national legislation and co-financing;
- regional development planning;
- local project implementation;
- participation of businesses and civil society.

The effectiveness of such a programme depends on the ability of different actors to coordinate their actions.

Coordination can take several forms.

Vertical coordination

Vertical coordination refers to interaction between different territorial levels:

EU → national → regional → local

It may involve the exchange of information, implementation of common rules, financial arrangements, monitoring and reporting.

Horizontal coordination

Horizontal coordination takes place between actors operating at the same level.

For example, different ministries may coordinate on a national policy, while several municipalities may cooperate to address a common territorial problem.

Cross-sectoral coordination

Contemporary European governance also requires cooperation between the public, private and civil society sectors.

Such cooperation is particularly important when addressing complex problems that cannot be solved by public administration alone.

Effective coordination requires appropriate institutional mechanisms. These may include:

- intergovernmental working groups;
- consultation procedures;
- coordination committees;
- partnership agreements;
- networks;
- joint programmes;
- information-sharing mechanisms;
- monitoring and evaluation systems.

The quality of coordination directly affects the implementation of European policies.

Weak coordination may lead to duplication of functions, inconsistent decisions, delays and inefficient use of public resources.

Effective coordination, in contrast, allows different actors to combine their competences and resources.

For this reason, administrative capacity within the European Union increasingly includes not only the ability to perform internal institutional functions but also the ability to cooperate across institutional and territorial boundaries.

This is one of the major differences between traditional hierarchical administration and contemporary multi-level governance.

Conclusions

Multi-level governance represents one of the fundamental characteristics of the European Union's political and administrative system.

The EU, Member States, regions and local authorities participate in the development and implementation of European policies, while non-state actors increasingly contribute to governance processes.

The distribution of competences provides the institutional basis for this interaction. The principles of conferral, subsidiarity and proportionality establish important limits and conditions for the exercise of public authority.

Regional and local authorities play an important role in translating European policies into concrete territorial action. Their participation also strengthens the territorial dimension of European governance.

The effectiveness of multi-level governance depends substantially on coordination. European governance therefore requires mechanisms that connect different levels of public authority and facilitate cooperation between public, private and civil society actors.

For public administration, the central lesson is that European integration changes not only where decisions are made, but also how public authorities interact with each other. The ability to coordinate, cooperate and work across institutional boundaries becomes an important component of contemporary administrative capacity.

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Topic 4. European Administrative Space and Administrative Reforms in Europe

First question. The concept and development of the European Administrative Space

The concept of the European Administrative Space (EAS) emerged in the context of European integration and reflects the gradual development of common principles, standards and administrative practices across European countries.

The European Administrative Space should not be understood as a single administrative system replacing the national administrations of EU Member States. Each Member State retains its own constitutional arrangements, administrative traditions, institutional structures and public service systems.

Instead, the European Administrative Space represents a process of convergence of administrative principles and practices resulting from European integration.

The development of the European Administrative Space has been influenced by several factors.

First, the implementation of European law requires national administrations to operate according to common legal and administrative requirements.

Second, participation in common EU policies creates a need for cooperation between national administrations.

Third, the development of the internal market and other common policies requires comparable administrative standards and effective institutional coordination.

Fourth, EU enlargement has strengthened the importance of administrative capacity. Candidate countries need to develop administrations capable of effectively implementing the *acquis communautaire* and participating in EU policymaking.

The European Administrative Space therefore develops through the interaction of:

EU institutions → national administrations → regional and local authorities.

The concept is closely associated with the development of common administrative principles such as:

- legality;
- reliability and predictability;
- openness;
- transparency;
- accountability;
- professionalism;
- impartiality;
- efficiency;
- protection of citizens' rights.

The European Administrative Space is consequently not a formally unified bureaucracy. It is better understood as a shared administrative environment based on common principles and standards .

Its development demonstrates that European integration affects not only legislation and economic relations but also the organisation and functioning of public administration.

Second question. Common principles and standards of European public administration

The development of European public administration is based on a number of principles that contribute to the quality, reliability and legitimacy of administrative action.

One of the most important principles is the rule of law . Public authorities must act within the limits of their legal powers and according to established procedures. Administrative decisions should be predictable and subject to appropriate forms of review.

Another important principle is legal certainty . Citizens and organisations should be able to understand the rules applicable to them and rely on the consistent application of those rules.

Openness and transparency are also essential characteristics of contemporary European administration. Public institutions should provide accessible information about their activities and decisions, subject to legitimate restrictions established by law.

Accountability means that public authorities and public officials should be responsible for the exercise of their powers and the use of public resources.

Impartiality and professionalism are particularly important for public administration. Administrative decisions should be based on objective criteria rather than personal, political or other inappropriate interests.

Another important principle is efficiency and effectiveness . Public administration should use public resources responsibly and achieve the objectives established by public policy.

The development of European administrative standards has been significantly supported by the work of SIGMA , a joint initiative of the OECD and the European Union. The Principles of Public Administration– provide a comprehensive framework for assessing and improving public administration systems.

The 2023 edition identifies six major areas:

1. strategic framework of public administration reform;
2. policy development and coordination;
3. public service and human resource management;
4. organisation, accountability and oversight;
5. service delivery and digitalisation;
6. public financial management.

The principles are particularly relevant for countries involved in the EU accession process because they provide a framework for assessing administrative capacity and identifying areas requiring reform.

The common principles do not eliminate national administrative diversity. Instead, they create a common reference framework against which the quality and capacity of public administration can be assessed.

Thus, European administrative convergence should be understood as convergence of principles, standards and capacities rather than uniformity of administrative structures .

Third question. Administrative reforms in the European Union Member States

Administrative reform refers to purposeful changes in the organisation, functioning and management of public administration aimed at improving its capacity to perform public functions.

European countries have implemented administrative reforms at different times and in different forms. There is therefore no single European model of administrative reform.

The content of reforms has been influenced by:

- national administrative traditions;
- political systems;
- economic conditions;
- technological development;
- demographic and social changes;
- European integration;
- fiscal pressures;
- changing expectations of citizens.

Despite these differences, several common directions can be identified.

Institutional restructuring

Administrative reforms may involve changes in the organisation of ministries, agencies and other public institutions. The purpose is often to clarify responsibilities, eliminate duplication and improve coordination.

Decentralisation

Many European countries have strengthened regional and local government by transferring responsibilities, resources and decision-making powers to subnational levels.

Decentralisation is particularly important when public functions can be performed more effectively closer to citizens.

Professionalisation of the civil service

Reforms frequently seek to strengthen merit-based recruitment, professional development, ethical standards and performance management.

Results-oriented management

European administrations increasingly use performance indicators, monitoring and evaluation to assess whether public policies and administrative activities produce the expected results.

Digitalisation

Digital technologies have become an important instrument of administrative modernisation. Digitalisation involves not only online public services but also redesigning administrative processes, improving interoperability and using data more effectively.

Simplification

Administrative reform can also aim to reduce unnecessary procedures and administrative burdens for citizens and businesses.

These reforms reflect the transition from administration focused primarily on internal procedures towards administration that combines legality, quality of services, efficiency and responsiveness .

At the same time, reforms do not always produce the expected results. Organisational changes without sufficient institutional capacity, human resources or political support may lead to formal rather than substantive transformation.

Therefore, successful administrative reform requires not only changes in organisational structures but also changes in administrative practices, competencies, leadership and organisational culture .

Fourth question. Administrative capacity and institutional development

Administrative capacity is one of the key concepts for understanding the effectiveness of public administration.

It refers to the ability of public institutions to perform their functions effectively, implement public policies, manage resources and respond to changing conditions.

Administrative capacity has several interconnected dimensions.

Institutional capacity

This concerns the quality of organisational structures, distribution of responsibilities and internal procedures.

An institution must have clearly defined functions and sufficient authority to perform them.

Human capacity

Effective administration requires qualified public officials with appropriate professional knowledge and skills.

This includes recruitment, professional development, leadership, motivation and ethical standards.

Policy capacity

Public institutions need the ability to identify problems, analyse alternatives, develop policies and assess their expected consequences.

Coordination capacity

Modern governance requires cooperation between ministries, agencies and different levels of government.

Weak coordination can significantly reduce the effectiveness of otherwise well-designed policies.

Financial and resource capacity

Institutions must have access to adequate financial, material and technological resources.

Digital capacity

Modern public administration increasingly depends on digital infrastructure, data management, interoperability and digital competencies.

Administrative capacity is particularly important in the context of European integration.

EU membership requires national administrations to participate in European policymaking, implement EU legislation, manage EU programmes and funds, cooperate with European institutions and comply with common rules.

For candidate countries, administrative capacity is therefore one of the important conditions for successful integration.

Administrative capacity should not, however, be understood simply as the number of employees or the size of public institutions. A large administration is not necessarily an effective administration.

The key issue is whether institutions possess the competence, resources, procedures and organisational arrangements necessary to achieve public objectives .

This makes institutional development a continuous process rather than a one-time reform.

Fifth question. European approaches to modernisation of public administration

Modernisation of public administration in Europe reflects changes in the role of the state and the increasing complexity of public problems.

Contemporary modernisation is based on the understanding that public administration must be capable of functioning in conditions of technological, economic, social and institutional change.

One important direction is the transition towards citizen-oriented public services . The quality of administration is increasingly assessed from the perspective of accessibility, convenience and effectiveness of services.

Another direction is digital transformation . Digital technologies allow administrative processes to be simplified, public services to become more accessible and interaction between citizens and public authorities to become more efficient.

Modernisation also involves strengthening evidence-informed policymaking . Public authorities increasingly use administrative data, research, monitoring and evaluation when developing and revising policies.

Another important element is institutional resilience and adaptability . Public administration must be capable of responding to crises and changing circumstances without losing continuity of essential public functions.

Modern European administration also places considerable emphasis on integrity and accountability . Anti-corruption mechanisms, transparency, conflict-of-interest management and effective oversight are important components of institutional quality.

At the organisational level, modernisation increasingly involves moving away from rigid administrative structures towards more flexible forms of coordination and cooperation.

At the same time, modernisation should not mean the abandonment of traditional administrative principles. Legality, professionalism, impartiality and accountability remain fundamental.

Therefore, contemporary European administrative modernisation can be viewed as an attempt to combine:

rule of law + professional administration + managerial capacity + digital transformation + institutional adaptability + citizen-oriented services.

The European Commission's ComPAct initiative reflects this broader understanding of administrative modernisation. It focuses on strengthening the European Administrative Space and supporting Member States in developing public administrations capable of delivering effective policies and high-quality public services.

For public managers, the main implication is that administrative reform should be treated as a long-term process of institutional development, rather than merely a change in organisational structures.

Conclusions

The European Administrative Space represents the gradual development of common administrative principles, standards and practices within the context of European integration.

It does not create a uniform model of public administration for all European countries. National administrative systems remain institutionally diverse, but they increasingly operate according to common principles concerning legality, professionalism, transparency, accountability, effectiveness and quality of public services.

Administrative reforms in European countries have addressed institutional structures, decentralisation, civil service professionalisation, performance management, digitalisation and administrative simplification.

A central condition for successful reform is administrative capacity. Effective institutions require appropriate organisational structures, qualified personnel, policy and coordination capacities, adequate resources and technological capabilities.

Contemporary European modernisation therefore combines the principles of traditional public administration with new approaches to management, digitalisation and governance.

The key conclusion is that European administrative reform is not primarily about creating identical institutions in different countries. Its purpose is to develop public administrations capable of effectively implementing public policy, cooperating across levels of governance and responding to the changing needs of society .

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Topic 5. Democracy, Transparency, and Citizen Participation in European Governance

First question. Democracy as a fundamental principle of European governance

Democracy is one of the fundamental principles on which the European Union is based. European governance is therefore understood not only as a system of institutional decision-making but also as a system that must ensure democratic legitimacy, representation and participation.

Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union identifies democracy, the rule of law, respect for human dignity, freedom, equality and respect for human rights as common values of the European Union.

Article 10 TEU establishes the principle of representative democracy. Citizens are directly represented at Union level in the European Parliament, while Member States are represented in the European Council and the Council of the European Union by their governments, which are democratically accountable to their national parliaments or citizens.

This creates a specific model of European democratic governance.

It combines:

- direct representation of citizens through the European Parliament;
- representation of Member States through the Council and European Council;
- national democratic mechanisms ;
- participatory instruments that allow citizens and organisations to interact with EU institutions.

Democratic governance therefore operates at several levels simultaneously.

An important principle established by Article 10 TEU is that decisions should be taken as openly and as closely as possible to the citizen .

This principle is particularly relevant for public administration. Administrative institutions are not only instruments for implementing political

decisions. They are also responsible for maintaining public trust, providing access to information and ensuring that citizens can interact with public authorities.

Democracy in public administration therefore includes more than elections. It involves:

- legality of administrative action;
- equal treatment;
- access to information;
- participation;
- accountability;
- responsiveness;
- opportunities to challenge administrative decisions.

The quality of democratic governance consequently depends partly on the everyday functioning of public administration.

An administration that operates transparently, provides accessible services and responds to citizens' needs contributes to the practical realisation of democratic principles.

Second question. Transparency and openness of public administration in the European Union

Transparency is an essential component of democratic governance. It allows citizens and organisations to understand how public institutions operate, how decisions are made and how public resources are used.

Article 15 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union establishes the principle that the Union's institutions, bodies, offices and agencies should conduct their work as openly as possible. It also establishes a right of access to documents of the EU institutions under the conditions defined by EU law.

Transparency serves several important purposes.

First, it strengthens public trust .

Citizens are more likely to trust public institutions when information about their decisions and activities is accessible and understandable.

Second, transparency supports accountability. Public authorities can be held responsible for their decisions when relevant information is available to citizens, representative institutions, oversight bodies and the media.

Third, transparency contributes to the prevention of corruption and conflicts of interest by making administrative processes more visible.

Fourth, transparency improves the quality of policymaking because access to information allows different stakeholders to examine proposals and provide informed feedback.

Transparency should therefore not be regarded simply as publication of documents. It also concerns the accessibility, comprehensibility and usability of public information.

Modern public administration increasingly uses digital technologies to improve transparency. Public registers, open data portals, online consultations and digital access to administrative documents create additional opportunities for citizens to monitor public institutions.

At the same time, transparency has legitimate limits. Public institutions must balance openness with the protection of personal data, confidential information, security interests and other legally protected interests.

Therefore, effective transparency requires an appropriate institutional and legal framework rather than unrestricted disclosure of all information.

The principle of openness is also connected with the quality of administrative communication. Public institutions should communicate decisions and policies in a way that enables citizens to understand not only what decision has been made but, where appropriate, why it has been made.

Third question. Citizen participation in the decision-making process of the European Union

Citizen participation is an important element of contemporary European governance.

Traditional public administration was largely based on a model in which decisions were made by public authorities and subsequently implemented for citizens. Contemporary governance increasingly recognises citizens as participants in public policymaking.

Article 11 TEU provides an important legal basis for participatory democracy at the EU level. EU institutions are required to provide citizens and representative associations with opportunities to make known and publicly exchange their views in all areas of Union action.

The Treaties also require the European institutions to maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with representative associations and civil society.

One of the most distinctive participatory mechanisms is the European Citizens' Initiative .

Under this mechanism, EU citizens can invite the European Commission to consider proposing legislation in areas where the Commission has competence. The initiative requires the collection of at least one million signatures from citizens from a significant number of Member States.

The European Citizens' Initiative does not mean that citizens can directly adopt EU legislation. Its purpose is to give citizens an opportunity to place particular issues on the European policy agenda.

Citizen participation can therefore influence different stages of the policy cycle:

identification of problems → formulation of proposals → decision-making
→ implementation → monitoring and evaluation.

Participation is also important because public policies often depend on knowledge that cannot be generated exclusively within government institutions.

Citizens, professional communities, businesses, NGOs and academic institutions may possess information about social needs and practical problems that can improve policy design.

However, participation also creates challenges.

Not all groups have equal resources or opportunities to participate. Organised stakeholders may have greater access to decision-makers than less organised citizens.

Therefore, participatory governance requires attention to:

- inclusiveness;
- equal access;
- representativeness;
- transparency of participation;
- feedback mechanisms.

Participation is meaningful only when citizens can understand how their contributions were considered and what effect they had on the final decision.

Fourth question. European mechanisms of public consultation and dialogue

Public consultation is an important instrument through which European institutions obtain information and opinions from stakeholders and citizens.

The European Commission uses consultation mechanisms as part of the policy development process. Depending on the issue, consultations may involve citizens, businesses, public authorities, civil society organisations, experts and other stakeholders.

The purpose of consultation is not simply to legitimise decisions that have already been made. Properly organised consultation can contribute to the quality of policy development by identifying potential problems, alternative approaches and possible implementation consequences.

A typical consultation process may include:

1. identification of the policy problem;
2. preparation of a policy initiative;

3. collection of opinions and evidence;
4. analysis of stakeholder contributions;
5. preparation or revision of the proposal;
6. adoption of the relevant decision;
7. subsequent monitoring and evaluation.

The European Commission's Have Your Say platform is an important digital mechanism for public participation in EU policymaking. It provides opportunities to give feedback on initiatives and participate in public consultations.

Public dialogue can also take place through:

- stakeholder meetings;
- expert groups;
- public hearings;
- conferences;
- online consultations;
- European Citizens' Initiatives;
- dialogue with civil society organisations;
- dialogue with regional and local authorities.

These mechanisms illustrate the transition from a purely administrative model towards a more participatory model of governance.

For public administration, consultation requires specific organisational capacities. Institutions need to identify relevant stakeholders, formulate clear questions, collect and analyse contributions and communicate how consultation results were used.

Thus, consultation should be viewed not simply as a communication activity but as an instrument of policy development and administrative decision-making.

Fifth question. Accountability and responsiveness of public administration

Democratic public administration requires institutions not only to exercise authority but also to explain and justify their actions.

This is the essence of accountability.

Accountability means that public institutions and officials can be required to provide information about their decisions and activities and can be subject to appropriate forms of oversight and responsibility.

Accountability in European governance operates through several mechanisms.

Political accountability

Institutions such as the European Parliament exercise political scrutiny over the European Commission and other EU activities.

Legal accountability

The Court of Justice of the European Union and national courts ensure that public authorities act in accordance with applicable law.

Financial accountability

The European Court of Auditors and other financial control mechanisms contribute to oversight of EU financial resources.

Administrative accountability

Institutions such as the European Ombudsman provide additional mechanisms for addressing maladministration.

Public accountability

Transparency, public debate, civil society activity and the media allow citizens and organisations to scrutinise public authorities.

Accountability is closely related to responsiveness .

A responsive administration recognises citizens' needs and responds to legitimate requests in a timely and appropriate manner.

Responsiveness can involve:

- accessible public services;
- clear administrative procedures;
- timely responses to citizens;
- mechanisms for complaints and appeals;

- consideration of public feedback;
- continuous improvement of services.

Accountability and responsiveness reinforce each other.

Transparency provides information; participation provides opportunities to express views; accountability creates mechanisms for responsibility; responsiveness ensures that public institutions react to legitimate public needs.

Together, these elements contribute to the quality of democratic governance.

For contemporary public administration, this means that institutional performance cannot be assessed exclusively through internal indicators. It must also be assessed through the perspective of citizens, stakeholders and public value.

Conclusions

Democracy, transparency and citizen participation are fundamental elements of contemporary European governance.

Democratic governance in the European Union combines representative mechanisms with instruments of participatory democracy. Citizens are represented directly through the European Parliament and participate indirectly through national democratic institutions. At the same time, the Treaties provide mechanisms for dialogue and participation involving citizens, civil society and representative associations.

Transparency creates the informational basis for democratic control. Access to information about public decisions and administrative activities strengthens accountability and public trust.

Citizen participation allows public authorities to take into account different perspectives and sources of knowledge when developing policies. Public consultations, stakeholder dialogue and the European Citizens' Initiative provide important mechanisms for such participation.

Accountability ensures that public authorities can be scrutinised and held responsible for their actions, while responsiveness focuses on the ability of institutions to react appropriately to citizens' legitimate needs.

The contemporary European approach therefore views democratic public administration as a combination of:

representation + transparency + participation + accountability + responsiveness.

These principles provide an important foundation for understanding European governance and create a bridge to the subsequent topics concerning European policies, territorial governance and the interaction between European and national administrative systems.

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Topic 6. EU Policies and Instruments of Public Governance

First question. The main areas of EU public policy and their governance mechanisms

The European Union develops and implements public policies in a wide range of areas. The scope of EU action depends on the competences conferred upon the Union by the Treaties. Therefore, EU public policy is not a single homogeneous system but a combination of policies in which the EU and Member States have different responsibilities.

The main areas of EU public policy include:

- the internal market;
- economic and monetary policy;
- cohesion and regional development;
- agriculture and fisheries;
- environment and climate policy;
- energy;
- transport;
- employment and social policy;
- consumer protection;
- research and innovation;
- digital policy;
- education, youth and culture;
- public health;
- migration and asylum;
- justice and home affairs;
- external action and development cooperation.

The intensity of EU involvement differs between these areas. In some policy fields, the EU has exclusive competence; in others, competences are shared with

Member States, while in certain areas the Union primarily supports, coordinates or supplements national action.

Consequently, EU governance mechanisms also vary.

One important mechanism is legislation. EU institutions can adopt regulations, directives and decisions that establish common rules or objectives.

Another mechanism is policy coordination. In areas where Member States retain significant competence, the EU may coordinate national policies, establish common objectives, develop indicators and facilitate the exchange of good practices.

A third mechanism is financial support. EU programmes and funds provide resources for achieving common policy objectives.

A fourth mechanism is monitoring and evaluation. EU institutions and Member States collect information about implementation and assess whether policies achieve their intended results.

A fifth mechanism is partnership and cooperation. Many European policies require cooperation between EU institutions, national governments, regional and local authorities and other stakeholders.

Thus, EU public governance combines several instruments:

regulation + coordination + funding + monitoring + evaluation + partnership.

The appropriate combination depends on the policy area and the distribution of competences.

An important characteristic of EU policymaking is that the formulation of a common European policy does not necessarily mean that its implementation is centralised at EU level. In many cases, European institutions establish common objectives and rules, while national and subnational administrations are responsible for practical implementation.

This makes the implementation capacity of Member States an important element of EU policy effectiveness.

Second question. Common policies and horizontal EU policies

EU policies can be distinguished according to their substantive focus and their role in achieving broader Union objectives.

Common policies are areas in which Member States have agreed to pursue common objectives and, depending on the policy, have transferred certain competences to the EU or established mechanisms for joint action.

One of the historically important examples is the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). It provides a common framework for agricultural support, rural development and the functioning of agricultural markets.

Another major area is the Common Commercial Policy, through which the EU acts as a unified economic actor in international trade.

The Common Fisheries Policy establishes a common framework for managing fisheries resources.

At the same time, a number of EU policies have a broader, horizontal character. They do not relate exclusively to one sector but influence the design and implementation of policies across different areas.

Examples include:

- environmental protection;
- climate action;
- digital transformation;
- gender equality and non-discrimination;
- social inclusion;
- research and innovation;
- sustainable development;
- fundamental rights;
- territorial cohesion.

The horizontal nature of these policies means that their objectives should be taken into account when designing policies in other sectors.

For example, environmental considerations can influence transport, agriculture, energy and regional development policy. Digital transformation

affects public administration, education, healthcare, economic development and public services.

The EU's European Green Deal illustrates the horizontal character of some policy objectives. Climate and environmental considerations are incorporated into a broad range of policy areas rather than being treated exclusively as an environmental issue.

Similarly, digitalisation has become a cross-cutting objective affecting economic policy, public administration, research, education and social policy.

This creates additional requirements for public administration. Administrative institutions can no longer operate exclusively within narrow sectoral boundaries. They increasingly need to coordinate different policy dimensions and assess how decisions in one area affect other policy objectives.

The distinction between common and horizontal policies is therefore important for understanding the complexity of EU governance.

Common policies provide frameworks for joint European action in particular areas, while horizontal policies help ensure that broader European objectives are incorporated into different sectors.

Third question. Policy coordination and implementation mechanisms

The implementation of EU policies requires coordination between different levels of public authority.

As discussed in the previous topics, European policies are often implemented through a combination of EU institutions and national, regional and local administrations.

Policy coordination begins at the stage of policy formulation. EU institutions and Member States negotiate common objectives, priorities and implementation arrangements.

After adoption, Member States are responsible for applying EU legislation and implementing many European programmes.

The European Commission performs an important coordinating and monitoring role. It works with Member States, provides guidance, collects information and assesses implementation.

Several mechanisms are used for coordination.

Legislative coordination

EU legislation establishes common legal requirements that Member States must incorporate or apply according to the relevant legal instrument.

Strategic coordination

EU strategies establish common objectives and priorities over a longer period.

They provide a framework within which European and national policies can be aligned.

Financial coordination

EU funds and programmes provide financial resources linked to specific policy objectives.

Funding arrangements can create incentives for Member States and regional authorities to align their policies with European priorities.

Administrative coordination

National administrations interact with EU institutions through committees, working groups, expert networks and other administrative mechanisms.

This allows information and administrative practices to be exchanged and common implementation problems to be addressed.

Monitoring and reporting

Implementation is monitored through indicators, reports, audits and other control mechanisms.

These mechanisms allow institutions to identify deviations from planned objectives and take corrective measures.

Evaluation

Evaluation provides a systematic assessment of whether an intervention has produced the expected results and what changes may be necessary.

The overall implementation process can therefore be represented as:

EU objectives → legislation and strategies → national implementation → regional/local implementation → monitoring → evaluation → policy adjustment.

The process is not necessarily linear. Evaluation and monitoring can generate information that leads to changes in programmes, priorities or implementation mechanisms.

This creates a policy learning cycle in which public authorities can use implementation experience to improve future policies.

Effective coordination is particularly important when responsibilities are shared between the EU and Member States. Without coordination, common European objectives may be interpreted or implemented differently, reducing the overall effectiveness of EU action.

Fourth question. European strategies, programmes and instruments for regional and local development

Regional and local development represents one of the most important areas of EU public governance.

The EU recognises significant differences in economic, social and territorial conditions between regions. Economic, social and territorial cohesion is therefore an important objective of European integration.

EU regional policy seeks to reduce disparities between regions and support balanced territorial development.

A major instrument is EU cohesion policy, which is implemented through a system of funds, programmes and partnership arrangements.

For the 2021–2027 programming period, cohesion policy is primarily supported through:

- the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF);
- the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+);
- the Cohesion Fund;
- the Just Transition Fund (JTF).

These instruments support areas such as:

- innovation;
- employment;
- infrastructure;
- digitalisation;
- environmental protection;
- energy efficiency;
- social inclusion;
- territorial development.

Regional and local authorities play an important role in translating European priorities into territorial projects.

EU regional development policy is therefore based substantially on the principle of partnership. European institutions, national authorities, regional and local authorities and other stakeholders participate in the design and implementation of programmes.

An important concept is the place-based approach. Territorial development policies should take into account the specific characteristics, resources, challenges and development potential of individual regions and communities.

European territorial cooperation programmes provide another important instrument. They support cooperation between regions and communities across national borders and encourage joint responses to common territorial challenges.

EU strategies also provide broader frameworks for regional and local development.

The European Green Deal, the Digital Decade, the European Pillar of Social Rights and other strategic frameworks influence the priorities of territorial development.

Regional and local authorities therefore operate within a complex policy environment in which European strategic priorities interact with national and local development strategies.

For public managers, the important task is to connect these levels:

European priorities → national strategic framework → regional strategy →
local development priorities → projects → measurable results.

This requires not only access to financial resources but also institutional capacity to design projects, manage funds, coordinate stakeholders and evaluate results.

Fifth question. The role of evidence, indicators and evaluation in EU policy implementation

Modern European policymaking increasingly emphasises the use of **evidence** in the design, implementation and evaluation of public policies.

Evidence can include:

- statistical data;
- administrative data;
- scientific research;
- expert analysis;
- stakeholder input;
- monitoring information;
- previous evaluation results.

The use of evidence allows policymakers to identify problems more accurately and assess possible policy solutions.

Evidence is particularly important because public resources are limited. Decision-makers need to understand whether interventions generate the expected results and whether resources are being used effectively.

Indicators

Indicators provide measurable information about the implementation and results of public interventions.

They can be divided into several broad categories.

Input indicators measure resources used for an intervention.

Output indicators measure the immediate products or activities generated by a programme.

Result indicators measure changes resulting from an intervention.

Impact indicators seek to capture broader and longer-term effects.

For example, in a regional employment programme:

- financial resources allocated may represent an input;
- number of training courses delivered may represent an output;
- number of participants obtaining employment may represent a result;
- long-term improvement in regional employment conditions may represent an impact.

The distinction between outputs and results is particularly important.

Completing activities does not necessarily mean that a policy has achieved its objective.

A programme may successfully deliver thousands of training sessions while having a limited effect on employment. Therefore, monitoring should not focus exclusively on whether planned activities have been completed.

Evaluation

Evaluation provides a deeper assessment of policy performance.

It can examine:

- relevance;
- effectiveness;
- efficiency;
- coherence;
- impact;
- sustainability of results.

Evaluation can be conducted before, during or after implementation.

Ex ante evaluation supports the design of an intervention.

Ongoing or interim evaluation examines implementation and allows adjustments.

Ex post evaluation assesses the results and effects after implementation.

The European Union increasingly uses evaluation as an instrument of evidence-informed policymaking and policy learning.

This approach changes the role of public administration. Administrative institutions are not only responsible for implementing decisions but also for generating information that can be used to improve those decisions.

Consequently, modern EU policy management can be represented as a cycle: evidence → policy design → implementation → indicators → monitoring → evaluation → learning → policy improvement.

The effective use of this cycle requires appropriate administrative capacity, including data collection, analytical skills, monitoring systems and professional evaluation competencies.

For regional and local authorities, this is particularly important when implementing EU-funded programmes. Access to European funding is increasingly connected with clearly defined objectives, indicators, monitoring requirements and evidence of achieved results.

Therefore, the ability to demonstrate what has changed as a result of public intervention becomes as important as the ability to demonstrate that financial and administrative procedures have been followed correctly.

Conclusions

EU public policies cover a wide range of areas, while the intensity of EU involvement varies according to the distribution of competences established by the Treaties.

European governance combines regulatory, coordination, financial, administrative, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Common policies provide frameworks for joint action in particular sectors, while horizontal policies integrate broader European objectives across different policy areas.

The implementation of EU policies depends substantially on coordination between European institutions and national, regional and local administrations.

European strategies and programmes provide common priorities and instruments, while Member States and territorial authorities play an essential role in translating them into practical action.

Regional and local development is an important area of European public governance. Cohesion policy and its financial instruments provide resources for reducing territorial disparities and supporting economic, social and territorial development.

Evidence, indicators, monitoring and evaluation are increasingly important components of the EU policy cycle. They provide information about the effectiveness and efficiency of public interventions and support policy learning.

The key principle is therefore:

European policy is not completed when a decision is adopted; its effectiveness depends on implementation, measurement of results, evaluation and subsequent policy improvement.

For public managers, this means that successful participation in European governance requires the ability not only to implement policies and manage resources but also to coordinate actors, use evidence, measure results and learn from implementation experience.

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Topic 7. European Regional and Local Governance

First question. Organisation of regional and local governance in the European Union

Regional and local governance is an important component of the European governance system. However, there is no single model of territorial organisation that applies to all EU Member States. The organisation of regional and local government reflects the constitutional structure, administrative traditions and territorial characteristics of each country.

Some Member States have a federal structure with constitutionally significant regional governments, while others have unitary systems in which regional and local authorities exercise powers transferred by national legislation. There are also significant differences in the number and functions of territorial levels.

Despite this diversity, European territorial governance is based on several common principles.

Local and regional authorities are responsible for a substantial part of public services and territorial development. Their competences may include:

- local infrastructure;
- spatial and urban planning;
- transport;
- public utilities;
- environmental management;
- social services;
- education and culture;
- local economic development.

The exact allocation of responsibilities differs between Member States.

An important European reference point is the European Charter of Local Self-Government, adopted within the Council of Europe. The Charter establishes principles concerning local self-government, including the right and ability of

local authorities to regulate and manage a substantial share of public affairs under their own responsibility.

At the EU level, the European Committee of the Regions provides an institutional channel through which regional and local authorities participate in European policymaking.

The EU therefore does not directly organise local government in its Member States. Rather, it operates within a system in which territorial authorities remain part of national constitutional arrangements while simultaneously participating in European governance.

This creates an important distinction between EU-level regional policy and national territorial organisation.

The EU establishes policy objectives and financial instruments in areas such as cohesion and regional development, while Member States determine the constitutional and administrative organisation of their regions and municipalities.

Consequently, European regional governance should be understood as a system of interaction between:

European institutions → national authorities → regional authorities → local authorities.

The effectiveness of this system depends on the clarity of competences, adequate resources, coordination and institutional capacity at each level.

Second question. Decentralisation and local autonomy

Decentralisation refers to the transfer of responsibilities, decision-making powers and, where appropriate, financial resources from higher levels of government to lower levels.

Decentralisation can take different forms.

Political decentralisation involves strengthening the decision-making role of elected territorial authorities.

Administrative decentralisation involves transferring responsibility for the delivery and management of public functions.

Fiscal decentralisation concerns the distribution of financial resources and revenue-raising powers between levels of government.

Decentralisation is closely connected with the concept of local autonomy.

Local autonomy means that local authorities have the capacity to manage a significant part of local public affairs within the framework established by law.

An important European reference is the European Charter of Local Self-Government. It emphasises that local self-government should be exercised by councils or assemblies composed of members freely elected by secret ballot and that local authorities should have appropriate administrative structures and financial resources to perform their responsibilities.

Decentralisation can provide several advantages.

First, decisions can be made closer to citizens.

Second, local authorities can adapt public policies to specific territorial conditions.

Third, decentralisation can strengthen accountability because citizens can more directly assess the performance of local authorities.

Fourth, territorial authorities can develop innovative solutions responding to local needs.

However, decentralisation also creates challenges.

The transfer of responsibilities without adequate financial resources may weaken local government capacity. Fragmentation of responsibilities may create coordination problems. Significant differences in administrative capacity between territories may also result in unequal quality of public services.

Therefore, effective decentralisation requires an appropriate balance between: competences + financial resources + administrative capacity + accountability.

European practice demonstrates that decentralisation is not simply a matter of transferring functions. It requires the creation of institutional conditions under which territorial authorities can effectively exercise their responsibilities.

Third question. European regional policy and cohesion policy

European regional policy is closely connected with the objective of reducing economic, social and territorial disparities between regions.

Cohesion policy is one of the principal mechanisms through which the European Union seeks to promote balanced territorial development.

Article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union establishes the objective of strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion and reducing disparities between the levels of development of different regions and the backwardness of the least favoured regions.

Cohesion policy is therefore based on the recognition that the benefits of European integration should be accessible across different territories.

For the 2021–2027 programming period, cohesion policy is implemented through several major funds, including:

- the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF);
- the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+);
- the Cohesion Fund;
- the Just Transition Fund (JTF).

These instruments support different dimensions of territorial development.

The ERDF supports investments related to innovation, economic development, digitalisation, infrastructure and environmental objectives.

The ESF+ focuses primarily on employment, social inclusion, education, skills and human capital.

The Cohesion Fund supports Member States with lower levels of gross national income in areas including environment and trans-European transport infrastructure.

The Just Transition Fund provides support to territories facing particularly significant socioeconomic challenges arising from the transition towards climate neutrality.

Cohesion policy operates through multiannual programming.

This means that European funding is not generally distributed as isolated individual interventions. Instead, Member States and regions develop strategic programmes defining priorities, objectives, financial allocations and implementation arrangements.

An important feature of cohesion policy is the partnership principle. Different levels of public administration and relevant stakeholders participate in programme preparation and implementation.

Therefore, cohesion policy is not merely a financial redistribution mechanism. It is also a mechanism for territorial development, institutional cooperation and strategic planning.

Fourth question. Territorial development and interregional cooperation

Territorial development concerns the economic, social, environmental and institutional development of particular territories.

The European approach increasingly recognises that territories differ in their resources, economic structures, geographical position, demographic characteristics and institutional capacity.

Therefore, effective territorial development cannot rely exclusively on uniform solutions.

A place-based approach emphasises the importance of the specific characteristics and development potential of individual territories.

Territorial development may involve:

- strengthening local economic competitiveness;
- developing infrastructure;
- supporting innovation;
- improving human capital;
- enhancing connectivity;
- protecting natural and cultural resources;
- improving public services;
- strengthening institutional capacity.

An important dimension of European territorial development is interregional cooperation.

Regions and cities can cooperate with each other to address common challenges, exchange experience and develop joint initiatives.

Such cooperation can take place within Member States and across national borders.

European territorial cooperation is particularly visible in Interreg, which supports cooperation between regions and countries.

Cross-border cooperation can address issues such as:

- transport connections;
- environmental protection;
- emergency response;
- tourism;
- labour markets;
- innovation;
- cultural cooperation.

Transnational cooperation allows territories from different countries to work together on broader geographical challenges, while interregional cooperation facilitates the exchange of experience and good practices.

Cooperation therefore creates opportunities for territories to develop solutions collectively rather than addressing common challenges independently.

For local and regional authorities, participation in European cooperation can also strengthen administrative capacity. Joint projects require planning, financial management, communication, monitoring and evaluation.

Thus, interregional cooperation has both a developmental and an institutional function.

Fifth question. European instruments for reducing territorial disparities

Territorial disparities may arise from differences in economic structure, infrastructure, employment opportunities, human capital, demographic trends, geographic location and institutional capacity.

The European Union uses a combination of financial, regulatory and strategic instruments to address these differences.

The most important instruments are associated with cohesion policy.

European Regional Development Fund

The ERDF supports investment aimed at reducing regional disparities and strengthening competitiveness, innovation, infrastructure and territorial development.

European Social Fund Plus

The ESF+ supports employment, education, skills development and social inclusion.

Its territorial significance lies in strengthening human capital and labour-market opportunities in different regions.

Cohesion Fund

The Cohesion Fund supports eligible Member States in areas such as environmental protection and transport infrastructure.

Just Transition Fund

The JTF supports territories particularly affected by the transition to a climate-neutral economy.

Territorial cooperation programmes

Interreg programmes support cooperation between regions and countries and allow territories to address common challenges collectively.

European strategies and territorial planning

Financial instruments are complemented by strategic frameworks that establish broader European objectives.

These instruments operate through a combination of EU funding, national and regional programming, partnership and project implementation.

An important principle is that territorial disparities cannot be reduced through financial transfers alone.

Financial resources must be accompanied by:

- effective institutions;
- qualified personnel;
- strategic planning;
- project management capacity;
- transparent procedures;
- monitoring and evaluation.

This is particularly important because territories with weaker administrative capacity may experience greater difficulties in preparing and implementing development projects.

Consequently, European cohesion policy increasingly pays attention not only to the amount of funding available but also to the quality of governance and institutional capacity within territories.

Sixth question. Governance of cities and regions in the context of sustainable and inclusive development

Cities and regions play an increasingly important role in addressing economic, social and environmental challenges.

Urban areas concentrate a large share of economic activity, population, infrastructure and innovation. At the same time, they face challenges related to housing, mobility, environmental quality, social inequalities, demographic change and access to public services.

European approaches to territorial development increasingly combine three dimensions:

economic development + social inclusion + environmental responsibility.

This requires integrated territorial governance.

An integrated approach means that urban and regional policies should not be developed exclusively through separate sectoral interventions. Transport policy,

spatial planning, environmental policy, housing, employment, social services and economic development can significantly influence each other.

For example, decisions concerning urban transport can simultaneously affect:

- economic accessibility;
- environmental quality;
- social inclusion;
- land use;
- public health.

Consequently, city governance requires coordination between different policy areas and administrative institutions.

Another important principle is inclusiveness.

Territorial development should provide opportunities for different groups of the population to participate in economic and social life. This requires attention to accessibility, employment, public services and participation in local decision-making.

European urban policy increasingly emphasises integrated approaches to cities and their surrounding territories.

The Urban Agenda for the EU provides a framework for cooperation between cities, the European Commission, other EU institutions and Member States. Its approach is based on improving regulation, access to funding and knowledge exchange for urban areas.

The New European Bauhaus also illustrates the integrated character of contemporary European territorial approaches by connecting sustainability, aesthetics and inclusion in the transformation of the built environment.

For cities and regions, this means that development strategies increasingly need to combine economic competitiveness with quality of life, environmental considerations and social inclusion.

An important role in this process belongs to local and regional public managers.

They must be able to:

- coordinate different sectors;
- involve stakeholders;
- use territorial data;
- attract and manage external funding;
- develop partnerships;
- monitor results;
- adapt policies to changing conditions.

Thus, sustainable and inclusive territorial development depends not only on financial resources but also on the quality of local and regional governance.

Conclusions

European regional and local governance operates within a system characterised by significant national diversity and increasing interaction between European, national, regional and local levels.

The European Union does not establish a uniform model of local or regional government. The organisation of territorial administration remains primarily a matter for Member States. At the same time, European policies influence territorial development through common objectives, financial instruments, partnership mechanisms and cooperation programmes.

Decentralisation and local autonomy strengthen the ability of territorial authorities to respond to local conditions, but their effectiveness depends on an appropriate combination of competences, resources, administrative capacity and accountability.

Cohesion policy provides one of the principal European mechanisms for reducing economic, social and territorial disparities. Through the ERDF, ESF+, Cohesion Fund, Just Transition Fund and territorial cooperation programmes, the EU supports investment and development across different territories.

Interregional and cross-border cooperation creates additional opportunities for joint responses to common challenges and for the exchange of administrative practices.

Contemporary European territorial governance increasingly emphasises integrated development that combines economic competitiveness, social inclusion and environmental responsibility.

The central conclusion is that regional and local development depends not only on the availability of financial resources but also on the capacity of territorial authorities to plan strategically, coordinate stakeholders, manage projects, cooperate across borders and levels of government, and evaluate development results.

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Topic 8. Public Administration in EU Member States and Candidate Countries

*First question. Comparative approaches to public administration in EU
Member States*

Public administration systems in the European Union are characterised by considerable institutional and administrative diversity. EU Member States have developed their public administrations under different historical, constitutional, political and social conditions. Consequently, European integration has not resulted in the creation of a single model of public administration.

A comparative approach makes it possible to identify both common features and important differences between national administrative systems.

Public administration can be compared according to several criteria:

- constitutional structure;
- territorial organisation;
- distribution of administrative competences;
- relationship between political and administrative institutions;
- organisation of the civil service;
- degree of decentralisation;
- mechanisms of public accountability;
- administrative procedures;
- organisation of public services;
- mechanisms of coordination;
- use of digital technologies.

One of the important differences concerns the relationship between the central government and territorial authorities.

Some countries have highly decentralised systems in which regional and local authorities exercise significant responsibilities. Other countries retain stronger central administrative control.

There are also differences in the organisation of the civil service. Some Member States traditionally have career-based systems, while others place greater emphasis on positions, managerial responsibilities and flexibility.

Despite this diversity, European integration has contributed to the development of common administrative principles.

National administrations increasingly need to ensure:

- respect for the rule of law;
- professional and impartial public service;
- transparency;
- accountability;
- effective policy coordination;
- quality public services;
- sound public financial management;
- effective implementation of EU law.

Comparative analysis therefore should not seek to identify a single "best" administrative system. Its purpose is to understand how different institutional arrangements respond to similar public management challenges.

This approach is particularly important for countries undertaking administrative reforms. European experience provides examples and possible solutions, but institutional reforms need to take into account the national context.

The comparative perspective therefore requires distinguishing between transferable principles and country-specific institutional arrangements.

Second question. Administrative traditions and models

European public administrations have developed within different administrative traditions. These traditions influence institutional structures, administrative culture, relationships between political and administrative actors and approaches to public service.

Classical comparative public administration literature often distinguishes several broad administrative traditions.

One of them is the Napoleonic or French tradition, characterised historically by strong central government, hierarchical administration and an important role for the state in organising public affairs.

Another is the Germanic tradition, which places considerable emphasis on legality, formal administrative procedures, professional administration and a strong legal framework for public authority.

The Nordic tradition is generally associated with a relatively high degree of decentralisation, strong local government, openness and emphasis on public trust and accessibility.

The Anglo-Saxon tradition has historically placed greater emphasis on managerial flexibility, executive agencies and performance-oriented approaches, although individual countries differ substantially.

Southern European administrative systems have also developed distinctive combinations of centralisation, legalism and territorial administration.

These categories should be used as analytical models rather than rigid classifications. Contemporary European public administrations increasingly combine elements from different traditions.

Administrative reforms have contributed to this convergence.

For example, countries with strong legalistic traditions have introduced performance management and digital public services, while administrations historically influenced by managerial approaches have simultaneously strengthened transparency, integrity and citizen participation.

The influence of New Public Management during the late twentieth century also contributed to changes in many European countries. Performance indicators, managerial autonomy, contractual arrangements and service orientation became more common.

More recently, the concept of New Public Governance has emphasised cooperation, networks and interaction between public institutions and non-state actors.

As a result, contemporary administrative systems are better understood as combinations of several approaches:

traditional public administration + managerial approaches + governance + digital administration.

European administrative traditions therefore continue to matter, but they coexist with common principles and increasingly shared administrative practices.

Third question. Central, regional and local administration

The organisation of public administration across central, regional and local levels is one of the main dimensions of administrative diversity within the EU.

At the central level, governments and ministries are generally responsible for national policy development, strategic coordination and functions that require national or European coordination.

Central administration may include:

- ministries;
- central executive agencies;
- regulatory institutions;
- specialised government bodies.

The central level is particularly important for establishing national legislation, strategic priorities and national standards.

The regional level varies considerably between Member States.

In federal countries, regions or constituent units may possess constitutionally protected legislative and administrative powers.

In some unitary states, regional authorities have significant responsibilities but operate within a framework established by national legislation.

In other countries, the regional level may have more limited functions.

The local level is generally responsible for functions closely connected with local communities and public services.

These may include:

- local infrastructure;

- spatial planning;
- public transport;
- utilities;
- social services;
- local economic development;
- culture;
- environmental management.

The precise allocation of responsibilities differs between countries.

An important European principle is that public responsibilities should be allocated in a way that allows them to be performed effectively and as close to citizens as appropriate.

The European Charter of Local Self-Government provides an important European framework for understanding local autonomy. It establishes principles concerning the political, administrative and financial conditions necessary for effective local self-government.

At the EU level, the Committee of the Regions provides a channel for regional and local authorities to participate in European policymaking.

The relationship between levels of administration therefore involves both division of responsibilities and coordination.

Centralisation can facilitate uniformity and national coordination, while decentralisation can improve responsiveness to territorial needs. Effective governance requires an appropriate balance between these approaches.

Fourth question. Institutional capacity and quality of governance

Institutional capacity refers to the ability of public institutions to perform their functions effectively and achieve established policy objectives.

It is an important factor determining the quality of public governance.

Institutional capacity includes several dimensions.

Organisational capacity

Public institutions need clearly defined responsibilities, appropriate organisational structures and effective internal procedures.

Human resource capacity

Public administration requires qualified personnel, merit-based recruitment, professional development and effective leadership.

Policy capacity

Institutions must be capable of identifying public problems, analysing policy alternatives, developing evidence-informed decisions and evaluating results.

Coordination capacity

Modern public problems frequently involve several institutions and levels of government. Effective coordination is therefore essential.

Financial capacity

Institutions need adequate and predictable financial resources and the ability to manage public finances responsibly.

Digital capacity

Digital technologies have become an important component of administrative capacity. Institutions require appropriate infrastructure, data management systems and digital competencies.

Institutional capacity is closely connected with the quality of governance.

High-quality governance is generally associated with:

- rule of law;
- government effectiveness;
- regulatory quality;
- accountability;
- transparency;
- control of corruption;
- participation;
- institutional reliability.

The quality of governance affects the ability of governments to implement policies and provide public services.

For EU Member States, administrative capacity is also important for the effective implementation of EU law and programmes.

For candidate countries, the issue is even more significant. EU accession requires administrations capable of adopting and implementing the *acquis*, coordinating European affairs and participating effectively in the Union's institutional system.

The OECD/SIGMA *Principles of Public Administration* provide a comprehensive framework for assessing public administration systems. The 2023 Principles cover strategic frameworks, policymaking and coordination, public service and human resource management, organisation and accountability, service delivery and digitalisation, and public financial management.

Institutional capacity should therefore be viewed not as a fixed characteristic but as a long-term organisational resource that can be developed through reform, learning and professionalisation.

Fifth question. Public administration reforms in candidate countries

Public administration reform is an important component of the European integration process.

Candidate countries need to develop administrations capable of implementing EU law and participating effectively in the institutional system of the Union.

Administrative reform in candidate countries generally addresses several interconnected areas:

- strategic planning;
- policy development and coordination;
- civil service;
- public financial management;
- organisation of public institutions;
- accountability;

- public service delivery;
- digitalisation;
- local government;
- administrative justice;
- anti-corruption and integrity mechanisms.

The EU accession process creates additional incentives for reform because candidate countries need to demonstrate sufficient administrative and institutional capacity to fulfil the obligations of membership.

Administrative reform is therefore closely connected with the broader accession criteria.

However, approximation to EU standards does not simply involve adopting European legislation.

A country may formally adopt legislation while still experiencing difficulties with implementation.

Therefore, effective reform requires both:

formal approximation + practical implementation capacity.

This distinction is particularly important in areas such as public procurement, financial management, competition policy, environmental regulation, state aid, public service and judicial administration.

The EU and OECD/SIGMA support administrative reform in candidate and potential candidate countries through assessments, recommendations, technical assistance and capacity-building activities.

The *Principles of Public Administration* provide a common analytical framework for evaluating the readiness and performance of public administration.

An important lesson from the experience of candidate countries is that administrative reform should be treated as a long-term institutional transformation, rather than a short-term legislative exercise.

Successful reform generally requires:

- political commitment;

- clear reform priorities;
- capable institutions;
- qualified public servants;
- adequate resources;
- effective coordination;
- monitoring of implementation;
- continuity of reform efforts.

Another important lesson is that reforms should be adapted to the institutional context of the country. European standards provide common objectives, but institutional solutions may differ.

Sixth question. Lessons from the European experience for Ukraine

The experience of EU Member States and candidate countries provides important lessons for the development of Ukrainian public administration.

The first lesson concerns the importance of institutional capacity.

European integration requires not only the adoption of EU-compatible legislation but also the ability of institutions to implement it effectively. Ukraine therefore needs to focus simultaneously on legislation, organisational arrangements, human resources and administrative practices.

The second lesson concerns professional public service.

A capable, politically impartial and merit-based public service is essential for continuity and quality of public administration.

The third lesson concerns coordination.

European governance demonstrates the importance of coordination between ministries, central executive bodies, regional authorities and local governments. European integration also requires effective coordination of Ukraine's position and implementation responsibilities across different levels of administration.

The fourth lesson concerns decentralisation and local government.

The experience of European countries demonstrates that transferring responsibilities to local authorities should be accompanied by appropriate financial resources, administrative capacity and accountability mechanisms.

The fifth lesson concerns evidence-informed policymaking.

Public decisions should increasingly rely on reliable data, research, monitoring and evaluation rather than exclusively on administrative or political assumptions.

The sixth lesson concerns digitalisation.

Digital public services and integrated administrative systems can improve accessibility, efficiency and transparency. However, digitalisation should involve the redesign of administrative processes rather than simply transferring existing procedures online.

The seventh lesson concerns accountability and integrity.

Transparency, conflict-of-interest management, financial control and effective oversight are essential for public trust and institutional quality.

Finally, Ukraine can learn from the experience of candidate countries that successful European integration is a long-term institutional process.

The objective is not to reproduce the administrative structure of a particular EU Member State. Instead, Ukraine needs to develop institutions capable of operating effectively within the European Administrative Space while taking into account the country's own constitutional, territorial and administrative context.

European experience therefore provides principles, standards and practical examples, but their application requires adaptation to Ukrainian conditions.

Conclusions

Public administration systems in EU Member States demonstrate considerable diversity. Different countries have developed distinctive administrative traditions, territorial structures and institutional arrangements.

At the same time, European integration has contributed to the development of common administrative principles and standards. Rule of law, professionalism,

accountability, transparency, effective policymaking and quality public services constitute important elements of contemporary European administration.

The organisation of central, regional and local administration differs across Member States, but effective governance requires a clear distribution of responsibilities and appropriate coordination between levels.

Institutional capacity is a critical determinant of governance quality. It includes organisational, human, policy, coordination, financial and digital capacities.

For candidate countries, administrative reform is an essential part of the European integration process. The adoption of EU legislation must be accompanied by the development of institutions capable of implementing that legislation effectively.

For Ukraine, the European experience demonstrates the importance of institutional capacity, professional public service, decentralisation, coordination, evidence-informed policymaking, digitalisation, transparency and accountability.

The central lesson is that European integration should not be understood simply as the formal approximation of legislation. It is also a process of institutional and administrative transformation, aimed at creating a public administration capable of effectively implementing European standards and delivering quality public services.

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Topic 9. EU Integration of Ukraine: Institutional and Administrative Dimensions

First question. European integration as a strategic direction of Ukraine's development

European integration is one of the strategic directions of Ukraine's political, economic and institutional development. It involves not only the approximation of Ukrainian legislation to European Union law but also broader institutional, administrative, economic and social transformations.

The European integration process is based on Ukraine's gradual approximation to the political and legal standards of the European Union and the development of institutional capacity necessary for future membership.

The strategic importance of European integration can be considered through several dimensions.

Political dimension

European integration is connected with strengthening democracy, the rule of law, human rights, accountability and effective public institutions.

Legal dimension

Ukraine is progressively aligning national legislation with the EU acquis, the body of rights and obligations common to EU Member States.

Institutional dimension

European integration requires public institutions capable of implementing European standards, coordinating European affairs and effectively fulfilling commitments undertaken in the accession process.

Economic dimension

Integration into the European single market creates opportunities for trade, investment, competition, innovation and economic development.

Social dimension

European integration affects employment, social protection, education, healthcare, environmental standards and the quality of public services.

The constitutional dimension of European integration is also important. Ukraine's Constitution identifies the strategic course of the state towards full membership in the European Union and NATO.

The institutional and administrative dimensions of integration are particularly important for public administration because European integration transforms the functions of public institutions.

Public authorities must:

- analyse EU legislation;
- coordinate Ukraine's negotiating positions;
- participate in European programmes;
- implement commitments under the Association Agreement;
- prepare for accession negotiations;
- approximate national legislation to the *acquis*;
- implement adopted reforms;
- monitor progress;
- communicate European integration policies to citizens.

Therefore, European integration should be understood as a long-term transformation of the Ukrainian state and its institutions, rather than simply a foreign-policy objective.

Ukraine formally applied for EU membership in February 2022. The European Commission issued its opinion on the application in June 2022, and EU Member States granted Ukraine candidate status later that month. In December 2023, EU leaders decided to open accession negotiations, which formally began in June 2024. (European Commission)

The process subsequently entered a more advanced stage. In June 2026, the EU and Ukraine opened negotiations on Cluster 1, Fundamentals, which includes

democratic institutions, rule of law, public administration reform and economic criteria. (Консильюм)

This development makes institutional and administrative capacity a central component of Ukraine's European integration.

Second question. Institutional framework of EU–Ukraine relations

EU–Ukraine relations are based on a developed institutional and legal framework.

One of its central elements is the Association Agreement between the European Union and Ukraine, which entered into force in September 2017.

The Agreement established a comprehensive framework for political association and economic integration. It provides mechanisms for political dialogue, legislative approximation, cooperation in different policy areas and institutional interaction between Ukraine and the European Union.

The institutional framework includes several important bodies.

EU–Ukraine Association Council

The Association Council is the highest-level political body established under the Association Agreement.

It monitors and supervises implementation of the Agreement and provides a framework for political dialogue and cooperation.

Association Committee

The Association Committee supports the work of the Association Council and deals with a wide range of issues related to implementation of the Agreement.

Parliamentary Association Committee

The EU–Ukraine Parliamentary Association Committee provides a parliamentary dimension to relations between Ukraine and the European Union.

It facilitates dialogue between the European Parliament and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

Civil Society Platform

The EU–Ukraine Civil Society Platform provides a mechanism for dialogue between civil society organisations from Ukraine and the EU.

Its role demonstrates that European integration is not exclusively an intergovernmental process.

Sectoral committees and subcommittees

The institutional framework also includes specialised bodies dealing with particular policy areas.

This allows cooperation to take place at both political and technical levels.

An important recent development concerns public administration specifically.

In March 2026, the Council of the EU adopted a decision supporting the establishment of a Public Administration Reform Sub-Committee under the EU–Ukraine Association Council, as well as a Joint Consultative Committee between the European Committee of the Regions and elected local and regional authorities of Ukraine. (EUR-Lex)

The Public Administration Reform Sub-Committee is intended to provide a platform for strategic policy dialogue, coordination and monitoring of public administration reform and to support alignment with EU standards and best practices. (EUR-Lex)

This development is particularly relevant for public administration because it demonstrates that administrative reform is becoming an increasingly institutionalised component of EU–Ukraine relations.

The institutional framework of EU–Ukraine relations can therefore be understood as a system connecting:

political dialogue → legislative approximation → sectoral cooperation → administrative reform → monitoring → accession negotiations.

Third question. Approximation of Ukrainian public administration to European principles and standards

Approximation of Ukrainian public administration to European principles means adapting administrative institutions, procedures and practices to principles that underpin effective public administration in the European Union.

This process does not require Ukraine to copy the institutional structure of a particular Member State.

Instead, the objective is to develop a public administration capable of meeting common European requirements concerning:

- rule of law;
- professionalism;
- impartiality;
- accountability;
- transparency;
- policy coordination;
- effective public service delivery;
- digitalisation;
- sound public financial management.

The OECD/SIGMA Principles of Public Administration provide an important framework for assessing public administration systems. The 2023 Principles cover six major areas:

1. strategic framework of public administration reform;
2. policy development and coordination;
3. public service and human resource management;
4. organisation, accountability and oversight;
5. service delivery and digitalisation;
6. public financial management.

These principles are particularly relevant for Ukraine because they provide a common framework for assessing administrative capacity in the context of European integration.

Approximation also concerns the development of administrative procedures.

European public administration places importance on:

- predictable administrative decisions;
- access to information;
- transparency;
- reasoned decisions;
- opportunities for review and appeal;
- protection of citizens' rights;
- proportionality of administrative action.

Another important area is the professionalisation of the civil service.

Merit-based recruitment, professional development, transparent remuneration and appropriate performance management contribute to institutional capacity and administrative continuity.

Digitalisation is another important dimension.

Modern European public administration increasingly relies on digital services, interoperable information systems, data-based decision-making and digital human resource management.

The approximation process therefore concerns not only legislation but also administrative practice.

The distinction is important:

legal approximation $\neq$ institutional approximation $\neq$ practical implementation.

A country may formally adopt European standards while still experiencing difficulties in implementing them.

Therefore, successful approximation requires the transformation of organisational practices, administrative culture and institutional capacity.

Fourth question. Public administration reform in the context of EU accession

Public administration reform is directly connected with Ukraine's EU accession process.

The importance of administrative reform has increased as Ukraine has moved from association towards membership negotiations.

The EU accession process requires candidate countries to demonstrate their ability to adopt and implement the *acquis* and to operate effectively within the institutional framework of the Union.

Public administration reform is therefore not a separate domestic policy but an important component of membership preparation.

The reform agenda includes several interconnected areas.

Civil service reform

The objective is to strengthen merit-based recruitment, professional development, remuneration and institutional capacity of the civil service.

Institutional organisation

Public institutions need clearly defined competences, effective internal structures and appropriate coordination mechanisms.

Policy development and coordination

Government institutions need to develop policies based on evidence and coordinate their actions across sectors.

Accountability and oversight

Effective mechanisms of parliamentary, administrative, judicial and financial oversight are necessary.

Public financial management

EU accession requires effective systems for budgeting, expenditure management, financial control and protection of public resources.

Digitalisation

Digital public services and integrated administrative systems can improve efficiency, transparency and accessibility.

Public procurement

Public procurement is particularly important in the accession process because it represents a specific negotiating chapter and requires alignment with EU rules.

The current accession process confirms the central role of public administration reform.

In June 2026, negotiations opened on Cluster 1 – Fundamentals, which includes Chapter 5 on public procurement, Chapter 18 on statistics and Chapter 32 on financial control alongside Chapters 23 and 24 concerning judiciary, fundamental rights, justice, freedom and security. The EU established interim benchmarks for the cluster and relevant chapters. (Консильюм)

This demonstrates that public administration reform is connected with a much broader system of institutional requirements.

Moreover, current EU-supported reform measures specifically address the Ukrainian civil service. The relevant EU framework identifies strengthening the capacity and efficiency of Ukrainian public administration and gradually aligning its rules, standards, policies and practices with the EU *acquis* as an objective. It specifically identifies civil service remuneration, merit-based recruitment and digitalisation of civil service and HR management as reform areas. (EUR-Lex)

Public administration reform should therefore be understood as an institutional foundation for successful accession, rather than simply one of many sectoral reforms.

Fifth question. Institutional capacity for implementation of European integration policies

European integration requires institutions capable not only of developing policy but also of implementing complex and long-term commitments.

Institutional capacity refers to the ability of public authorities to perform their functions effectively, coordinate actions, mobilise resources and achieve established policy objectives.

In the context of European integration, institutional capacity includes several dimensions.

Strategic capacity

Public authorities must be able to establish priorities, develop implementation plans and coordinate European integration with national development strategies.

Legislative capacity

Institutions need the expertise to analyse EU legislation, identify necessary changes and prepare legislation compatible with the *acquis*.

Coordination capacity

European integration involves almost all major areas of public policy. Effective coordination between the government, ministries, central executive bodies and territorial authorities is therefore essential.

Negotiation capacity

Accession negotiations require professional expertise, institutional memory and the ability to formulate and defend national positions.

Implementation capacity

Adopting legislation is insufficient. Public institutions must be able to implement new rules in practice.

Monitoring and evaluation capacity

Progress needs to be measured through indicators, monitoring mechanisms and evaluation.

Human resource capacity

European integration requires public servants with knowledge of EU institutions, law, policymaking, project management, negotiation and foreign languages.

Financial capacity

Implementation of European commitments requires appropriate budgetary planning and financial management.

Institutional capacity is particularly important because the accession process is highly complex.

Different ministries and public bodies are responsible for different negotiating chapters and policy areas. Their work must be coordinated to ensure consistency between sectoral reforms.

At the same time, European integration requires interaction between central government, regional and local authorities, civil society, business and expert communities.

The establishment of the EU–Ukraine Public Administration Reform Sub-Committee in 2026 provides an additional institutional mechanism for dialogue on administrative reform and monitoring of implementation. (EUR-Lex)

Therefore, institutional capacity should be considered a cross-cutting condition for successful European integration.

It is not enough to create a formal institutional unit responsible for European integration. Institutions need sufficient authority, resources, expertise, coordination mechanisms and continuity.

Sixth question. Challenges and opportunities of Ukraine's accession to the European Union

Ukraine's accession to the European Union creates significant opportunities but also involves substantial institutional, economic and administrative challenges.

Major challenges

One of the principal challenges is the scale of legal and institutional approximation.

The *acquis* covers a very large number of policy areas and requires extensive adaptation of legislation, administrative procedures and institutional practices.

A second challenge is administrative capacity.

European integration requires institutions capable of simultaneously managing domestic reforms, implementing EU-related commitments and responding to other national challenges.

A third challenge is coordination.

European integration involves many institutions and policy sectors. Weak coordination can result in fragmented reforms or inconsistent implementation.

A fourth challenge concerns human resources.

Ukraine needs sufficient numbers of qualified public servants with specialised European expertise.

A fifth challenge is financial capacity.

Implementation of European standards requires investment in infrastructure, digital systems, institutional development and public services.

A sixth challenge concerns territorial implementation.

European integration is not implemented exclusively at the central government level. Many European standards and programmes directly affect regional and local authorities.

At the same time, accession creates significant opportunities.

Institutional modernisation

EU integration provides an opportunity to strengthen public institutions, improve administrative procedures and develop professional public service.

Economic development

Integration into the European market can expand opportunities for Ukrainian businesses, investment, innovation and regional economic development.

Access to European programmes and resources

Membership can provide broader access to European financial instruments, research programmes, infrastructure initiatives and other forms of cooperation.

Human capital development

European integration creates opportunities for education, professional mobility, research cooperation and development of human capital.

Regional development

Closer integration can strengthen territorial cooperation and provide new opportunities for Ukrainian regions and municipalities.

Strengthening governance

European standards can contribute to greater transparency, accountability, institutional reliability and quality of public services.

The accession process should therefore not be viewed exclusively as the adoption of European rules.

It creates an opportunity to modernise the functioning of the Ukrainian state.

At the same time, successful integration requires institutional ownership of reforms. European standards should not remain external requirements imposed on Ukrainian institutions. They need to become part of the normal functioning of public administration.

This is particularly important because the ultimate objective of reform is not merely to demonstrate formal compliance but to create institutions capable of delivering effective public policies and services.

Conclusions

European integration is a strategic direction of Ukraine's development that affects the country's political, legal, economic and institutional systems.

The Association Agreement provides the fundamental framework for EU–Ukraine cooperation, while the accession process has created a new level of institutional requirements.

Ukraine's movement towards EU membership increasingly places public administration reform at the centre of the integration process. The opening of Cluster 1 – Fundamentals in June 2026, including public administration reform and related institutional chapters, demonstrates this directly. (КОНСИЛЬЮМ)

Approximation to European principles involves more than legislative changes. It requires the development of professional public service, effective institutions, coordination mechanisms, transparency, accountability, digital capacity and sound public financial management.

Institutional capacity is a critical condition for successful implementation of European integration policies. Ukraine needs institutions capable of policy development, legislative approximation, negotiation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

The European integration process presents significant challenges, but it also provides an opportunity for comprehensive modernisation of Ukrainian public administration.

The central conclusion is that EU accession should be understood not only as Ukraine's adaptation to the European Union, but also as a process of transforming the capacity and quality of the Ukrainian state.

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Topic 10. European Standards of Public Governance and Management Decisions

First question. European principles and standards for public decision-making

Public decision-making is one of the central functions of public administration. The quality of governance depends not only on the institutional structure of public authorities but also on the way in which decisions are prepared, adopted, implemented and reviewed.

European approaches to public decision-making are based on several interconnected principles.

The first is the rule of law. Public authorities must act within the limits of their legally defined powers. Decisions should have an appropriate legal basis and comply with applicable legislation.

The second principle is transparency. Information about public decisions, their objectives and, where appropriate, the reasoning behind them should be accessible to citizens and stakeholders.

The third principle is accountability. Public authorities should be able to explain and justify their decisions and be subject to appropriate mechanisms of oversight.

The fourth principle is participation. Relevant stakeholders and citizens should have appropriate opportunities to contribute to policymaking, particularly where decisions have significant public consequences.

The fifth principle is proportionality. Public intervention should not go beyond what is necessary to achieve the legitimate objective.

The sixth principle is effectiveness and efficiency. Public decisions should contribute to clearly defined objectives while ensuring responsible use of public resources.

The seventh principle is coherence. Decisions should be consistent with existing legislation, public policies and broader strategic objectives.

The eighth principle is evidence-informed decision-making. Decisions should be supported, where possible, by reliable data, research, analysis and evaluation.

These principles are reflected in the EU's approach to Better Regulation. Better Regulation seeks to ensure that EU policymaking is based on evidence, transparency and stakeholder involvement and that proposed interventions are proportionate to their objectives.

An important element of this approach is the assessment of different policy options before decisions are adopted.

Public decision-making can therefore be represented as a process:

problem identification → evidence collection → development of alternatives → assessment of consequences → consultation → decision → implementation → monitoring → evaluation.

This approach emphasises that a management decision should not be treated as an isolated administrative act. It is part of a broader policy and governance process.

For public managers, European standards therefore require the ability to combine legality, analytical capacity, participation, strategic thinking and responsibility for results.

Second question. Evidence-informed policy and administrative decision-making

Evidence-informed policymaking means using the best available evidence to support public decisions.

Evidence can take different forms, including:

- official statistics;
- administrative data;
- academic research;
- evaluation results;
- expert knowledge;
- stakeholder information;

- international comparative data;
- previous policy experience.

The purpose of evidence is not to replace political decision-making. Public policy inevitably involves values, priorities and choices. Rather, evidence helps decision-makers understand the nature of a problem, identify possible alternatives and estimate their likely consequences.

This distinction is important:

evidence informs the decision; it does not determine the decision automatically.

Evidence-informed decision-making is particularly important when public authorities face complex problems.

A systematic approach can include several stages.

Problem definition

The first task is to establish what the actual public problem is.

Poorly defined problems can lead to inappropriate interventions even when implementation is technically effective.

Evidence collection

Decision-makers identify relevant data, research and experience.

The quality and reliability of evidence should be assessed.

Development of alternatives

Different policy or administrative options are formulated.

Assessment

The expected benefits, costs, risks and possible unintended consequences of each option are examined.

Decision

The responsible authority selects an option according to legal requirements, evidence, public priorities and available resources.

Implementation

The decision is translated into concrete administrative actions.

Monitoring and evaluation

Information about implementation and results is collected and used to determine whether the decision achieved its objectives.

This creates a policy learning cycle:

evidence → decision → implementation → results → evaluation → new evidence → improved decision.

The European Commission's Better Regulation framework places considerable emphasis on evidence, impact assessment, consultation and evaluation in the policy cycle.

At the national level, evidence-informed decision-making also requires appropriate administrative capacity.

Public institutions need:

- analytical units;
- qualified specialists;
- access to reliable data;
- statistical and research capacity;
- monitoring systems;
- evaluation competencies.

Without these capacities, evidence-informed policymaking can become formal.

Another important issue is the quality of data. Data may be incomplete, outdated, inconsistent or interpreted incorrectly. Public managers therefore need not only access to evidence but also the capacity to critically assess its relevance and reliability.

Evidence-informed policymaking is thus both an analytical and an institutional process.

Third question. Assessment of political, social, economic and environmental consequences of management decisions

Public management decisions can produce multiple and interconnected consequences.

A decision that solves one problem may create new effects in another policy area. Therefore, contemporary European approaches increasingly emphasise the assessment of the broader consequences of public interventions.

An important instrument is impact assessment.

Impact assessment involves examining how alternative policy options may affect different groups, sectors and areas of public life.

A comprehensive assessment can consider at least four dimensions.

Political consequences

These may include effects on:

- public trust;
- political stability;
- relationships between levels of government;
- institutional legitimacy;
- stakeholder support.

For example, a reform that changes the distribution of responsibilities between central and local authorities may produce institutional and political consequences beyond its immediate administrative objective.

Social consequences

Social assessment considers effects on:

- different population groups;
- employment;
- income;
- social inclusion;
- access to public services;
- equality of opportunities.

Particular attention should be given to groups that may experience disproportionate negative effects.

Economic consequences

Economic assessment may include:

- budgetary costs;
- effects on businesses;
- investment;
- employment;
- productivity;
- administrative burdens;
- long-term economic benefits.

Public decisions should therefore be assessed not only in terms of their direct costs but also their broader economic effects.

Environmental consequences

Environmental assessment considers potential effects on:

- natural resources;
- biodiversity;
- pollution;
- climate;
- land use;
- energy consumption.

Environmental considerations increasingly form part of policy development across different sectors rather than being limited to environmental policy.

The four dimensions are interconnected.

For example, a major infrastructure project may have positive economic effects but also generate environmental consequences and social effects for local communities.

A high-quality management decision therefore requires a multidimensional assessment rather than consideration of one indicator.

Impact assessment should also consider both intended and unintended consequences.

This is particularly important because public interventions operate in complex social systems where outcomes cannot always be predicted with certainty.

The assessment of consequences can therefore be presented as:

policy option → expected benefits → expected costs → risks → distributional effects → unintended consequences → alternative options.

The purpose is not to eliminate uncertainty but to make decision-makers more aware of the possible consequences of their choices.

Fourth question. Risk and uncertainty in public governance

Public authorities make decisions under conditions of incomplete information.

Consequently, risk and uncertainty are permanent characteristics of public governance.

Risk generally refers to a situation in which possible outcomes can be identified and their probability can, at least to some extent, be estimated.

Uncertainty is more difficult because the range or probability of possible outcomes may be unknown or highly difficult to determine.

Public managers may face uncertainty concerning:

- economic conditions;
- demographic changes;
- technological developments;
- political developments;
- public reactions;
- implementation capacity;
- future financial resources;
- external shocks.

The distinction between risk and uncertainty is important because they require different approaches.

Risk can be assessed through:

- probability analysis;

- scenario analysis;
- sensitivity analysis;
- risk registers;
- contingency planning.

Under conditions of uncertainty, decision-makers may need to use:

- alternative scenarios;
- flexible implementation mechanisms;
- pilot projects;
- adaptive management;
- continuous monitoring.

One important principle is therefore proportionality between the scale of uncertainty and the degree of flexibility in decision-making.

When uncertainty is high, rigid long-term decisions may create greater risks. Flexible approaches can allow institutions to adjust policies as new information becomes available.

Public governance also requires consideration of systemic risks.

A decision that appears rational within one institution may create risks for other institutions or sectors.

For example, reducing expenditure in one area may produce additional costs elsewhere in the public sector.

Risk management should therefore not be limited to identifying threats. It should also examine interdependencies between institutions, policies and levels of governance.

European approaches increasingly emphasise preparedness, resilience, monitoring and adaptive capacity.

For public managers, this means that good decision-making is not about predicting the future perfectly. It is about developing the capacity to:

identify risks → assess them → prepare responses → monitor developments
→ adapt decisions.

This is particularly relevant to public administration operating in conditions of rapid technological, economic and geopolitical change.

Fifth question. Balancing European integration objectives with legal, institutional, financial and resource constraints

European integration creates numerous policy and institutional objectives for Ukraine. At the same time, implementation takes place within real constraints.

Public managers must therefore balance strategic objectives with available institutional and material capacity.

One of the first constraints is legal capacity.

EU-related commitments may require substantial legislative changes. However, reforms must be compatible with the constitutional framework and the existing legal system.

Another constraint is institutional capacity.

A new policy may require institutions that do not yet possess sufficient staff, expertise, information systems or organisational procedures.

Financial constraints are equally important.

European standards may require investments in:

- infrastructure;
- digital systems;
- public services;
- human resources;
- regulatory institutions;
- monitoring and control systems.

Public authorities therefore need to establish priorities and sequence reforms according to available resources.

Human resources represent another critical constraint.

Even when funding is available, implementation may be limited by shortages of qualified personnel or excessive administrative workloads.

There may also be time constraints.

EU integration involves numerous parallel reform processes. Attempting to implement all reforms simultaneously may exceed the administrative capacity of institutions.

Therefore, effective management requires prioritisation and sequencing.

A practical approach can involve:

1. identifying strategic European integration objectives;
2. determining legal requirements;
3. assessing institutional readiness;
4. estimating financial and human resource requirements;
5. identifying risks;
6. prioritising reforms;
7. establishing implementation schedules;
8. defining indicators;
9. monitoring progress;
10. adjusting implementation when necessary.

This approach helps avoid a situation in which formal compliance is achieved without sufficient capacity for practical implementation.

The central management challenge is therefore not choosing between European objectives and national constraints. It is finding feasible institutional pathways for achieving strategic objectives under existing constraints.

This requires realistic planning, prioritisation and continuous assessment of administrative capacity.

Sixth question. Application of European experience to the development of public administration in Ukraine

European experience provides Ukraine with a substantial source of principles, standards and practical approaches for improving public administration.

However, European experience should not be interpreted as a requirement to copy the institutional structure of a particular EU Member State.

The more appropriate approach is to identify principles and practices that can be adapted to the Ukrainian institutional context.

Several areas are particularly important. Evidence-informed policymaking

Ukraine can strengthen the use of statistical, administrative and research evidence in the preparation of government decisions.

This requires stronger analytical capacity within public institutions and systematic use of monitoring and evaluation.

Regulatory quality

European approaches to Better Regulation provide instruments for improving the quality of regulatory and policy decisions through impact assessment, consultation and evaluation.

Professional public service

European experience demonstrates the importance of merit-based recruitment, professional development, ethical standards and institutional continuity.

Institutional coordination

European governance requires coordination between different institutions and levels of administration. For Ukraine, this is particularly important in the context of EU accession, where implementation responsibilities are distributed across numerous public authorities.

Decentralisation and territorial governance

European practice provides examples of combining local autonomy with national standards, financial arrangements and accountability.

Digital transformation

European administrations increasingly use digital technologies to improve services, administrative processes and access to information.

Monitoring and evaluation

The systematic measurement of policy results can help Ukrainian institutions identify successful interventions and correct ineffective ones.

Administrative adaptability

European experience also demonstrates the importance of institutions being capable of responding to crises and changing circumstances.

The application of these approaches should take place through a process of institutional adaptation.

A useful sequence is:

European principle → assessment of Ukrainian conditions → adaptation of institutional mechanism → implementation → monitoring → evaluation → improvement.

This approach avoids mechanical transplantation of foreign institutional solutions.

The objective is to build a Ukrainian public administration that is compatible with European principles while remaining capable of responding to Ukraine's specific institutional, territorial and socioeconomic conditions.

Conclusions

European standards of public governance place significant emphasis on the quality of public decision-making.

Effective decisions should be legally grounded, transparent, accountable, proportionate and supported by relevant evidence. They should also take into account the views of stakeholders and the potential consequences of different policy options.

Evidence-informed policymaking provides a foundation for more rational and accountable decisions, while impact assessment helps identify political, social, economic and environmental consequences.

Risk and uncertainty are inherent in public governance. Effective public management therefore requires not only forecasting but also risk assessment, scenario planning, monitoring and the capacity to adapt decisions.

In the context of European integration, public authorities must balance strategic objectives with legal, institutional, financial and human-resource

constraints. This makes prioritisation, sequencing and realistic implementation planning essential.

For Ukraine, European experience provides important principles and practical approaches for improving public administration. However, their application should be based on adaptation rather than mechanical imitation.

The central conclusion is that the quality of European-oriented public administration depends not only on what decision is adopted, but also on how the decision is prepared, what evidence supports it, what consequences and risks are considered, how it is implemented, and whether its results are evaluated.

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Topic 11. European Cooperation and Governance Networks

First question. Networks and partnerships in European governance

European governance increasingly relies on cooperation between multiple actors rather than on the actions of public authorities alone.

A governance network can be understood as a relatively stable pattern of interaction between public authorities and non-governmental actors who exchange information, resources, expertise and influence in order to address common public issues.

Networks differ from traditional hierarchical administration. In a hierarchical model, decisions are primarily made within a defined chain of authority. In a network, outcomes depend to a greater extent on coordination, negotiation, mutual dependence and cooperation between autonomous actors.

This does not mean that the state loses its role. Public authorities remain responsible for establishing legal frameworks, defining public objectives, allocating public resources and ensuring accountability. However, implementation increasingly requires cooperation with actors outside government.

Partnership is therefore an important element of contemporary European governance.

Partnership can involve:

- national and regional authorities;
- municipalities;
- EU institutions;
- civil society organisations;
- businesses;
- universities and research institutions;
- professional associations;
- social partners;

– citizens and community organisations.

Networks can operate at different territorial and institutional levels. A local network may bring together a municipality, businesses, NGOs and universities, while a European network may connect institutions from several Member States and regions.

European governance networks perform several important functions.

First, they facilitate information exchange. Different actors possess different types of knowledge and information.

Second, they facilitate resource mobilisation. Financial, organisational, human and technological resources can be combined.

Third, networks support coordination between policies and institutions.

Fourth, they can increase legitimacy, particularly when affected stakeholders are involved in the policy process.

Finally, networks can contribute to innovation, because interaction between actors with different expertise can generate new solutions.

At the same time, network governance creates challenges. Participants may have different interests, resources and levels of influence. Decision-making may become more complex, and accountability can be less straightforward than in a hierarchical organisation.

Consequently, effective network governance requires clear objectives, defined roles, mechanisms for coordination and appropriate accountability arrangements.

Second question. Cooperation between public authorities, civil society, business, academia and other stakeholders

European governance is based on the recognition that public problems cannot always be effectively addressed by government institutions acting independently.

Different stakeholders possess different capacities.

Public authorities provide legal authority, public resources, policy coordination and institutional responsibility.

Civil society organisations can provide knowledge of community needs, represent particular groups and mobilise citizens.

Businesses contribute investment, technologies, managerial expertise, products and services.

Universities and research institutions provide research, analytical capacity, innovation and professional expertise.

Citizens and local communities provide practical knowledge about local problems and the effects of public interventions.

Cooperation allows these different capacities to be combined.

An important European principle is therefore partnership. In EU cohesion policy, partnership is institutionalised through cooperation between public authorities and economic, social and civil-society partners in the preparation and implementation of programmes.

The partnership principle is important because public policy is not only about producing administrative decisions. It is also about understanding the needs of society and ensuring that policies can be effectively implemented.

Cooperation can take different forms:

- consultation;
- information exchange;
- joint planning;
- advisory bodies;
- working groups;
- memoranda of cooperation;
- joint projects;
- co-financing;
- service delivery partnerships;
- research and innovation partnerships.

The intensity of cooperation can therefore vary considerably.

It is useful to distinguish between participation and partnership.

Participation may involve stakeholders providing opinions or information during policymaking. Partnership generally implies a deeper and more structured relationship in which actors jointly contribute to planning, implementation or monitoring.

Effective cooperation also requires attention to potential power imbalances.

Large organisations may have greater financial or institutional resources than smaller civil society groups or local communities. Therefore, partnership mechanisms should provide meaningful opportunities for different stakeholders to contribute.

The objective is not to eliminate differences between actors but to create institutional conditions in which these differences can be managed constructively.

Third question. Cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation

European territorial cooperation provides mechanisms for addressing problems that extend beyond administrative or national borders.

Three major forms of cooperation are particularly important.

Cross-border cooperation

Cross-border cooperation involves neighbouring territories located along national borders.

It addresses problems that are directly shared by border regions, such as:

- transport connections;
- environmental protection;
- emergency services;
- labour markets;
- tourism;
- public services;
- local economic development.

The geographical proximity of participating territories makes this form of cooperation particularly suitable for solving problems that cannot be effectively addressed within one national jurisdiction.

Transnational cooperation

Transnational cooperation involves larger geographical areas and usually several countries.

It focuses on strategic challenges affecting broader territories, including:

- environmental management;
- transport networks;
- climate adaptation;
- territorial planning;
- innovation;
- economic development.

The objective is generally not to solve a problem at a single border but to coordinate approaches across a wider European territory.

Interregional cooperation

Interregional cooperation connects regions that may be geographically distant.

Its main purpose is often the exchange of experience, knowledge and good practices.

Regions can cooperate on issues such as:

- innovation;
- public administration;
- digitalisation;
- entrepreneurship;
- energy;
- urban development;
- social inclusion.

These forms of cooperation demonstrate that territorial governance in Europe is not limited to national administrative structures.

They create additional channels through which regions and local authorities can work directly with counterparts in other European territories.

For Ukraine, these mechanisms are particularly important because cooperation with European regions can contribute to institutional learning, local development, reconstruction and European integration.

Fourth question. European territorial cooperation programmes

European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) is the component of EU cohesion policy commonly associated with Interreg.

Interreg supports cooperation between regions and countries in order to address common territorial challenges and promote balanced territorial development.

The current Interreg framework for 2021–2027 includes several forms of cooperation corresponding broadly to cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation.

Territorial cooperation programmes generally support projects involving partners from different countries or regions.

Typical areas include:

- environmental protection;
- climate action;
- transport and connectivity;
- innovation;
- employment;
- social inclusion;
- tourism and cultural cooperation;
- institutional capacity;
- local and regional development.

The distinctive feature of these programmes is that the territorial dimension is built directly into the programme design.

Projects are expected to address problems that benefit from cooperation across administrative or national boundaries.

For public administration, participation in territorial cooperation programmes requires more than the ability to prepare a project application.

Public institutions need capacities for:

- identifying common territorial problems;
- finding appropriate partners;
- developing joint objectives;
- preparing project proposals;
- managing financial resources;
- coordinating implementation;
- monitoring results;
- reporting.

Therefore, European territorial cooperation also contributes to institutional capacity building.

Interreg can be particularly valuable for Ukrainian regions and municipalities because cooperation with European partners provides access not only to financial resources but also to organisational experience, professional networks and practical knowledge.

The broader significance of territorial cooperation is that it changes the understanding of territorial development.

A region does not necessarily have to address all development challenges independently. Cooperation can allow territories to combine complementary advantages and jointly address common problems.

Fifth question. Public-private and public-civic partnerships

Partnerships between public institutions and non-governmental actors are an important mechanism for mobilising additional capacities for public purposes.

Two forms are particularly relevant.

Public-private partnerships

A public-private partnership (PPP) involves cooperation between a public authority and a private-sector partner in the provision of infrastructure or public services under an appropriate contractual and institutional framework.

PPP mechanisms can be applied, for example, to:

- transport infrastructure;
- energy;
- water and waste management;
- healthcare facilities;
- public buildings;
- digital infrastructure.

The potential advantage is the combination of public-sector objectives with private-sector financing, expertise, technology and management capacity.

However, PPPs should not be understood simply as a method of obtaining private financing.

They require careful assessment of:

- public value;
- financial sustainability;
- allocation of risks;
- contractual responsibilities;
- quality standards;
- transparency;
- long-term costs.

The public authority remains responsible for protecting the public interest.

Public-civic partnerships

Public-civic partnerships involve cooperation between public institutions and civil society organisations or community groups.

They can be particularly useful in areas such as:

- social services;
- youth policy;

- cultural development;
- environmental protection;
- community development;
- support for vulnerable groups;
- citizen participation.

Civil society organisations can provide specialised knowledge, community connections and flexible implementation capacity.

Public-civic partnerships can therefore strengthen the connection between public administration and citizens.

However, these partnerships also require transparent procedures, clear responsibilities and appropriate accountability mechanisms.

The central principle is that cooperation with non-governmental actors should increase public value rather than transfer public responsibility without adequate oversight.

Sixth question. Network-based approaches to solving complex public problems

Some public problems cannot be effectively addressed by one institution or one sector.

Examples include:

- climate change;
- regional inequality;
- migration;
- urban development;
- social exclusion;
- public health;
- environmental management;
- youth unemployment;
- digital transformation.

Such problems are often described as complex or “wicked” public problems because their causes are interconnected, different actors have different interests, and there is no single universally correct solution.

Network-based governance provides an alternative to purely hierarchical approaches.

The basic logic is:

complex problem → multiple actors → shared understanding → coordination → joint action → monitoring → adaptation.

A network approach begins with identifying the actors who possess relevant authority, knowledge or resources.

The next step is to establish a common understanding of the problem.

This is often more difficult than it appears. Different actors may define the same problem differently.

For example, a municipality may perceive urban mobility primarily as a transport issue, businesses may focus on accessibility and costs, residents may emphasise quality of life, while researchers may focus on environmental and spatial impacts.

Network governance creates a space in which these perspectives can be combined.

The next task is to establish shared objectives.

Actors do not necessarily need identical interests. They need sufficient common ground to cooperate.

Network-based problem solving can then involve:

- joint planning;
- information sharing;
- coordinated implementation;
- pooled resources;
- experimentation;
- pilot projects;

- monitoring;
- collective learning.

A particularly important feature is adaptive capacity.

Complex problems change over time. Therefore, network arrangements should allow participants to modify approaches when new evidence or circumstances emerge.

At the same time, networks should not become an excuse for unclear responsibility.

Public managers must ensure that:

- responsibilities are defined;
- decision-making procedures are understood;
- conflicts of interest are managed;
- information is transparent;
- results can be evaluated;
- public authorities remain accountable.

The role of the public manager in a network therefore differs from the role of a traditional hierarchical administrator.

The manager increasingly acts as a coordinator, facilitator, broker and integrator.

This requires competencies in negotiation, communication, conflict management, partnership development and strategic coordination.

Network governance can consequently be understood as a complementary mode of public governance rather than a replacement for hierarchical administration.

Conclusions

European governance increasingly combines hierarchical public administration with networks, partnerships and horizontal cooperation.

Governance networks connect public authorities with civil society, businesses, academia and other stakeholders, allowing different forms of knowledge, resources and institutional capacity to be combined.

European territorial cooperation demonstrates the practical importance of cooperation across administrative and national borders. Cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation allow territories to address common challenges and exchange experience.

Interreg provides an important institutional framework for such cooperation and contributes not only to territorial development but also to the strengthening of administrative and partnership capacities.

Public-private and public-civic partnerships can mobilise additional resources and expertise, but they require clear rules, transparency, risk management and accountability.

Network-based approaches are particularly relevant for complex public problems where no single institution possesses sufficient authority, knowledge or resources to provide an effective solution.

The key implication for public administration is that the role of public managers is increasingly connected not only with making decisions, but also with organising cooperation, coordinating actors and creating conditions for joint action.

For Ukraine, European network governance provides opportunities to strengthen cooperation between public authorities and non-governmental actors, develop territorial partnerships, participate in European programmes and build institutional capacity through practical cooperation with European counterparts.

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Topic 12. Future of European Governance and Public Administration

Methodological guidelines

First question. Contemporary challenges to European governance: digital transformation, demographic change, security threats, migration, climate change and geopolitical transformations

European public governance is operating in an environment characterised by increasingly interconnected and rapidly changing challenges.

The European Commission's recent strategic foresight work describes a context marked by the erosion of the international rules-based order, climate and environmental pressures, technological change, demographic trends, geopolitical uncertainty and growing security concerns. The Commission therefore emphasises the need for a more proactive and forward-looking approach to governance.

One of the most significant transformations is digitalisation.

Digital technologies are changing the way governments collect information, organise administrative processes, communicate with citizens and deliver public services. Data, digital public infrastructure, artificial intelligence and automated processes create opportunities for greater efficiency and more personalised services.

At the same time, digital transformation creates new governance challenges related to cybersecurity, privacy, data protection, digital exclusion, algorithmic decision-making and institutional capacity.

Demographic change represents another long-term challenge.

Population ageing, migration, changing household structures and transformations in labour markets affect the demand for public services and the composition of the public-sector workforce.

These developments require governments to reconsider areas such as:

- healthcare;

- social protection;
- education;
- employment;
- pension systems;
- territorial development;
- public-sector human resources.

Security threats have also become more central to European governance.

Public administrations increasingly have to operate in conditions affected by geopolitical tensions, cyber threats, disinformation, critical infrastructure risks and hybrid threats.

Security considerations, therefore, increasingly interact with economic, technological and social policies.

Migration presents another multidimensional governance challenge. It requires coordination among migration, labour market, social, security, and integration policies and involves cooperation among European, national, regional, and local authorities.

Climate change and environmental transformation require long-term policy responses while creating immediate administrative challenges in energy, infrastructure, agriculture, urban development, and territorial planning.

Finally, geopolitical transformations affect the external environment in which European institutions operate.

The European Commission's 2025 Strategic Foresight Report identifies the interplay among strategic autonomy, competitiveness, technological development, societal resilience, democracy, and security as a central challenge for the EU.

These challenges are interconnected.

For example, demographic change affects labour markets; labour shortages influence migration policy; digitalisation changes labour demand; climate change

affects migration and infrastructure; geopolitical tensions influence energy security and public finances.

Consequently, European governance increasingly requires cross-sectoral and long-term approaches rather than isolated responses within individual policy areas.

Second question. Resilience and adaptive capacity of public institutions

The growing complexity of the policy environment increases the importance of institutional resilience.

Resilience in public governance refers to the capacity of public institutions to continue performing their essential functions during crises, absorb shocks, adapt to changing circumstances and learn from experience.

Resilience does not mean simply returning to the previous state after a crisis.

A resilient institution should be able to adapt and improve.

Its capacity can be considered through several dimensions:

- organisational continuity;
- professional human resources;
- financial capacity;
- reliable information systems;
- digital infrastructure;
- interinstitutional coordination;
- crisis management;
- public communication;
- citizen participation;
- learning and adaptation.

Resilience is closely connected with adaptive capacity.

Adaptive capacity is the ability of institutions to modify policies, procedures and organisational arrangements when circumstances change.

This requires public administrations to avoid excessive rigidity.

At the same time, adaptability does not mean permanent institutional instability. Effective public administration needs stable rules and institutions while maintaining sufficient flexibility to respond to new conditions.

This balance can be expressed as: institutional stability + organisational flexibility = adaptive capacity.

The Ukrainian experience provides an especially important example.

The OECD's 2026 Public Governance Review of Ukraine identifies the resilience of Ukrainian public governance under wartime conditions and highlights digitalisation, strategic planning, public participation, the public service and AI use as important elements of future governance capacity.

The review also points to the importance of strategic frameworks and coordination mechanisms for maintaining reform capacity under conditions of extraordinary pressure.

For European public administration more broadly, resilience increasingly requires moving from crisis response towards preparedness.

This means identifying potential risks before they materialise, developing alternative scenarios and ensuring that institutions can continue operating under different conditions.

Third question. Innovation in public administration

Innovation has become an important component of modern public administration.

Public-sector innovation can involve new:

- services;
- administrative processes;
- organisational models;
- technologies;
- forms of citizen engagement;
- regulatory approaches;
- partnerships.

Innovation should not be understood simply as the introduction of new technology.

Its main purpose is to create better public value.

The OECD's 2024 analysis of government innovation, based on almost 800 cases from 83 countries, identifies several important trends: human-centred service design, digital infrastructure, emerging technologies, proactive and personalised services, broader use of data, experimentation and stronger citizen participation.

One important direction is the development of human-centred public services.

Instead of designing administrative systems primarily around organisational structures, governments increasingly seek to design services around the needs and experiences of users.

Another direction is proactive government.

Traditional public services often require citizens to identify a service, submit an application and provide information. Digital systems can increasingly allow governments to anticipate needs and offer services automatically when appropriate.

Innovation also involves experimentation.

When governments face complex problems for which existing solutions are insufficient, they can use pilot projects, prototypes and controlled experiments before scaling successful approaches.

Digital transformation provides additional opportunities.

Digital public infrastructure can create shared systems for digital identity, data exchange, payments, registries and other functions. The OECD emphasises that such infrastructure requires interoperability, security, governance arrangements and appropriate safeguards.

Another emerging area is GovTech – cooperation between public institutions, start-ups, innovators and academia to develop digital government solutions.

Innovation therefore requires not only technology but also an organisational culture that supports:

- experimentation;
- learning;
- cross-sector cooperation;
- responsible risk-taking;
- use of data;
- continuous improvement.

The future public administration should consequently be capable of innovating while maintaining legality, accountability, inclusiveness and public trust.

Fourth question. Future models of European governance

The future of European governance is unlikely to be represented by one completely new model.

Rather, European governance is likely to combine several existing approaches.

The traditional hierarchical model will remain important because public authorities need clearly defined powers, legal responsibility and accountability.

At the same time, network governance will continue to expand where public problems require cooperation between governments, businesses, civil society, academia and citizens.

Multi-level governance will remain important because European policies are implemented through interaction between EU, national, regional and local levels.

Digitalisation will contribute to the development of digital and data-driven governance, in which information becomes a strategic resource for policymaking and service delivery.

Another likely direction is human-centred governance, where public institutions are evaluated increasingly through the quality and accessibility of services experienced by citizens.

A further development is anticipatory governance.

Instead of responding only to problems after they emerge, public institutions increasingly seek to identify possible future developments and prepare for different scenarios.

These approaches can be combined into a broader model:

hierarchical governance + multi-level governance + network governance + digital governance + anticipatory governance.

The future European administrative system can therefore be understood as a hybrid governance model.

Such a model does not eliminate traditional public administration. It expands its capacity to interact with other actors and operate under conditions of uncertainty.

This transformation also changes the role of public managers.

The public manager of the future needs to be not only an administrator, but also:

- a strategic coordinator;
- an analyst;
- a facilitator;
- a network manager;
- an innovator;
- a risk manager;
- a change manager.

Consequently, future public administration will require a broader combination of legal, managerial, analytical, digital and communication competencies.

Fifth question. Strategic foresight and anticipatory governance

A central feature of future-oriented governance is the ability to consider possible future developments before making present decisions.

Strategic foresight is not simply forecasting.

The European Commission defines foresight as the exploration of different possible futures and the opportunities and challenges associated with them. Its purpose is to incorporate long-term thinking into policymaking, strategic planning and preparedness.

This distinction is important.

Forecasting usually asks: What is likely to happen?

Foresight asks: What futures are possible, plausible or preferable, and what should we do today in response?

Strategic foresight can use:

- horizon scanning;
- trend analysis;
- scenario development;
- expert consultation;
- systems analysis;
- stress testing;
- backcasting.

The European Commission has institutionalised foresight through cooperation between the Secretariat-General, Joint Research Centre, Member States and other actors. Foresight is also connected with Better Regulation, policy design and policy evaluation.

The 2025 Strategic Foresight Report introduced the concept of “Resilience 2.0”, emphasising a proactive approach to strengthening the EU’s capacity to operate in turbulent and uncertain conditions.

This illustrates a broader transition from reactive governance to anticipatory governance.

Anticipatory governance involves:

- identifying emerging developments;
- considering alternative futures;
- assessing possible risks and opportunities;

- testing policies against different scenarios;
- preparing institutions for change;
- adapting policies as new information becomes available.

This approach is particularly important for issues with long-term consequences, such as demographic change, climate policy, digital infrastructure, spatial development, and technological regulation.

For public administration, strategic foresight is therefore not a separate analytical exercise. It should become part of strategic planning and policy development.

Sixth question. Prospects for Ukraine's integration into the European administrative and governance space

Ukraine's integration into the European administrative and governance space is directly connected with the country's EU accession process.

The EU formally opened accession negotiations with Ukraine in June 2024. In June 2026, negotiations opened on Cluster 1 – Fundamentals, which includes rule of law, democratic institutions, public administration reform and economic criteria. In July 2026, negotiations also opened on Cluster 6 – External Relations. The accession process remains merit-based, and progress depends on Ukraine's alignment with and implementation of the EU acquis and relevant European standards.

This means that European integration is not limited to adopting EU legislation.

It also requires the development of institutions capable of implementing European rules and policies in practice.

The main directions of administrative integration include:

Institutional capacity

Ukrainian public institutions need sufficient organisational, analytical, financial and human-resource capacity to implement European policies.

Professional public service

European integration requires a professional, merit-based and politically responsible public service capable of working with EU institutions and applying EU standards.

Policy coordination

EU accession involves many sectors simultaneously. Effective coordination between ministries, central executive bodies, regional authorities and local governments is therefore essential.

Multi-level governance

European integration will increasingly involve regions and municipalities because many EU policies are implemented territorially.

Digital governance

Ukraine's experience with digital public services creates a strong basis for further integration of European digital governance practices. The OECD's recent review highlights the resilience of Ukraine's digital service infrastructure and the role of systems such as Diia and Trembita in maintaining public services and administrative processes during wartime.

Administrative resilience

Ukraine's experience of maintaining public governance during full-scale war provides an important foundation for future institutional development. The next stage is to transform crisis-adaptation capacities into permanent institutional capabilities.

European administrative culture

Integration also requires strengthening practical principles such as legality, accountability, transparency, professionalism, evidence-informed policymaking, participation and respect for citizens.

The objective is therefore not simply to make Ukrainian institutions formally similar to European institutions.

The deeper objective is to ensure that Ukrainian public administration becomes compatible with European principles, capable of implementing EU policies and able to participate effectively in European governance networks.

This can be represented as:

legal approximation → institutional adaptation → administrative capacity → practical implementation → monitoring and learning → deeper European integration.

Ukraine's European integration should therefore be understood as both an external policy objective and a process of long-term transformation of the public administration system.

Conclusions

The future of European governance will be shaped by the interaction of technological, demographic, environmental, security and geopolitical transformations.

These challenges require public administrations to become more resilient, adaptive, innovative and capable of working across institutional and territorial boundaries.

Digital transformation is changing both administrative processes and the relationship between governments and citizens. At the same time, innovation increasingly involves human-centred service design, experimentation, data use, digital public infrastructure and new forms of cooperation.

Future European governance is likely to develop as a hybrid system, combining hierarchical administration with multi-level, network, digital and anticipatory governance.

Strategic foresight is becoming particularly important because governments can no longer rely exclusively on extrapolating past trends. Public institutions need to consider alternative futures and prepare for uncertainty.

For Ukraine, these developments have direct practical relevance. EU integration requires not only approximation of legislation but also the

development of administrative institutions capable of implementing European standards and participating effectively in European governance.

Ukraine's current accession process demonstrates that public administration reform is an integral part of European integration. The opening of the Fundamentals cluster in June 2026 placed public administration reform directly within the core of accession negotiations.

The long-term objective can therefore be formulated as the development of a resilient, professional, innovative, digital and European-oriented public administration capable of governing effectively under conditions of uncertainty and transformation.

This also provides the final conceptual link of the course:

European public administration is not a fixed institutional model. It is a continuously developing system of principles, institutions, networks, technologies and management practices that must adapt to changing societal needs and emerging challenges.

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KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Administrative capacity – the ability of public institutions to perform their functions effectively, including the capacity to formulate and implement policies, manage resources, coordinate actions and deliver public services.

Administrative reform – a process of purposeful changes in the organisation, functioning, procedures and capacities of public administration aimed at improving its effectiveness, quality and accountability.

Administrative tradition – historically formed patterns of organisation and functioning of public administration, including institutional structures, administrative procedures, relations between politics and administration, and approaches to public service.

Accountability – the obligation of public authorities and public officials to explain and justify their actions, decisions and use of public resources and to be subject to appropriate forms of oversight.

Adaptability – the capacity of public institutions to modify policies, organisational arrangements and administrative practices in response to changing circumstances.

Anticipatory governance – an approach to governance that uses knowledge about possible future developments, risks and opportunities to prepare public institutions and policies for alternative futures.

Better Regulation – the European approach to improving the quality of legislation and public policymaking through evidence, impact assessment, consultation, transparency, proportionality and evaluation.

Citizen participation – the involvement of citizens in public decision-making and policy processes through information, consultation, dialogue, deliberation and other forms of engagement.

Cohesion Policy – the EU policy aimed at reducing economic, social and territorial disparities between regions and promoting balanced development across the European Union.

Common policies – areas of EU policy in which the European Union and its Member States exercise competences according to the Treaties and established common rules and instruments.

Competence – the legally defined authority to act, regulate, make decisions or perform particular functions at a specified level of governance.

Cross-border cooperation – cooperation between public authorities and other actors from neighbouring territories located in different countries to address common territorial challenges.

Decentralisation – the transfer or allocation of powers, responsibilities and resources from higher levels of government to lower levels of government or autonomous public institutions.

Digital governance – the use of digital technologies, data and digital infrastructure to support policymaking, administration, public services, communication and interaction between public authorities and society.

European Administrative Space – a conceptual framework describing common principles, standards and administrative practices that have developed through European integration and cooperation and influence the organisation and functioning of public administration.

European integration – the process through which European states develop common institutions, policies, legal frameworks and forms of cooperation and, in the case of EU membership, progressively integrate into the European Union.

European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) – the component of EU cohesion policy supporting cooperation between regions and countries through cross-border, transnational and interregional programmes.

Evidence-informed policymaking – an approach in which the development and implementation of public policies are informed by the best available research, data, evaluation results, expert knowledge and other relevant evidence.

Governance – the processes and mechanisms through which public and collective affairs are coordinated and managed through the interaction of public authorities and other actors.

Governance network – a structured pattern of interaction between autonomous public and non-public actors who cooperate, exchange resources and coordinate actions to address common public problems.

Good governance – a set of principles and practices associated with effective, accountable, transparent, participatory, inclusive and lawful public governance.

Impact assessment – a systematic examination of the potential economic, social, environmental and other consequences of a proposed policy, regulation or management decision.

Institutional capacity – the ability of institutions to perform their assigned functions effectively, based on appropriate structures, competences, procedures, resources and human capacities.

Interregional cooperation – cooperation between regions from different countries or territories, often focused on the exchange of experience, knowledge, innovation and good practices.

Interreg – the EU programme framework supporting European territorial cooperation between regions and countries.

Multi-level governance – a system of governance in which decision-making and policy implementation involve actors operating at different territorial and institutional levels, including the EU, national, regional and local levels.

Network governance – a mode of governance based on horizontal interaction, coordination, negotiation and cooperation between interdependent actors rather than relying exclusively on hierarchical authority.

New Public Management (NPM) – an approach to public administration that emphasises managerial autonomy, performance measurement, efficiency, results, competition and the use of selected private-sector management practices.

New Public Governance (NPG) – an approach that emphasises networks, partnerships, inter-organisational cooperation, participation and interaction between public, private and civil-society actors.

Open government – a model of public governance based on transparency, access to information, citizen participation, accountability and the use of these principles to strengthen public trust and public institutions.

Participatory governance – governance in which citizens and stakeholders have structured opportunities to influence public policies, decisions and their implementation.

Place-based development – an approach to territorial development that takes into account the specific economic, social, institutional, environmental and cultural characteristics of individual territories.

Policy coordination – the process of aligning policies, actions and decisions of different public authorities and stakeholders in order to achieve common or compatible objectives.

Policy evaluation – a systematic assessment of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of a public policy or programme.

Policy implementation – the process of translating adopted public policies and decisions into concrete programmes, administrative actions, services and results.

Public administration – the system of institutions, organisations, procedures and activities through which public authorities implement laws, policies and public programmes and provide public services.

Public governance – the broader system of relationships, institutions and processes through which public decisions are developed, implemented and

evaluated with the involvement of different governmental and non-governmental actors.

Public management – the management of public organisations, resources, processes and performance aimed at achieving defined public objectives and creating public value.

Public-private partnership (PPP) – a structured form of long-term cooperation between a public authority and a private-sector partner for the provision of infrastructure, services or other public functions under defined contractual and institutional arrangements.

Public-civic partnership – cooperation between public authorities and civil society organisations, community groups or other civic actors in the development or implementation of public initiatives and services.

Public decision-making – the process through which public authorities identify problems, develop and assess alternatives, adopt decisions and organise their implementation and evaluation.

Public value – the social, economic, institutional or other value created through public policies, services and administrative actions for society.

Public policy – a purposeful course of action adopted or pursued by public authorities to address a public problem or achieve defined public objectives.

Public service – a system of professional employment within public administration based on defined duties, competencies, legal requirements and standards of conduct.

Regulatory impact assessment – a structured process for examining the likely effects of regulatory proposals and comparing alternative regulatory and non-regulatory options before a decision is adopted.

Resilience – the capacity of public institutions and governance systems to withstand shocks, maintain essential functions, adapt to changing conditions and learn from crises.

Risk management – the systematic identification, assessment and management of potential events that may negatively affect public objectives, policies or institutional performance.

Rule of law – the principle according to which public authorities and individuals are subject to law, public power is exercised within legally defined limits, and fundamental rights are protected through independent and effective institutions.

Stakeholder – an individual, organisation, institution or group that is affected by a public policy or decision, has an interest in it, or possesses relevant knowledge, authority or resources.

Strategic foresight – a systematic approach to exploring possible, plausible and preferable futures in order to improve strategic planning, policymaking and preparedness.

Subsidiarity – the principle according to which decisions should be taken as closely as possible to citizens and higher levels of governance should act only where objectives cannot be sufficiently achieved at a lower level.

Sustainable development – an approach to development that seeks to reconcile economic, social and environmental objectives over the long term.

Territorial governance – the coordination and management of development processes within a particular territory through interaction between different levels of government and territorial stakeholders.

Transnational cooperation – cooperation between institutions and organisations from several countries within a broader geographical area to address common strategic territorial challenges.

Transparency – the openness of public institutions and accessibility of relevant information about public policies, decisions, procedures and the use of public resources.

Whole-of-government approach – an approach to public governance that promotes coordination and integrated action across ministries, agencies and policy sectors rather than fragmented institutional responses.