

The Capacities of Governance in Central and Eastern Europe.¹

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Summary

The purpose of this paper is to present a general description of the state of governance in the post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The findings on which the author bases this paper are drawn from his study of the situation in the Czech Republic, and are also based on the results of an expert survey carried out in April 2003 at the 11th Annual Conference of the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee) in Bucharest. The survey brought together a total of 78 experts from 23 countries.

Introduction

The way in which the man administers his own affairs is inadequate and a cause of worries. The reasons are obvious. The damage caused by bad public policies and administration often is much more serious than that resulting from natural disasters. It is so not only because of the imperfection of the historically formed ways of treating public affairs but also due to the non-readiness of the man to cope with the entirely new challenges of globalization. *“The on-going globalization raises an urgent question of whether we are able to govern so as to avoid the bad and promote the good. If the governments fail to master the problem, it will mean not only an escape from democratic responsibility but also a failing leading most likely to the very undesirable and perhaps even catastrophic consequences in the future.”* (Dror 2001:10). In case of the Central and Eastern European region, the general problems generated by globalization are aggravated still further by some additional specific factors that arise from stresses, demands and handicaps of transformation.

The paper focuses on analyzing the key points in the identification of the interests of differentiated social actors and their moderation and transformation by the constitutional, political and administrative framework into accepted public interests in the post-communistic countries. Despite the considerable differences existing in the individual countries, some more general characteristics, stemming primarily from the legacy of communism in combination with the specific features marking the period of transformation in the 1990s, may be delineated. These include a striking imbalance between the existing modes of governance and the internal conditions and external factors under which governance runs, and the rather unclear interplay between market forces, the introduction of political pluralism and societal changes. There are influential external factors as well: globalization, emerging new technologies, and environmental changes.

¹ This is an updated version of a keynote presentation given at the 11th the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee – <http://www.nispa.sk>) Annual Conference, Bucharest, Romania, 10.4. 2003. I would like to express many thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Andruch from NISPAcee Secretariat who helped me in processing the expert survey data during the 11th NISPAcee Annual conference, and Martin Nekola from CESES for processing the survey data further and creating the graphs and tables of this paper.

There is the need and necessity to better understand (via thorough and rigorous analyses) what is really happening in society and within its steering structures. The relationship between political, economic and medial power and the qualities of the constitutional and political system, its institutions (especially legislative bodies and political parties) and public administration (relationship between politicians and administrators, coordinative mechanisms, crisis management, audits and the competence and education of civil servants) are studied as the environment for the implementation of the recognized and acknowledged public interests. The problem of public involvement and responsibility of citizens is also taken into consideration.

Ten criteria of *Good Governance*

Good governance commences with a responsible identification of diverse social – and societal - interests and their projection into well-articulated public interests. This *encompasses regimes of seeking, setting, implementing and evaluating public policies covering the differentiated present and future interests within a given society. A part of these is formed by public interests. A decisive portion of governance is performed by national public administration, and is executed in competitive collaboration with commercial and civic sectors.*

Development of a more responsible and competent governance calls for measures to introduce mechanisms enhancing its efficiency, openness and transparency, while promoting stimuli towards the involvement of citizens and civic-sector institutions in public affairs, thus eliminating the communication and interest-related barriers between politicians, civil servants and citizens. This requires a broadly based and ongoing debate to be conducted by the civic sector on the key political priorities and measures. It also calls for public political space to be opened for the direct participation of experts and citizens in the formulation of public interests, and in drafting proposals and implementing and monitoring public policies.

There are several critical points that affect efficient management of this particular task. The results of a thorough analysis of the developments in the Czech Republic (refer to Potucek 1999a,b,c, 2001, 2002, Purkrábek et al 2000) enabled me to spell out ten criteria of *good governance* that allow for the specification of the actual "condition" of the individual countries under scrutiny:

1. *Analytical basis for decision-making*
2. *Communication in public space*
3. *Strategic thinking and governance*
4. *Democratic mediation of interests*
5. *Transparency of political parties*
6. *Accountability of the government*
7. *Politics, market, and media interweaving*
8. *Approach to social exclusion*
9. *Education in public policy and administration*
10. *Global context of policy making*

These ten criteria are characterized in more detail further on. At the end of the explanation of each criterion, a set of its sub-characteristics is proposed which indicates its content in a more

comprehensive way.

1. Analytical basis for decision-making

The necessary condition of a good governance is the cognitive environment which is able to deliver to decision-makers a comprehensive evidence of main problems, their determinants, alternative ways how to solve them, threats and opportunities, as well as ways of avoiding potential threats and making full use of emerging opportunities. What is needed is to set up advisory units that would cooperate with political leaders, senior administrative officials and specialists in the area of formulating and implementing various public policies.

Indicators of analytical basis for decision-making:

- Professional advisory capacity within and available to the government (consultants within the government, independent think-tanks, academic research institutes etc.)
- The government nurtures the advisory institutions, takes their recommendations seriously and strives to implement them

2. Communication in public space

The Rotterdam Program for the Development of Administration (Rotterdam 1997) deals with the tasks of developing administration within the context of European integration. It pays a particular attention to the tasks of the reform of public administration in the Central and East European countries. A peculiar feature of this paper is the stress laid upon the cooperation between the state administration and the civic sector. A good performance of the administration is linked inseparably with a live and powerful civic society without which a fair and efficient policy is unthinkable. Administration carried out by Government only is not able and capable to respond adequately to the real needs of the people in many areas of public policy. That is why the Governments have to search for partnership cooperation and joint decision-making with the civic sector. The so called policymaking councils are cited as example in this regard with the councils consisting of the representatives of the Government, the citizens and the different interest organizations serving to identify the generally recognized public policies and the ways of their implementation.

Of decisive importance is the way in which the civic sector institutions are drawn into the world of administration (governance) without losing their initiative and independence in the process. This approach is characteristic of offering and sharing information, having regular consultations and, in the end, building thus a consensus among the parties involved.

Indicators of communication in public space:

- *Civic and commercial sector are taken as partners by the government*
- *The tripartite institution is vivid*
- *Policy-making councils operate*
- *Public hearings and discussions are organized*
- *There is sufficient skill in pursuing public communication*

3. Strategic thinking and governance

A need for a coordinated and continually renewable, through an on-going dialogue, search and establishment of priorities for a particular state and society was gaining strength throughout the whole period of the nineties. Such countries as Finland, Ireland or Taiwan

which were able to work their way up to lead an imaginary racing group of the prosperous and rapidly developing countries during the last decades while solving successfully their considerable problems at home at the same time have always proceeded from just such a responsibly selected set of priorities. And vice versa: the countries that gave up such search leaving everything at the mercy of self-evolution were “ losing points “ and failing in a ruthless, though hidden behind the diplomatic smiles, competition and fight for resources, survival and development opportunities.

Indicators of strategic thinking and governance:

- The capacity exists to prepare and approve strategic decisions at all levels of the public administration
- National visions, strategies and doctrines are developed and discussed
- The coordinated preparation of departmental and cross-departmental middle-term conceptions, policies and plans takes place
- An effective system for the implementation and updating of approved strategies exists

4. Democratic mediation of interests

Political scientists analyze the reasons for a declining concern the people have for public affairs and particularly their declining willingness to be engaged in the administration of public affairs. The scientists put the said development trend into the context of a crisis related to the traditional system of representation of interests because the confidence in the institutions forming such system has constantly been on the fall. If however the rule of proportion is applicable here in the sense that the more irresponsible the citizens are, the more unaccountable also are the Governments, then the outlook for the future is very bleak and dangerous indeed.

The public interests crystallize from a clutter of heterogeneous interests that are of an individual, group, short-term as well as long-term nature. The more successful the Government is in listening to the views of citizens (inclusive of minorities, poor and marginalized social layers of society), and also of the representatives of business circles, and in finding the broadest possible common denominator of their interests, the better the Government.

The social interests are structured and the changes in the lives of people occur fast so much nowadays that any particular system of representation of interests lags necessarily behind the requirements of time. Making use of all the functional channels that enable evaluation of both the existing and the proposed new policies provides a potent development opportunity in order to have the efficiency of social management raised. The stress so far laid predominantly on representative democracy (whose institutions are of course maturing incessantly and are surely to change further) will be good to be complemented with participative democracy (connected with strengthening the political function of the civic sector as an institutional bearer of civic society) and direct democracy (introduction of referenda, electronic forms of articulation and reflection of interests etc.). Related to it also is the legal form of lobbying.

A rational response is to open and to encourage all possible ways for the people to enter public policy and to do so through both engaging themselves in political parties and representative bodies and their activities in civic associations and initiatives but also through public hearings, discussions, referendums, petitions etc. Such areas as civic education,

conceived in an attractive modern way as to its contents and methods, and life-long political education may have a great mission too especially in the long-range perspective.

Indicators of democratic mediation of interests:

- Representative democracy operates smoothly, without major disruptions
- There are complementary mechanisms of participatory democracy (space for the involvement of non-profit organizations in legislature, legal regulation of lobbying)
- There are complementary mechanisms of direct democracy (referendum, petition, electronic forms of articulation and reflection of interests)

5. Transparency of political parties

The role of political parties in the mediation of interests will always be crucial. So also because of that, the parties could and should undergo a process of internal transformation and renewal. Their fundamental problem (except of those that managed “to survive” even from the pre-1989 era) consists in small memberships and that is what limits unsoundly selecting the current and the future political elites.

Our research revealed certain shortcomings in the political training of both members and non-members, in the generation of programs, the regimes of internal management in the parties (including a good-quality policy in relation to personnel matters) and, also, in the deficits of the intra-party democracy in the Czech Republic (Potůček et al. 1999). All attempts at making the funding of political parties more transparent have failed so far. This puts in jeopardy still more their legitimacy in the eyes of the public. No wonder that the parties have not succeeded yet in persuading the majority of citizens of their readiness to play the responsible role ascribed to the parties by the Constitution. The interest on part of the citizens in joining political parties and working there has been stagnating for a long time: since the middle nineties until now only 3 per cent of the adult population have said that they are members of a party and additional 3 per cent have declared their potential interest in joining a party (Potůček 2000, Frič et al. 2002). The situation is even less encouraging in some other countries of the region with a fragile and unstable party system.

Indicators of transparency of political parties:

- Intra-party democracy functions and prevents the formation of an oligarchy
- The financing of political parties is transparent and submits to regular external checks
- There is a developed system of political training of party members
- Political parties attract new membership
- Political parties are perceived by the public as the legitimate vehicles of interest mediation

6. Accountability of the government

The latest report of the Rome Club (Dror 2001) is devoted entirely to the capacities of governance. Dror points out how vitally important it is to continually strengthen the capacities of public administration on regional, national and especially global levels, to improve and to enrich in an on-going way the functions of public administration and to keep raising its ability to adapt itself and to respond fast to the changing conditions of life – to make it more accountable to the needs of people. The author recommends that the public administration be more professional, more effective and have a higher quality than is the current state of affairs in this area. In one breath he adds however that though the above improvements are desirable

and possible, the way to their attainment will be very complicated and extraordinarily difficult and will require a firm and resolute political support on part of the very Government.

A paradox in the post-communist era is the fact that with the removal of the supremacy of the Communist party there also disappeared the supervisory superstructure, a source of fear for all which was thus also fulfilling in past important restraint and control functions in relation to the State apparatus. The various civilized procedures and forms of control over the activities of the State apparatus have been asserting themselves in many countries with only a considerable delay and many officials made use in the meantime of the existing chances to abuse their public positions in order to gain personal benefits. The systems of internal and external control do not generate enough pressure on the observance of regulations and ethical codes. We see as an objective, so far unreachable for the region, the U.S. *General Accounting Office* having at its disposal a thousand of the highly qualified specialists in such domains as law, public finances, public policy and administration. These consider not only the way of handling financial funds but especially as to what extent and how efficiently a given office is able to fulfill its role, to carry out its administrative functions.

Indicators of accountability of the government:

- Effective system of intramural control in public administration units
- General Accounting Office and/or corresponding independent institutions executing extramural performance and budgetary audits
- Right to appeal to administrative courts
- Ombudsman (ombudsmen)
- Charters of citizens' rights, patients' rights, consumers' rights ...

7. Politics, market, and media interweaving

A complicated task that all the contemporary democracies try to solve with different degrees of success is how to prevent the political, economic and medial power from interweaving in one another. The social transformation in the nineties of last century left in the region not only a lot of institutional backlogs or even white spots but indeed also too much temptation to get to unjustified enrichment through the non-transparent exercise of influence on political decision-making by means of media or the use of corruption.

Care for improvements in the regulation of privatization, financial markets, both the public-law and private-owned media, awarding public contracts, financing political parties and strengthening control mechanisms are thus a standing imperative at present and for the future as well.

7.1. Prevention of interconnection of economic and political power

The entire period of the nineties last century was marked by huge transfers of property in the region. Such phenomena as a personal interconnection between economic and political elites, an inadequate legal framework of privatization and for the functioning of banks and other financial institutions led to massive misappropriation of the originally state or municipal property and to corruption practices. As Charles Lindblom concluded in a clear-sighted way decades ago (1977), the entire economy and society would fall under the yoke of clientelism sooner or later, if no robust and controllable means were in place preventing that interconnection from occurring. The majority of citizens are the losers, namely those who do

not have access to the uncontrolled undeserved sources of wealth and power and the legitimacy of the whole political arrangements is thus radically undermined.

7.2. Prevention of interconnection of medial and political power

At the time when the traditional democratic institutions were forming the newspapers were brought to their readers by coach. While the political system has hardly changed since that time – the functioning of the state is still based on the division of power among the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government – the media, especially electronic, encircled the globe with an ever more compact network.

The focus of power, i.e. the ability to influence the thoughts and the actions of people, shifted dramatically away from the political and administrative institutions that are subject after all to certain rules and restrictions, towards the editorial offices, especially those of television.

Institutions whose purpose is to regulate the activities of the media were emerging in the early nineties with the legislators having only little experience at the time.

In case of public-law media, there is a danger that such media may succumb to the political formation currently in power – in the Czech Republic we still remember rather vividly the crisis around the public-law television at the close of 2000. On the other hand, the private-owned media have an immense freedom of what and how they broadcast to their watchers/listeners. There is a vast space available for making mutually advantageous informal deals between the politicians and the private subjects of the medial market.

The development has shown that the situation is serious and the need for a fundamental revision of the attitude on part of governments to the regulation of the media is rather pressing. It concerns both the public-law and the commercial media. The statutes and the activities of the respective medial councils lag hopelessly behind the need to uphold efficiently an equal access by the different subjects to the information channels and to pay heed to the impartiality of information the media provide.

Indicators of politics, market, and media interweaving:

- Prevention of economic favoritism of the political élite in decision-making
- Prevention of corruption at all levels of government
- Effective regulation of the public sector media
- Effective regulation of private-owned media
- Equal access to media by all competing political actors

8. Approach to social exclusion

The European Union can be seen as a promising administrative roof for the governments of the new member states to become more influential actors of the global regulatory game. Nevertheless, the European Union is split as for what should be its basic goal to be followed – the economic efficiency or the (social) quality of life for all; thus it could not actualize its full potential as the governmental counterpart of the regulative forces of the global economy.

Copenhagen criteria for accession (1993) were designed more as a technical (economic and political) instrument from above than as an appropriate tool to steer living conditions in the candidate countries: legal, economic and political issues prevailed, social ones were

marginalized - reduced to the preservation of individual human rights and building loosely defined institutional framework. In the meantime, the accession countries were used by the actors of global economy as the backdoor for broadening its operational space, especially in social welfare. The most important example were the reforms of the national old age pension systems, which opened doors for private insurance funds by introducing the compulsory private (co-)insurance. It was an easy terrain for their operations as the post-communist governments lacked strategic thinking, necessary skills and to a considerable extent legitimacy, too (Deacon et al. 1997). This was a different situation compared to the situation of actual EU member states where the impact of globalization on Welfare State(s) was much less influential than many supposed (Ferrera-Hemerijck-Rhodes 2001).

Thus, the after-1989-transformation of Central and Eastern Europe brought about obvious social problems that influence everyday life and consciousness of the population in the candidate countries: the spread of unemployment and poverty, new health problems, ethnic tensions and conflicts. These and other socially pathological phenomena differ a lot in their incidence and seriousness around the region of Central and Eastern Europe. In some countries, dual systems (impoverished public and corrupted black market ones) have developed in the health care and education, associated with the overall deterioration of social security systems.

Due to this neglect of social dimension of transformation, the implementation of the ambitious goals of the EU Lisbon Strategy, including the preservation of social cohesion and life-long education, will face serious difficulties in the new Central and Eastern European member states.

Indicators of approach to social exclusion:

- Long-term policies identifying social cleavages and developing approaches to reduce the threat of social exclusion in the market economy
- Coherent employment policies
- Sound social security system
- Equal access to health care and education
- Tailored policies towards the vulnerable and minorities

9. Education in public policy and administration

It is a sort of a truism that the principles and practices of *good governance* cannot be implemented by badly educated politicians or civil servants.

The Czech Republic gained one infamous primacy among the transforming countries of Central and Eastern Europe. No self-contained system of training the civil servants in the central bodies of State administration came into being here for more than ten years, this neither in the form of specialized university-level education nor in the form of further education. The situation began changing only with the formation of the department for the reform of public administration within the Civil Administration Section at the Ministry of the Interior in 1998. As late as 2000 the Government adopted a document establishing The Institute for State Administration which carries analytical, educational and coordinative functions at the central level of State administration. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that the whole system of education and training for the civil servants in the central bodies of State administration will develop to the full before the end of this decade.

Indicators of education in public policy and administration:

- Comprehensive governmental programme aimed at enhancing the quality of instruction in public policy and administration
- In-service training capacities at all levels of public administration
- Broad tertiary education in public policy and administration
- Specific training programmes for politicians, journalists and citizens
- Exchange schemes with foreign institutes and schools for students and teachers

10. Global context of policy making

There is a growing imbalance between the established modes of governance and the external conditions under which the governance runs. The governance formed in industrial societies with a clearly shaped social structure relying above all on institutions of the national state. Nowadays, we are witnessing globalization of economies, global perils to life environment, an onslaught of new information and communication technologies. New security risks are emerging and the societies as such differentiate in compliance with the keys unknown before. The mode of governance lags behind in its adaptability to the dynamism of these shifts which results in the disregard for and the neglect of the problems that put in jeopardy the quality and sustainability of life and, in some instances, even the fundamental human rights. An early and consistent reform in the management and administration of human affairs is a must, though so far it has been realized to the full by only the very few and the intellectual, organizational, motivational and material resources needed for the purpose have been insufficient.

The most important deficit of the existing mode of governance lies in the fact that the problems have to be solved at the level of individual states in the first place while they are generated predominantly at a higher, supranational level. Moreover, in the post-communist countries such an additional complicating phenomenon exists as a demanding and protracted process of democratization of public administration occurring in the context of other transformations. No wonder then that the legitimacy of the whole political system in the eyes of the people has declined dramatically with the last decades.

Indicators of global context of policy making:

- Well defined national interests vis-a-vis globalization and European integration
- Insight of analysts and politicians into the rapidly changing global context of national decision-making
- National administrative capacities to take part in supranational governance (UN, EU, NATO, OECD, etc.)
- Crisis management

Results of the international expert survey concerning the capacities of governance in Central and Eastern Europe

With the lack of systematic and targeted comparative analysis of the state-of-the-art of public administration in the region, with a very accidental evidence of the performance of various functional units, it is very difficult to draw any conclusions about its capacities. In such a situation, a research methodology should rely more on expert knowledge and judgement. The annual conferences of the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee) are the meeting place of top experts and practitioners not only from the region, but also from the respected Public Administration research and teaching units from around the world.

I used this opportunity and asked the participants of the 11th NISPAcee Annual Conference² to fill in a checklist with the ten criteria for their respective countries. All of them were exposed to the explanation of their meaning and indication. The instruction was simple: to evaluate the situation of country's capacities of governance according to all ten criteria. The scale for evaluation was designed in the following way:

Scale for evaluation:

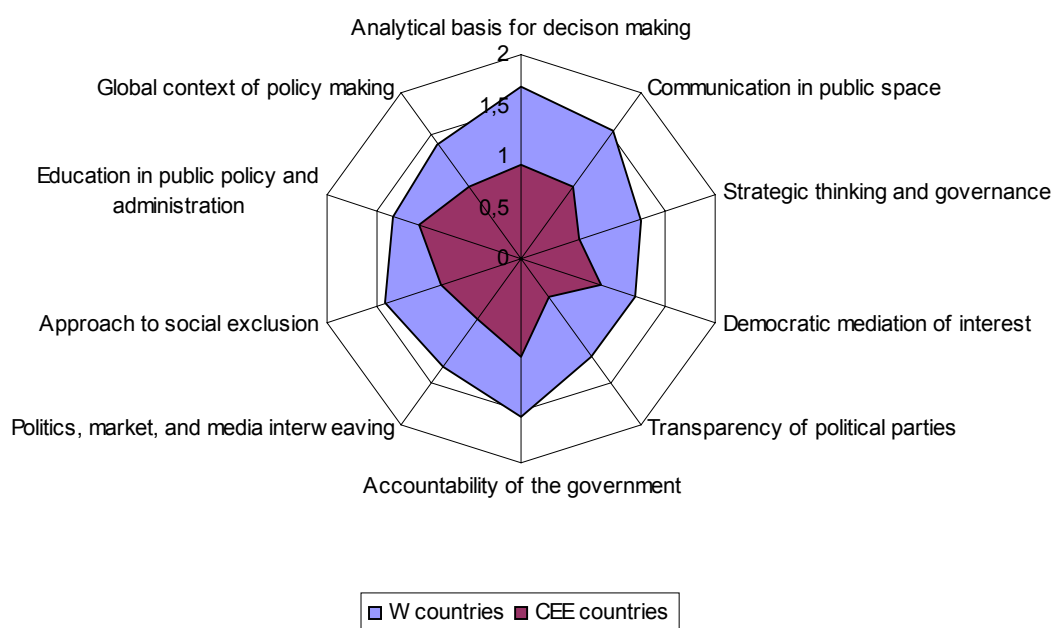
Quite bad situation, no clear cut improvements foreseen	0
Mediocre performance, mixed results	1
Well done: remarkable achievements, good prospects for the future	2

The turnout was remarkable, nearly eighty participants joined the survey and fill in the questionnaire. Unfortunately, some countries were only evaluated by less than five participants. I decided to omit such countries for comparative purposes, but to include these cases to calculate average values for the two clusters of countries – the developed countries of the West (USA, United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Germany – together 11 cases) on one hand and the Central and Eastern European countries (Albania, Armenia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovak Republic, Ukraine, – together 67 cases) on the other hand.

The results of such a comparison are presented by Graph 1.

² Bucharest, Romania, 10.-13.4. 2003

Graph 1: General comparison of capacities of governance in Western countries and Central and Eastern European countries



It comes as no surprise that the transforming countries of Central and Eastern Europe being compared have, on average, finished below the average of the Western democracies being compared, both in their entirety and individually according to all the ten criteria.

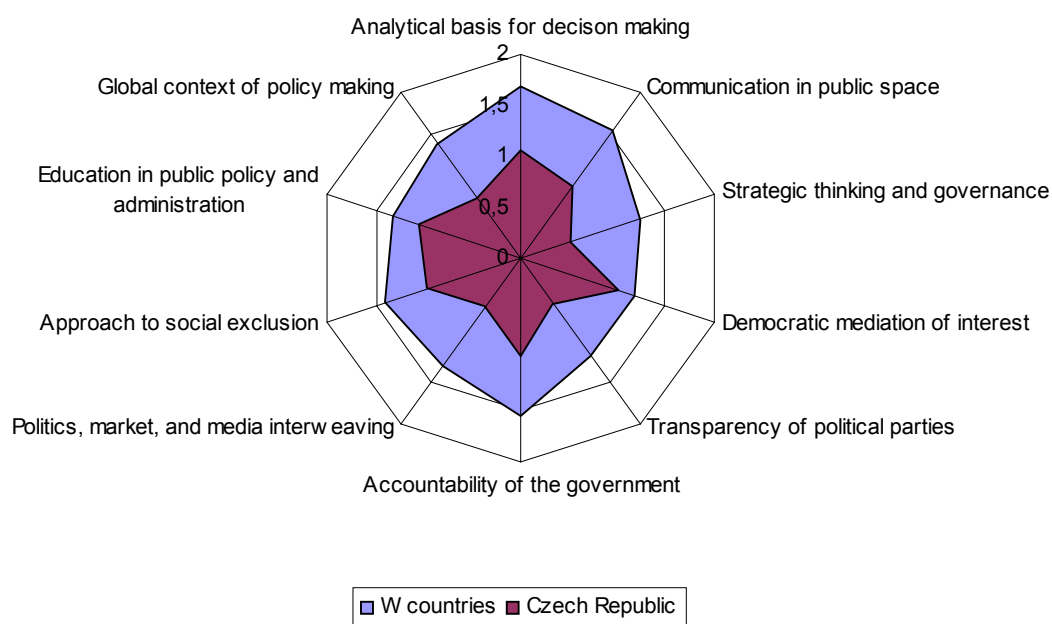
Only six Central and Eastern European countries were evaluated by five or more experts: Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland and Ukraine. Average results of the expert evaluation is shown in the following table.

Table 1: Average evaluation of selected CEE countries

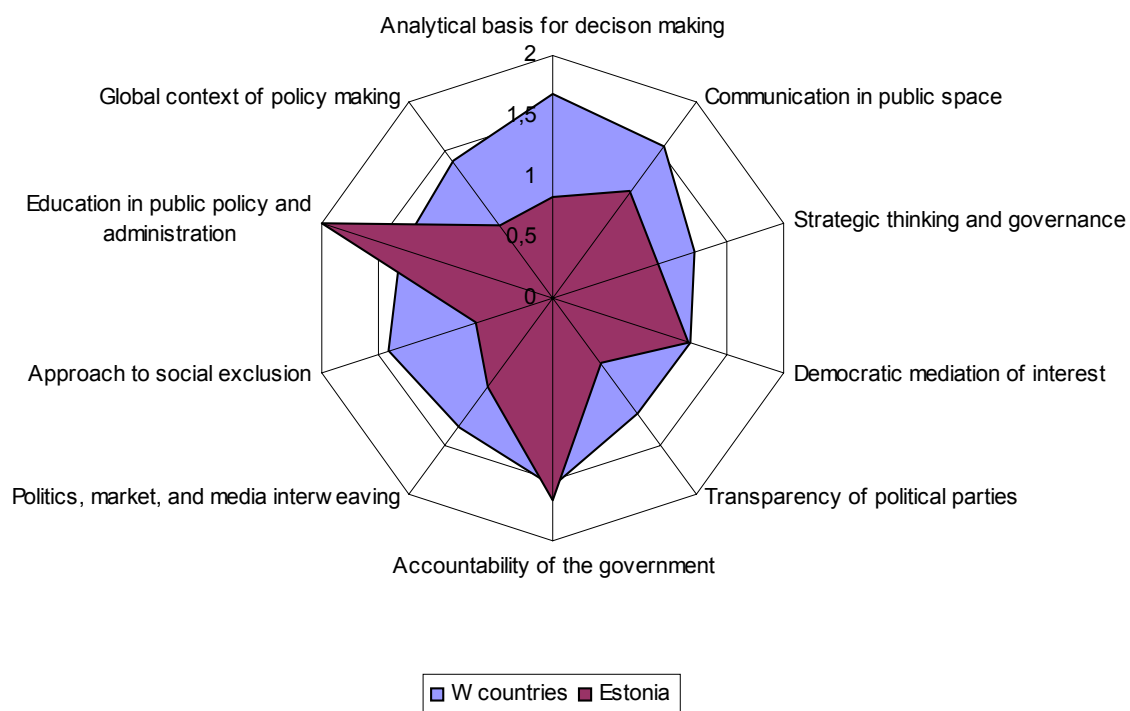
Criterion→ Country ↓	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Cases
Czech Republic	1,05	0,86	0,5	1	0,55	0,96	0,59	0,96	1,05	0,73	11
Estonia	0,83	1,08	0,92	1,17	0,67	1,67	0,92	0,67	2	0,75	6
Lithuania	1	1,14	1	1,33	0,71	1,17	1,29	0,86	1,29	0,86	7
Macedonia	1	1	0,57	1,29	0,14	1	0,71	0,86	0,71	0,71	7
Poland	0,75	0,67	0,33	0,67	0,5	1	0,58	1,08	1	1,17	12
Ukraine	1	0,8	0,2	0,2	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,6	1	0,8	5
CEE countries	0,92	0,88	0,61	0,82	0,46	0,96	0,73	0,82	1,05	0,88	67
W countries	1,68	1,55	1,23	1,18	1,18	1,55	1,32	1,41	1,32	1,4	11

It would be also interesting to compare the evaluation of selected Central and Eastern European countries with the average evaluation of Western democracies – see the following graphs.

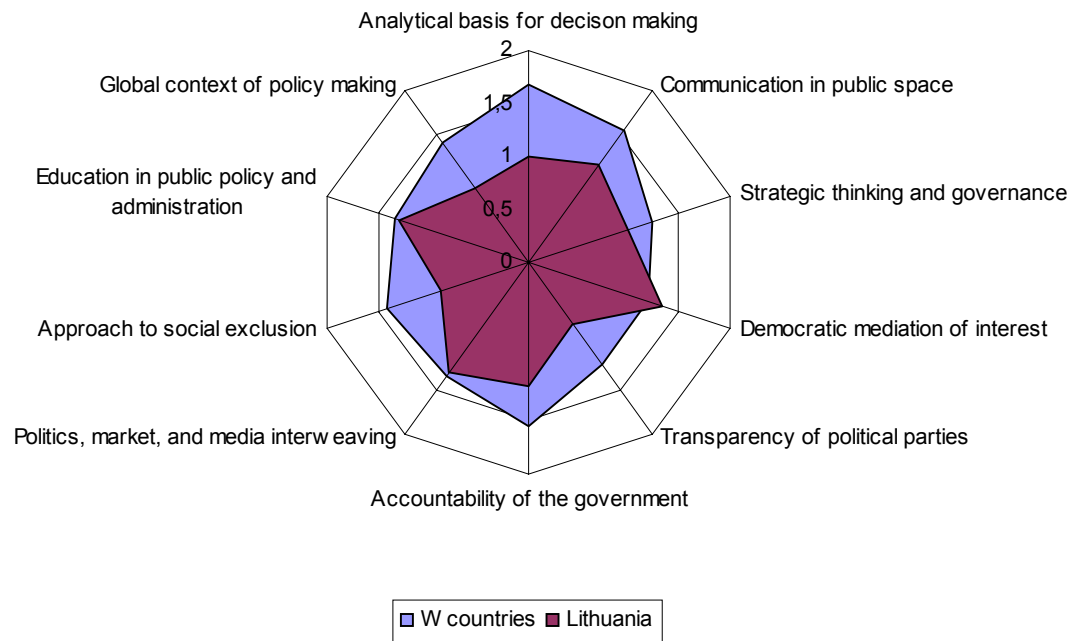
Graph 2: Comparison of capacities of governance in the Czech Republic with the Western average



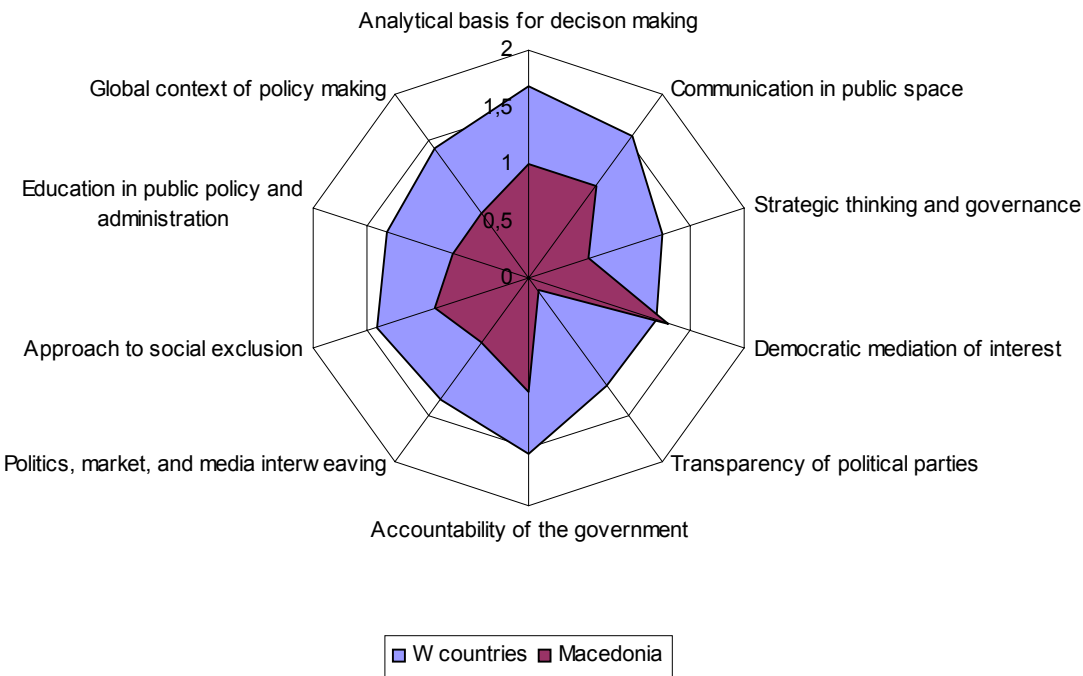
Graph 3: Comparison of capacities of governance in Estonia with the Western average



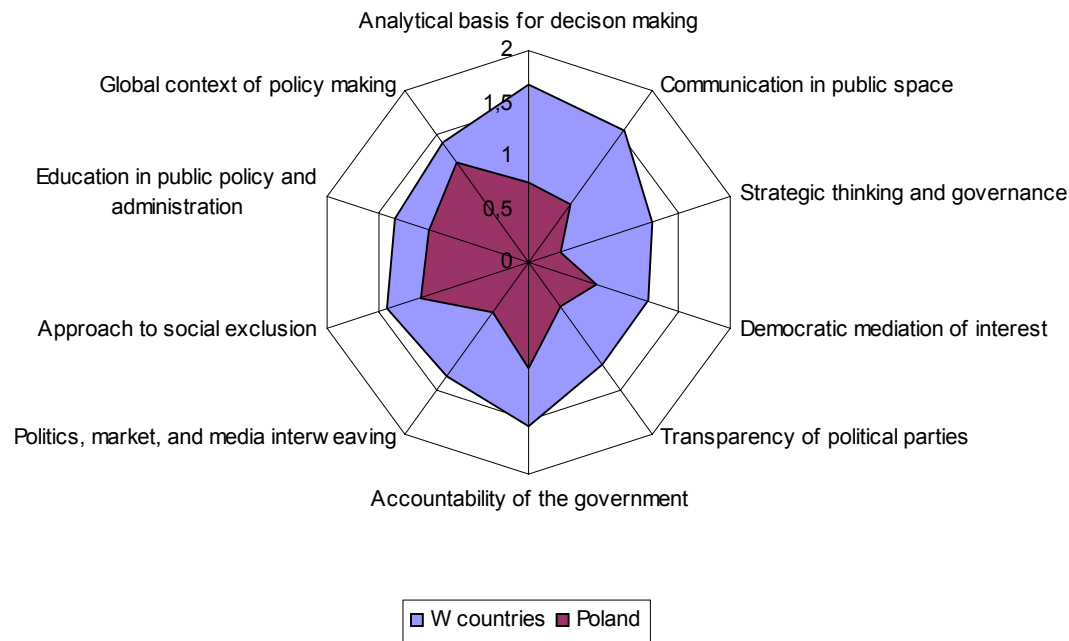
Graph 4: Comparison of capacities of governance in Lithuania with the Western average



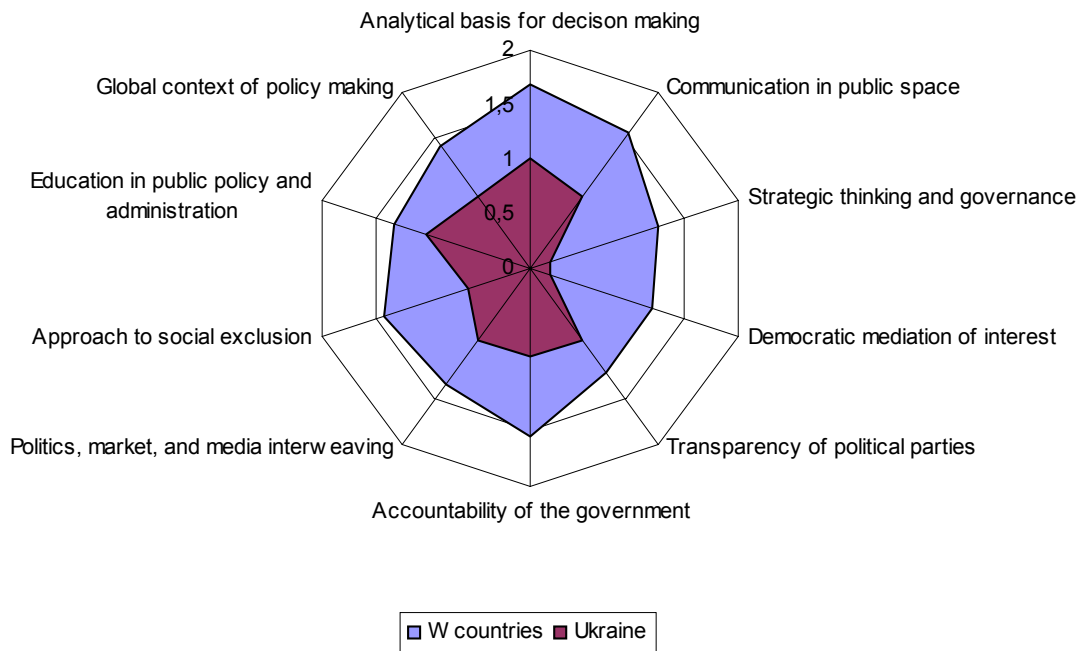
Graph 5: Comparison of capacities of governance in Macedonia with the Western average



Graph 6: Comparison of capacities of governance in Poland with the Western average

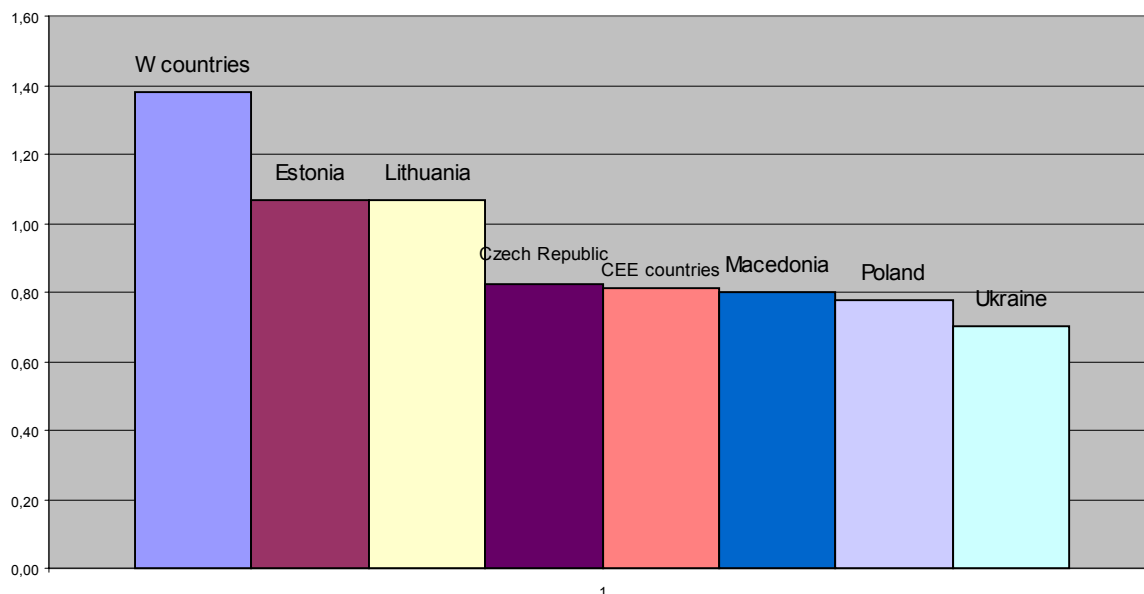


Graph 7: Comparison of capacities of governance in Ukraine with the Western average



The following graph compares average values across all ten criteria for the group of Western democracies, the group of all included Central and Eastern European countries, with the six countries that were represented by five or more expert in our survey.

Graph 8: Comparison of general capacities of governance in selected CEE countries



The results of the expert survey make it possible to formulate several interesting preliminary conclusions. The Baltic countries have shown better results in the comparison than the post-communist countries of Central Europe which, in turn, have fared better than Ukraine. Equally interesting is the comparison of the "performance" of all the post-communist countries according to the individual criteria: the best-placed criteria in the expert survey were education in public policy and administration, accountability of the government, and analytical basis for decision-making. The lowest score was run up by transparency of political parties, followed by strategic thinking and governance, and politics, market, and media interweaving.

There is no need to exaggerate the relevance of the above presented results. The expert surveys have their apparent methodological limitations. As most of the questioned experts were educators and researchers, not surprisingly education and analytical capacities scored better than issues associated with the core governmental activities. The selection of experts was submit to a specific situation of the international conference: there was no chance to apply more elaborated techniques of sampling allowing to get a more balanced composition of experts with various expertise. What is presented here is a pilot expert survey that indicates what might be the promising fields of a more thorough and rigorous analytical effort in the future.

Nevertheless, I believe that even such a preliminary diagnosis should attract attention of decision-makers and thus contribute to a better understanding of developmental needs of the Central and Eastern European countries in their continuous effort to achieve better governance.

Conclusion

The answer to the question posed at the beginning of this paper is quite simple: our current modes of governance will not stand the test either when facing the needs of the region or the global challenges our civilization is grappling with. Seen in this light, it is all the more important for the citizenry as well as political representation to fully realize the importance of the long-term cultivation of conditions for good governance in a bid to raise the quality of life of our and future generations. It is equally vital for our political representation to adjust its range of priorities to this recognition. As for the transforming countries of Central and Eastern Europe, this general statement applies to their state of governance with a greater degree of urgency.

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