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The (changing) patterns of performance appraisal in civil service: An outlook on 16 European countries

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The research problem

- Western – indeed global – advances in civil service systems: Performance Appraisal (PA) as a miraculous „strategic“ instrument...
- [...Despite all theoretical and empirical arguments of sceptics...!]

BUT:

- What is really going on here? how are civil service systems responding to the challenges of the post-crisis, post-New Public Management era?
- And how do these patterns change if we move from the West to the East, from more to less developed politico-administrative systems?

The research problem: A theoretical framework

Theoretical dimension		
Admin. reform doctrine (Pollitt-Bouckaert 2017)	NPM	Post-NPM NWS (NPG?)
Management doctrine (McGregor 1960)	Theory X	Theory Y
Workforce motivation (Ketelaar et al 2007))	Extrinsic	Intrinsic
Public service HRM / performance appraisal (Boswell-Boudreau 2002):	Measuring-incentivizing (evaluative)	Developmental
Features:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Single measurment event of achievement of externally set goals - Material (+/-) consequences - Autonomy / discretion at (immediate) supervisors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuing process (social action and communication) - identifying individual developmental needs / articulating expectations - Improving communi-cation and org. climate - Incentives for development

The research questions

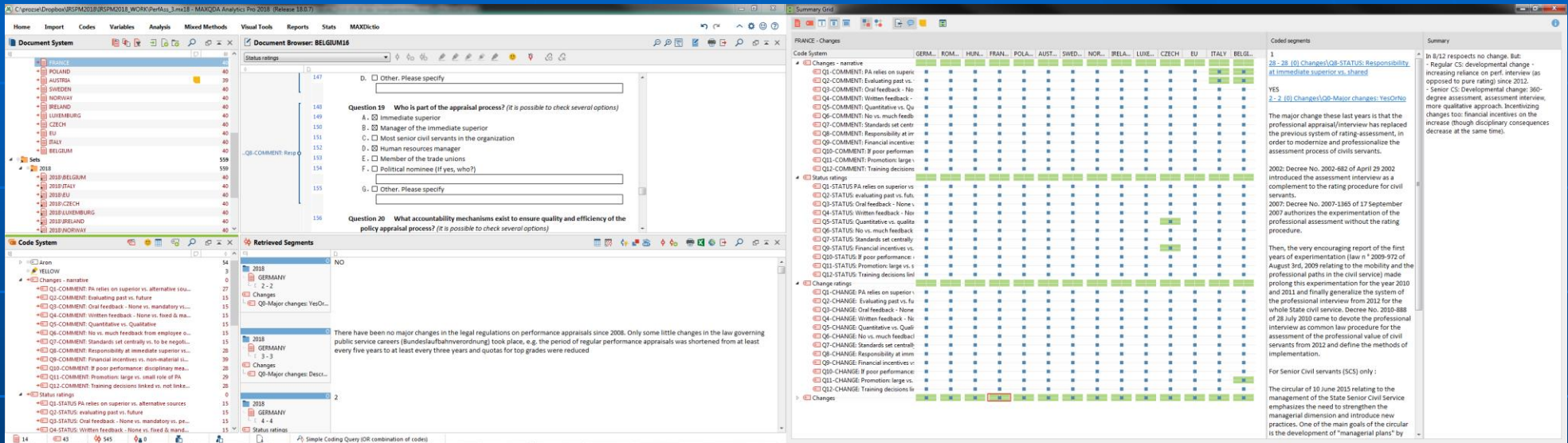
- A move from NPM to other / different / opposing direction has been observed (in Europe and elsewhere), especially since the 2008 crisis.
- RQ1: What is the pattern of European public administration in terms of the „measuring-incentivising“ vs. „developmental“ dimension?
- RQ2: Did a move similar to the one mentioned above – involving an increasingly „developmental“ and decreasingly „measuring-incentivizing“ PA system – happen in European countries?
- RQ3: If yes what are the patterns of such a change? In particular, how do they relate to contextual conditions (East vs. West, more vs. less developed politico-administrative systems etc.)?

Data and method

- Two expert surveys. I. July-December 2016, under the Slovak EUPAN (European Public Administration Network) Presidency. II. January-April 2018
- Scope / Respondents: Senior civil servants (one per country) representing the department / unit in charge of civil service matters. EU & Associated Countries and the European Commission. 30/30 and 21/30 responses.
- Temporal scope: 2008-2018
- A mix of open- and closed-ended questionnaire questions, administered via email, with rounds of follow-up communications / clarifications.
Operationalization of PA FEATURES:

Data and method

- Operationalization of CHANGE: shift in the presence of either PA types
- MaxQDA qualitative analysis software (arrange / synthesise / visualise data)



- Temporal scope: 2008-2018. Countries covered (**STILL IN PROGRESS!**):

	Career	Hybrid	Position
Countries (covered by both surveys)	DE, FR, LUX, EC, BE, AT, PT, IE, ES, RO, HU	BG, SI, SK, IT, PL	CZ, SE
Not covered	EL	LV, LT, MT	DK, EE, FI, UK, NL

Findings

Finding (1a): Contrary to the initial hypothesis (theoretical expectations) the two ideal types are **not mutually exclusive**. Rather, they constitute two independent dimensions.

This suggests a new typology of PA systems as follows:

		Developmental features	
		Weak	Strong
Measuring-incentivizing features	Strong	TYPE 1 (NPM)	TYPE 4
	Weak	TYPE 3	TYPE 2 (PNPM)

Types 1 and 2: The two ideal types

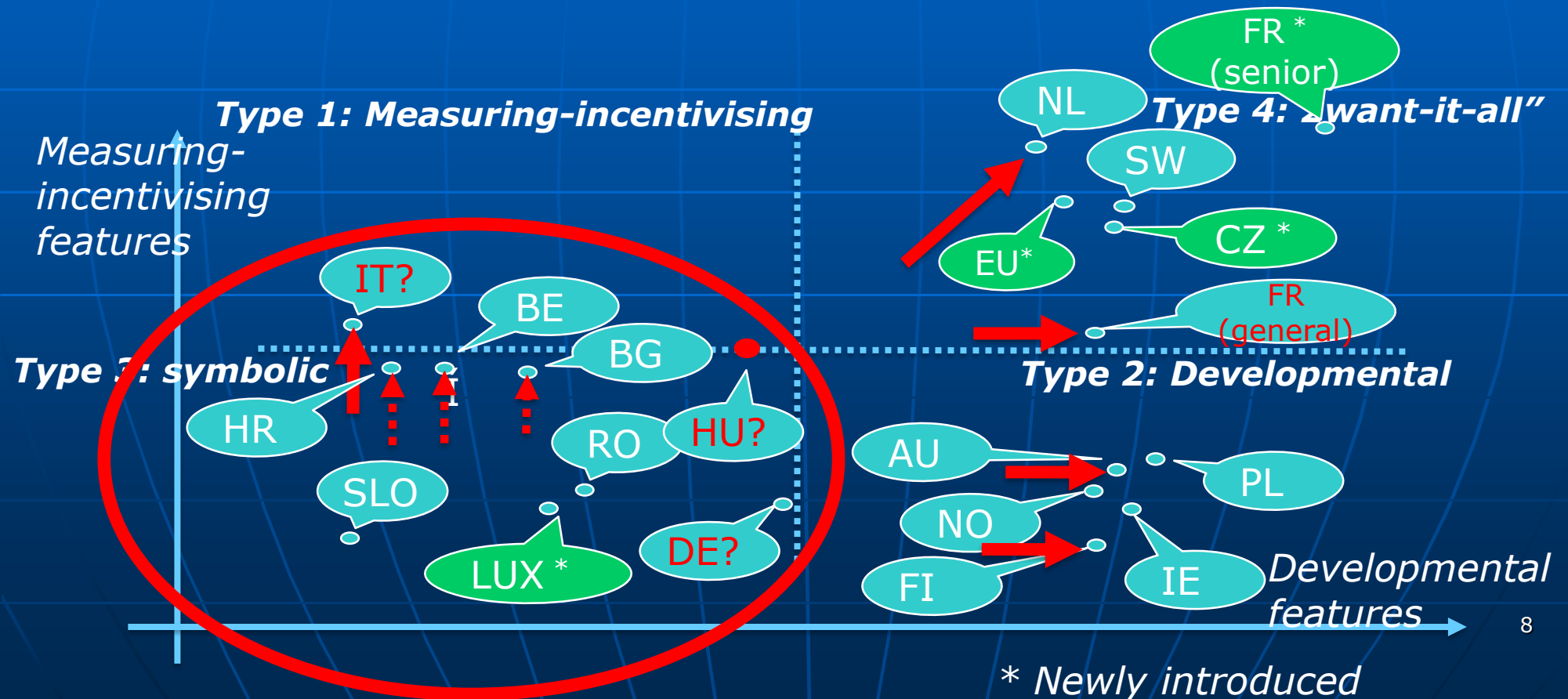
Type 3: symbolic use (international recommendations....); legitimizing use; competing or substituting informal institutions (nepotism/clan control)...?

Type 4: within-country variations; want-it-all attitude...?

[continued]

RQ1b / current patterns: see the below figure.

- Southern and Eastern Europe: Type 3 / Symbolic PA!
- Western/Continental and Nordic: Developmental & want-it-all



[continued] RQ2 / Changes:

- Little change, large stability (despite turmoil!).
- Where change happens: always „more” (rather than „less”) of either developmental or incentivising (or both) features.
- Most newcomers: Type 4 / want-it-all
- CEE: „hardening” – a slight move towards the measuring-incentivising model

