

# **Comparative Curriculum Assessment in the Field of Good Governance**

**Prepared by Faculty of Economics & Business, University of  
Zagreb**



Funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

## **Table of content**

1. Introduction .....	1
2. Methodology.....	4
3. Research results.....	16
4. Conclusions .....	20
References.....	24

## 1. Introduction

Erasmus+ TERRAGOV project is primarily focused on providing highly qualitative and innovative teaching in the five countries of the partner HEIs and beyond across other European countries. The topic addressed by Intellectual objective 2 of TERRAGOV project falls at the intersection of various disciplines - from governance studies to international political economy, comparative politics, and European studies.

The curriculum is well-known to determine the quality of the educational process. It informs about the content of the courses, but also defines the learning process, the teaching process, and the assessment of students. The aim of the TERRAGOV project was to develop and implement an innovative course curriculum that builds upon the classic foundations of governance studies while adding important, innovative, current study elements. In order to develop this modern, international curriculum, it is necessary to start from a baseline assessment of the specificities of the national curriculums across Europe. As such, a comparative curriculum assessment needed to be conducted based on each of the HEIs internal review and inventory of the relevant course work and curriculum related to the course topic developed under TERRAGOV.

The outputs of Intellectual objective 2 (IO2), Comparative curriculum assessment, should serve two distinctive target groups. On the one hand, students from the partnering HEIs and other HEIs across Europe specialized in governance studies and related disciplines. The innovative, interdisciplinary, scalable and interactive course materials produced in TERRAGOV should be structured in a manner compatible with national curriculums. Following the results of the analysis conducted as a part of IO2, partnering HEIs will be able to modernize their curriculums. Furthermore, outputs will be used for the pilot online courses and offline Intensive Training Programs included in the project which will take place in Bucharest, Romania by the Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE), and in Vilnius, Lithuania by the Business School of Vilnius University (VU IBS). Finally, by developing a shared curriculum compatible with national practices, the TERRAGOV project will facilitate easier access for international students to the relevant disciplines in the HEIs educational offer.

On the other hand, in addition to students, the second target group is comprised of class teachers that can use the curriculum assessed and developed in the TERRAGOV project. The comparative perspective and good practice examples will provide teaching staff with the opportunity to perfect their course curriculum in the future, enhancing its compatibility with other European programs. Beyond the direct teaching impact within the TERRAGOV online courses and offline Intensive Training Programs, the conclusions of the comparative curriculum assessment will be shared with the wider academic community in the form of a peer-reviewed article on best practices in international teaching experiences and blended learning.

Governance is a relatively recent discipline compared to many other subjects that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) cover. Variations in curriculums teaching governance are numerous and often depend on how governance is defined since no alignment or consensus has been made on the definition of governance. Objectives on what governance is seems to depend on the interests of different stakeholders. Investors, for example, make shareholder value the central objective in governance and focuses on the relationship between a company and its shareholders (Shleifer & Vishny, 1997). How companies should be held accountable is the focus of accounting scholars and professionals who apply annual reports and other financial information. Politicians and media tend to focus on business ethics and corporate social responsibility by analysing fraud, financial scandals, and corruption. Networks, socialization, and values are the focus of sociologists. Motivation, behaviour, and team dynamics can be central governance issues for psychologists. All these differences of what governance is have characterised teaching governance at HEIs throughout European HEIs.

HEIs are claimed to have a role of preparing students for participation in a democratic society, as is the vision of many universities and university associations (e.g., AACSB International, 2009; GMAC, 2012). However, some scholars doubt that universities have succeeded in achieving this vision, especially students' ability to deal with societal challenging issues (Dyck & Schroeder, 2005; Ferraro et al., 2005; Ghoshal, 2005; Giacalone & Thompson, 2006; Podolny, 2009). Furthermore, managers complain that universities do not graduate sufficiently well-prepared students, especially those who are unable to deal with governance and ethical dilemmas (Bryant et al., 2018). It is, therefore, vital to understand the content of the governance curriculum and which student-centered teaching methods best enhance

students' ability and capacity to deal with governance issues in society. Social changes continue to happen, putting continuous pressure on HEIs to develop and upgrade their curriculum. The latest development is a call for responsibility of sustainability at both societal and corporate level. The impact of the recent COVID-19 crisis is securing a strong focus on sustainability, and here 'HEIs' curriculum comes again into play.

The research presented in this report assesses the governance curriculum of five universities in five European countries by analyzing the content of governance-related courses. Comparative curriculum assessment is made from a baseline assessment of the national curriculum specificities of each partner university. The assessment produces an innovative element of a common curriculum for good governance in times post the COVID-19 crisis. It thus furthers the potential for a simultaneously unitary and internationalized curriculum on governance studies in European universities.

## 2. Methodology

Governance as a research and teaching topic is an eclectic discipline covering theoretical frameworks from several disciplines such as sociology, law, accounting, etc. At the same time, these courses can tackle the subject in a more or less focused way, covering only one segment of the phenomena in the context of different subjects or focusing on a particular segment of governance (such as governance in non-profits, in developing countries or as a tool of competitiveness).

The research undertaken as a part of IO2 intended to map the current state of governance curriculums in Europe, in order to create solid foundations for the development of curriculums relevant to the post COVID-19 business environment.

The research assesses governance curriculums in five European countries: Croatia, Iceland, Lithuania, Romania, and Spain. Altogether the research covers 102 courses taught within universities in the observed countries.

The research consisted of several stages. The first step included the development of the framework for the content analysis of curriculums in the field of governance courses from the five European countries. Then, data collection was based on a template commonly developed by the task force from FEB Zagreb and representatives of other partner institutions. During several online meetings the possible content of the template for course assessment was discussed and finalized. The template layout can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Framework for curriculum assessment

**COURSE (DISCIPLINE) DESCRIPTION**

**(1) In General**

Name of Institution/Faculty/Department			
Type of Institute (e.g., High Education Institute, Tertiary VET provider, Lifelong Learning Center, University)			
Country in which the Course is applicable			
Course Title			
Year of introduction			
Nature of the Course: Master programme, Bachelor programme, VET Course, further training or Lifelong Learning course)			
Corresponding Level of EQF			
Level in the National Qualification Framework			
Number of credit points (ECVET/ECTS)			
Learning method (e.g. learning in the classroom, e-learning, blended learning)			
Type of Accreditation			
Duration (total learning hours)			
<p align="center"><b>TRAINING MODULES</b></p> <p align="center"><i>If credit is awarded to distinct parts of the course e.g. Lectures, Laboratory Exercises etc.</i></p> <p align="center"><i>If credits are united for the whole course, list the weekly teaching hours and the total credits</i></p>		<b>HOURS</b>	<b>CREDIT UNITS</b>
<b>Total</b>			
<p><b>TYPE OF COURSE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• general background,</li> <li>• special background,</li> <li>• specialization</li> <li>• general knowledge,</li> <li>• skills development</li> </ul>			
What are the requirements for learners to be admitted to the courses? (e.g., Age, education level, previous degrees, recognition of prior professional experiences, attendance to previous preliminary courses)			
Language of Teaching and of the Exams:			
Course's Webpage (URL)			
What is the percentage of work-based learning?			
How are companies or practitioners associated to the course? (e.g. entrepreneurs as lecturers, compulsory internships)		1.	

## (2) AIM & LEARNING OUTCOMES

<b>Aim:</b>
<b>Learning Outcomes</b> <i>Please describe the learning outcomes of the course (specific knowledge, skills, and capabilities that students will acquire upon successfully completing the course).</i>
<b>You can Consult:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>The description of the Level of Learning Outcomes for each course of study according to the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area</i></li><li>• <i>The Descriptive Indicators of Levels 5, 6, 7 &amp; 8 of the European Lifelong Learning Qualifications Framework <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/el/node/1440">https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/el/node/1440</a> and</i></li><li>• <i>The Summary Guide for Writing Learning Outcomes <a href="https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/4156">https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/4156</a></i></li></ul>
<b><i>By the end of the unit, the student will be able to acquire the following skills:</i></b>
<i>Please state skills</i>
<b>Key Competences</b>
<i>Taking into account the key competencies that the graduate must have acquired (as listed in the Diploma Supplement and listed below), which one (s) does the course aim for?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Search, analyze and synthesize data and information, using the necessary technologies</i></li><li>• <i>Adaptation to new situations</i></li><li>• <i>Decision making</i></li><li>• <i>Independent work</i></li><li>• <i>Teamwork</i></li><li>• <i>Working in an international environment</i></li><li>• <i>Working in an interdisciplinary environment</i></li><li>• <i>Production of new research ideas</i></li><li>• <i>Project design and management</i></li><li>• <i>Respect for diversity and multiculturalism</i></li><li>• <i>Respect for the natural environment</i></li><li>• <i>Demonstrating social, professional and ethical responsibility and gender sensitivity</i></li><li>• <i>Exercising criticism and self-criticism</i></li><li>• <i>Promoting free, creative and inductive thinking</i></li></ul> <i>Other.....</i>

## (3) COURSE CONTENTS

<b>Please list the Modules under this course</b>
--



#### (4) TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS - EVALUATION

<p><b>Delivery Method</b> Face to face, Distance learning etc..</p>	
<p><b>USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES</b> Describe any use of ICT in Teaching, in Laboratory Education, in Communication with Students</p>	
<p><b>TEACHING/PEDAGOGICAL METHODS</b> Describe the teaching and pedagogical methods applied (e.g. Lectures, Seminars, Laboratory Exercise, Field Exercise, Study &amp; Analysis of Bibliography, Tutorial, Internship/Placement, Art Workshop, Interactive Teaching, Study Visits, Project Design, Paper Writing)</p>	
<p><b>STUDENTS ASSESSMENT</b> Description of the assessment process Assessment Language, Assessment Methods, Formative or Inferential, Multiple Choice Assessment, Short Answer Questions, Problem Development Questions, Problem Solving, Written Thesis, Report, Oral Examination, Public Presentation, Practical, Artistic, Laboratory, Other...)</p> <p>Specify clearly the defined assessment criteria</p> <p>The whole assessment procedure is based on a certain national/international regulation/standard (e.g. ISO 17024). If yes, describe it</p>	
<p><b>NECESSARY EDUCATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURES/EQUIPMENT (e.g. laboratories, ICT classrooms, etc.</b></p>	
<p><b>How does the course include distance learning?</b></p>	<p>Blended learning on <a href="http://online.ase.ro">online.ase.ro</a></p>

A collection of all analyzed curriculums presented in the accepted template is available at the TERRAGOV shared disk (Dropbox), folder IO2.

Secondly, the collected curriculums were analyzed from the perspective of the direct impact on governance and classified into three commonly agreed-upon categories: core courses, semi-related to governance, and related to governance. In addition, the general content of the courses syllabuses was analyzed to depict whether they support public governance, European governance, or corporate governance topic. As a result, a broad overview of the course curriculums according to the mentioned classification criteria is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: General overview of governance courses**

	<b>Core courses</b>	<b>Semi</b>	<b>Related</b>
<b>EUROPEAN/GLOBAL GOVERNANCE</b>	<b>GLOBAL GOVERNANCE</b>		<b>R+D AND INNOVATION POLICIES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION</b>  <b>TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIONS</b>
<b>PUBLIC GOVERNANCE</b>	<b>GOOD GOVERNANCE</b>  <b>GOVERNANCE, PARTICIPATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA IN SMART CITIES</b>  <b>RESILIENCE STRATEGIES IN SMART CITIES AGAINST NATURAL DISASTERS AND CLIMATE CHANGE</b>	<b>COMPETITIVENESS AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES IN SMART CITIES</b>  <b>ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN AND STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>  <b>PRINCIPLES OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE</b>  <b>PUBLIC LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES</b>  <b>PUBLIC MANAGEMENT</b>  <b>PUBLIC POLICIES</b>  <b>PUBLIC POLICY ANALYSIS</b>	<b>GOVERNMENT AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION</b>  <b>HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>  <b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS</b>  <b>MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF TOURISTIC DESTINATIONS</b>  <b>PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF COAST TOURISM</b>  <b>PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF TOURISM IN NATURAL SPACES AND RURAL AREAS</b>  <b>PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF URBAN AND CULTURAL TOURISM</b>  <b>ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIOLOGY</b>  <b>TOURISTIC DESTINATIONS PLANNING</b>  <b>TOURISTIC POLICY</b>
<b>CORPORATE GOVERNANCE</b>	<b>CORPORATE GOVERNANCE, SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY</b>	<b>INTEGRATED AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT IN ORGANISATIONS</b>  <b>KNOWLEDGE ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>  <b>INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT</b>  <b>INNOVATION ECONOMY</b>

		<b>STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT</b>
		<b>STRATEGIC VISION OF SUSTAINABILITY AND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>QUALITY MANAGEMENT</b>
		<b>SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP</b>	<b>STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF INNOVATION</b>
		<b>ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN AND BEHAVIOUR</b>	<b>STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF TOURISTIC COMPANIES</b>
		<b>ECOLOGICAL ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT</b>	

The third step in the research included the development of a template that should be used for a comparative curriculum assessment. Information to understand the magnitude of differences and commonalities was collected and compiled in an Excel database which was used for further analyses. The comparative analysis of courses was based on the methodology proposed by Sosnovsky (2018). The complete list of the analysed course characteristics includes: course type (Bachelor or Master level), year/semester of studies (1/2/etc.), elective or mandatory nature, relations to other courses in the program, prerequisite courses, department teaching the course, course load (overall number of credits according to ECTS regulations, particular course activities (lectures/tutorials/practical work/homework/etc.).

In addition to the content analysis, the governance 'curriculums' content was assessed from the perspective of focus on resilience. Each course was evaluated as being directly connected, semi-connected, or indirectly connected with resilience. Finally, the elective or mandatory position of governance courses was also analysed. This distinction is significant because it approximates the perceived importance of governance curriculums within the field of study. Further on, we are focusing on the issue of governance courses' position within a specific year of the study. On the other hand, since the preferred way of teaching is also influencing the quality of the course, we also analysed the intensity of online teaching, the language in which

the course is taught, and how the exams are carried out. The template for comparative curriculum assessment is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Excel template for comparative curriculum assessment**

	Country
	University
	Faculty
	Institution's international accreditation*
	Course title
	Relationship to CG (direct, semi, indirect)*
	Focus of CG (General, Public, European)*
<b>COURSE TYPE</b>	Course Type (Bachelor - undergraduate, Master - graduate, PhD)*
	Elective or Mandatory*
	Students' year of study*
	Language of Teaching (national, English, Both English and national)*
<b>COURSE LOADING</b>	ECTS
	Lecture hours in class total
	Seminar hours in class total
	Tutorial hours total
<b>TEACHING ASPECTS</b>	Pedagogy (learning in the classroom, e-learning, blended learning)
	Delivery method before COVID (face-to-face, online, hybrid)
	Delivery method after COVID (face-to-face, online, hybrid)
	Use of IT
<b>COURSE CONTENT</b>	Aim of the course
	Training modules
	Learning outcomes
	Key competencies
	Students assessment

\*=closed questions from the drop-down menu

Researchers hand-picked the observed 102 courses from five countries as specified in Table 4. Courses were selected for their relationship with governance in the broad or narrow sense. Analyzed institutions are dominantly project participants' home institutions: the Complutense University of Madrid, University of Iceland, University of Vilnius, Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE), and Faculty of Economics and Business at the University of Zagreb.

**Table 4. Number of analysed courses per country**

Country	Number of analysed curriculums
Croatia	12
Romania	36
Lithuania	14
Iceland	21
Spain	19

The following courses were included in the comparative curriculum assessment:

**Table 5. Courses included in comparative curriculum assessment**

Country	Course title	Relationship to CG and resilience (direct, semi, indirect)	Focus of CG (General, Public, European)
Croatia	Corporate governance	Direct	General
Croatia	Corporate governance	Direct	General
Croatia	Authentic Leadership Development	Indirect	General
Croatia	Business Strategy	Direct	General
Croatia	Leadership	Direct	General
worldwide	Business Continuity	Direct	General
Croatia	Corporate Risk Management	Indirect	General
worldwide	Change management	Direct	General
worldwide	Leadership and Management for Nonprofit	Semi	Public
Croatia	Local government	Indirect	Public
Croatia	Management in social sector	Indirect	Public
Croatia	Managing business crises	Direct	General
Romania	Comparative Corporate Governance	Direct	General
Romania	Finance and Corporate Governance	Direct	General
Romania	Corporate Governance	Direct	General
Romania	European Economic Governance	Direct	European
Romania	Global Economic Governance	Direct	General
Romania	Multi-level governance and access in to the European funding system	Direct	European

Romania	Corporate governance	Direct	General
Romania	Corporate governance	Direct	General
Romania	Corporate governance models and practices for Romanian enterprises	Direct	General
Romania	Corporate governance	Direct	General
Romania	Corporate governance	Direct	General
Romania	European Governance	Direct	European
Romania	Internal Audit and Corporate Governance	Direct	General
Romania	Modern governance and the challenges of human resources public policies	Direct	General
Romania	Modern Governance in the European Administrative Space	Direct	Public
Romania	Modern Governance	Direct	Public
Romania	Organizational behavior and governance. Ethics and professional standards	Direct	General
Romania	Corporate governance and ethics	Direct	General
Romania	Economic globalization	Semi	General
Romania	Business services- a 21st century industry	Semi	General
Romania	International business and sustainable development	Semi	General
Romania	Organizational behavior and governance. Ethics and professional standards	Semi	General
Romania	Outsourced processes in the Business Services Industry	Semi	General
Romania	Processes Improvement in the Business Services Industry	Semi	General
Romania	Strategic business leader	Semi	general
Romania	Strategic Human Resources Management	Semi	Public
Romania	Institutions and EU policies	Semi	European
Romania	Organizational Change Management	Semi	Public
Romania	Change Management	indirect	general
Romania	Risk Management	indirect	General
Romania	Management Skills and Organizational Behaviour	Indirect	General
Romania	Geopolitics	Indirect	General
Romania	Human Resources Management	Indirect	General
Romania	Organizational behavior	Indirect	General
Romania	Organizational behavior	Indirect	General
Lithuania	Corporate Communication	Semi	General
Lithuania	Corporate Communication	Direct	General
Lithuania	Strategic Project Portfolio Management	Semi	General
Lithuania	Strategic Management	Direct	General

Lithuania	Leadership and Strategic Management	Semi	General
Lithuania	Structuring Investments and Partnerships	Semi	General
Lithuania	Change Management	Semi	General
Lithuania	Enterprise Risk Management	Semi	General
Lithuania	Corporate Governance	Direct	General
Lithuania	Risk Management	Semi	General
Lithuania	Corporate Communication	Semi	General
Lithuania	International Crisis Communications	indirect	General
Lithuania	Corporate Governance	Direct	General
Lithuania	Change Management in public sector organisations	Semi	Public
<b>Iceland</b>	Finance II	Direct	
<b>Iceland</b>	Corporate governance	Direct	General
<b>Iceland</b>	Environmental governance	Semi	General
<b>Iceland</b>	Management of Protected Areas - Field course in Southeast Iceland	Semi	Public
<b>Iceland</b>	Projectification and Sustainable of Projects	Indirect	International
<b>Iceland</b>	Term Paper in Small States Studies	Semi	General
<b>Iceland</b>	Policy Change, Innovation and Networks in Public Administration: Leading Theories	Semi	Public
<b>Iceland</b>	Control Environment	Direct	Public
<b>Iceland</b>	Local Governance	Semi	Public
<b>Iceland</b>	Theories of development	Semi	Public
<b>Iceland</b>	Constitutional Economics	Semi	General
<b>Iceland</b>	Danish System of Governance, History and Culture	Semi	European
<b>Iceland</b>	Arctic Politics in International Context	Direct	Public
<b>Iceland</b>	Climate Change, International Relations and Green Politics	Semi	International
<b>Iceland</b>	Education and education policies in a local and global context	Indirect	Public
<b>Iceland</b>	Anthropology and global warming	Direct	Public
<b>Iceland</b>	Sustainable Tourism Development in Northern Environment	Direct	European
<b>Iceland</b>	Crisis management	Direct	
<b>Iceland</b>	Performance Audit		Public
<b>Iceland</b>	Public Administration		Public
<b>Iceland</b>	Local Governance		Public



Spain	Organisational Design and Strategic Planning	semi	General
Spain	Principles of Management Science	semi	General
Spain	Public Leadership and Management Techniques	semi	Public
Spain	Public Management	semi	Public
Spain	Public Policies	semi	General
Spain	Public Policy Analysis	semi	Public
Spain	Integrated And Sustainable Management In Organisations	Semi	General
Spain	Knowledge Economics And Management	Semi	General
Spain	Strategic Management	Semi	General
Spain	Strategic Vision Of Sustainability And Corporate Social Responsibility	Semi	General
Spain	Sustainable Leadership	Semi	General
Spain	Organisational Design And Strategic Planning	Semi	Public
Spain	Ecological Economy And Sustainable Development	Semi	General
Spain	Governance, Participation And Social Media In Smart Cities	Core	Public
Spain	Resilience Strategies In Smart Cities Against Natural Disasters And Climate Change	Core	Public
Spain	Corporate Governance, Social Responsibility And Sustainability	Core	General
Spain	Competitiveness And Development Strategies In Smart Cities	Semi	General
Spain	Global Governance	Core	General
Spain	Good Governance	Core	Public

### 3. Research results

The first step of the empirical analysis was to analyse the curriculum content of the observed governance courses. For each analysed curriculum, the focus of the course had to be determined. Each course could have just one focus and thus could be classified into only one category. The results of the authors' preliminary analysis showed 12 distinct categories of courses involving the topic of governance. All these categories, together with the exact number of the courses that cover governance from these distinct perspectives, are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6. Main focus of the analysed governance-related curriculums**

<b>Main focus of the analysed governance-related curriculums</b>	<b>Number of courses</b>
Governance of different organizational contexts	16
Leadership and change management	13
General governance	12
Strategy	11
Management and communication	10
Comparative governance and governance in Europe	8
Resilience and sustainability	7
Economics	7
Risk and crisis management	7
Environmental issues	5
Financial and accounting issues of governance	4
International relations	2

Source: ' 'Author's own work

Governance in a different organizational and industrial context is covered in 16 of the analysed courses making it the biggest group of governance-related courses. Within these curriculums,

the focus is mostly on public sector governance and local governance but also covers more specialised areas such as governance within urban development or governance of protected areas. Such findings indicate that apart from general governance, academia has already recognized the need for a specific approach to governance.

The second biggest group of courses that deal with governance is from the perspective of leadership and change management. Altogether 13 courses in our analysis fall into this group of topics. Most of the courses include governance topics within leadership and organizational behaviour curriculums, usually complimented with the analysis of the conceptual framework of change management.

The highest concentration of governance topics is within the general governance group of courses which encompass 12 courses. Besides governance topics, content analysis suggests that these curriculums usually include topics of ethics. Additional 11 of the analysed courses cover governance within the business administration discipline of strategy. In courses that are focused on the topics of strategic management, business strategy, portfolio management, and business services, the topic of governance emerges from time to time in the context of its importance for the companies' long-term competitiveness.

Courses primarily dealing with management issues cover the topic of governance in the case of 10 courses out of the observed sample. The topics in focus of these courses are primarily organizational communication and different aspects of human resource management. Comparative governance and governance in Europe is the focus of eight out of the observed 102 courses. Some of these courses focus on comparative governance within European countries. In contrast, some courses deal with specific governance in their countries (Romania and the Danish system of governance in one of the curriculums from Iceland).

When it comes to teaching resilience as a part of governance courses, three distinct groups of courses are determined. Topics of resilience and sustainability are covered from different perspectives; some deal with business continuity or sustainability of certain business segments (for instance sustainable tourism development in Northern environment) while some debate suitability by focusing on the effects of corporate social responsibility on governance. The second group of courses that cover governance-related issues are mostly concentrated on economics topics, mostly in the area of global economic governance and

development theories. Finally, seven courses in our sample focus on risk and crisis management topics.

Theoretical corporate governance frameworks are also present in the courses focused on environmental issues such as global warming, climate change, and environment control. Within our sample, we have five courses that are focused on these topics. Another area that mentions corporate governance topics are the courses covering financial and accounting issues of governance. Out of four courses that fall into this group, two focus on the topic of internal and performance audits. Finally, two of the observed courses tackle issues of governance from the perspective of international affairs. One of it is focusing on geopolitical issues, while the other is specifically focused on arctic policies.

If we take an even deeper look at the focus of the observed courses, we can see that the issues of governance include different areas of studies. However, the intensity of the governance topics within the curriculum differs significantly. From that perspective, we can define three groups of courses (Table 7). The first one is the group that is focused on governance issues in more than 2/3 of the curriculum's topics. Out of the observed groups of courses in this category, we can assign general governance courses as well as courses dealing with comparative governance issues. The second group of courses concerning the intensity of governance-related topics is formed by courses dealing with governance in different organizational contexts and governance with respect to resilience and sustainability. In the curriculum of these courses governance-related topics are found in more than 1/3 and less than 2/3 of all topics. Finally, all other groups of courses cover governance issues in less than 1/3 of topics in the curriculum.

**Table 7. Intensity of governance related topics within the observed curriculums**

<b>Intensity of governance related topics (% of all the topics in the curriculum)</b>	<b>Main focus of the courses</b>	<b>Number of courses</b>
Group A – More than 66%	General governance, Comparative governance and governance in Europe	20
Group B – Between 33% and 66%	Governance of different organizational contexts, Resilience and sustainability	23

Group C – Less than 33%	Leadership and change management, Strategy, Management and communication, Economics, Risk and crisis management, Environmental issues, Financial and accounting issues of governance, International relations	59
-------------------------	---	----

Source: ' 'Author's own work

These results can be observed from the perspective of connection of the curriculums with the key issues for our research, namely the relationship of governance issues with resilience. The results of the analysis indicate that 41 courses are directly connected with resilience issues, 43 courses are semi-connected with these issues and 14 courses are indirectly associated with theoretical frameworks of resilience. Further on, most courses that deal with governance issues are positioned at the graduate level of university education. Out of 102 courses, only 23 are placed at the undergraduate level. Also, most of the observed courses are taught in the national languages of each country. Of the observed courses, 28 are though in English and 6 in both English and the national language.

From the perspective of ways of dissemination of knowledge, most courses are based on blended learning, while 23 courses are held only in class, and only 2 courses use only e-learning.

#### 4. Conclusions

Governance is a controversial concept that does not enjoy a single, overarching definition (Olowu, 2002: 345). The fact that there are various approaches to the study of governance, which corresponds to a different school of thought, leads to various approaches to teaching governance in higher education. However, there are several principles and values that frame the concept of governance, which stem from international organizations (e.g., United Nations, OECD, World Bank, etc.), such as: participation, transparency, the rule of law, accountability, efficiency, effectiveness, partnership, sustainability, agility, etc. These underlying normative values can be the first point in framing governance curriculums.

Recent research on the content and structure of HEI programs shows that they still emphasize functional knowledge (e.g., marketing, accounting, economics, finance, and strategy), rather than people skills and ethical awareness (Mintzberg & Gosling, 2004; Schlegelmilch & Thomas 2011; Segon & Booth 2012). There is an urgent need to rebalance the curriculum to foster combining analytical capabilities, managerial skills, and attention to ethics and good governance. In addition, COVID-19 has revealed the importance of resilience.

The comparative assessment conducted as a part of this paper has assessed the content of several governance-related courses. Research findings confirm a lack of definition of what governance actually is, as governance-related curriculums lack a unified focus. Apart from general governance, other courses related to governance focus on marketing, finance and accounting, strategy, economics, environmental issues, and other. Nevertheless, all these topics are important in the context of tentative governance that is recently gaining importance (Kuhlmann et al., 2019), especially considering the rapid pace of environmental changes and challenges.

Academics recognized the need to modernize governance-related curriculums even before the pandemic (e.g., see Wooldridge, 2004; Awortwi, 2011; Cepiku, 2011), but recent events request not only to rethink curriculum content but teaching methods as well. One of the aspects to highlight, based on the curricula analysed in the different institutions, is that although the contents related to governance and good governance are present to a greater

or lesser extent in all the courses within the disciplines that have been considered as a centre of interest, those contents only constitute the fundamental theoretical and analytical framework in just over one third of them. Besides, where these contents are present, they mainly refer to courses in graduate programs, while they are present in undergraduate programs to a much lesser extent. In the same way, although different aspects related to the relationship between resilience and good governance are effectively dealt with in most courses, for only a few of them, it is a central element when building the core contents and the main framework of analysis. Therefore, the challenge arises of transforming what is so far an indirect and lateral approach to the problem of resilience from the perspective of different functionally defined fields of knowledge (as stated above), to the design of a curriculum that specifically and systematically deals with the relations between good governance and resilience as a main theoretical and analytical framework in different fields and academic disciplines.

In any step, the pandemic and its consequences have marked a turning point when considering updating curricular content to incorporate the issue of the relationship between good governance and resilience in a more specific way (Galaitzi et al., 2021). This circumstance also leads us to consider the theoretical and practical problems of using a concept, that of resilience, no less controversial than that of governance (Brand & Jax, 2007). On the one hand, substantial progress has been made in clarifying the concept and its relationship with other related concepts such as risk, vulnerability, and the trade-offs between resilience and efficiency (Cañizares et al., 2021) while, on the other, the problems posed by its characterization as a normative concept still remain (Thorén & Olsson, 2018). However, none of this should prevent a more extensive and coherent introduction of these contents both in undergraduate and graduate programs; rather, it should call for a continuing debate about the theoretical and practical consequences of different approaches.

New contents in the curriculum should then pay close attention to governance tools and processes and how they are related to the construction of resilience as an embedded capacity of organizations and institutional arrangements of any kind (Masten & Obradović, 2006). Among those governance tools, special attention should be paid to issues such as the creation of social capital in organizations and communities (Aldrich & Meyer, 2015). The aim of such curriculums would be teaching how to develop complex and flexible skills, and for that

purpose teaching methods should be oriented towards the use of case studies and a comparative approach (Mauffette-Leenders et al., 2014).

The governance scenario is, according to many authors, a scenario defined by complexity (Chandler, 2014), and paradoxically, governance is a key element for managing that complexity. In addition, the scenario in which the problems related to good governance arise is a scenario characterized by the speed of technological and ecological changes (Brown, 2012). In this context, the notion of resilience has been making its way as a particularly suitable perspective for the analysis and search for solutions to the challenges faced by the governance of organizations and states (Peters & Pierre, 1998; OECD, 2014). But the link between governance and resilience presents some problems in theory and practice.

The concept of resilience has its origin in the study of ecological systems. Still, more recently, its use has been generalized for the study of phenomena and dynamics that affect social systems, and, in fact, it is an important part of studies on sustainability (Lebel et al., 2006; Garmestani & Benson, 2013). There are several issues to consider when it comes to the relationship between governance and resilience. On the one hand, to what extent is the concept of resilience useful for examining and better understanding governance problems? On the other hand, in what sense does resilience constitute an objective of good governance, and, finally, what instruments of good governance are necessary to achieve more resilient social systems?

Every organisation should deal with the tentativeness of ex-ante or ex-post expectations when potential changes at both national and international levels are considered. Critical discussion in this study brings to the assumption that the modes of governance may change more rapidly than research studies or curriculum renewals indicate. However, the conceptualisation of governance through tentative elements in decision-making processes may help different organizational settings avoid unrealistic visions and show conditions, contexts, limits, or failures in the rationalisation of teaching governance. The COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the importance of resilience, which has been greatly neglected as a part of teaching curriculums. A review of the academic literature, in combination with the conducted research, makes it possible to identify a series of elements of good governance that seem to guarantee a better adaptation to changes and greater resilience. These include a multi-



perspective view of governance in accordance with the existing curriculums but with a much stronger emphasis on resilience topics.

Future research could be developed in various lines that could address both issues related to the implementation of new subjects in the curricula, as well as the effects on the training of graduates. From the point of view of implementation, it would be important, on the one hand, to assess the problems that may arise from the redefinition of some studies in order to reorient them more explicitly towards the frameworks defined by the concepts of governance and resilience, and the incorporation of these topics as specific courses within undergraduate and graduate programs. From the point of view of the results, it would also be urgent to estimate to what extent this type of content that is intended to be incorporated truly serves to equip graduates with better skills and tools to face the problems of the organizations in which they are going to develop as professionals.

This study has several limitations. First, the quality of conclusions depends upon the analysed curriculums collected from authors' home institutions. Second, some curriculums contained more information than others. Third, the number of analysed curriculums per country differs, so some countries included curriculums that were just more strongly related to governance than others.

## References

- AACSB International. (2009). *Eligibility procedures and accreditation standards for business accreditation*. Tampa, FL.
- Aldrich, D. P., & Meyer, M. A. (2015). Social capital and community resilience. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 59(2), 254–269. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764214550299>
- Awortwi, N. (2011). An unbreakable path? A comparative study of decentralization and local government development trajectories in Ghana and Uganda. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 77(2), 347–377. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852311399844>
- Brand, F. S., & Jax, K. (2007). Focusing the meaning(s) of resilience: resilience as a descriptive concept and a boundary object. *Ecology and society*, 12(1), Article 23.
- Brown, K. (2012). Policy discourses of resilience. In M. Pelling, D. Manuel-Navarrete, & M. Redclift (Eds.), *Climate change and the crisis of capitalism: A chance to reclaim self, society and nature* (1st ed., pp. 37–50). Routledge.
- Bryant, M., Sigurjonsson, T. O., & Mixa, M. W. (2018). Governance Mechanisms Post-Crisis. In: T. O. Sigurjonsson, D. L. Schwarzkopf, & M. Bryant (Eds.), *The Return of Trust? Institutions and the Public after the Icelandic Financial Crisis* (pp. 245–262). Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Cañizares, J. C., Copeland, S. M., & Doorn, N. (2021). Making sense of resilience. *Sustainability*, 13(15), Article 8538. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13158538>
- Cepiku, D. (2011). Public administration PhD programmes in Italy: Comparing different disciplinary approaches. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 77(2), 379–396. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852311399238>
- Chandler, D. (2014). *Resilience: The governance of complexity*. Routledge.
- Dyck, B., & Schroeder, D. (2005). Management, theology, and moral points of view: Towards an alternative to the conventional materialist-individualist ideal-type of management. *Journal of Management Studies*, 42(4), 705–735. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2005.00516.x>
- Ferraro, F., Pfeffer, J., & Sutton, R. I. (2005). Economics language and assumptions: How theories can become self-fulfilling. *Academy of Management Review*, 30(1), 8–24. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2005.15281412>

Galaitis, S., Kurth, M., & Linkov, I. (2021). Resilience: Directions for an uncertain future following the COVID-19 pandemic. *GeoHealth*, 5(11), Article e2021GH000447. <https://doi.org/10.1029/2021GH000447>

Garmestani, A. S., & Benson, M. H. (2013). A framework for resilience-based governance of social-ecological systems. *Ecology and Society*, 18(1), Article 9. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5751/ES-05180-180109>

Ghoshal, S. (2005). Bad management theories are destroying good management practices. *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 4(1), 75–91. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2005.16132558>

Giacalone, R. A., & Thompson, K. R. (2006). Business ethics and social responsibility education: Shifting the worldview. *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 5(3), 266–277. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2006.22697016>

Graduate Management Admission Council. (2012). *Global Management Education Graduate Survey*. <https://www.gmac.com/-/media/files/gmac/research/curriculum-insight/2012-gmegs-survey-report-early-release.pdf>

Kuhlmann, S., Stegmaier, P., & Konrad, K. (2019). Focusing on a moving target—the tentative governance of emerging science and technology. *Research Policy*, 48(5), 1091-1097.

Lebel, L., Anderies, J. M., Campbell, B., Folke, C., Hatfield-Dodds, S., Hughes, T. P., & Wilson, J. (2006). Governance and the capacity to manage resilience in regional social-ecological systems. *Ecology and society*, 11(1), Article 19.

Masten, A. S., & Obradović, J. (2006). Competence and resilience in development. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1094(1), 13–27. <https://doi.org/10.1196/annals.1376.003>

Mauffete-Leenders, L. A., Erskine, J. A., & Leenders, M. R. (2014). *Learning with Cases* (4th ed.). Richard Ivey School of Business, University of Western Ontario.

Mintzberg, H., & Gosling, J. R. (2002). Reality programming for MBAs. *Strategy and Business*, 26(1), 28–31.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2014) *Boosting Resilience through innovative risk governance*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264209114-en>

Olowu, D. (2002) Introduction—Governance and Public Administration in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Research and Training Prospectus, *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 68(3), 345–353. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852302683003>

Peters, B. G., & Pierre, J. (1998). Governance without government? Rethinking public administration. *Journal of public administration research and theory: J-PART*, 8(2), 223–243.

Podolny, J. M. (2009 June). The buck stops (and starts) at business school. *Harvard Business Review*, 87(6), 62–67.

Schlegelmilch, B. B., & Thomas, H. (2011). The MBA in 2020: Will there still be one? *Journal of Management Development*, 30(5), 474–482. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02621711111132984>

Segon, M., & Booth, C. (2012). Are MBAs meeting business's needs? *World Journal of Management*, 4(2), 1–13.

Shleifer, A., & Vishny, R. W. (1997). A Survey of Corporate Governance. *The Journal of Finance*, 52(2), 737–783. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2329497>

Sosnovsky, S. (2018). Methodology for Comparative Analysis of Courses. In: S. Pohjolainen, T. Myllykoski, C. Mercat, & S. Sosnovsky (Eds.), *Modern Mathematics Education for Engineering Curricula in Europe*. Birkhäuser. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-71416-5\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-71416-5_2)

Thorén, H., & Olsson, L. (2018). Is resilience a normative concept? *Resilience*, 6(2), 112–128. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21693293.2017.1406842>

Wooldridge, B. (2004). Preparing public administrators for an era of globalization and decentralization: A strategic-contingency approach. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 70(2): 385–403. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852304044263>