



TRENDS FOR THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC  
SECTOR REFORM: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF  
FUTURE-LOOKING RESEARCH IN PUBLIC  
ADMINISTRATION

Dion Curry

April 2014



This Project is funded by the European Union under the 7th Framework Programme

### **About COCOPS**

The COCOPS project (Coordinating for Cohesion in the Public Sector of the Future) seeks to comparatively and quantitatively assess the impact of New Public Management-style reforms in European countries, drawing on a team of European public administration scholars from 11 universities in 10 countries. It will analyse the impact of reforms in public management and public services that address citizens' service needs and social cohesion in Europe. Evaluating the extent and consequences of NPM's alleged fragmenting tendencies and the resulting need for coordination is a key part of assessing these impacts. It is funded under the European Union's 7th Framework Programme as a Small or Medium-Scale Focused Research Project (2011-2014).

### **About the Author**

**Dion Curry** is a research fellow at the Department of Public Administration at Erasmus University Rotterdam.

The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme under grant agreement No. 266887 (Project COCOPS), Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities.

## TRENDS FOR THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF FUTURE-LOOKING RESEARCH IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

### **Abstract**

This report presents a critical review of key academic and practical research on future trends in public sector reform in Europe and beyond, focusing particularly on perspectives on reform since the start of the financial crisis in 2008. After providing a brief background on the history and use of future-looking research in public administration, the report identifies three key areas in which changes are noted: shifts in context, shifts in governance and engagement, and shifts in management.

In context, global changes, exogenous factors and the financial crisis will likely continue to shape public administration. However, there is little consensus over whether this will lead to a deep change in practice, or merely a continued evolution of current practices. E-government and e-governance, network governance and stakeholder engagement are seen as increasingly important in shifting governance, but these have opened up new questions of accountability, transparency and trust. Finally, shifts in management have led to consideration of what lies beyond New Public Management. While strategic planning, evidence-based policy-making and performance measurement and management play a role, again there are questions about whether this represents a true break from NPM or merely a refinement or fragmentation of the idea. The report finishes with a look at what these changes mean for the discipline, encouraging scholars to approach future-looking research systematically in a way that engages with practitioners.

### **Keywords**

Future trends; public sector reform; financial crisis; governance; New Public Management; scenario building

## Contents

Introduction .....	5
Background .....	6
Shifts in Context.....	8
Global Changes and Exogenous Factors .....	8
The Financial Crisis and Fiscal Consolidation.....	9
Post-Crisis Public Administration: Punctuation or Continuation?.....	11
Shifts in Governance and Engagement .....	12
E-Government and E-Governance .....	12
Network Governance and Stakeholder Engagement.....	13
Accountability, Transparency and Trust .....	17
Shifts in Management .....	18
Beyond New Public Management.....	18
Strategic Planning and Evidence-Based Policy-Making.....	19
Performance Measurement, Management and Efficiency in Service Delivery .....	22
Where Now? Public Administration as a Discipline.....	22
Conclusions.....	25
Bibliography.....	28

## **Introduction**

Public administration has faced somewhat of an identity crisis in the past five years. The financial crisis has had a profound effect on making both officials and academics rethink what public administration can and should be. However, there is some question as to how much these changes are actually manifested, and whether they indeed represent something new or are just reconceptualisations of pre-existing ideas. The data and experiences in different European countries do not help to clarify this. While countries such as the United Kingdom have undertaken considerable reform of their public sector after the crisis, the public sector still plays a significant role in countries, without exception. Government and public sector spending has been on a general upward trajectory, with spending accounting for over 40% of GDP compared to 30% in 1960 (OECD, 2011, pp. 21). At the same time, however, government revenues as a percentage of GDP have actually declined (OECD, 2011, pp. 58). This has, obviously, placed strains on already-strained public systems. While there is seen to be a general need to reduce costs, governments also face structural factors that make that difficult, such as ageing populations and increasing healthcare costs.

Dealing with these issues has resulted in some introspection in public administration, with academics and practitioners examining the practical and theoretical implications of dealing with these issues. Speculation on the future of public administration has existed in the discipline at least since the 1960s. This report makes an attempt to compile recent thoughts and views of the future of public administration both as a discipline and in practice to identify common and key trends in the public sector. It provides a systematic review of literature collected from leading academic, government and non-governmental sources and synthesises this research into a coherent picture of contemporary literature on the future of public administration and the emergence of potential trends.

A total of 74 sources, mainly articles and reports, were reviewed. The literature was compiled through a review of key journals in the field, discussions with public administration experts and Google, Google Scholar and Web of Science searches. The focus is mainly on the academic view of the future, but practitioner reports are also considered extensively. These tended to be drawn from international organisations and have a cross-country focus. While some individual country reports on the future were included, the emphasis was on a pan-European view of the future. In addition, the search was limited to English-language publications. While attempts were made to make this report as comprehensive (and likely exhaustive) as possible, there are several caveats to that. First, the focus of this review is on literature published post-millennium, with a special emphasis on literature from post-2008. This was done in order to focus on currently foreseen trends and to emphasise any differences since the start of the financial crisis. Second, the work concentrates on views from a European perspective. Significant cleavages still

exist between European and North American scholarship in public administration (Kickert, 2005), and while some American literature was drawn upon for insight into general and global trends, any attempt at comprehensiveness is only claimed for European literature. In addition, focus is on pan-European or global perspectives and does not delve deeply into country-specific reports on the future of public administration.

This report first provides a bit of background information on the sources and nature of the futures-looking research used in this report, before examining the underlying trends that have influenced the key themes identified by most of the literature reviewed. Finally, the paper looks at lessons that have been developed for bringing these concepts to fruition and potential obstacles that may arise in future public administration reform. This work will not go in-depth into the scholarship of these specific reform areas, and instead focus clearly on how futures-looking articles saw these concepts developing in upcoming years. In other words, the focus remains on development of visions of the future, not development of the specific concepts.

## **Background**

Consideration of the future of public administration is not a new thing. The Minnowbrook Conference is the longest standing and perhaps most important venue for consideration of the future of public administration. The Minnowbrook is an American tradition begun in 1968 and has taken place every twenty years since. The aim of the conferences is to make public administration – both academically and practically – more responsive to the needs and issues of the day and to establish how this can be developed for future practice (O’Leary, 2011, pp. i2). The latest conference was held in 2008 and invited 56 young scholars to address the issues that they felt most pertinent to the development of public administration. It was followed up by a larger conference with 220 participants responding and expanding on many of the ideas discussed in the previous phase. Core issues discussed at the 2008 conference included the place of NPM in a post-crisis context, how network governance and collaborative approaches to policy have affected the discipline and the role of public administration in an increasingly globalised world (O’Leary, 2011). The results of the conference were presented in a special issue of the *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* in 2011 and many of these findings are presented in this review.

In late 2010, *Public Administration Review* also published a special issue symposium on the future of public administration in 2020. While this symposium also focused mainly on a North American perspective, it still addressed many issues relevant to public administration in Europe and the world as a whole. This work looked at the future in the context of external factors – population and demographic change, energy and the environment, food issues, public debt and information technology. This symposium, too, presented issues that are recurrent in much

forward-looking public administration research. It focused on three main themes – the dissolution of traditional barriers and need for more collaboration, more strategic and nuanced approaches to dealing with public administration challenges and the future of public administration as a discipline. Once again, many of the findings of this symposium are reviewed in this document (O’Leary and Van Slyke, 2010).

Practitioner-based reports are also common. The OECD publishes many future-looking documents that attempt to identify world trends and policy responses in its member countries (and beyond). Its *Government at a Glance* report (2011) for instance, mixes quantitative data, trends over time and normative ideas of what should be changed about public administration around the world. It separates it into **inputs** (which include public finance and economics, employment in general government and public corporations and compensation in selected public sector occupations), **processes** (which include strategic foresight and leadership; human resources management practices; transparency in governance; public procurement; regulatory governance; and ways of delivering public services), **outputs** and **outcomes**. Their in-depth *Government of the Future* takes a more explicit and prescriptive approach to understanding governance and public administration, but was published in 2000 (OECD, 2000). They have also released reports on specific aspects of the future of governance, such as e-government (2008), as well as countless reports on specific policy areas, including health, entrepreneurship, the environment, pensions and education, to name but a few. Other think tanks, NGOs, international organisations, consultancy firms and government-affiliated bodies have also produced documents looking toward the future. In the United States, the National Intelligence Council produced a report in 2008 on global trends in governance and public administration, as have Rand (Treverton, 2010) and KPMG (2013). This style of report is common with consultancy firms, and this research has attempted to focus on key future-looking reports by major think tanks or consulting firms.

Finally, specific countries often produce reports on future trends in the public sector and public administration. While these often take a single-country focus, several of them look more broadly at trends in several countries, or even global trends. A recent report on *Governments for the Future* (Finland Ministry of Finance, 2013) examines trends in Austria, Finland, Scotland, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The report highlights the key themes that are envisaged to become increasingly important in the coming years, and in the wake of the financial crisis. Among the main approaches highlighted in the report are an increased emphasis on horizontal policy-making and ‘joining up’, a stronger focus on evidence-based policy-making and promotion of innovation and strengthening of learning capacity. As this surfeit of reports shows, there is no shortage of practical and academic literature looking to the future of public administration.

Four broad categories of trends have predominated in discussion on the future of public administration in practice and as a discipline.

<b>Key Trends Influencing the Future of Public Administration</b>	
1. Shifts in Context	Global Changes The Financial Crisis
2. Shifts in Governance and Engagement	Network Governance E-Governance Accountability, Transparency and Trust
3. Shifts in Management	New Public Management Performance Management Evidence-Based Policy-Making and Strategic Planning
4. Shifts in the Discipline	

### **Shifts in Context**

Public administration does not exist in a vacuum, and is largely shaped by the political and social context in which it operates. At the same time, public administration responses can in turn shape external factors, most notably in financial terms, as evinced by the financial crisis. The report will first look at exogenous factors that have and will shape public administration in the future, before turning to a deeper look at the effect of the financial crisis on the public sector of the future.

#### *Global Changes and Exogenous Factors*

In addition to the financial crisis, many future-looking policy documents – especially those released by practitioners – highlight other external factors that will have an increasing effect on the policy process in future years. These issues will be analysed in more depth in a forthcoming COCOPS report (Pollitt, 2014), but this report will briefly outline the key factors that present themselves in the literature. Apart from emergencies and disasters that remain unpredictable, authors highlight several contextual trends that will likely be stressors on public administration in the future, namely demographic change and environmental factors.

Demographic change was arguably the most identified factor that will reshape public administration in the coming years. On one side of the coin, many countries are dealing with integrating youth populations into the labour market (KPMG, 2013), with youth unemployment particularly problematic in those countries in the Eurozone hit hardest by the crisis, such as Spain, Portugal and Greece. On the other side, higher life expectancy, ageing baby boom populations and falling birth rates are placing strain on welfare systems, especially pensions and healthcare, in Europe and around the world. The share of GDP accounted for by pension

spending is forecast to increase by 1.2% in the coming twenty years as the proportion of elderly grows (KPMG, 2013, pp. 14). Not only will ageing put extra pressure on finances, but in turn it will affect the way in which public administration operates, as well as affecting the makeup of the workforce of public administration (Wolf and Armirkhanyan, 2010). Attached to this, pension systems in each country will become increasingly strained as workforces continue to age and baby boomers continue to retire (National Intelligence Council, 2008). Looking somewhat more optimistically, the OECD sees an ageing public workforce as also providing an opportunity for restructuring and renewing public administration (OECD, 2011, pp. 101).

Energy and environmental issues will also become increasingly important. Climate change will have knock-on, and often unknown, effects on social and fiscal issues facing public administration, including resource management issues (food, water and natural resources), effects on industry and increased pressure on infrastructure and development (National Intelligence Council, 2008; Treverton, 2010; KPMG, 2013). Urbanisation will further exacerbate this resource strain, particularly in terms of energy (KPMG, 2013).

Public administration will have to adapt accordingly. Some authors (Robertson and Choi, 2010) foresee public administration reforms as adapting to large trends in society, moving from a mechanistic view of the world to a more ecological approach. This ecological approach will emphasise interconnectedness, self-organisational capacity and co-evolutionary dynamics of public administration systems, over a more mechanistic approach of reductionism, competition and prediction and control. This shift will have an impact on the purpose, design, process and relationships underpinning public administration (Robertson and Choi, 2010). However, as reactions to the financial crisis below show, a radical shift in approach to public administration has yet to materialise.

#### *The Financial Crisis and Fiscal Consolidation*

The OECD Government at a Glance report points out failures in public sector regulation and supervision as being key causes of the financial crisis (OECD, 2011, pp. 9) and public administration is inextricably linked to the financial situation of any country, especially as revenues have fallen and spending has risen in many countries post-crisis (OECD, 2011, pp. 57). Public debt will likely continue to increase at least in the foreseeable future. Debt-to-GDP ratios in developed countries have increased from 46% to 78% (estimated) from 2007 to 2013 and this is expected to continue to rise (KPMG, 2013).

The financial crisis that started in 2008 has undoubtedly had an effect on the direction of public administration, but only time will tell whether this is, in fact, a sea change in approach or simply a readjustment or relabeling of reform processes that existed long before 2008. Response to the

crisis has been far from uniform and has created dichotomies (sometimes diametrically opposed) in dealing with the fallout (Peters, Pierre and Randma-Liiv, 2011). While some countries (Germany, France) have maintained their approach to governance and not changed their approach significantly in light of the crisis, others have greatly altered their approach to governance as a result of the crisis, such as the United States. Likewise, there has been retrenchment by some governments that have moved back towards centralisation as a way of controlling the policy process (UK, Finland), whereas others have embraced decentralisation as a way of dealing with the crisis (Sweden, Slovenia). There have been opposite reactions in other ways as well, such as politicisation, coordination and coherence, and a focus on long-term or short-term solutions (Peters, Pierre and Randma-Liiv, 2011, pp. 16-21). These responses call into question not only *what* effect these financial issues have had on public administration, but in some cases even *whether* they have had an effect.

Pressures to fiscally consolidate are influenced by different factors in different countries, but the OECD sees a need for more fiscal consolidation within most systems. The need for this consolidation is not driven by the size of government in a certain country, but rather by the need for agreement (at least within a country) about the functions of government and a match between available revenues and expenditures (OECD, 2011, pp. 33). This has not always occurred as countries deal with incompatible goals of improving (or maintaining) public services while also cutting costs. The fiscal consolidation approach of most countries has tended to focus on cutting expenditures rather than raising revenues, and these cost savings tend to be derived from programmatic cuts, although operational ones also factor into many savings (OECD, 2011, pp. 39-40). In terms of specific areas where there are cuts or reforms, pension reforms are a common undertaking, while health and education reforms are less likely to be undertaken (OECD, 2011, pp. 42-45). In terms of operating costs, many cuts to compensation costs, such as voluntary retirement, wage cuts and ministerial rearrangements, do not perform up to expectations in terms of fiscal savings. Instead, better workplace planning, long-term policy review, skills strategies and workplace redesigns are more effective, along with closer involvement of management and workers in shaping how these cuts are implemented (OECD, 2011, pp. 50). There is also little conclusive evidence about which reforms are most likely to result in efficiency gains. However, there is some OECD evidence that decentralisation of power and spending responsibilities to sub-national levels, management practices that promote employee satisfaction and morale, and exploiting economies of scale are reforms that are most likely to improve efficiency (OECD, 2011, pp. 47).

### *Post-Crisis Public Administration: Punctuation or Continuation?*

While the financial crisis has undoubtedly had an effect on the vision that scholars have for the future of public administration, many of the themes that still get traction were also prevalent in earlier work. To a certain extent, the crisis has simply sped up and deepened a push for fiscal consolidation and efforts to deliver services more efficiently. Even before the crisis, high levels of demand for services and high budget deficits were placing increased strain on service delivery (Joyce and Pattison, 2010) and the financial crisis has only resulted in an increased push, rather than a different approach, to fiscal consolidation within governments.

In fact, many public administration reforms that support financial goals identified after the crisis still conform to patterns of reform that existed before 2008. As long ago as 2001, the European Commission's White Paper on European Governance highlighted many public-sector trends and approaches that still apply in a post-crisis world, such as the necessity of coherent policy objectives and development of networks by allowing more actors to take part in the policy process (European Commission, 2001, pp. 4), as a way to reduce spending.

The 2000 OECD report on the Government of the Future also identifies policy trends and goals that still resonate. These include changing societal and technological factors, as well as issues of accountability and trust, and the subsequent need to reform government in a way that ensures coordination under changing roles for government and non-governmental actors. In many ways, this shows that the crisis has not had a profound effect on the overall prescriptive ideas of reform that are deemed necessary, as this report also identifies the need for still-popular ideas such as stakeholder ownership, accountability, capacity and network ideas of governance (OECD, 2001). Likewise, their *Modernising Government* (2005) highlights a number of broad concepts that are still being explored in practice and in the literature, such as open government, performance enhancement, accountability, marketization and the involvement of non-governmental stakeholders and public sector motivation, along with concepts that have only become even more important since the financial crisis, such as public sector restructuring.

Still, there will likely be a shift in thinking about public administration post crisis. Even before 2008, managing and budgeting were developing in interlinked ways and this is likely to continue, with an increased focus on results-based management (OECD, 2011, pp. 27). While the period of economic liberalisation in the 1980s to the early 2000s saw a move towards allowing more technocrat control over various aspects of policy – most notably the power of independent central banks – the crisis has shone more light on these arrangement and while this technocrat-centric approach is unlikely to disappear completely, it has come under increased scrutiny after the crisis (Roberts, 2010). This could lead to an overhaul of how public policy is conducted and the relationship between politics and bureaucracy, but on the other hand the

banking crisis has not yet led to a significant shift in responsibilities or a move away from a technocratic model.

Most of the perceived trends as regards the financial crisis focus on relatively specific needs for reforms. However, there is also a need to institutionalise these reforms, or at least move them beyond ad hoc responses to economic shocks. The crisis has also resulted in closer collaboration with other stakeholders at least in the short term, but there is a need to further develop and institutionalise strategic capacity and coordination in this regard (OECD, 2011, pp. 87). In an attempt to cut costs, there has also been more questioning of public sector remuneration, but significant difference in how this can be dealt with, due to different bargaining powers, attractiveness of public sector work and different labour markets, and these questions will continue to shape reform of the public sector (OECD, 2011, pp. 111). A report on Austria, Finland, Scotland, Sweden and the UK emphasises the need for clearer connections and coordination between policy strategy-making and budgeting and the allocation of resources, as well as greater integration between stages of the policy process (Finland Ministry of Finance, 2013). This strategic development would lead to longer term approaches to addressing some of the concerns made evident by the crisis. These perceptions show that while the crisis has altered the way in which public administration works in the midst of economic corrections, there has been less evidence that these changes will be institutionalised or continue on once the economy recovers.

### **Shifts in Governance and Engagement**

The role of government vis-à-vis other actors has also shifted significantly in the past two decades, and it is likely that this relationship will continue to be refined or even redefined. Both the tools and the ways in which governments interact with citizens and other actors have changed, most notably with the rise of e-government initiatives, and this raises new questions of accountability, transparency and trust of government and public administration.

#### *E-Government and E-Governance*

E-government and e-governance refer to ‘the provision of governmental information and services electronically 24 hours per day, 7 days per week’ (Norris, 2010, pp. S180). The idea extends beyond a simple technological tool and involves working with citizens, businesses and other governments. It works in a two-way manner – technology and innovation produce new ways to govern and administer, but the ways in which organisations govern and administer also affect the growth potential and ways that technology can be used (Norris, 2010, pp. S181). Earlier examinations of e-governance predicted drastic changes to the ways in which government and bureaucracy work, leading to bigger things such as e-democracy, whereas in

reality the results have been much more humble. E-government remains (mostly) informational and less interactive than was originally thought.

Still, there is general consensus that there will be more emphasis on e-government in the future, even if citizen uptake has been lower and shallower than expected (OECD, 2011, pp. 170). There is general consensus that information technology will continue to expand, having profound effects on personal information, but also increased educational and social uses (O’Leary and Van Slyke, 2010). The debate on e-Government has become more sophisticated in the past decade as well, moving from a focus on internal use of the internet in improving efficiencies within government to a more active use of technology as a new way of connecting citizens and government and opening up the policy process.

However, there is debate over whether this is a new form of governance, or simply a new format for old government practices, as there is still a focus on information dissemination rather than interactive engagement between citizens and governments (OECD, 2011, pp. 25). In earlier days, there was more confusion, and fewer results, to e-government initiatives, which mainly had a surface-level quality of provision of (some) information but lacked any engagement qualities. This in turn led to discussion about whether e-governance truly represented a paradigmatic shift away from NPM, or whether it was just a ‘second wave’ of NPM reforms (Torres, Pina and Royo, 2005). Some authors (Norris, 2010, pp. S181) feel that future changes will continue to be evolutionary rather than revolutionary, with advances generally remaining in the informational realm: streamlined access to information that is more institutionalised and routinized into everyday governmental and bureaucratic processes. Two particular disconnections occur between governments in drawing a consensus on what democratic e-governance should mean, particularly in drawing connections between local needs and regional needs, and between government and citizens (Barnes, 2010, pp. S137). Pressures on local-level governments to produce efficient services caused them to focus more inwardly, and work less on forging connections between themselves and other governments (Barnes, 2010, pp. S138), which in turn hampers development of citizen engagement through e-governance initiatives.

#### *Network Governance and Stakeholder Engagement*

Network governance has risen in prominence as a way to address the lessening of hierarchy within and between many public sector bodies, and between governmental and non-governmental actors. This idea recognises the increasing prominence of other actors and stakeholders in public administration activities and attempts to develop a framework upon which these complex relations can be understood in a policy and public administration context. This idea of networks has led to an increased focus on stakeholder engagement in the policy

process and service delivery, which may take forms from simple contracting out of services to deeper ideas of involvement in policy planning and decision-making. In turn, this increasing engagement has raised new questions about democracy, accountability and transparency.

In many ways, contracting out can be seen as the beginning of a more active role for non-governmental actors in the policy process. While across the OECD government-owned service providers are still somewhat more customary, outsourcing has become an increasingly common way to deliver services (OECD, 2011, pp. 72). At the current time, however, there is not complete agreement on the future of contracting out. Some authors envisioning a deepening of this process to reflect more collaboration, whereas others see a retraction with the public sphere again taking control of service delivery. In order to continue to provide services that are both high quality and efficient, most authors see a need to fine-tune existing practices of contracting out. The evaluation of costs and benefits associated with contracting out must be broadened in order to provide services that meet both financial and social needs. In the future, this will require consideration of not only financial costs, but should also encompass standards in performance, accountability and transparency, appropriateness of outsourcing in context, workforce balance and innovation (Breul, 2010, pp. S199). These considerations extend globally, with a need to develop the interaction between the public sector and business on both national and global terms. In this area, many of the requirements for successfully moving forward are similar to issues raised in other contexts: the need for partnerships and involvement of multiple stakeholders, collaborative learning, institution building and development of networks, but also managing social adjustment to an increasingly globalised world (Abonyi and Van Slyke, 2010).

While many predict a continuing practice of contracting out and pursuing market-based service delivery, there is also a strong likelihood that privatisation will be reversed, at least in some areas. Perry and Buckwalter predict that there will be a shift away from focusing on private provision of services, back to more emphasis on the public sphere, as the current financial crisis makes people reconsider the relationship between private provision and public service (Perry and Buckwalter, 2010, pp. S241-S242). The crisis has shown that market-based approaches are far from infallible, and privatising services has often not resulted in the savings that were theoretically foreseen. There is often a lack of competition in provision of essential services (especially at local and often even regional levels), and many state monopolies have been replaced with de facto private monopolies. In addition, differing priorities (public good versus private profit) can conflict and questions of accountability become more tangled (Warner, 2010, pp. S145). This could result in either a reversal of privatisation in some areas, or increased regulation over how these services can be provided privately. While issues related to the financial crisis, most notably in the financial sector, have shaken people's faith in private

provision of at least some services, it is unclear whether this has gone any way to *restoring* faith in public provision of services, or whether there is a desire to return to that mode of service delivery.

Stakeholder involvement can take different forms and has evolved over the years. Simple contracting out, which rose to prominence in the 1980s, has now given way to attempts to develop a more collaborative approach to working with other stakeholders. Fiscal constraints and a focus on efficiency have created an idea of ‘leveraged government’, where the government brings in additional private-sector stakeholders as a way to develop (or at least maintain) services in an efficient manner, which in some cases led to a decentralisation of service delivery as governments focused on ‘governing’ and left other actions to other actors (OECD, 2011, pp. 22). This approach has also extended the scope of stakeholders, moving beyond service providers to other groups, most notably a rise in the involvement of non-governmental organisations (OECD, 2011, pp. 21). New service delivery models are likely to take an even deeper idea of stakeholder involvement, finding ways (still yet to be determined) to directly include citizens and other stakeholders in policy development, decision-making and delivery (OECD, 2011, pp. 167).

There is often little clear boundary between discussion of stakeholder engagement and talk about network governance, but they do represent slightly different approaches – or at least different takes on the same approach – to future public sector reform. The involvement of these new actors has inevitably flattened or at least altered the hierarchical, government-centric approach to policy-making that dominated several decades ago. This move towards network governance has also created issues of accountability, as the lack of a clear hierarchy and move towards private service delivery undermine some democratic controls on keeping those delivering services to account (Moynihan and Ingraham, 2010, pp. S234). Collaboration and development of networks will become more important, along with questions of how to ensure these collaborations are both efficient and effective (Feldman, 2010, pp. S159). According to the Finnish Ministry of Finance (2013), innovation and learning requires a network approach involving many units or stakeholders in the process of identifying priorities with understandable goals and logics.

In turn, new approaches are required in order to address the challenges raised by network governance and stakeholder involvement, including careful reconsideration of many aspects of the policy process, such as instrument choice (OECD, 2011, pp. 28). Part of the effort to more actively involve other non-governmental actors has also resulted in a shift in approach to regulation over the years, as stronger regulatory governance, including transparency, is seen to ensure effective compliance and evaluation of performance (OECD, 2011, pp. 157). Instead of a

top-down, rigid approach to regulation in many areas, there has been a move to ideas of 'regulatory impact analysis'. This aims to give non-governmental actors more flexibility and incentives with regard to regulation in order to allow compliance in a more cooperative, cost-effective manner with less need for direct oversight (OECD, 2011, pp. 26). While this would increase the role of non-governmental actors throughout the policy process, it does not negate the need for governmental involvement. A strong institutional based and supports are still necessary in ensuring that reforms are followed (OECD, 2011, pp. 35), and effective reform requires a predictable, gradual approach that takes into account different stakeholder and political perspectives (OECD, 2011, pp. 38).

The responses to challenges and benefits brought about by a more networked approach to policy are not just centrally located, however. These issues permeate through increasingly complex levels of governance – from local to regional to state to international - with citizen connections necessary throughout the process. Levels such as local government are responsible as well for involving the community, providing services and creating and enforcing a regulatory environment in which public administration can operate on the ground (Hayward, 2010). This becomes increasingly difficult as local levels of government have come under increasing pressure in some political systems, with resources often being cut at the same time as further services are downloaded to the local level. This exacerbates problems with multi-level governance, as policy design and implementation become untethered, with fiscal resources and centralised planning often coming from higher levels of government that local levels are then required to implement. This will require a recalibration in the future, likely in the area of taxation. Local taxation powers are often limited, and if services continue to be downloaded then local governments' revenue raising capacity will have to increase, either in the shape of intergovernmental transfers or through new taxation powers, such as sales and services taxes (Warner, 2010, pp. S146).

Looking upwards, supranational institutions also will become more involved in the policy process. Of course, the interconnectedness of the increasingly globalised world has and will have profound effects on public administration and the policy process. Global trade as a percentage of GDP has increased by over 50% since 1980, requiring governments to balance local, regional, national and supranational needs in developing economic policies (KPMG, 2013). The EU has highlighted the need to be better involved in the policy process. Main roles for the EU to play include the development of better and more responsive regulation and service delivery, better integration and examination of policy issues from a global governance perspective and strategic planning to develop clarity and focus in policies and institutions (European Commission, 2001).

### *Accountability, Transparency and Trust*

Accountability is a central concern in much futures research. Data shows that there has been a decline in citizen trust over the years (OECD, 2011, pp. 22), while at the same time there is an increased focus on flexibility in addressing governance and administration concerns. However, this flexibility has made it less clear who bears responsibility for decisions and outcomes and thus requires new structures in order to remain accountable on various levels. As flexibility increases, clarity on an organising purpose becomes more important, as this provides a framework in which ideas of decentralisation and accountability can still be exercised (Khademian, 2010, pp. S167-S168). This need for accountability, transparency and trust will be visible in all policy areas and approaches, and will need to be balanced with ideas of participation and public organisation (Getha-Taylor, 2010, pp. S170-172). For instance, there will be increased emphasis on transparency and accountability issues around public procurement (OECD, 2011, pp. 147), as the increased prevalence of these approaches over the past several decades has not been met by appropriate new structures to apportion accountability. This focus on accountability, transparency and trust can be broken down into several different but related ideas. First, and most obviously, there is a need to be accountable and transparent and develop trust between public officials and citizens, and trust in this relationship must run both ways. Second, there is a requirement for a clear idea of accountability between political and administrative actors. Both factors must be taken into account in the future when developing accountability structures in new forms of governance.

In America, the public has a conflicting view on public administration. On one hand, there is an expectation that public servants should drive growth, but on the other hand, there is a relatively high level of distrust in public servants (Moynihan and Ingraham, 2010, pp. S229-237). This distrust has also grown in Europe, and the financial crisis has not helped to improve trust between citizens and public administration. New arrangements of governance that include multiple actors involved in different (and often overlapping) aspects of the policy process increase the need to develop ways to establish accountability and transparency, and thus (hopefully) reduced this distrust. Relatively short term, widening the scope of freedom of information laws and a general and proactive disclosure of information by administrators would help to improve the transparency of the political process (OECD, 2011, pp. 135). Slightly longer term, transparency can be increased through the further development of legislative capacity in budgeting issues (beyond simple funding allocation), which will increase political oversight and accountability over public sector decisions (OECD, 2011, pp. 135).

This in turn, though, could raise difficulties in balancing political and bureaucratic needs and priorities. The relationship between administrators and political officials incorporates two

separate but related issues: the need to isolate public administrators from political interference, but also to acknowledge the contributions of the administrators to the shaping and implementation of policy. The relationship between the two groups should be seen as complementary, with both sides fulfilling separate but connected and interdependent roles (Svara, 2001, pp. 176). Still, political and bureaucratic methods of addressing accountability must be sensitive to both sides. Over time, this new approach to accountability and transparency should lead to an institutionalisation of the idea of public integrity. This can be maximised by increasing transparency in relationships between government and other actors, or by increasing ‘integrity frameworks’ that provide an institutional base for these values. In both areas, the framework for increasing integrity has improved over the decades (OECD, 2011, pp. 24-25), but as shown earlier, this has not (at least so far) resulted in an increase in citizen trust.

### **Shifts in Management**

Ideas of New Public Management have predominated in the debate on public administration in the past 25 years, but system shocks such as the financial crisis, along with the increasing importance of non-traditional NPM ideas such as networks, collaboration and service quality have called into question some of the basic tenets of NPM reforms, both academically and practically. While NPM is often seen to be on the wane, there is less consensus about whether there is an evolution or a revolution in the way in which the public sector is managed.

#### *Beyond New Public Management*

New Public Management (NPM) is a contested subject in discussing public administration trends. Drechsler cites the decline of NPM as an idea (Drechsler, 2009), while Moynihan found NPM literature to be declining in JPART AND PAR (Moynihan, 2008, pp. 485). Dunleavy et al. (2006) famously argued that New Public Management is dead, replaced with digital-era governance, with an increased focus on reintegration, needs-based holism and digitisation changes (de Vries, 2010; Dunleavy, 2006). Lapsley says that NPM has often been a ‘cruel disappointment’ to governments who implement NPM-style reforms, illustrating his case with examples of governments expressing disappointment with management consultancy, failure of e-government to develop as planned, ‘tick-box’ exercises and the rise of the audit society, and the misfit of private ideas of risk management to public administration (Lapsley, 2009). There are often unintended consequences to these NPM-style reforms, and they are usually not positive (Lapsley, 2008).

However, there is disagreement about whether a new paradigm is now developing, or whether reform now simply reflects a growth within the NPM paradigm, or a fragmentation of the idea of NPM. De Vries (2010) argues that digital governance is just an extension and evolution of

the NPM paradigm, with a concurrent growth out of the ‘NPM cocoon’ of other ideas such as an emphasis on non-economic and societal values, network governance, globalisation processes and new combinations of coordination between the state, civil society and the market (De Vries, 2010, pp. 3). While this is possible, inclusion of some of these ideas, particularly non-economic and social values, may serve to stretch the whole concept of NPM beyond usefulness.

The financial crisis has also had an effect on the New Public Management paradigm without completely replacing it. Haynes (2011) argues that the crisis has reversed some of the stakeholder engagement ideas seen in the 2000s as a response to NPM-style reforms, and there has been a return to NPM ideas despite the rhetoric of inclusive governance. In three central tenets of NPM – managerialism, privatisation and decentralisation – the 2000s saw a rise in criticism of these ideas, with questions about the success, accountability and fit of introducing market-based ideas to government services. However, responses to this, such as ideas of the third way (Giddens, 1998) or digital-era governance (Dunleavy, Margetts, Bastow and Tinkler, 2006) should not necessarily be seen as a rejection of NPM, but rather as a fragmentation of the concept (Haynes, 2011).

#### *Strategic Planning and Evidence-Based Policy-Making*

Strategic planning defines what an organisation is, what it does, and why it does it (Bryson, 2010, pp. S256-257). Strategic plans take a wide variety of shapes, and those suited to competitive private markets are not always suited to public services. Miles and Snow (1978) categorise organisational strategies as prospectors (those who seek out new opportunities and innovations in providing services), defenders (those who emphasise stability and process in order to maintain their position) or reactors (those who respond to the cues of more powerful actors). However, more recent studies only find weak connections between strategy and performance in this three-way categorisation (with prospecting and defending being seen as positively related to performance, and reacting seen as a negative indicator of performance), with a synthesis study identifying a positive relationship in 31% of (weighted) studies, no relationship in 56% of studies and a negative relationship in 13% of studies. Prospecting was found to be the most positive approach in terms of performance and reacting the most negative, but results for defensive practices were varied, with different approaches to study producing either negative or positive findings (Boyne and Walker, pp. S188). However, there are indications that strategy should be seen as a continuum, rather than viewed as a categorisation (Boyne and Walker, pp. S189), as well as incorporating Bozeman’s (1987) work on publicness by looking at ownership (public/private/non-profit), funding (government versus private) and control (political to economic).

These different strands, as well as shifting political priorities and economic and political shocks, have produced a rather patchwork and sometimes ad hoc approach to strategic planning. Authors identify several key components that need to be incorporated in the future to ensure successful strategic planning. It should aim to improve the decision-making process, promote strategic thinking in the longer term, enhanced effectiveness and responsiveness, and also improve legitimacy (Bryson, 2010, pp. S255). Bryson identifies eight potential futures as regards strategic planning. First, the need for strategic thinking will only become greater with time. Second, approaches and designs for strategic planning will continue to develop and multiply. While this provides many options for countries to follow, it may also make it more complicated to settle on an appropriate strategy. Third, there will be a push to include more groups and actors into the strategic planning process, which fits in with the general push in public administration for more stakeholder involvement. Fourth, there will be an increased emphasis on methods to aid strategic planning, such as mapping and modelling. Fifth, this strategic approach may clash with the need for speedy response to issues. In other words, longer-term strategic planning may have more difficulty in dealing with unexpected shocks, but crisis responses should also be able to be built into the model. Sixth, there will be greater understanding of when and how different approaches are valid and work. This will hopefully mitigate the problem of multiple strands of strategic planning. Seventh, there will be a greater focus on how to coordinate and align strategic plans into a broader organisational or inter-organisational perspective. Finally, strategic planning will be seen as a more useful tool for knowing, learning and understanding public administration processes (Bryson, 2010, pp. S260-S262).

Furthermore, Poister posits that there needs to be a shift from thinking of strategic planning to thinking of strategic management, which implies an ongoing effort to think and plan strategically, and clear ideas of how to implement these ideas in order to adequately develop inputs into desired outputs and goals (Poister, 2010). This strategic approach must be sustainable over the longer term, environmentally, politically and economically (Fiorino, 2010). Overall, the emphasis in planning must be rethought to move from a system of managing government institutions towards providing an institutional bedrock that allows for the public administration to harness and coordinate relevant and interested stakeholders and citizens in a way that can be leveraged to improve policy and governance processes (Johnston, 2010). This will hopefully also be a move away from a focus on 'rules' to a focus on information-driven planning (Brown, 2010, pp. S212), which in turn must be theory based and adaptable to non-competitive ideas of public management. This information-driven approach requires that managers have access to information to allow them to develop goals and objectives, that these plans include and are developed across different levels of the organisation, and that managers

must be given the autonomy to adapt these plans as new information becomes available (Brown, pp. S213). This is important in rethinking the approach to all managerial decisions, but is particularly vital in dealing with unexpected occurrences, such as disasters.

While strides have been made in planning for unexpected events, the actual implementation of these plans has lagged. This ties in with broader issues of traditional and network governance, and balancing the need for hierarchical planning with the collaboration necessary for dealing with cross-cutting issues (McGuire and Schneck, pp. S204). There are differences in opinion on how well public administration will deal with some of these unforeseen issues in the future, but more agreement on what issues will matter: abundance of information, the need for collaboration and coordination and the increased involvement of citizenry (Dobel, pp. S182-S184; McGuire and Schneck, pp. S201-S207). As always, the OECD calls for more 'strategic foresight and leadership', including identification of common goals and problems, synthesis of information, and evidence-based policy making and decisions, leading to effective communication with the public sector and the public itself to ensure effective implementation (OECD, 2011, pp. 87).

This evidence-based approach to policy making will also be necessary in the future to ensure continued policy innovation. In order to be effective, it has to be accompanied by organisational learning, a service-oriented approach, context appropriateness, recognition of complexity and a firm organisational mandate (Osborne and Brown, 2011). Evidence-based reforms - that is ones that involve programme reviews, value-for-money and cost-benefit assessments conducted both *ex ante* and *ex post*, while also including all relevant stakeholders in the process – are being implemented in countries such as Sweden. However, there is still room for improvement and there is a lack of comparative data to establish best practices across countries (OECD, 2011, pp. 34-35). Troublingly, the Finland Ministry of Finance report from 2013 identifies gaps in current evidence-based public administration are brought about more by a lack of demand for evidence from policy-makers, rather than a lack of supply (Finland Ministry of Finance, 2013, pp. 35-39).

Therefore, in the future evidence-based policy-making must also evolve and improve, looking both to past experience and goals for future reform (OECD, 2011, pp. 34). Khagram and Thomas argue for a new 'Platinum Standard' in evidence-based policymaking. It must be scientifically rigorous, contextually valid, practically relevant and inclusive of stakeholders. They propose this platinum standard based on two existing gold standards. The first uses experimental methods, counterfactuals and average causal effects. The second uses case studies, comparative methods, triangulation and causal mechanisms. In order to develop strong evidence-based policymaking, the strengths of both of these approaches must be combined and integrated (Khagram and Thomas, 2010).

The focus on strategic planning goes hand in hand with the idea of performance measurement. Performance measurement in recent years has become an important tool in developing public administration, and there is increased focus on staff performance management to increase efficiency and quality of service (OECD, 2011, pp. 128). Unfortunately, linking the measurement of outputs and outcomes to the provision of more effective management has not always been made. As technology improves, managers will have access to ever-larger stores of information, and difficulties in utilising this information will also rise. Data will extend to include underutilised areas such as tracking clients after they leave services, and data collection, collation and comparison will spread across areas and services as partnerships are forged to increase information sharing. This new breadth and depth of information will also raise new problems or exacerbate existing ones, such as concerns over privacy and use (and potential misuse) of the information available (Hatry, 2010, pp. S208-S211). There is also a danger of confusing indicators/results/outcomes and goals (Feldman, 2010, pp. S160). For instance, the goal of work in child welfare is to improve the situation for the child, and one such indicator (in certain circumstances) may be a reduced number of days in foster care. However, it was found that this result was often confused for the ultimate goal of improving child welfare, when in some instances this may not have been the best result for achieving the ultimate goal (Hatry, 2010, pp. S210).

In order to address some of these concerns, there has been a movement towards a broader conceptualisation of measurement. This involves a widening out from simple *output*-based indicators to *outcome*-related measures that more fully encapsulate impact of policy choices (Van de Walle and Groeneveld, 2011). In the future, performance measurement must be integrated into the broader idea of strategic management outlined above. The current focus on performance measurement must be expanded to a broader idea of ‘performance management’. In this way, performance measures can be translated into firm objectives and strategies for strengthening policy, programmes and organisational issues. Finally, strategy and performance must be integrated in order to clearly link goals and objectives with performance measurement systems, allowing for a holistic approach to action that applies through all stages of the policy process (Poister, 2010, pp. S249).

### **Where Now? Public Administration as a Discipline**

Of course, the changing focus and trends of public administration in practice have been reflected by changes in public administration as a discipline. While academic public administration reacts to, and may in fact shape, public administration in practice, the approaches taken to understanding these phenomena are different. However, different scholars approach the

discipline in different ways, as is evident from futures-based research. While some look at the discipline as a guide, showing normatively at what public administration *should* be, others see it as a mirror and focus on a more objective representation of what public administration *is* and *will* be. This in part reflects larger debates about the wide scope of the discipline, which may lead to fragmentation and lack of coordination between different strands and foci of public administration (Nesbit et al., 2011). There is some tension between different approaches to the discipline, particularly the managerialism and legalism strands of public administration. While managerialism pushes values of efficiency and performance, legalism focuses on values such as accountability, equality and transparency (Christensen, Goerdel and Nicholson-Crotty, 2011). There is some consensus that recent years have seen a push to incorporate more legalistic measures into public administration, but the financial crisis has also raised the prominence of efficiency. The difficult part, as seen by authors, is to reconcile those two sides of public administration.

There are further disciplinary obstacles that must be surmounted to achieve these goals. Nabatchi, Goerdel and Peffer identify two major concerns about public administration. First, there is a lack of recognition that public administration can act as an arbiter of political conflict and has a role in shaping political and societal affairs. Second, a ‘bureaucratic pathology’ has set in that has hampered its ability to address complex policy issues (Nabatchi, Goerdel and Peffer, 2011). There is also tension between the simplification provided by performance measurement and the increasing complexity of public administration, which has arisen from cultural/institutional tensions, task complexity, causal uncertainty and goal conflicts (Moynihan et al., 2011).

Trends also differ across regions, with some authors focusing on European or North American models for the future of public administration. Moynihan conducted a systematic content analysis of articles in PAR and JPART up to 2007 to identify North American trends in public administration. He identified issues both related to public administration practically and as a discipline. He noted a general maturation of public administration as a discipline in general and methodologically, employing more rigorous approaches to study and focusing more on quantitative data. He also identified declining interest in NPM, but an increased focus on innovation and alternative forms of governance, network governance, performance measurement, technology and e-government, participation and involvement of new actors, and a subsequent drop in longer-standing trends in public/private divides, leadership, politics and bureaucracy and implementation. Eikenberry (2009, pp. 1060) identified growing distrust in the government and civil service in American contexts.

Network governance has also brought about new questions of democracy and equity, due also to a move towards a more individualised view of society and, thus, public administration. This is also reflected in the move from hierarchical control to network governance. This has had some positives, by allowing more actors to take part in the process and blurred the boundaries between traditional political, administrative and economic boundaries in public administration, but has also allowed for increased permeation of organised interests into the policy process (Eikenberry, 2009, pp. 1062). Some authors reflect concerns that increased involvement of private and non-profit sectors will not fill the gap left by the potential hollowing out of government administration (Eikenberry, 2009, pp. 1063-1064), although there is an idea of a ‘helper’ public administration that aims to facilitate effective policy development and implementation among many actors (Eikenberry, 2009, pp. 1064). While a lot of these concerns are also reflected in Europe, Kickert (2005) finds differences between ‘Ango-American’ and European streams of public administration in his study of Italy, Germany and France, largely created by different legalistic traditions, with differences also present at the nation state level (Kickert, 2005). This further complicates any hope of a ‘one-size-fits-all’ idea of disciplinary engagement with reform.

Just as there are perceived normative and objective problems with the discipline, there are also perceived normative and objective solutions. One more normative approach to improving the discipline is by highlighting the social relevance of public administration research, aiming to improve social equity by clarifying the conceptualisation of social equity, building it into academic instruction and further developing these ideas theoretically and methodologically (Gooden and Portillo, 2011), including more empirical research (Pitts, 2011). There is also a perceived need to further emphasise public leadership, a concept that should be seen as distinct from other (business, political) forms of leadership and includes consideration of the character, function and jurisdiction of leadership in public administration (Getha-Taylor et al., 2011).

More generally, there should be more connections fostered between academics and practitioners to combat problems with the discipline, through research that is accessible to practitioners, emphasising problem-based learning techniques that can be applied in real-world settings. In addition, there should be more active participation of academics in practical settings (Bushouse et al., 2011). Public administration is reliant on history, context and contingency (unexpected issues). Therefore there must be greater focus on public sector training and skills development (Perry and Buckwalter, pp. S243-S244) drawing on practice as well as historical context. These changes can be achieved through an increased focus on comparative public administration and sharing of best practices, as well as further development of collaboration and interdisciplinarity (as well as intradisciplinarity between different strands of public administration), which require sustainability and continuity of study, dialogue and promotion of policy learning

(Bowornowathana, 2010, pp. S64-S68; Walker, 2011). This requires more engagement with other academic communities, and particularly more engagement with practitioners (Isett et al., 2011). More prosaically, public administration as a discipline must remain relevant and develop strong methodological (particularly statistical) approaches to appeal to public officials in practice (Durant, 2010). Diverse and rigorous methodological approaches should be encouraged, along with promotion of theoretical diversity and maintenance of relevance in a wider world (Nesbit et al., 2011).

There is a need to take a more global approach to public administration that allows for worldwide sharing of best practices and innovation in the public sector, as major policy issues are often cross-national in nature and thus require cross-national solutions (Hou et al., 2011). More metastudies should be conducted to improve the understanding of how public administration as a whole discipline fits into broader academic and practical debates. New technology should be used to promote more participative and collaborative research and scholarship across traditional disciplinary and geographic boundaries (Schweik et al., 2011). Sub-disciplines must also be further developed. There should be increased use of public financial management theories and methodologies in order to better inform debates in public administration research, especially as financial matters become ever-more central to public administration (Kioko et al., 2011). Networks literature should be expanded by looking at work on networks in other disciplines, developing more advanced methods and measures of networks (Isett et al., 2011).

## **Conclusions**

Conclusions can be drawn both on the state and trends in public administration, as well as the state of research on the future of public administration. As this review shows, forward-looking research in public administration can be roughly grouped into three different areas – shifts in context, shifts in governance and engagement and shifts in management. In addition, these changes have also created a shift in public administration as an academic discipline. A review of the literature in all of these areas identifies several key trends within those general areas. In terms of context, there have been global changes such as climate change and demographic issues that will affect public administration in the future, and the financial crisis has also created questions about what effect (or lack thereof) it will have on future reforms. The rise in new concepts of governance, such as network governance and e-governance, has also shifted future perceptions of public sector engagement with citizens, politicians, and other levels of government, as well as creating questions of accountability, transparency and trust in public administration. Finally, there is a perceived shift away from ideas of new public management to a greater concentration on strategic planning and evidence-based policy-making.

While there is some agreement on the general thrust of many trends that will be influential in the future of public administration, there is less consensus on the extent of potential change these trends will have, how they will be manifested or what effect they will have. By their very nature, many contextual factors are impossible to predict, but there is agreement that some sort of contingencies should be in place to deal with unexpected events. However, the disjointed and fractured response to the global financial crisis has revealed that there is likely no magic solution to dealing with these issues, nor will any changes necessarily reflect a true transformation in how public administration works. To this date, e-governance initiatives have not had the profound impact on public administration that was once predicted, with many initiatives still functioning primarily as information sources, rather than truly innovative approaches to connecting with citizens. Here, the literature is also unsure as to whether development of e-governance initiatives will continue on in an evolutionary way, or whether the revolution is yet to occur. This feeds into a broader debate of engagement with citizens, and here too, while authors agree that there is a need for greater connections between citizens and the public sector, there is little agreement about how to accomplish this, or the future of this networked approach post-crisis. Regardless, questions of accountability, transparency and trust remain paramount in defining these processes in a responsible manner. Finally, authors perceive a shift in management approaches away from New Public Management-type approaches towards a more inclusive view of performance that incorporates more measures beyond efficiency, along with a longer-term outlook supported through responsible strategic planning. Here too, there is disagreement about whether this is truly a break from NPM-style reforms, or merely a fragmentation or 'second wave' of NPM, and evidence is inconclusive.

There is some agreement on the general underlying principles on which these disparate reforms must be built. Obstacles and constraints such as risk-averse organisational cultures or skills gaps must be taken into account. The respective roles of politicians and civil servants in interactions between the two must be well defined, and short- and long-term needs and goals need to be reconciled (Peters, Pierre and Randma-Liiv, 2011; OECD, 2011; Bryson, 2010; Fiorino, 2010). These approaches and issues in turn will inform what the role of the centre of government must play in developing the future of public administration (Finland Ministry of Finance, 2013; Svava, 2001; Eikenberry, 2011). There is a need to empower individuals and communities, to integrate various aspects of public administration and service provision in a holistic way (Khagram and Thomas, 2010; Poister, 2010; Scottish Government, 2011) and to develop these services in an efficient manner that avoids negative outcomes. There must be moves to integrate and join up services to avoid fragmentation, and to promote more bottom-up policy making to avoid being unresponsive to the needs of citizens, which will require a renewed relationship between different stakeholders (OECD, 2011; Abonyi and Van Slyke, 2010; Feldman, 2010;

Finland Ministry of Finance, 2013). This involvement of new stakeholders will require a reconceptualization of the idea of ‘publicness’, as public policy moves to embrace involvement from more non-governmental actors, an increase in marketization of public policy and development of more meaningful global regulation (Koppell, 2010). There is a need for increased collaboration in leadership as well, and a focus on sharing information between academics and practitioners and exploiting technology to facilitate these interactions (Crosby, 2010). Finally, new accountability and oversight mechanisms must be developed, and greater emphasis must be placed on strategic planning (OECD, 2011; Khademian, 2010; Getha-Taylor, 2010; Scottish Government, 2011; Bryson, 2010; Poister, 2010; Brown 2010).

In terms of the literature itself, certain patterns emerge in the structure of this future-looking work. In general, different authors have treated the development of future predictions in different ways, stemming from both normative and objective rationale. One clear thread is the reliance on single-outcome approaches, with little emphasis on developing multiple future scenarios. Given the vast amount of literature on future reform, this creates a disjointed approach to understanding possible future directions for public administration, and ones often based more on piecemeal understanding of reform rather than a broader, overall picture. In addition, the literature rarely applies these futures approaches systematically or methodologically. Instead, any claims remain implicit, couched in terms of what ‘will be’ or ‘should be’ without establishing (somewhat) objective criteria upon which these futures can be assessed in probability or path to these outcomes. Literature often draws heavily on past practices, focusing mainly on broader conceptions of reality rather than a thorough review of the past and current processes that may lead to these outcomes. This lack of focus on process is then carried forward to future forecasting, with little emphasis on what will bring about the forecasts that are predicted. The approaches used in the literature also lack the clear problem framing and causal events chains that would establish what would bring about these (often very different) visions of the future. This leaves most work in a normative realm that is not clearly connected to adequately framed problems or events chains that will allow for a clear through line from the present into the future.

The literature is likewise unclear in its focus on state or process. Much of the PA futures work focuses on specific issues but does not adequately define whether those are, in fact, intended outcomes, or processes by which a (usually unidentified) outcome can be achieved. To illustrate this with a simple example, while a significant proportion of the literature identifies network governance as a key trend in public administration, it often fails to identify whether network governance is a desirable end in itself (and if so, what processes will allow network governance to develop) or whether it is simply the process by which a desirable outcome (perhaps increased actor engagement) will be achieved. This conceptual muddiness in turn makes futures research

difficult by creating a black box around consideration of how we move from the present to the future. Regardless, a focus on future reform at least shines a light on possible directions in which public administration may head, and allows for deeper study of particular issues that may arise. This should also be supplemented by a whole-perspective view of future-looking research, which this report hopefully in part provides.

## **Bibliography**

Abonyi, G. and Van Slyke, D. 2010. "Governing on the Edges: Globalization of Production and the Challenge to Public Administration in the Twenty-First Century." *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S33-S45.

Barnes, William R. 2010. "Governing Cities in the Coming Decade: The Democratic and Regional Disconnects," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S137-S144.

Bowornwathana, Bidhya. 2010. "Minnowbrook IV in 2028: From American Minnowbrook to Global Minnowbrook," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S64-S68.

Box, Richard. 1998. *Citizen Governance: Leading American Communities into the 21st Century*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Boyne, George A. and Walker, R.M. 2010. "Strategic Management and Public Service Performance: The Way Ahead," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S185-192.

Bozeman, Barry. 1987. *All Organizations Are Public: Bridging Public and Private Organizational Theories*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Breul, Jonathan S. 2010. "Practitioner's Perspective – Improving Sourcing Decisions," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S193-S200.

Brown, Trevor L. 2010. "The Evolution of Public Sector Strategy," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S212-S214.

Bryson, John M. 2010. "The Future of Public and Nonprofit Strategic Planning in the United States," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S255-S267.

Bushouse, B., Jacobson, W., Lambright, K., Llorens, J., Morse, R., Poocharoen, O. 2011. "Crossing the Divide: Building Bridges between Public Administration Practitioners and Scholars." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 21 (Suppl. 1), pp. i99-i112.

Christensen, R., Goerdel, H. and Nicholson-Crotty, S. 2011. "Management, Law, and the Pursuit of the Public Good in Public Administration." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 21 (Suppl. 1), pp. i25-i40.

Crampton, David and Wendy Lewis Jackson. 2007. "Family Group Decision Making and Disproportionality in Foster Care: A Case Study," *Child Welfare*, 86(3), pp. 51–70.

- Crosby, B. 2010. "Leading in the Shared-Power World of 2020." *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S69-S77.
- Dobel, J. Patrick. 2010. "Mission Integrity in Disaster Management," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S182-S184.
- Donahue, John D. 2010. "The Race: Can Collaboration Outrun Rivalry between American Business and Government?" *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S151-S152.
- Drechsler, W. 2009. "The Rise and Demise of the New Public Management: Lessons and Opportunities for South East Europe." *Uprava, Ietnik VII*, 3/2009.
- Dunleavy, Patrick, Margetts, Helen, Bastow, Simon and Tinkler, Jane. 2006. "New Public Management is Dead – Long Live Digital-Era Governance." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 16(3), pp. 467-494.
- Durant, Robert F. 2010. "Parsimony, "Error" Terms, and the Future of a Field," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S319-S320.
- Eikenberry, A. 2009. "The Present and (Normative) Future of Public Administration and Implications for ASPA." *Public Administration Review*, November/December, pp. 1060-1067.
- European Commission. 2001. "European Governance: A White Paper." Brussels, COM(2001) 428 Final.
- Feldman, Martha S. 2010. "Managing the Organization of the Future," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S159-S163.
- Finland Ministry of Finance. 2013. *Governments for the Future*. Available at [http://www.vm.fi/vm/fi/04\\_julkaisut\\_ja\\_asiakirjat/01\\_julkaisut/08\\_muut\\_julkaisut/20131119Governing/Government\\_for\\_the\\_Future.pdf](http://www.vm.fi/vm/fi/04_julkaisut_ja_asiakirjat/01_julkaisut/08_muut_julkaisut/20131119Governing/Government_for_the_Future.pdf).
- Fiorino, D. 2010. "Sustainability as a Conceptual Focus for Public Administration." *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S78-S88.
- Getha-Taylor, Heather. 2010. "Human Relations 2.0," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S170-S172.
- Getha-Taylor, H., Holmes, M.H., Jacobson, W., Morse, R. and Sowa, J. 2011. "Focusing the Public Leadership Lens: Research Propositions and Questions in the Minnowbrook Tradition." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 21 (Suppl. 1), pp. i83-i97.
- Giddens, A. 1998. *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gooden, S. and Portillo, S. 2011. "Advancing Social Equity in the Minnowbrook Tradition." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 21 (Suppl. 1), pp. i61-i76.
- Hatry, Harry P. 2010. "Looking into the Crystal Ball: Performance Management over the Next Decade," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S208-S211.
- Haynes, P. 2011. "The Return of New Public Management?" *Working Paper*. Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1935909> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1935909>.

- Hayward, T. 2010. "Practitioner's Perspective—Managing for 2020: An Exploration of Role Interdependence and Balance." *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S129-S136.
- Hou, Y., Ya Ni, A., Poocharoen, O., Yang, K. and Zhao, Z. 2011. "The Case for Public Administration with a Global Perspective." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*. 21 (Suppl. 1), pp. i45-i51.
- Isett, K., Mergel, I., LeRoux, K., Mischen, P. and Rethemeyer, R. 2011. "Networks in Public Administration Scholarship: Understanding Where We Are and Where We Need to Go." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*. 21 (Suppl. 1), pp. i157-i173.
- Johnston, E. 2010. "Governance Infrastructures in 2020." *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue 2010, pp. S122-S128.
- Joyce, P. and Pattison, S. 2010. "Public Budgeting in 2020: Return to Equilibrium, or Continued Mismatch between Demands and Resources?" *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S24-S32.
- Kapucu, Naim. 2012. "The State of the Discipline of Public Administration: The Future is Promising." *Public Administration Review*, 72 (3), pp. 458-463.
- Kickert, W. (2005). "Distinctiveness in the Study of Public Management in Europe." *Public Management Review*, 7(4), pp. 537-563.
- Kioko, S., Marlowe, J., Matkin, D., Moody, M., Smith, D. and Zhao, Z. 2011. "Why Public Financial Management Matters." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 21 (Suppl. 1), pp. i113-i124.
- Khademian, Anne M. 2010. "Organizing in the Future: Pursuing Purposefulness for Flexible Accountability," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S167-S169.
- Khagram, S. and Thomas, C. 2010. "Toward a Platinum Standard for Evidence-Based Assessment by 2020." *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S100-S106.
- Koppell, J. 2010. "Administration Without Borders." *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S46-S55.
- KPMG. 2013. *Future State 2030: The Global Megatrends Shaping Government*. Available at <http://www.kpmg.com/Global/en/IssuesAndInsights/ArticlesPublications/future-state-government/Documents/future-state-2030-v3.pdf>.
- Lapsley, I. 2008. "The NPM Agenda: Back to the Future." *Financial Accountability and Management*, 24(1), pp. 77-96.
- Lapsley, I. 2009. "New Public Management: The Cruellest Invention of the Human Spirit?" *Abacus*, 45(1), pp. 1-21.
- McGuire, Michael and Diana Schneck. 2010. "What if Hurricane Katrina Hit in 2020? The Need for Strategic Management of Disasters," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S201-S207.

- Miles, Raymond E. and Charles C. Snow. 1978. *Organizational Strategy, Structure, and Process*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Moynihan, D. 2008. "Public Management in North America: 1998-2008". *Public Management Review*, 10(4), pp. 481-492.
- Moynihan, Donald P. and Patricia W. Ingraham. 2010. "The Suspect Handmaiden: The Evolution of Politics and Administration in the American State," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S229-S237.
- Moynihan, D., Fernandez, S., Kim, S., LeRoux, K., Piotrowski, Wright, B. and Yang, K. 2011. "Performance Regimes Amidst Governance Complexity." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 21 (Suppl. 1), pp. i141-i155.
- National Intelligence Council. 2008. *Global Trends: A Transformed World*. Available at [http://www.dni.gov/files/documents/Newsroom/Reports%20and%20Pubs/2025\\_Global\\_Trends\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](http://www.dni.gov/files/documents/Newsroom/Reports%20and%20Pubs/2025_Global_Trends_Final_Report.pdf).
- Nesbit, R., Moulton, S., Robinson, S., Smith, C., Dehart-Davis, L., Feeney, M., Gazley, B. and Hou, Y. 2011. "Wrestling with Intellectual Diversity in Public Administration: Avoiding Disconnectedness and Fragmentation while Seeking Rigor, Depth, and Relevance." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 21 (Suppl. 1), pp. i13-i28.
- Norris, Donald F. 2010. "E-Government 2020: Plus ça Change, Plus c'est la Meme Chose," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S180-S181.
- OECD. 2001. *Government of the Future*, OECD Publishing.
- OECD. 2005. *Modernising Government: The Way Forward*. OECD Publishing. Available at <http://www.oecd.org/gov/modernisinggovernmentthewayforward.htm>.
- OECD. 2008. *Future of E-Government: Agenda 2020*, OECD Publishing. Available at <http://www.oecd.org/governance/eleaders/43340370.pdf>.
- OECD. 2011. *Government at a Glance 2011*, OECD Publishing. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/gov\\_glance-2011-en](http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/gov_glance-2011-en).
- O'Leary, Rosemary. 2011. "Minnowbrook: Tradition, Idea, Spirit, Event, Challenge." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 21(Suppl. 1), pp. i1-i6.
- O'Leary, R. and Van Slyke, D. 2010. "Introduction to the Symposium on the Future of Public Administration in 2020." *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S5-S11.
- Osbourne, S. and Brown, L. 2011. "Innovation, Public Policy and Public Services Delivery in the UK: The Word That Would be King?" *Public Administration*, 89(4), pp. 1335-1350.
- Peters, B. Guy, Pierre, Jon and Randma-Liiv, Tiina. 2011. "Global Financial Crisis, Public Administration and Governance: Do New Problems Require New Solutions?" *Public Organization Review*, 11, pp. 13-27.

- Perry, James L. and Neal D. Buckwalter. 2010. "The Public Service of the Future," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S238-S245.
- Pitts, D. 2011. "A Little Less Conversation, a Little More Action: Using Empirical Research to Promote Social Equity." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 21 (Suppl. 1), pp. i77-i82.
- Poister, Theodore H. 2010. "The Future of Strategic Planning in the Public Sector: Linking Strategic Management and Performance," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S246-S254.
- Pollitt, Christopher. 2014. "Future Trends in European Public Administration and Management: An Outside-In Perspective." *COCOPS Report*.
- Roberts, A. 2010. "The Rise and Fall of Discipline: Economic Globalization, Administrative Reform, and the Financial Crisis." *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S56-S63.
- Robertson, P. and Choi, T. 2010. "Ecological Governance: Organizing Principles for an Emerging Era." *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S89-S99.
- Schweik, C., Mergel, I., Sandfort, J. and Zhao, Z. 2011. "Toward Open Public Administration Scholarship." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 21 (Suppl. 1), pp. i175-i198.
- Scottish Government (2011). *Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services: Final Report*. Available at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Review/publicservicescommission>.
- Svara, James H. 2001. "The Myth of the Dichotomy: Complementarity of Politics and Administration in the Past and Future of Public Administration," *Public Administration Review*, 61 (2), pp. 176-183.
- Torres, Lourdes, Pina, Vicente and Royo, Sonia. 2005. "E-Government and the Transformation of Public Administrations in EU Countries: Beyond NPM or Just a Second Wave of Reforms?" *Online Information Review*, 29(5), pp. 531-553.
- Treverton, G. 2010. *Making Policy in the Shadow of the Future*. Santa Monica: RAND Publishing.
- De Vries, Jouke. 2010. "Is New Public Management Really Dead?" *OECD Journal on Budgeting*, 2010:1, pp. 1-5.
- Walker, R. 2011. "Globalized Public Management: An Interdisciplinary Design Science?" *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 21 (Suppl. 1), pp. i53-i59.
- Van de Walle, S. and Groeneveld, S. 2011. "New Steering Instruments: Trends in Public Sector Practice and Scholarship." In Groeneveld, S. and Van de Walle, S. (eds.) (2011). *New Steering Concepts in Public Management*. Bingley: Emerald.
- Warner, Mildred E. 2010. "The Future of Local Government: Twenty-First-Century Challenges," *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S145-S147.

Wolf, D. and Amirkhanyan, A. 2010. "Demographic Change and Its Public Sector Consequences." *Public Administration Review*, Special Issue December 2010, pp. S12-S23.