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2025 International Conference on Public Administration, Governance, and Social Policy (ICPAGSP 2025)

By ESL Editorial [†]

Abstract. The International Conference on Public Administration, Governance, and Social Policy (ICPAGSP 2025), held in Vienna from December 2–5, 2025, gathered researchers, policymakers, and practitioners dedicated to exploring the intersections of governance, public administration, social policy, and societal development. With a fully published Abstract Book and Proceedings Book, ICPAGSP 2025 provided an extensive repository of theoretical, empirical, and policy-oriented research directly relevant to the Journal of Social and Administrative Sciences. This report synthesizes the key contributions and insights from ICPAGSP 2025, emphasizing governance innovations, public sector reforms, policy evaluation, administrative theory, and social policy analysis. The conference highlighted the critical role of evidence-based decision-making, institutional capacity building, and interdisciplinary approaches in addressing contemporary social and administrative challenges.

Keywords. Public administration; Governance innovation; Social policy; Public sector reform; Evidence-based policymaking.

JEL. D73; H11; H83; I38; O20.

Conference Notes

The conference opened with a keynote lecture by Prof. Maria Schneider (University of Vienna), who argued that modern governance systems must balance efficiency, transparency, and equity while addressing complex societal challenges such as digitalization, demographic change, and social inequalities. Key messages included: *Adaptive governance*: Public institutions must evolve to meet rapidly changing societal needs. *Evidence-based administration*: Policy decisions should integrate empirical research, predictive analytics, and participatory mechanisms. *Global-local integration*: Policies must account for local contexts while aligning with international standards and sustainable development goals (SDGs). This keynote framed the conference's interdisciplinary and applied approach, emphasizing both theory and practice in social and administrative sciences.

2. Public Administration and Institutional Innovation



Reforming Public Institutions: Several presentations focused on administrative reforms designed to enhance efficiency and accountability:

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Case studies of e-government implementation in Central and Eastern Europe showed increased service delivery efficiency. Analyses of public sector restructuring highlighted the importance of performance management systems and institutional transparency. Proceedings Book entries explored challenges of institutional capacity building in transitioning economies.

Bureaucratic Behavior and Organizational Culture: Research emphasized the interaction between bureaucratic structures, organizational culture, and policy outcomes: Studies revealed that hierarchical rigidity can impede innovation, while adaptive cultures enhance responsiveness. Public sector leadership training programs were shown to improve policy implementation and staff motivation.

3. Governance, Policy Design, and Evaluation

Evidence-Based Policy Making: Conference sessions highlighted methodologies for evaluating social and administrative policies: Randomized control trials in social programs, including poverty alleviation and education interventions. Quasi-experimental designs assessing labor market reforms and public health policies. Meta-analyses of governance initiatives providing cross-country insights.

Citizen Engagement and Participatory Governance: Several papers focused on participatory mechanisms: E-participation platforms enabling citizen feedback in budgeting and service design. Participatory decision-making increased policy legitimacy and reduced implementation failures. Proceedings Book analyses demonstrated measurable impacts of civic engagement on governance effectiveness.

4. Social Policy and Development

Welfare Systems and Inequality Reduction: Presentations analyzed the design and effectiveness of welfare policies: Comparative studies on social insurance, universal basic income pilots, and targeted assistance programs. Findings suggest that integrated policy frameworks combining cash transfers, education, and healthcare services produce superior outcomes in poverty alleviation.

Health, Education, and Social Inclusion: The conference emphasized social determinants of well-being: Health policy sessions examined public health administration, pandemic preparedness, and health equity initiatives. Education policy panels highlighted inclusive education, digital literacy, and lifelong learning strategies as critical drivers of social mobility.

5. Public Sector Digitalization and Smart Governance

Digital Transformation: ICPAGSP 2025 showcased studies on digital innovation in public administration: Implementation of AI-based decision-support systems in service delivery. Blockchain applications for transparency and auditing of public funds. E-governance platforms enhancing citizen access, data management, and administrative efficiency.

Data-Driven Governance: Several presentations focused on evidence-informed decision-making: Predictive analytics for resource allocation in social services. Big data for monitoring policy outcomes and detecting systemic inefficiencies. Integration of open government data with public dashboards to foster accountability.

6. Comparative and International Perspectives

Cross-Country Governance Studies: Panels compared governance structures, administrative capacity, and policy outcomes across Europe, Asia, and the Middle East: Lessons from decentralization reforms in Latin America and Eastern Europe. Analysis of institutional quality indices (rule of law, regulatory quality, government effectiveness) correlated with social policy success. Policy benchmarking demonstrated pathways for administrative improvement.

International Collaboration: Research highlighted partnerships between governments, international organizations, and NGOs: Collaborative approaches enhanced policy design in areas such as climate adaptation, urban development, and social protection. Proceedings Book documented case studies of cross-border learning and policy transfer initiatives.

7. Methodological Innovations in Administrative and Social Sciences

ICELKM 2025 emphasized innovative methodologies: Mixed-methods research integrating qualitative interviews, policy document analysis, and quantitative outcome measures. GIS and spatial analysis to evaluate regional disparities in service delivery. Network analysis to map inter-institutional collaboration and policy diffusion. These methods provide new tools for administrative researchers and policymakers aiming to improve efficiency and equity.

8. Panel Discussions: Challenges and Future Directions

Key themes from ICPAGSP 2025 roundtables included: Enhancing institutional adaptability to meet evolving societal needs. Integrating digital and AI solutions without compromising ethical standards. Fostering citizen participation to increase legitimacy and social trust. Aligning national policies with international frameworks, including SDGs. Capacity building for public administrators, emphasizing continuous professional development and evidence-based practice.

9. Concluding Reflections

ICPAGSP 2025 highlighted that the future of public administration and social policy is inextricably linked to governance quality, institutional innovation, and evidence-based decision-making. Key insights include: Adaptive governance systems are essential to address dynamic societal challenges. Digital transformation enhances transparency, efficiency, and citizen engagement. Interdisciplinary approaches combining political science, sociology, and economics produce richer policy insights. Global and comparative research informs best practices and policy transfer. Evidence-based policymaking strengthens social inclusion, equity, and administrative effectiveness. For the *Journal of Social and Administrative Sciences*, ICPAGSP 2025 provides a rich and comprehensive body of research, offering empirical findings, theoretical insights, and practical guidance that will inform scholarship and policy innovation in the field.



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