

Innovative and Collaborative Partnerships between Universities and Government:
The Case of the Executive Master of Public Governance Program in Copenhagen, Denmark:
A co-operation between University of Copenhagen and Copenhagen Business School

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ABSTRACT

This paper gives an introduction to the Executive Master of Public Governance degree program in Copenhagen, Denmark – a joint effort by University of Copenhagen and Copenhagen Business School aided by Aalborg University. The degree program itself began its first intake of executive students in August 2009. The average age of participants is 45 years. By the summer of 2011, the Copenhagen MPG program had enrolled 500+ public managers from Denmark as executive master students. In order to understand the context of the program, the paper gives an introduction to the background of the establishment of the program which was a result of a government reform – the Quality Reform – agreed and also funded partly by the Danish Parliament in 2008. The second part of the paper describes the organization and purpose of the program. The third part presents the content of the degree program. The paper ends by pointing to some preliminary lessons learned and future directions for the program.

INTRODUCTION

This paper gives an introduction to the Executive Master of Public Governance degree program in Copenhagen, Denmark – a joint effort by University of Copenhagen and Copenhagen Business School aided by Aalborg University – which in the summer of 2011 had enrolled 500+ public managers from Denmark as executive master students. The average age of participants is 45 years. The degree program itself began its first intake of student in August 2009. In order to understand the context of the program, the paper gives an introduction to the background of the establishment of the program which was a result of a government reform – the Quality Reform – agreed by the Danish Parliament in 2008. The second part of the paper describes the organization and purpose of the program. The third part presents the content of the program. The paper ends by pointing to lessons learned and future directions.

ESTABLISHING A FLEXIBLE MASTER PROGRAM IN PUBLIC GOVERNANCE IN DENMARK

In 2006, the Danish government began an ambitious process for a new government-wide reform of the public sector in Denmark – the so-called “Quality Reform” (Regeringen 2007). The government’s aim was to propose a new reform that would “produce better quality of services and more job satisfaction”. The Danish government was led at the time by a government consisting of the Liberal Party in coalition with the Conservative Party. For the Quality Reform, the government later would seek a broad backing in Parliament for a number of proposals, including the proposal for a new executive public management master degree program. The Danish welfare society is consistently ranked among the most efficient and effective in the world in well-known indexes such as the World Bank Governance Indicators (World Bank 2011), Transparency Index (Transparency International 2011), and the recent Better lives index by the OECD (OECD 2011). Danish public management has undergone a number of different reforms during the last decades, including reforms of local governments, the police force, the universities and digital era governance (see for example Greve 2006; Hansen 2011).

Around the same time, the Danish State Employer’s Authority had invited the University of Copenhagen and Copenhagen Business School to begin talks about a more flexible program for public sector managers as an alternative to the existing cohort programs that were on the market. In Denmark, there exist a small number of Master of Public Administration programs that offer a cohort-model education for public managers. MPA programs existed at the time at Copenhagen Business School, University of Southern Denmark (where it was called Master of Public Management), Aalborg University and Roskilde University (where it was called Master of Public Policy). The MPA/MPM cohort model still exists in Copenhagen, Southern Denmark and Aalborg with an intake of 20-30 students per cohort.

The government’s proposal for a Quality Reform did not involve executive education in the first proposal in the fall of 2006, but that was soon going to change. The government had invited a large number of organizations, including the trade unions, to participate in the formulation process leading up to the new reform. In early 2007, the government’s progress with the reform was stalled, and in need of a new impetus. The trade unions seized the opportunity, and called upon the government to begin tripartite negotiations in an almost old-fashioned neo-corporatist tradition. The government, in need of success

with the reform, grabbed the opportunity to continue the reform process and negotiations began behind closed doors during the spring of 2007. One of the trade unions' key demands was more emphasis and resources towards training and education for staff and personnel in the public sector. The government conceded to the demands, not at least because a general election was looming later in that year, and the government needed to be on good terms with the trade unions and with the voters, many of whom work in the public sector. It also has to be noted that this was 2007, the last year before the global financial crisis set in. Resources were being allocated for many different purposes, and the times were generally seen to be good. As a consequence, the government did not think it had much to lose by providing additional resources to more educational and training programs. The negotiations ended in an agreement in the summer of 2007 between the trade unions, the employers and the Danish government. The price of the combined proposals for the quality reform was 10 billion DKK (2 billion USD) for various initiatives, including elderly care and health, and a new "quality foundation" with 50 billion DKK (10 billion USD), ½ of the money from the foundation being earmarked for new hospitals and other health care proposals. The proposals later formed a part of the budget bill for 2008, which was finally voted on 5 March 2008 (the vote had been postponed because of the general election in late 2007). One line in the agreement was a line saying: "The government will provide resources for establishing a flexible executive master program in public governance" and allocated 75 million DKK (15 million USD) for that purpose. The proposal for an executive master was part of a much larger packet of initiatives concerning training and management education initiatives. In the Quality Reform, it was one part of 9 main areas of interest, and it was under the heading of "management reform". For example, the diploma level received 200 million DKK (40 million USD) in support. For the flexible executive master program, most of the 75 million DKK (15 million USD) was earmarked for direct support for subsidies for individual participants. 5 million (1 million USD) was put aside to funds for developing the new flexible master program.

The government delegated decision-making authority for overseeing the program to a new "steering group" consisting of the members of the tripartite neo-corporatist negotiations with the Danish Ministry of Finance's State Employer's Authority as the chair of the group. The steering group consists of State Employer's Authority (chairman), Local Government Denmark (employer organization), Danish Regions (employer organization), The Danish Confederation of Professional Associations AC (trade union), Danish Lawyer and Economists' Association (trade union), LO The Danish Confederation of Trade Unions (trade union), and FTF (trade union).

The steering group decided that the Danish universities interested in the project for the new flexible executive master should form consortia to bid for offering the program. The steering committee indicated that it wanted to have two consortia. All universities in Denmark were invited to bid. Negotiations got on between universities and business schools. Eventually, two consortia were formed: A "West consortium" was formed between Aarhus University and University of Southern Denmark. An "East consortium" was formed between University of Copenhagen and Copenhagen Business School. Aalborg University joined the "East consortium" in the last minute, and geographically they are located in the north of Denmark on the top of the peninsular Jutland (Roskilde University did not seek to become part of the new programs). As University of Copenhagen and Copenhagen Business School had

done all the preparation work before that time, it was decided by the East consortium that Aalborg University could get a separate agreement with the East consortium in order for them to be able to offer the program in Aalborg and the surrounding regional area.

The steering group had a couple of demands that they would like to reflected in the program. First, it should be more practice-oriented and not only be concerned with theory. Second, the program should seek active cooperation with consultancy firms for parts of the program related to personal development of public managers in order to secure the practice orientation. Third, the programs should be offered in a flexible manner so public managers could hop “on and off” the program as they saw fit. Fourth, the program should be open to many public managers with various backgrounds. This was of particular concern to some of the trade unions who wanted their members to enjoy the benefit of the program without having formal university degrees necessarily. An agreement about at least two years management experience was put as a minimum demand for entry.

One issue was what to call the new degree? There already existed an MPA, an MPM and an MPP in Denmark, and there was a sense that the new program should not be confused with the existing programs. Taking its cue in the recent development in research where there was increasing use of the term “governance” or “public governance” (see, for example, Osborne 2009), it was agreed to call the new program the executive Master of Public Governance (or “MPG” for short) program, and that was approved by the ministry. The new programs had their study program approved by the ministry, and the new flexible master program was the first program to be accredited by the new official Accreditation Institution ACE Denmark established by the Danish government (www.acedenmark.eu).

The new flexible executive Master of Public Governance degree program is clearly part of the wider effort to educate and train public managers in Denmark. The government and the tripartite partners made it very clear in the documents and the agreements in the Quality Reform. Denmark needed better educated and trained public managers if it was to implement new reforms and develop the Danish public sector further. Public management training and education is therefore part of a systematic effort by the Danish government to improve the structure and processes of the Danish public sector, and not an accidental or insular program that is detached from its context. The 75 million DKK (15 million USD) easily represents the biggest boost for executive training for public managers in the history of the Danish state.

The remainder of this paper is concerned primarily with the East consortium’s program, and is here called the Copenhagen program. The two consortia were under the same circular that authorizes the program, but has chosen two different paths in formulating the program. While the Aarhus/Southern Denmark took many of their courses from their existing curricula, the Copenhagen program developed all new modules and courses for their program. A task force was established which prepared the Copenhagen program with members of both the University of Copenhagen and Copenhagen Business School. An agreement of co-operation was drawn up and eventually signed by the rector (vice chancellor) of the both the university and the business school. The agreement set out the governance structure of the co-operation. The study board (consisting of faculty and students) was established in accordance with Danish university education rules. A coordination group meets annually to discuss more

strategic matters. The administration and marketing was delegated to Copenhagen Business School for the period of the agreement (2009-2012). The program is run in practice by the executive master unit at Copenhagen Business School whose head of secretariat is the daily manager of the program. The agreement could be terminated with six months notice by any of the partners. In the agreement it was stated that Copenhagen Business School should appoint the first academic director of the program while University of Copenhagen would provide a vice-director for the program. Negotiations for a new agreement are scheduled to take place in the first half of 2012.

THE PURPOSE AND THE ORGANIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE MASTER OF PUBLIC GOVERNANCE PROGRAM

The Executive Master of Public Governance was established because of the need to provide high quality education and training for public managers in the public sector. The degree is targeted towards public managers in central government (including the armed forces and the police), regional government and local government. The purpose according for the MPG according to its official statutes (“studieordningen”) was “to qualify and develop the public manager’s capability to conduct professional management in a political directed public sector context with the aim of strengthening the public manager’s competence in reflecting and further developing his or her own management practice” (paragraph 1 of statutes). It is said that “the education program is an internationally recognized further education within the social sciences for managers with a considerable management responsibility and personnel responsibility within the central government, regional government, local government, state owned enterprises, private companies with public service tasks or other organizations with strong relationship with the public sector” (paragraph 2). In practice though, the subsidy for the educational program can only be paid to government employees. “The program should enable executive students to use a wide range of methods, theories and perspectives which contribute to the practice of professional management in a political and public context including”:

- Think and act strategically, understand institutional contexts nationally and internationally, diagnose challenges and dilemmas and understand how public organizations and policy areas functions and how they can be changed
- Transform vision, strategies and political objectives to practical objectives and success criteria; implement and follow up on actions and initiatives
- Create and communicate visions, goals and different diagnoses of various contexts, their actors, challenges and solutions, and being able to influence, transmit and involve (people) through dialogue and feedback
- Create and develop trust-based relations for employees, networks, corporations, citizens, users, international partners, and be able to facilitate cooperation, allocate tasks; motivate and develop employees
- Think and act normatively, assess problems, people and policies from a value-based and ethical perspective, show personal and professional integrity in different contexts

The document also mentions a number of competencies that public managers should be educated in:

- Contextual knowledge
- Theoretical/analytical competence
- Reflection competence
- Practical management competence
- Personal competence

The MPG program can be taken in a flexible manner – from two to six years. Entry levels were set at having at least two years management experience and a bachelor or master’s degree, and competences in English equivalent to “level B” in the Danish high school system

Key Features of the Executive Master of Public Governance program

There were a number of key features about the new MPG program when it began in 2009.

- (1) *Orientation towards strategic management.* The program was clearly oriented towards the strategic and management aspects of public managers’ job. Other programs may have focused more on a broader social science educational profile. In the Copenhagen MPG program, there were new models (see below), and no models based on discipline only such as “economics”, “political science”, “sociology”, “psychology” etc.
- (2) *Relevance to the practical world of public management:* There was an emphasis from the beginning on relevance for practice. It was especially the steering group of the tripartite organizations that emphasized this point. While practice-orientation is nearly always a key target for executive master programs around the world, the steering group felt a need to make this point very strongly. As a consequence, it was decided by the steering group that the universities should involve private consultancy companies for part of the delivery of training. In Copenhagen this was done by sub-contracting with private consultants for the two introductory courses, especially for the 360 degree test (in Copenhagen this was performed as 270 degree following the model for that specific company). The contract was competitively tendered once the magnitude of the program became apparent.
- (3) *Cooperation between universities.* Several universities would work together and deliver the program. As already mentioned, the University of Copenhagen (40.000+ students) and Copenhagen Business School (17,000 students) worked together in the Copenhagen program. This was the first time the two universities had worked together on such a project. The initial agreement of cooperation has been quite important in determining responsibility. Previously, the Copenhagen Business School had offered the MPA program for 15 years and had considerable experience in executive programs in other management areas as well. The impetus to form consortia was the brainchild of the steering group and not something the universities initially had prepared. However, both institutions are located in the central Copenhagen area.

Meetings could be held at either institution. The only meetings that needed more careful travel planning are meetings with Aalborg University, located more than 500 km from Copenhagen, but easily accessible by plane in 45 minutes.

- (4) *International dimension.* It was emphasized in the statutes that the program should have a distinct international dimension (paragraph 14). This could be as memorandum of understandings with other institutions, as an international summer school, as sending executive students to program in other countries, to invite guest lectures and professors to come to Copenhagen and to involve international oriented topics in the classroom. An agreement in the form of a memorandum of understanding was signed with the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin quite early on in 2009. The cooperation with the Hertie School of Governance meant that Hertie could send students to the English-speaking modules in Copenhagen, and that Copenhagen could send students to elective modules in Berlin (mainly in the Spring semester). This cooperation has worked quite well, and meetings have been held between Copenhagen and Hertie on a regular basis. Talks have been going on with Warwick University/Warwick Business School in the UK which Copenhagen Business School already had considerable connections with. Talks were also held with Sciences Po in Paris, France in the beginning.
- (5) *Funding through the Danish government and Parliament.* The financial foundations for the program were largely secured through the funds in the national budget that were set aside for both consortia. The aforementioned 75 million DKK (15 million USD) (5 million DKK were set aside for development) was dedicated towards subsidizing program fees for public managers. The size of the subsidy was decided by the tripartite steering group on an annual basis. Until now, the subsidy has been for 2000 DKK per ECTS point. The whole program is 60 ECTS points (1 year fulltime student work). So for a module that cost 10.000 DKK (an elective module), the public manager's organization would receive 6.000 DKK in subsidy which left 4.000 DKK to be paid by either the student or the organization. Mostly, the organization pays the last part. In essence this means that the MPG program is largely 100% government financed. The way the subsidies are allocated is the following: The steering group has divided the funds up in proportions in terms of organizational size. The funds are allocated in a precise manner, so each public organization knows exactly how many funds are available for their organization. This list is public and can be viewed on the State Employer Authority's website. So for example, the Danish Foreign Ministry or the Ministry of Justice can see from the list that they have x amount of resources earmarked for the program, the Capitol Region of Denmark can see how many resources they have been allocated, and the Gribskov local government can see how many resources they have been allocated. How they allocate funds internally in each organization is up to them. We know that the principles vary. Some organizations use them strategically and align the resources with their own strategic HRM policy or leadership training policy. Other organizations might not even be aware that they have an account where funds are to be spent (as some organizations have not applied for funds yet).

Student Intake and Profile

Because the program has been fortunate enough to be eligible for government funding since 2009, the program has managed to attract a fairly substantial number of executive students. People can apply two times a year: once in May and once in November. Roughly, 120 public managers have begun each semester, making the annual intake around 240 executive students. These students come from all areas of the public sector: from central government, regional government and local government as well as the armed forces and the police and other organizations. The present number of students in the summer of 2011 was 520 executive students (see figure 1). The average age is 45 years. They range from 31 years of age to 61 years of age. There are 61% women and 39% men. 54% have a university degree in law, political science, economics or other, 28 % have a medium-term degree (nurses for example), 7% have a diploma degree and 4% are from the armed forces or police, 3% have a PhD, and 3% a bachelor degree (see figure 2). 48% are from local government, 33 % are from central government, 16% are from the regions, and 2% from other organizations (see figure 3). It is by any standard the largest executive public management program in Denmark. As a new feature there are a couple of “key accounts” beginning to show. The Capitol Region of Denmark has sent many public managers as has the Copenhagen city municipality. The Capitol Region and Copenhagen city municipality are the two largest employers in the Copenhagen region, much larger than any private sector corporation in the area. Copenhagen city council has alone circa 44.000 employees while the Capitol Region has about 16.000 employees. Most recently, the Danish police force has made the MPG program its preferred executive master program. All future chief police inspectors are expected to go through the MPG program to get a degree. It is a huge responsibility, but one that is cherished by the program.

Insert figures 1, 2 and 3 about here

THE CONTENT OF THE EXECUTIVE MASTER OF PUBLIC GOVERNANCE DEGREE PROGRAM

The MPG degree program is offered jointly by University of Copenhagen and Copenhagen Business School (and Aalborg University in northern Jutland) and is a public management and governance program of an international standard designed to meet the requirements of the public manager in order to improve his or her management practice. The program developed a strategy early on which emphasized the following: The MPG program aims to educate public managers to further develop the Danish welfare society”. That way, the MPG program is not only improving practice, but also for a wider purpose which the continuing development of the Danish welfare society.

The MPG curriculum was developed by an initial group of public management and governance researchers from Copenhagen Business School and University of Copenhagen that were also responsible for the first classes and modules that were taught. A decision was made early on to try to develop new modules, and not be content to copy existing modules in normal masters’ program in political science or management. The workload is characterized in ECTS-points. ECTS means “European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System” (for more information go the European Union website: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc48_en.htm).

The result of the initial task force was the following curriculum of modules:

- Two introductory modules of 5 ECTS each = 10 ECTS
- Six core modules (students choose 4 out of 6) of 5 ECTS each = 20 ECTS
- Elective modules of 3 ECTS or 6 ECTS = 18 ECTS
- A final master project = 12 ECTS

There were few requirements attached to the running order, but both introductory courses had to be taken in order to complete a full master and in order to begin a master project. The steering group had emphasized flexibility allowing the student the opportunity to “mix and match”. In practice, a large majority of students began by taking the introductory courses first.

The introductory and obligatory modules were designed from various disciplines and also to allow for mix in disciplines. The introductory modules are:

- Introduction to management studies
- Personal development module

The introductory module is 5 ECTS and lasts one semester, while the personal development module of 5 ECTS is spread over 2 semesters (previously 3 semesters).

The core modules are:

- Coaching
- Strategic Human Resource Management
- Communication and management
- Leading reform and change
- Public governance
- Strategic management in a governance perspective

The elective modules are quite varied which is to be expected. They are loosely classified in three categories for ease of the executive students to choose from: a) supportive electives, b) advanced electives and c) contemporary issue electives. One example of the first category could be “organization theory for public managers” or “economics and accounting for public managers” which were not in the original curriculum, but which have been sought after modules. An example of the second category could be “Advanced communication studies” or “Performance management” which builds on from “Communication and management” and “Leading Reform and Change” respectively. An example of the third category could be “Globalization and the Danish public sector”, “The competition state” or “Motivation of knowledge employees”, or “Existence and public management” (based on more philosophical studies).

A list of examples of electives is included below (Danish titles in brackets):

- Trust-based management (tillidsbaseret ledelse)
- Organizational theory for public managers (organisationsanalyse)
- Existence and management (eksistens og ledelse)
- Innovation management (innovationsledelse på tværs)
- Motivation of knowledge employees (motivation af videnarbejdere)
- Evaluation and evidence based management (evaluering og evidensbaseret ledelse)
- The Danish public sector model and globalization (den danske model og globalisering)
- Tracking public sector leadership after the financial crisis (på sporet af det offentlige lederskab)
- Methods in social science (samfundsvidenskabelig metode)
- Stakeholder relations, lobbyism and public affairs
- Risk communication (risiko kommunikation)
- New Public Management
- Public governance in the health sector (politisk styring i sundhedsvæsenet)
- Performance management
- Economics and organizations (økonomistyring i offentlige organisationer)
- The Competition state
- Ethics and democratic legitimacy (etik og demokrati i den offentlige sektor)
- New forms of communication on the web (Nye kommunikationsformer på nettet)
- Advanced communication and management (Videregående kommunikation og ledelse)
- Organizational psychology (organisationspsykologi)
- Gender and public management (køn og offentlig ledelse)

Modules in English

The MPG program has also offered modules in English, either alone or through our partners:

- Strategic change management
- Inside the black-box: Advanced strategy making in public sector organizations
- Public Managers: New Identities and Roles in Challenging Times
- Performance management (Hertie School of Governance)
- Cutback management (Hertie School of Governance)
- Organisations and agencies (Hertie School of Governance)
- International Summer School (the MPA program and international partners). The summer school held at a destination in Europe brings together executive master students from Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, South Africa, United Kingdom

For several of the modules we have been able to offer more classes. We generally have 24 (15) at a minimum number of executive students and max 40 executive students in the classroom.

In Copenhagen, there have been three classes on “Strategic management in a governance perspective”, two on “Communication and management” and “Leading reform and change classes”.

Popular core modules are “Strategic management in a governance perspective”, “Communication and Management” and “Coaching” hotly followed by the other three modules. The introductory modules run at maximum capacity with four classes of 30 executive students each. Among the most popular elective modules have been: “Organizational Psychology”, “Motivation of knowledge employees”, “Trust based management”, and “Innovation management” and “Organization theory for public managers”.

The final master project capstone project allows for three types: a classic master thesis, an organizational development project and a personal leadership project.

What Is Distinctive about the Curriculum?

- (1) The curriculum aims to support the objectives and purposes set out for the program in general. The curriculum focuses both on the contextual aspects of public sector management and governance as also on the more personal perspectives on taking on management responsibility. The more contextual parts of the curriculum have to do with strategic management, leading reform and change, public governance and to a certain extent communication and management. The more personal perspective parts of the curriculum focus on coaching, strategic HRM, and personal development. The introductory course tries to capture both aspects. The master project with its three types also allows for a specific chosen profile. It is hoped that when the first candidates graduate from the program, that they will appreciate this balance of the curriculum.
- (2) The curriculum tries to be in tune with the challenges public managers are facing today and tomorrow. The obligatory modules should be the basics of what contemporary public managers should be skilled in. The elective modules give more room for improvising, and here the topical issues can be changed from semester to semester. At the moment, the “organizational psychology” module and “trust-based management” module is attracting attention, indicating perhaps a special take or need by Danish public managers in a time of financial austerity? It also seems clear that “strategy” and “communication” are two topics that the public managers are interested in knowing more about.
- (3) The curriculum is constantly being updated and being developed with guest lectures and international speakers. The program has been lucky enough to attract a number of high class guest lectures. International guest lectures and guest speakers have been a priority in the MPG program from the very beginning. Because of the funds available from the government funding, the possibility of inviting guest professors have been quite generous. Speakers from the Danish public sector have also been interested in making appearances in the classroom.

International guest professors invited to speak have included: Professor Beryl Radin (American University, USA), Professor Brad Jackson (University of Auckland, New Zealand), Professor Erik-Hans Klijn (Erasmus University, Netherlands), Professor Renate Meyer (WU-Wien), Professor Janet Newman (Open University, UK), and Professor Kjell-Arne Røvik (Norway).

The Danish speakers include Erik Bonnerup a former permanent secretary, Inger Marie Vynne vice-CEO for the local government Gribskov Kommune, and Kaj Kjærsgaard from the Ministry of Finance.

Each semester is introduced with a special lecture usually by one of the faculty members. In 2009 it was Ministry of Finance manager Elisabeth Hvas from the Danish Ministry of Finance on challenges for public services; in spring 2010 it was Professor Uffe Østergaard from Copenhagen Business School on the Danish state in a historical perspective; in the fall of 2010 it was Professor Reinhard Stelter from University of Copenhagen on coaching; in the spring of 2011 it was professor Anker Brink Lund from Copenhagen Business School on communication for public managers; and in the fall of 2011 it was Associate Professor Anders Berg-Sørensen from the University of Copenhagen on ethics for public managers.

Course Delivery and Exams

The modules are all delivered in semesters. The spring semester begins late January / early February. Summer exams are in May and June. The fall semester begins in late August and ends in November. Winter exams are in December and January. The semester is divided so that the introductory module and the obligatory modules are placed first in the semester, and the elective modules are placed in the second half of the semester. The “hours in class” for a 5 ECTS module is set to 32 hours. The hours in class for an elective module of 3 ECTS is 20 hours and 32 also for a 6 ECTS module. Classes are usually 3 x 8 + 2 x 4 = 32 hours for an obligatory module, and 5 x 4 hours, or a block seminar of 2½ days for an elective module of 3 ECTS (more spread out for a 6 ECTS elective module). Classes are normally scheduled during the day time. A whole day class will begin at 09.00 and end at 17.00. A half day class will begin at 13.00 and end at 17:00. Students who are there for the day are served a lunch (usually a sandwich or Scandinavian-type “open sandwiches”). Students are also getting coffee/tea and cake and assorted fruits during breaks. Coffee is especially important as most Danes drink lots of it!

Exams are mostly of two kinds: A written assignment followed by an oral exam. The written part is usually 10-15 pages long and is prepared in part through the hours in class. The written exams are graded through the Danish grading system and graded by the lead examiner with an external examiner. The other type is a synopsis exam where the student presents a shorter synopsis in an oral exam. In the oral part, the executive student will usually have 5 minutes to make introductory remarks. The whole session takes 30 minutes, all inclusive. The synopsis exam is graded by the leading examiner and an internal examiner (other member of faculty). The introductory module and the personal development module have both developed more interactive exams where the verdict is pass/failed. The master thesis is assigned to be around 80 pages long, and will be followed by an oral exam. The grading will be according to the Danish grading system, and there will be a lead examiner and an external examiner.

Teaching Methods

The teaching methods tend to vary a lot because of the different topics and their teaching styles. Teaching in “coaching” can perhaps be different in style than teaching in “strategic management in a governance perspective”. There has been taken great care in encouraging faculty to use and experiment

with new teaching methods. There are many prime examples, but no overall review yet of the methods used. An annual teacher seminar is bringing some of the teaching methods to the table. Others are shared between teachers. The program is blessed with having adequate resources so far, which means that there is possibility of having two faculty members present for most of the time in the modules. There is also an amount earmarked for inviting guest lectures and speakers from outside. Among the teaching methods used are the following:

- Lectures
- In-class discussions
- Guest lectures
- YouTube clips followed by discussions
- Small tests
- Teaching cases (more on that below)
- Group presentations by students
- Small group discussions
- 270 degree tests of participants
- Small assignments
- Interviews on leadership style in home organizations

The MPG program has been striving to develop a more coherent program for the teaching case method. Several faculty members have followed the case-based teaching course offered by Copenhagen Business School. A course on case-writing is being planned for the spring of 2012. Special funds have been allocated for improving and promoting the teaching case method in the classroom.

Students use the e-learning platform of CBS for their courses. Up to the summer of 2011, "Sitescape" was used, and from the fall of 2011 the platform will be "CBS Learn" based on the international program "Moodle".

Teaching Evaluation

There is a comprehensive teaching evaluation after each semester. Each and every module is evaluated through an electronic survey. The electronic teaching evaluation is administered by the Evaluation Unit at Copenhagen Business School. The teaching quality is graded on various items on a scale from 1-5. Up to now, the teaching evaluations have been satisfactory and quite good. The response rate fell in the fall semester of 2010 which was of some concern, but every effort is made to get the response rate up again and it was improved in spring 2011. Each evaluation is delivered to the teacher in question directly for his or her information. The combined evaluation report is reviewed by the academic director and vice-director and the staff involved. The evaluation report is also reviewed by the study board. A version of it is also presented to the advisory board of MPG. At the end of each semester, there is an evaluation meeting for all relevant faculty members where the results of the evaluation report and other issues related to evaluation is discussed.

MPG in the Media

There has not been so much active media promotion done yet from the MPG program's side. But the MPG program has been featured in various media. In the beginning it was thought to be important to establish some kind of "brand" presence. A brochure with a distinct design and advertisements were planned in connection with a media bureau. The advertisements were target at specialist journals and magazines of public sector manager unions, especially "DJØF-bladet"; the magazine for the union of the Danish Lawyers and Economists which organized many of the central government and other government-level public managers. The advertisement was focused on the design of the name MPG and did not contain photos. The advertisement were also placed in one of the big Danish daily newspapers, "Politiken", which we know are being read by public sector managers. This has seemingly paid off as the advertisement drew a lot of attention and has helped in attracting public managers to the program.

MPG has been featured in other media and by the government. The Ministry of Finance magazine "Incitament" ("Incentive") has run a story in several issues where the magazine follows one particular public manager's (Lone Frosch) journey through the program. The public manager in question is from the Danish Patent Office. The magazine is nicely edited with a good graphic design and the articles features interviews with the public manager and sometimes her boss. The Ministry of Finance's State Employer's Agency has also featured a small number of executive students on their website, including the MPG executive student who is the director of a prison in Denmark. MPG was also featured in articles in Boersen, the business paper.

CONCLUDING REMARKS: LESSONS LEARNED AND DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The Executive Master in Program has existed since August 2009 and been in operation for a little over two years now. The program is funded partly by the Danish government and Parliament and is supported by major stakeholders in the Danish public sector. The program in Copenhagen currently has 500+ public managers enrolled as executive students. They come from all areas in the public sector: central government, regional governments and local governments. Evaluations are favourable so far. Copenhagen Business School and University of Copenhagen collaborate on delivering the program. There is an affiliated program in Aalborg University. There is a thriving international collaboration with Hertie School of Governance in Berlin and talks with Warwick University in the UK. The first graduates will get their degree in January 2012.

There are beginning to be some preliminary lessons learned:

- (1) There has been a very constructive and intense dialogue between the steering group representing the original tripartite negotiators and the universities and other partners. The dialogue has been kept on, and there have annual meetings as well as more informal discussions and consultation. When the ministry has needed new figures, the secretariat has provided them with the requested information. The dialogue has continued throughout the program, and the support from the ministry, and employers, the unions and the whole of the public sector has been amazing. The dialogue and constructive alliance with the international partners have also been outstanding. A key lesson here is that dialogue pays off.

- (2) There has been a tremendous enthusiasm for the program by the incoming executive students. The executive students have both been able to formally evaluate the modules, but also shared information and experiences in the classroom and during- and after exams. The enthusiasm has been present in the classroom where executive students have provided examples and experiences that have aided the teaching and raised the bar for the issues and types of discussion that were possible. Whether this is first time enthusiasm or whether the involvement will continue, remains to be seen, but so far it has boosted everyone's engagement in starting up a new program. A key lesson here is that enthusiasm supports the program and propels it to strive for quality in all aspects.
- (3) Faculty members have been active in formulating new teaching plans, and developing new modules, including new elective modules. We have been lucky to receive interest and backing from a wide range of faculty across the involved institutions. Faculty members have expressed keen interest in coming to teach the executive students. There has also been additional bonus for many involved as faculty members have been hired as consultants and guest speakers for various public sector organizations. Faculty members have been greatly aided in their planning by a helpful and service minded and efficient secretariat that is essential for this kind of new program to work. A key lesson here is that efficient organizing and alignment with faculty interests are important ingredients in making a new program function from day one.

The Copenhagen MPG program is ready to be developed even further. There are a number of different projects and ideas lined up already and more are bound to come soon. Among the present projects are:

- *Teaching case program:* As already mentioned we are trying to get a more ambitious case-teaching and writing program off the ground, and we are very inspired about developments elsewhere, for example the case program associated with the Australian and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG). We have experienced case teachers at CBS and hope to connect to other inspirational persons as well elsewhere. We would like the teaching case method to be one of the defining features of the Copenhagen MPG program.
- *Social media:* So far the Copenhagen MPG program has not been strong on social media, but a LinkedIn profile and platform was launched in September 2011 and already has 200+ members. The LinkedIn site will exclusively connect executive students associated with the Copenhagen MPG program.
- *Research related to the MPG program:* Although funding must be used for subsidies only and not for research, it is clear that research on public management and governance will take inspiration from many of the examples and experiences and connections that the program brings forward. There is bound to be more connections made between researchers and MPG students. One issue is to write some text books based on the experiences and examples presented in the classroom.

- *International partnerships*: There is a growing interest from executive students to gain more international insight and opportunities. Many of the bigger groups represented, for example executive students from the Danish police force, have expressed an interest in being more internationally oriented. The co-operation with the Hertie School of Governance has been rewarding and inspirational, and there is no doubt that further international partnerships will be beneficial to the program.

Among the big questions are what will happen after 2012 when the initial government funding runs out, and how much the financial crisis will affect the program in the short run. We have already had a taste of the second question: the number of applications was still high for the spring semester of 2011. There are probably two or more issues that are relevant to that discussion for the future. The first one is that initiative for establishing an executive master program was not an accidental decision, but a part of a more systematic effort in developing the competences of public managers in Denmark in order to further improve the Danish welfare society. The trade unions and other organizations all have a vested interest in the effort becoming or being a success. The second one is that there is now beginning to be a solid foundation to build the program on for the future. Modules are established, the faculty members and secretariat have put effort in making a good coherent program, the brand is gradually getting more well-known in public sector organizations, and most importantly of all; public managers are seeking out the program because they tend to find it can help them build their competences and help to strive for the greater aim of securing and improving the Danish welfare society in turbulent times.

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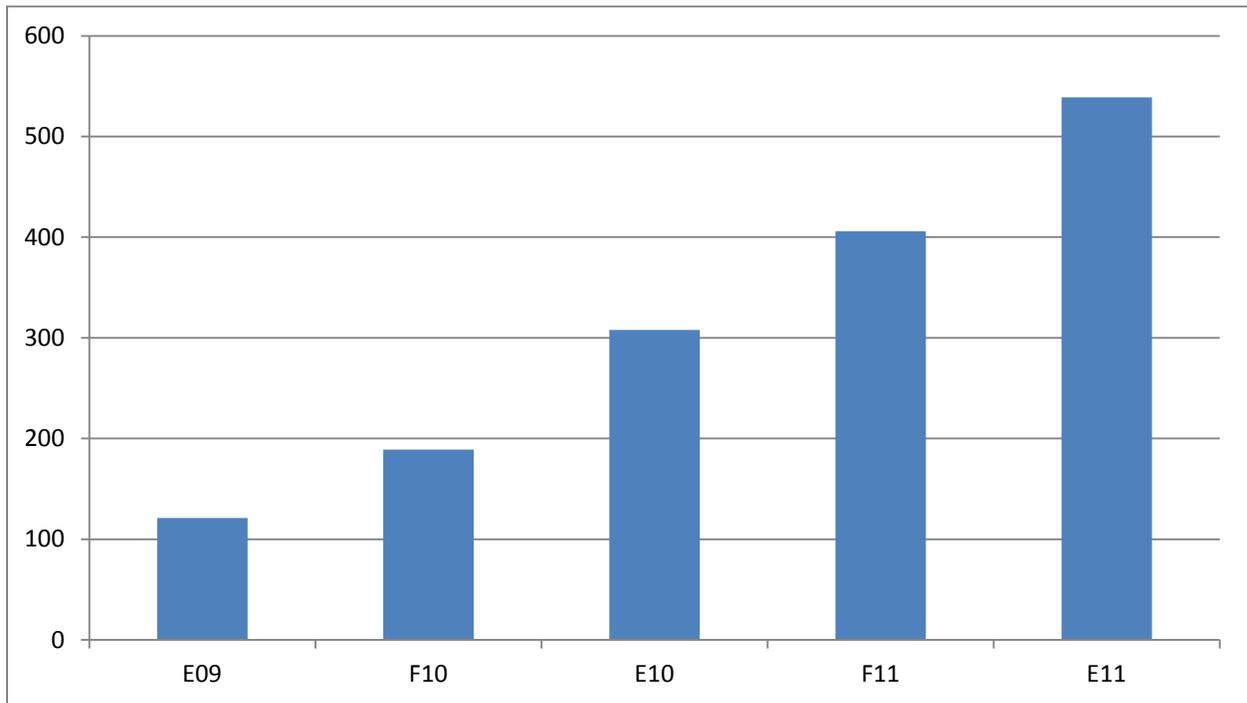


Figure 1: Number of applications for the MPG program in Copenhagen. E=Autumn/Fall, F=Spring

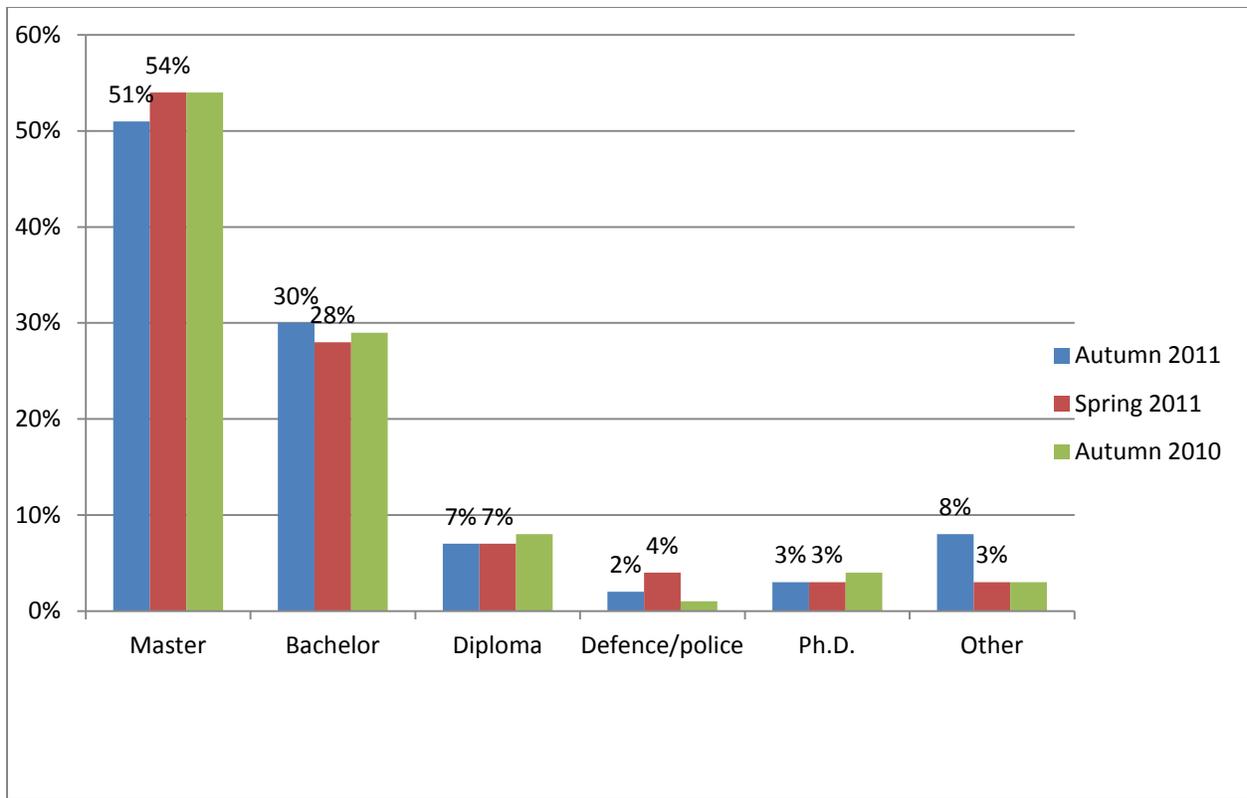


Figure 2: Educational background of participants the MPG program in Copenhagen, Denmark

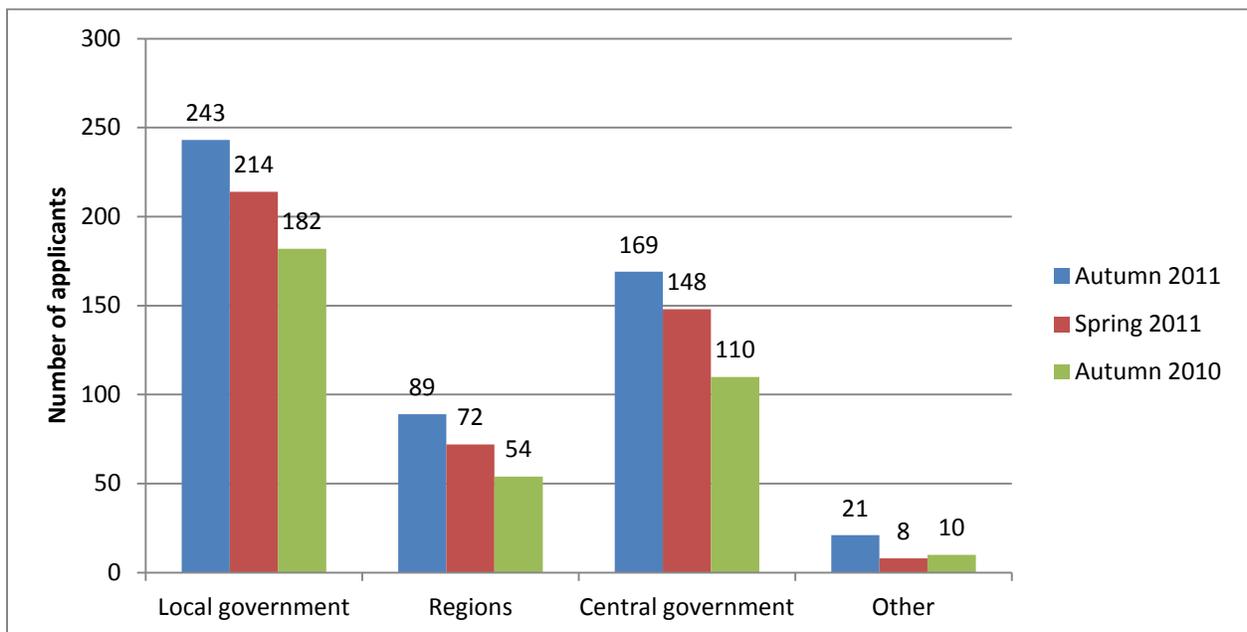


Figure 3: Level of government – distribution among applicants for the MPG program in Copenhagen as of Summer 2011