

# *The National School of Administration in France and Its Impact on Public Policy Making*

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The purpose of this paper is to determine the extent to which the graduates of the National School of Administration (*Ecole Nationale d'Administration* – ENA) determine the making of public policy in France. The paper wants to test four hypotheses. The first one states that there is as a positive association between the hierarchy of position occupied by the civil servant and public policy determination. The second states that the policy influence grows with the length of the duration of the detached service the civil servant performs, while the third one assumes the influence on policy making by the civil servant grows after his return to the career post. The fourth hypothesis suggests that there exists a positive relation between the participation of civil servants in professional and political associations and the extent of their public policy input. The paper also tries to

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asses the efficacy of the external controls (Senate, National Assembly, etc.) and internal controls (Prime Minister's Office, Council of State, etc.) of the bureaucracy in order to determine whether the civil service might dominate the area of policy determination in addition to its implementation. In addition, the paper seeks to establish an empirical profile of the *grands corps*.

*Key words:* *Ecole National d'Administration*-ENA, graduates, *grands corps*, public policy making, decision-making, detached service, control mechanisms

It is the purpose of this study to determine the extent to which the graduates of the National School of Administration (*Ecole National d'Administration*) or ENA – the only method of entry into the *grands corps* and lesser corps of the state – determine the making of public policy in addition to its implementation.

Established in 1945 to train generalist administrators for the civil service of post-war France, ENA currently admits about 80 French and 30 foreign students annually<sup>1</sup> to its practically oriented program (*programme d'application*) following its rigorous entrance examinations of about a week. The percentage of those admitted through its external, from outside the service, and internal, from within the service, competitions is about 7%. The opening up of the higher levels of the service to low-level employees from within the service was one of the revolutionary features of the 1945 law founding ENA. In practice, even though candidates admitted to ENA from within the service come from broader and humbler social backgrounds than external students, it is those with university education or those who attended the ENA preparatory course of two years who succeed. Internal students have never made up 50% of the student body, ENA's yearly quota for civil servants (Reimer, 1977: 76–77).

A majority of the successful candidates are of middle and upper class origins, and are graduates of the *Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris* (IEPP), formerly the *Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques*, a private school. The first

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<sup>1</sup> *L'ENA en chiffres*, p. 1–7, give detailed information about the number of students and the newer programs of ENA which illustrate its diversification developments beyond its basic program termed *Le cycle de formation initiale*. [ww.ena.fr/index.php?fr/institution/ena-chiffres](http://ww.ena.fr/index.php?fr/institution/ena-chiffres)

year at the IEPP, called *annee preparatoire* is intended for students coming from secondary school (*lycee*). The vast majority of students entering ENA have done the *annee preparatoire*, the year in which students acquire the 'style sciences Po' – the *methode*, the essentially deductive forms of reasoning valued as a *capacite de synthese*, a way of perceiving reality and even a style of speech and dress«. It is also during this year »... when the student finds his 'model' among the *maitres des conferences*«, the majority of whom are members of the *grands corps* (Reimer, 1977: 48).

The ENA program of studies emphasizes internships. One of about ten months in the office of a prefect, a microcosm of the French administration, and one of about ten weeks in a private sector company or a state enterprise such as Air France. Upon completion of the two-year program, with much of it taking place now in Strasbourg instead of its former headquarters in Paris, students are ranked in order of their overall performance with a certain weight given to one's performance on the entrance examinations. This final ranking (*classement*) determines selection of one's job preference from the list of available vacancies with the first on the list choosing his/her position, then the second and so on. Approximately the first 15 on the final ranking opt to work for one of the *grands corps*, the Inspectorate of Finance (*Inspection des Finances*), the Court of Accounts (*Cours des Comptes*), the Council of State (*Conseil d'Etat*), the Ministry of External Affairs, and a few other. The others join the ranks of the civil administrators (*administrateurs civils*). It is of interest that the Inspectorate of Finance is considered to be *le plus grand des grands corps*. It should be noted here that, due to the differences in prestige, career development, future prospects, remuneration and perks between the *grands corps* and other government corps as well as among ministries, the final ranking assumes crucial importance. The *grands corps* attracts those at the top of the graduating class and this contributes to the perpetuation of their competence and prestige.

Organizationally, ENA is an administrative body attached to the Department of the Prime Minister through the General Directorate of the Public Service. The School has a governing body, *Conseil d'Administration*, chaired by the Vice President of the Council of State. Attached to the governing body is a committee, *Conseil d'orientation*, specifically concerned with curricular affairs. ENA is headed by a director who is assisted by an administrative staff and supervised by a secretary general. Most of the work of ENA is performed by a largely non-permanent staff.

In terms of curriculum, the 1971 reforms, focusing on method rather than content, formed the basis of ENA training practices until 1987 when new

reforms were introduced. Although there have been further changes since then, ENA training continues to rely on case studies and problem solving in taxation and budget, labour relations, administrative regulations, and international affairs (Stevens, 1980: 252). Considerable group work, decision-making exercises, macro and microeconomic simulations, guest speakers, fieldwork, language laboratory training and report preparation in the seminars and optional projects, constitute the methods of learning. Additionally, the study of specialized subjects and topics offered by means of seminar groups, aim to provide a form of pragmatic administrative experience. Here, under the guidance of a practicing administrator, the students work in groups, simulating the functions of a plural administrative body. The particular seminar's final report is distributed to all students. The final phase of the ENA program involves electives (*options*), requiring each student to select two topics for group study leading to a group report. Primary sources such as site visits, interviews, official documents and other, are often used in this connection.

Many of the ENA graduates, partly due to the training they received at the School and especially the socializing influences of their career corps, are drafted to serve on detail in the positions of ministers, assistant ministers, directors of public enterprise, members of ministerial cabinets, and other, for as long as they are needed. De Gaulle actively promoted the colonization of the political domain by enlisting the expertise of the higher civil service while asserting his central authority.<sup>2</sup> It is this high mobility within the civil service from administrative to political positions and back through service *en détachement*, which has contributed the most to the political-administrative interface.

At any one time about one-third of the members of the *Conseil d'Etat* (nominally an administrative tribunal), one-fourth of the members of the *Cours des Comptes* (similar to the comptroller-general's office) and two-thirds of the inspectors of finance (the top echelons of the Treasury) might be on detached service, special missions to other administrative agencies or special assignments (Ehrman, 1983: 308).

The Gaullist regimes of the Fifth Republic greatly increased the role of the career civil service in public policy making, largely because of de Gaulle's distaste for party politics and the dire need for economic development.

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<sup>2</sup> According to de Baeque, in a presidential regime the unity of the executive requires that there is no demarcation between the cabinet members, in the Fifth Republic no longer responsible to the National Assembly, and the higher civil service (De Baeque, 1981: 37).

»His dislike of parties and the groups they represented left him with little alternative but to turn over the government of France to an elite of civil servants, who in the end, proved to be more narrow than any of the politicians he had dispossessed« (Fears, 1981: 58–64).

The weakening of parliamentary controls has further contributed to the power of the public bureaucracy. Since the extension of the rule-making power of the government in 1958, high-ranking civil servants have prepared vital policy decisions without consulting parliament or other elective officials, for example the currency reform of 1958 and economic measures introduced with it, the stabilization plan of 1961, the reforms of the courts and social security system, the reform of the administrative structure of the Paris region, the integration of France into the European Union (EU) early in the process, and other.

Bureaucratic power has been further strengthened as a result of the centralization of decision-making authority in the president's office, which has contributed to another type of administrative centralization. In the French civil service, dominated by dense and rigid rules, exceptions are inevitable. However, such exceptions can only be granted by senior administrative officials. This forces another area of decision making to the higher administrative echelons, adding to their power.

What has been the role of ENA, established under the Fourth Republic, in the conditions and political milieu of the Fifth? Views concur that ENA is an eminently successful institution, which has succeeded in some respects and failed in others. It recruits capable people likely to discharge the responsibilities of the highest offices with distinction, it has established high professionalism in its operations, contributed to the improvement of communication within the administration due to the network of its graduates, and is responsible for the development of an ethos it passes to its graduates.

While this ethos defies definition, it can be traced to upper-class cultural values; the spirit of the former private *Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques*, continuing in its successor public institution (IEPP), with its emphasis on intellectual approaches based on general culture (*culture generale*); ENA's early philosophy developed by Debre (the School's architect), Racine, and others; the emphasis given to economic and Keynesian ideas during the training; and the competitiveness introduced by the final ranking (*classement*) which results in the adoption of a style perceived to be favoured by the examiners. It is this ENA ethos, together with the ENA emphasis on expert and efficient answers, which promotes a conformist approach stressing technical correctness or technocratism.

The technocratic ideology, going back to Saint-Simon, holds that it is the expert and not the politician who is the source of the best solutions to modern problems. To put it differently, social problems may best be met with technical solutions. Hence, the problems confronting a nation must be depoliticized and the technocratic approach with its presumed expertness and objectivity should dominate all social and economic policy. The term »technocrat« has often been applied to ENA graduates because of a common outlook emphasizing depoliticized thinking and the application of logically correct solutions to problems.

ENA has been further criticized for its failure to broaden significantly the regional basis of recruitment and educational background of its entrants. Data show that about 70 per cent of the successful candidates in the ENA external examination come from the upper and upper-middle classes with the vast majority of them from the Paris area. There are indications, however, that the social origins of the ENA student body have become more diverse over time. Above all, ENA has maintained its monopoly of recruitment to senior non-technical positions based on high scholastic achievement and intellectual capacity.

Criticism has also been directed at the training ENA provides, namely that in spirit, method and content, with the exception of the internships, it is nothing more than what most students have already experienced at the IEPP. The curriculum, despite its practicality and adaptation to the needs of modern administration, has not been based on a study of the actual job requirements of the various corps and ministries it serves. Curricular reforms have occurred but the emphases on the accepted ways of doing, adoption of the proper administrative style, learning to operate within the existing context, have continued.

Even some of the ENA graduates themselves have questioned and criticized the very system through which they have gone. The interviews I conducted in Paris in 2008, involving an accidental sample of 20 ENA graduates, indicate that ENA was the sole avenue leading to a career in government service offering challenging work and opportunity to satisfy individual needs. There was consensus that it was more the rigorous selection of the ENA external competition rather than the training offered by ENA itself that accounted for the success of ENA graduates. The prefectural internship was by far the most positive experience of the ENA training. Group seminars and the optional subjects, essentially group projects, were highly thought of but more in terms of the methods used and opportunity for interaction rather than content. Major negative aspects of the ENA experience were the feeling that aside from the internship

nothing new was learned and the intense competitiveness induced by the final ranking. Responses further disclosed that during the ENA competition and throughout the training program, manners and behaviour, how one conducted oneself (*comportment*) critically affected the judgment of examining boards.

Of importance is the criticism describing ENA as the *seminaire du regime*. Evidence tends to support this viewpoint. First, the nature of the Fifth Republic is determined by a constitution that was largely the work of Michel Debre, ENA's founder, and a team mainly composed of ENA graduates (Debre, 1975: 21). Second, ENA graduates have provided to the Fifth Republic three presidents, numerous prime ministers, ministers and junior ministers. Third, every general election since 1958 has seen an increasing number of *enarques* elected to parliament, largely members of parties supporting the governing coalition. Fourth, the Cabinet of the President, the Cabinet of the Prime Minister and all the ministerial cabinets have included large numbers of civil servants, largely ENA graduates. Fifth, the nature of the regime accorded a special place to the administration by substantially strengthening the executive, weakening parliamentary control, and divorcing government and parliament, thus promoting the direct appointment of civil servants to ministerial posts.<sup>3</sup>

The presence of ENA graduates in ministerial cabinets does not necessarily imply that their political views mirror those of their minister. Cabinets of the Fifth have included civil servants of all political persuasions and this is largely due to the minister's need for officials who can understand and control the work of the administration. Administrative competence has tended to be more crucial than other factors in appointment to ministerial cabinet jobs, which are part of a normal progression in the career of many civil servants on their way to the top. There is no indication suggesting the existence of a pact between the government and top administrative cadres. The governments of the Fifth Republic have reinforced the power of the executive and they have also successfully ensured the subordination of officials.

It is a fact that many *enarques* have looked to a political career as the proper avenue for their talents and energies, but there is nothing to suggest that ENA has been responsible for their decision. Although the proportion of ENA graduates attracted to a political career has substantially increased

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<sup>3</sup> The first ENA graduates entered ministerial cabinets in 1950. By the 1970s, about 30% of all *enarques*, or a total of 505, had served in a cabinet. These numbers rose substantially in the 1990s and later, especially during the Chirac presidency (Annuaire International de la Fonction Publique, 2010–11).

during the life of the Fifth Republic, it still is a relatively small proportion. Of the total number of ENA graduates, about 3 per cent on the average have sought elective office and about 2 per cent have succeeded.

It should further be noted that the diversity of political ideologies of *enarques* does not suggest that ENA produces individuals with uniform outlooks and approaches. Evidence indicates that it is the practices, approaches, and policies of the particular administrative corps of an *enarque* that conditions the official behaviour and outlook of the particular ENA graduate rather than the training received at ENA. It is significant that most of the ENA graduates with successful political careers have been members of the *grands corps*. Well over half of the *enarques* who by the beginning of this century had served as ministers or members of parliament came from the *grands corps*. Membership and experience in the *grands corps* are far more dominant factors in the relationship between *enarques* and politics than mere graduation from ENA. ENA serves the purposes of the *grands corps*. It is from the top of the ENA graduating class that they obtain their members and it is the vested interests of the *grands corps* in maintaining their unique identify and privileged place in the French administration that have interfered with reformist ideas. »The ENA exists in the shadow of the *corps*. It reflects their glammers, it draws on them for many of its staff who can represent their viewpoint, and it nourishes them by selecting the high-fliers who will fill their ranks« (Stevens, 1980: 427).

The *grands corps* have been extensively studied by French scholars and the question of whether in the Fifth Republic they rule France has received considerable attention. Notable contributions have been made by Bodiguel, Kessler, Quermonne, Thoenig and others. Still, among the most authoritative works that are to some extent empirical, are those of Ezra Suleiman, *Politics, Power and Bureaucracy in France* (1974) and *Elites in French Society* (1978). Both books contain individual interview responses from high-ranking civil servants but these are few, used to illustrate points the author wishes to make.

Of pertinence, here are the findings of a study the author of this paper conducted to fill the void caused by the scarcity of empirical data. The study is concerned with two major questions. First, to determine the extent to which higher civil servants, members of the *grands corps*, enter into public policy formation, and second, to ascertain whether their policy-making input is only a temporary phenomenon, practiced while serving on detail in political positions, or continues upon return to their regular post. In this context and to this end, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

- (1) There is a positive association between the hierarchy of position occupied and public policy determination. The higher the position is in the structure of the government hierarchy, the greater the influence exerted on public policy formation is likely to be. At the top levels administration and politics merge. A confirmation is here sought of what is generally known but with reference to the *grands corps* alone.
- (2) Public policy influence is directly related to the frequency and overall duration of the *détachements* of higher civil servants especially the details to predominantly political positions. The higher the frequency and longer the duration of details the greater the input in public policy making is likely to be. It has been observed that higher functionaries detailed from administrative posts to service in policy-making positions have a proportionally higher input in public policy formation since this is now a larger part of their formal responsibilities. Such input tends to increase with the number and length of details.
- (3) The influence in policy making on return to the career post increases as a result of the frequency and overall duration of the details, especially those to political positions. There have been indications that the longer the period of detail in political posts and the more frequent the occurrences of *détachement* in political positions are, the more likely it is that civil servants will influence public policy on return to the corps to a greater extent than before the detail. It is thought that this might be due to promotion within the corps as a result of the experience gained and the informal professional and political contacts developed during the periods of detail.
- (4) There is a positive association between the participation of civil servants in (a) professional and (b) political activities and the extent of their public policy input. Evidence indicates that citizens who are more active in professional and political associations than others tend to exert a greater amount of influence in the making of public policy than those who are less active.

It was also thought necessary to obtain information on the efficacy of external controls, (Senate, National Assembly, and other) and internal controls (Prime Minister's Office, Council of State and other) of the bureaucracy in order to determine whether the civil service might dominate the area of policy determination in addition to its implementation. In in-

stances where the external and internal controls over the civil service are effective, there is little likelihood that this might be the case. Conversely, where these controls are ineffective or non-existent, the government bureaucracy would be likely to dominate the area of public policy making.

Lastly, the study seeks to establish an empirical profile of the *grands corps*, today almost totally composed of graduates of ENA, an elite whose influence in the administration of France remains without parallel and from the ranks of which the Fifth Republic has drawn three of its presidents and most of its prime ministers and ministers.

To obtain the requisite empirical data it was found necessary to administer a mail questionnaire (Appendix 1) to a random probability sample of 330 French higher civil servants, stratified by corps. The sample was equally drawn from the three top corps – the Council of State, the Court of Accounts and the Inspectorate of Finance. The questionnaire, translated into French, had been pre-tested earlier. It was administered to a random sample of 50 members of the Council of State. Of these, 18 were returned. The pre-tested, finalized version of the questionnaire was mailed from Paris to 110 members of each of the three corps, selected at random, with a cover letter guaranteeing the anonymity of the responses and a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Of the 330 questionnaires, a total of 110 or 33% have been returned. Of these, 32 came from members of the Council of State, 43 from the Court of Accounts, and 35 from the Inspectorate of Finance. Considering that the total professional population of the Council of State is about 270, Court of Accounts 330, and Inspectorate of Finance 200, a total of about 800, the number of returns makes extrapolations possible.

It would be of interest to present the emergent profile of the respondents first so that the population is defined in terms of its major characteristics. Thus, the subsequent analyses could be better understood.

The responses to Q. 1, »How long have you been a member of the *Grands Corps*«, exhibited considerable variability, ranging from 1 to 45 years with the mean at 22.05 and the median 22.00. Out of the 109 respondents, 55% have been with the *grands corps* for 19 years or longer and 21% for 6 years or less. Obviously, the majority of this population has substantial professional experiences.

In response to Q. 2, »Are you a graduate of the National School of Administration (ENA)«, 93.6% (102) out of 109 responded affirmatively. This confirms the prevalent notion that graduation from ENA is the *carte d'entrée* into the *grands corps*.

In response to Q. 3, »Are you a graduate of: (a) the Institute of Political Studies of Paris (IEPP), (b) other«, 80.4% (86) out of 107 indicated that they graduated from IEPP and 19.6% (21) from other institutions of higher learning. Here as well, another commonly held notion, that the vast majority of the candidates who succeed in ENA's external entrance examinations have attended IEPP, is confirmed.

Of the 103 respondents to Q. 4, »Which of the following has contributed the most to your professional career, professional outlook, and general professionalism«, results were as follows:

- 21.4% (22), (a) graduation from ENA
- 64.1% (66), (b) membership in the *Grands Corps*
- 9.7% (10), (c) having often served on detail
- 4.9% (5), (d) other.

Evidently, it is the training imparted by the *grands corps* and their socializing influences that are the primary factors in the development of careers and professionalism. The role of ENA here, although secondary, is still substantial. Worthy of notice is that only about 10% consider detailed service to have been a major contributory factor in this area.

Of the 103 respondents to Q. 5 (a), »How many times have you served on detail?« and (b) »Indicate what the total time of periods you served on detail is (years)«, 81.6% (84) had served at least once and 51.5% (53) had been on detail 2 to 4 times. The total number of years on details was an average of 9.97 (median 8.00). Evidently, members of the *grands corps* spend about 10 years on an average of 2.59 (median 2.00) full-time assignments away from their career job, a highly developmental experience.

Responses to Q. 6, n = 109, »How many of the times you served on detail were to: (a) mainly administrative positions, (b) mainly political positions?«, indicate that 57.4% (65) served on detail in administrative positions at least once (mean number of times 2.56, median 1.00) and 40.4% (44) served at least one time in political positions (mean number of times 2.22, median 1.00). The data suggest that assignments to other administrative posts are a more likely occurrence than details to political jobs.

Q. 15 aims to ascertain involvement in professional and other associations by asking, »To which of the following types of organizations do you belong and have held continuous membership«. Of the respondents, n = 109, 84.4% (92) hold memberships in associations. The distribution is as follows:

- (a) 59.6% (65) belong to professional associations
- (b) 19.3% (21) are members of civil service associations
- (c) 2.8% (3) are members of political party associations
- (d) 2.7% (3) belong to various other organizations.

The data suggest that this is largely professional, bureaucratic elite. By collapsing the first two, professional and civil service associations, the total 78.9% (86), makes this more evident. By contrast, the 2.8%, representing those who hold membership in political parties, suggests low political involvement. It implies that this population is not politically active.

The responses to Q. 16, »How many times have you held office in any of these types of associations (professional, civil service, political, other)?« help explain the degree of professional and other categories of activism. Of the total (n = 109), 53.5% (62) have held office in any one of the types mentioned. The average number of times one had held office was 2.96 while the median was 1.00. The variance between the mean and the median implies that a small number of respondents have held office in professional and other association numerous times.

The responses to Q. 17, »How many times have you actively participated in political electoral and other campaigns?« aimed to ascertain the extent of political activism, are interesting. Of the 104 respondents, 44.2% (46) participated in such campaigns on the average 1.53 times. This denotes a higher degree of political activism by comparison to the 2.8% of those holding membership in a political party (Q. 15).

Q. 18, »How many times have you yourself run for political office?« taps another dimension of political activism. Of the 102 who responded to this question, 22.5% (23) had run for political office. The mean number of times here was 0.77. These results must be considered in conjunction with the responses to Q. 19 (a) »How many times have you been elected to office?« and Q. 19 (b) »Total number of years you have held political office/s.« Of the respondents (n = 100), 21% (21) were elected to office at least once for an average of 2.22 years. In terms of becoming candidates for elective political office and winning, the members of the *grands corps* exhibit substantial activism with over one fifth of them occupying elective office. It may, therefore, be inferred that they are politicized in the sense that in their elective positions they are directly involved in policy determination.

To obtain information about how the sample represented the various hierarchical levels, Q. 23 was introduced: »Is the position you now occupy

in the particular *grands corps* in which you are regularly serving at (a) the beginning, (b) middle, (c) top levels of the organizational hierarchy?«. Of the 103 who responded to this question:

- (a) 8.7% (9) were at the beginning levels of the hierarchy
- (b) 34.0% (35) in the middle, and
- (c) 57.3% (59) at the top levels.

What seems to emerge here is an inverted hierarchy, heavy at the top. The *grands corps* are small, closed services based on the concept of career, recruiting at an entry level five to fifteen a year from the top of ENA's graduating class and promoting only from within. The pattern of organization, involving few levels, is semi-hierarchical and the administrative pattern collegial. Retirees continue to be members of their corps on inactive duty.

Q. 24 attempts to determine in which type of positions, administrative or political, the majority spend most of their career. It asks, »What is the total number of years you have spent in government service in: (a) mainly administrative positions, (b) mainly political positions?«. The average, in the case of administrative positions is 19.73 years and the median 15.00 (n = 105) while, in the case of political positions, the mean is 4.43 and median 3.00 years (n = 54). The data suggest that the *grands corps* are immersed in predominantly administrative duties.

Q. 25 aims at ascertaining upward mobility within the corps by asking: »How many times have you been promoted within the particular *grands corps* to which you belong?« Of the respondents (n = 98), 87.1% (95) have been promoted at least once and 71.5% (81) at least twice. The mode was 34.9% (38) and involved two promotions. The average number of promotions was 2.52 (median 2.00). Upward mobility within a corps, a hierarchy with few levels, seems to be adequate.

Q. 26 pertains to the level of education attained. It asks, »What is the highest college or university degree you have earned«. Of the 108 respondents:

- (a) 8.3% (9) had done work equivalent to a junior college degree
- (b) 49.1% (53) had earned a bachelor's degree or the equivalent
- (c) 41.7% (45) had earned a master's degree or the equivalent
- (d) .9% (1) had earned a university doctoral degree.

Among the holders of BA and MA degrees, the number of those who had specialized in either law or political science was high. In addition, almost all had gone through the two-year program of ENA that involves one

ten-month internship in a prefecture and another one of three months in the private sector. Undoubtedly, the members of the *grands corps* are well educated and superbly trained both at ENA and within the corps themselves.

Q. 27 attempts to gain some knowledge of the social and economic antecedents of the members of the *grand corps* by asking: »What is or was the profession of your: (a) father, (b) mother«. The 104 responses concerning the father's profession, categorized along major occupational lines, appear below:

	Occupation	Per cent	No. of answers
1	Medical doctor	8.7%	(9)
2	Lawyer	3.8%	(4)
3	Industry, commerce,	24.0%	(25)
4	Scientists, engineers	7.7%	(8)
5	Civil servants	36.5%	(38)
6	Schoolteacher	5.8%	(6)
7	University faculty	4.8%	(5)
8	Military staff	2.9%	(3)
9	Skilled laborer	3.8%	(4)
10	Farmer	1.0%	(1)
11	Retired	1.0%	(1)

By collapsing (1) through (4) into one category, labelled »Professional«, (5) through (8) into another, labelled »Public employees«, and (9) through (11) into »Other« we have:

- (a) Professional 44.2% (46)
- (b) Public employees 50.0% (52)
- (c) Other 5.8% (6)

Almost all the members of the *grands corps* come from fathers who are or were professionals or civil servants. Many of the latter were serving or had served in the upper echelons of the public bureaucracy including the *grands corps*. The social and economic antecedents of the majority are identified with the upper-middle class.

Of the total number of households (n = 104), 64.4% (67) of the mothers did not work. The 37 mothers gainfully employed were distributed by occupation as follows:

	Occupation	Per cent	No. of answers
(1)	Medical doctor	13.5%	(5)
(2)	Civil servant	13.5%	(5)
(3)	Schoolteacher	29.7%	(11)
(4)	University faculty	5.4%	(2)
(5)	Banking, commerce	27.0%	(10)
(6)	Worker	8.1%	(3)
(7)	Farmer	2.7%	(1)

By collapsing categories (2) through (4) into one, »Public employees«, the total becomes 48.7% (18). Here, as in the case of the fathers, most of the working mothers were/are employed in the public sector.

Q. 28 asks the age of the respondents. The average age ( $n = 109$ ) is 51.20 years and the median 52.00. The members of the *grands corps* are a middle-aged population with an average of 22 years of career experience.

Q. 29 concerns gender. Of the respondents ( $n = 109$ ), only 10.1% (11) are women. The remaining 89.9% (98) are men. The French higher civil service, like most other entities or bodies of the government at the top, is male dominated.

Let us now turn to the hypotheses developed in the context of the central objectives of the study, ascertainment of (a) extent to which the higher civil servants in France determine public policy making and (b) whether such policy-making power is exercised solely while serving on detail especially in political positions or continues upon return to their career post. The first hypothesis seeks to determine whether *there is a positive association between the place in the hierarchy of the career position and degree of input in public policy making*.

To this end, it was first attempted to ascertain whether there is a positive association between place in the organizational hierarchy of the career position (Q. 23) and time devoted to policy-making decisions (Q. 7). Spearman's rho correlation co-efficient here was .169 (sig. .101,  $n = 95$ ) denoting the absence of association. The attempt to correlate the responses of the same variable, place in the organizational hierarchy of the career position, to those concerning degree of influence in policy-making decisions in the career position (Q. 8), proved equally futile (Spearman's rho correlation co-efficient .112, sig. .273,  $n = 97$ ). The results contradict the notion, generally held, that the higher the position in the hierarchy of

an organization the higher the degree of policy input. They may be partly attributable to the low number of responses, the fact that within a *grand corps* there are few hierarchical levels or both.

An unanticipated association was, however, found to exist between place in the organizational hierarchy of the career position (Q. 23) and variables number of times on detail (Q. 5a) and total number of years on detail (Q. 5b). The Spearman's rho correlation coefficients were .445 (sig. .000, n = 96) and .540 (sig. .000, n = 88) respectively, both significant at the .01 level. There was further an association, significant at the .01 level, between times on detail to mainly political positions (Q. 6b) and place in the organizational hierarchy of the career position (Q. 23), (Spearman's rho .360, sig. .006) for n = 56. The data suggest that the greater the number of details and total number of years of service *en détachement* the higher the place occupied in the organizational hierarchy of the corps. The implication is that service on detail outside the corps contributes substantially to upward movement or promotion within the corps.

The second hypothesis assumes that *public policy influence is directly related to the frequency as well as overall duration of the details, especially the details to mainly political positions.* The variables, number of times on detail (Q. 5a), total number of years on detail (Q. 5b), and times on detail to mainly political positions (Q. 6b) were individually tested with each of the variables time percentage devoted to policy making decisions in the career position (Q. 7) and degree of influence in policy-making decisions in career position (Q. 8). Two positive associations emerged, both rather weak but significant at the .05 level. One, between the total number of years on detail (Q. 5b) and degree of influence in policy-making decisions in the career position (Q. 8) (Spearman's rho .227, sig. .037, n = 85). The other, between times on detail to mainly political positions (Q. 6b) and degree of influence in policy-making decisions in the career position (Q. 8), (contingency coefficient .360, sig. .021, n = 100). The data indicate that there is a direct but not strong relationship between service on detail and input in policy making.

The third hypothesis presumes that *the influence in policy making on return from detail to the career post increases as a result of the frequency and overall duration of the details, especially those to political positions.* Of all the pertinent correlation runs attempted, two relatively strong positive associations emerged, both significant at the .01 level. One, between the total number of years on detail (Q. 5b) and degree of influence in policy-making decisions on return to the career post (Q. 12) (contingency coefficient .504, sig. .010, n = 59). The other, between degree of influence exerted in

policy-making decisions in the career position (Q. 8) and degree of influence exerted in policy-making decisions on return to the career position (Q. 12) (contingency coefficient .688, sig. .000, Spearman's rho correlation coefficient .807, sig. .000,  $n = 61$ ).

This association is further upheld by the correlation between time percentage devoted to policy making decisions in career position (Q. 7) and degree of influence in policy-making decisions on return to the career post (Q. 12) (Spearman's rho .568, sig. .000,  $n = 61$ ). The findings suggest that public policy input is strengthened on return to the home base by comparison to what it was before proceeding on detail. This might very well be the result of promotion within the corps following periods of service outside the corps *en détachement*, in view of the following associations, all significant at the .01 level:

(a) place in the corps organizational hierarchy (Q. 23) and number of times on detail (Q. 5a), (Spearman's rho .445,  $n = 96$ )

(b) place in the corps hierarchy (Q. 23) and total number of years on detail (Q. 5b), (Spearman's rho .540,  $n = 88$ )

(c) place in the corps hierarchy (Q. 23) and times on detail in political positions (Q. 6b), (Spearman's rho .360,  $n = 56$ )

There was further supporting evidence, even though weaker than the preceding ones, derived from the association between the number of times on detail (Q. 5a) and percentage time devoted to policy-making decisions on return to the career position (Q. 11), (Spearman's rho .273, sig. .026,  $n = 66$ ) as well as *total number of years on detail (Q. 5b) and degree of influence in policy-making decisions in the career position (Q. 8)*, (Spearman's rho .227, sig. .037,  $n = 85$ ) both significant at the .05 level.

The fourth hypothesis presumes that *there is a positive association between the participation of higher civil servants in (a) professional and (b) political activities and the extent of their public influence input*. Bivariate analysis of variables total number of memberships held in professional and other associations (collapsed responses) (Q. 15) and degree of influence in policy-making decisions on return to career post from detail (Q. 12) reveals the existence of a positive association between them (contingency coefficient .407, sig. .045,  $n = 65$ ) significant at the 0.5 level. This suggests that those who are members of professional, civil service, political and other associations are more likely to influence policy making than those who are not. Running the same variable against the degree of involvement in political activities on return to career post from detail (Q. 20) shows no association.

Testing the hypothesis further by attempting to ascertain whether a positive relationship exists between the number of times office held in associations (Q. 16) and degree of influence in policy-making decisions on return to career post from detail (Q. 12) results in the absence of association. The same finding is reached by testing the same variable with degree of involvement in political activities on return to career post (Q. 20). It follows that activism, whether professional or political, does not have any effect on the degree of policy input upon return to the corps.

However, a certain degree of positive association emerges between the number of times elected to political office (Q. 19a) and number of times on detail in mainly political positions (Q. 6b) (Spearman's rho .283, sig. .040, n = 53) as well as percentage time devoted to policy-making in career position (Q. 7) (Spearman's rho .216, sig. .041, n = 90). Similar but somewhat stronger results are reached by running the variable total number of years political office held (Q. 19b) against the number of times on detail in mainly political positions (Q. 6b) (Spearman's rho .349, sig. .013, n = 50) and percentage time devoted to policy-making in the career position (Q. 7) (Spearman's rho .227, sig. .044, n = 79). These associations, however weak, are significant at the .05 level and should not be ignored. They denote the existence of linkages between serving in mainly political capacity *en détachement* on the one hand and election to political office and relatively heavy involvement in policy making in the career post on the other, all of which are factors that contribute to the politicization of civil servants.

Turning to the question of the efficacy controls of the public bureaucracy, the notion outside France is that in the Fifth Republic the external controls (Senate, National Assembly, Constitutional Council and other) are relatively weak and the internal ones (*Grands Corps*, Prime Minister, Ministers, and other) are strong. For the purposes of this study, the President was considered to be more of an external type of control because of the constitutional powers entrusted to him, his selection by the total electorate for long terms, and independence from the National Assembly and Senate, both considerably weakened in the Fifth Republic.

To ascertain what the members of the *grands corps* themselves think in this case, the question was asked: »Based on your experience, which one of the following external bodies exercises the most effective control over the *grands corps* to which you belong? (Check one)« (Q. 13). Nine options were offered of the last which was »Other (please specify)«. The responses to this question (n = 100) are summarized below:

	Body or subject(s)	Per cent	Number
(1)	Senate	(2)	2.0%
(2)	National Assembly	15.0	(15)
(3)	President	22.0	(22)
(4)	Constitutional Council	7.0	(7)
(5)	Communication media	10.0	(10)
(6)	Trade unions	0.0	
(7)	Organized groups	0.0	
(8)	Political parties	0.0	
(9)	Other (please specify)	44.0	(44)
	Total	100.0	(100)

Within »Other« most of the responses considered »the government« as the most effective control. The government is normally identified with the executive, in this case the dual executive of the President and Prime Minister. By adding to this the percentage of those who considered the »President« as the foremost effective control, the total of those ranking the executive as the strongest external control rises to 66% (66). The data clearly indicate that the strong executive is the government organ viewed by the *grands corps* themselves as exercising the highest degree of control over them. This confirms the popular notion that in the Fifth Republic the executive has ensured both their subordination and loyalty.

The responses (n = 101) pertaining to the internal controls (Q. 14), in terms of efficacy generally regarded more effective than the external, are as follows:

(1)	Cabinet of Prime Minister	5.9	(6)
(2)	General Secretariat of the Government	5.9	(6)
(3)	Council of State	12.0	(12)
(4)	Inspectorate of Finance	9.9	(10)
(5)	Court of Accounts	5.9	(6)
(6)	Minister of the Economy & Budget	43.6	(44)
(7)	Minister to whom corps is responsible	9.9	(10)
(8)	Other (please specify)	6.9	(7)
		100.0	(101)

The strongest internal control is thought by 43.6% (44) of the respondents to be exercised by the Minister of the Economy, nominated by the Prime Minister but appointed by the President, who controls the strings of the purse. Adding to this the 9.9% (10) of the Inspectorate of Finance, a corps within the Ministry of the Economy and Budget, the total becomes 53.5% (54). Individually, the Council of State, follows as a distant third with 12.0% (12). Collectively, however, the *grands corps* (collapsed figures of 3, 4 and 5 above) come second with 27.8% (28).

The relative eminence of the Council of State in this domain can be explained in terms of its functions. These functions include passing on the constitutionality and feasibility of implementation of all proposed bills before they are considered by the Council of Ministers, doing the same for all implementation decrees after legislation has been promulgated by the President, and acting as the highest administrative court.

The three top influential figures in the Fifth Republic, in descending order, are those who occupy the position of the President, Prime Minister, and Minister of the Economy and Budget, all part of the executive. The fact that these three are ranked by the respondents as the most effective controls testifies to the superior powers of the chief executive and lends further credence to the notion that the *grands corps* are but its obedient instrument.

By considering the results in terms of both external and internal controls, the two considered most effective by the respondents are the government (dual executive), and the Minister of the Economy, who is part of the executive. The rankings testify to the superior powers of the executive as the foremost control in the Fifth Republic and lend further credence to the notion that the *grands corps* have continued to be more its disciplined organ rather than an independent force. As Ferrel Heady has expressed it: »Without being basically threatened as to its role in the political system, the French administrative elite, despite its impressive capabilities for self-protection, has faced and adjusted under the Fifth Republic to a greater challenge to its autonomy than it has been accustomed to in the past.« (Heady, 2005: 207).

The study has concluded that the *grands corps* constitute a male-dominated administrative elite. They are the sons of professionals and public employees who live in the Paris area. They grew up in Paris, graduated from the Paris Institute of Political Studies (IEPP) and, following rigorous competitive examinations, were admitted to the National School of Administration (ENA) where they trained as generalist administrators for

over two years. A substantial number, about 42%, had earned a master's or equivalent degree prior to entering ENA.

The *grands corps* are closed career services relying on the cream of the crop of the ENA graduating class, recruited at an entry-level position, to replenish their ranks. The corps members have an average age of 51 years and an average of 22 years of experience of which an average of 20 years represented total service in predominantly administrative positions, within and outside the corps. Of the 22 years with a corps, an average of 10 years was spent on detail largely to administrative positions outside the corps. The median number of times a member of the corps served on detail was 2 and the average over 2. At least 57% of the corps members occupy a career post at the top levels of the organizational hierarchy and only a few, close to 9%, consider themselves to be at a beginning level while the remaining 36% are serving in the middle levels. The corps members are promoted 2 to 3 times during their career (mean 2.52, median 2.00).

The majority considers the socializing and other influences of the corps in which they serve to have moulded their career, professional outlook and general professionalism. This is a professional elite with close to 80% holding memberships in professional and civil service associations, with 54% of them having served as officers.

Participation in political electoral and other campaigns is relatively high with at least 44% having been actively involved in such campaigns 1 to 2 times on the average. Almost an equal number, 21% was elected to political office at the local, departmental or national levels and served, on the average, for a period of over 2 years. In terms of political activism, including service in elective office, the *grands corps* have consistently been in a leading position.

The data negate the existence of a positive association between place in the hierarchy of the career position and degree of input in public policy making in the case of the *grands corps* where the organizational hierarchy is relatively flat, involving few levels. Evidence, however, suggests that the number and length of details decisively influences upward movement or promotion within a corps.

On the question of whether there is a positive association between the frequency and overall duration of the details, especially the details to predominantly political posts, and the degree of public policy input, the data are substantially supportive. There is a strong correlation between the total number of years spent on detail and the degree of influence exerted on policy-making decisions on return to the career position. Similarly, there

is a significant but comparatively weaker correlation between the number of times on detail to mainly political positions and the degree of influence in policy-making decisions on return. The data uphold one of the crucial aspects of the study to the effect that the higher the number and overall duration of details, the higher the influence in the making of policy is likely to be on the home turf.

A strong positive association also emerged between the degree of influence in policy making in the career position and the degree of policy-making influence on return to the corps. These, in conjunction with the preceding findings as well as the positive association between years on detail and place in the hierarchy, suggest that the degree of policy input increases on return to the corps by comparison to what it was before going on detail. Such increase, of course, may totally be the result of promotion to a higher-level post within the corps as a result of the number and duration of details.

Judging by the association between the number of memberships in professional and other associations and the degree of influence in policy making on return to the corps, there is a positive correlation between the participation of higher civil servants in professional and political activities and their public policy input. This is further supported by the positive association between the number of times elected to political office and number of times on detail to largely political positions as well as time devoted to policy-making duties in career post. These data, in light of the 21% of corps members elected to office, suggest a relatively high level of politicization.

The executive emerges as the strongest control of the *grands corps* and public bureaucracy. Although the policy-making role of the corps in the Fifth Republic has reached new heights as a result of their election to political office and enhanced influence in policy determination due to the frequency of details, the executive has been able to ensure both their loyalty and subordination. It was inevitable that their public policy input would be exacerbated in a regime with a supreme centralized executive in which the technocratic talents of the corps continue to be actively enlisted in a policy-making capacity.

However, it is also the traditional and unparalleled place of the *grands corps* in the French administrative system that is, at least partly, responsible for furthering bureaucratic input in public policy making along with the phenomenon of »... *la colonisation des pouvoirs électifs par les haut fonc-*

tionnaires ...»<sup>4</sup> The *grands corps*, a legacy of the »ancien régime«, surrounded by a prestige that is as strong as it is mysterious, dominate the French administration (Kessler, 1986: 9).<sup>5</sup> The structure, processes, and functioning of the Fifth Republic have further promoted the political-administrative interfacing. As it has been asserted, it is not as much in the typical characteristics of the administration that the search for an explanation of the politicization of civil servants must be sought as in the structure and functioning of the political system itself (Mény, 1987: 5–23).

The study makes evident that the higher civil servants, whether members of the *grands corps* or not, do not rule France. They are not the ultimate determiners of public policy. They constitute an obedient instrument of the executive and this is reinforced by the strength of the controls the executive has over them.

The emerging pattern is that *grands corps* members conscientiously and ably perform the duties of the position in which they serve whether in their career post or on detail in a mainly administrative or political capacity, diligently conforming to what is expected of them on the job. Following a period of detail, they may return to the home corps in which they are likely to be promoted to higher responsibilities or move on to a more important position than formerly outside the corps for another period of detail. In either case, their role in public policy making tends to be strengthened while they continue to defer and be subordinate to the strong executive.

A major conclusion derived from all the data presented is that ENA itself has little, if any, direct impact in public policy making. Those of its graduates who become members of the *grands corps*, a majority of all who have passed through ENA, have substantial influence in public policy formation but this is exercised while serving on detail in mainly political positions, appropriately executing the responsibilities the particular position entails. It is the training, experience and socializing influences of the *grands corps* in which these *enarques* serve, along with the ease by which appointed civil servants can move from administrative into political positions and back through the practice of the *détachement*, that are the crucial factors in their career development as well as their public policy input.

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<sup>4</sup> Translated by the author as »... the colonization of elective powers by the higher functionaries ...« (Bodiguel, Quermonne, 1982: 268).

<sup>5</sup> Translated by the author.

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## Web sources

ENA – [www.ena.fr/index.php?fr/institution/ena-chiffres](http://www.ena.fr/index.php?fr/institution/ena-chiffres)

## Appendix I. Questionnaire for Members of the French Grands Corps of the State

All responses are anonymous and confidential. Most of the following questions can be answered by a simple X in the appropriate space provided. For some it is necessary to respond with a word or two. Please answer all questions

1. How long have you been a member of the *Grands Corps*? \_\_\_\_\_ (years)
2. Are you a graduate of the National School of Administration (ENA)?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are you a graduate of: (a) The Institute of Political Studies of Paris? \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Which of the following has contributed the most to your professional career, professional outlook, and general professionalism?  
(a) Graduation from ENA? \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) Membership in the *Grands Corps*? \_\_\_\_\_  
(c) Having often served en detail (*en détachement*)? \_\_\_\_\_
5. (a) How many times have you served on detail? \_\_\_\_\_ (no. of times)  
(b) Indicate what the total time of the periods you served on detail is: \_\_\_\_\_ (years)
6. How many of the times you served on detail were to:  
(a) mainly administrative positions (policy implementation) \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) mainly political positions (policy determination) \_\_\_\_\_
7. In your regular career position in the *grand corps* in which you serve, which of the following percentages best represents the time you devote to policy-making decisions both with a small group of others and alone?  
(a) 1–20% \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) 21–40% \_\_\_\_\_  
(c) 41–60% \_\_\_\_\_  
(d) 61–80% \_\_\_\_\_  
(e) 81–100% \_\_\_\_\_
8. In your *grand corps* career position, on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest), how would you rate the degree of influence you yourself exert on major policy decisions?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (circle one)
9. While serving on detail in a mainly political rather than administrative capacity, which one of the following percentages best represents the time you devote to policy-making decisions with a small group of others or alone?  
(a) 1–20% \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) 21–40% \_\_\_\_\_  
(c) 41–60% \_\_\_\_\_  
(d) 61–80% \_\_\_\_\_  
(e) 81–100% \_\_\_\_\_

10. While serving on detail on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest), how would you rate the degree of influence you yourself exert in policy-making decisions?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (circle one)

11. Following your return to your regular career position in your particular *grand corps* from a period of having served on detail, do you find that the time you devote to policy-making decisions both with a small group of others and alone:

(a) increases? \_\_\_\_\_

(b) remains about the same? \_\_\_\_\_

(c) decreases? \_\_\_\_\_

12. Following your return to your regular *grand corps* career position from a period of having served on detail, on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest), how would you rate the degree of influence you yourself exert on policy-making decisions?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (circle one)

13. Based on your experience, which of the following external bodies exercises the most effective control over the *grand corps* to which you belong? (check one)

(a) Senate \_\_\_\_\_

(b) National Assembly \_\_\_\_\_

(c) President \_\_\_\_\_

(d) Constitutional Council \_\_\_\_\_

(e) Communication media \_\_\_\_\_

(f) Trade unions \_\_\_\_\_

(g) Professional and other organized groups \_\_\_\_\_

(h) Political parties \_\_\_\_\_

(i) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

14. Based on your experience, which of the following internal bodies exercises the most effective control over the *corps* to which you belong? (check one)

(a) Prime Minister's Office \_\_\_\_\_

(b) General Secretariat of the Government \_\_\_\_\_

(c) Council of State \_\_\_\_\_

(d) Inspectorate of Finance \_\_\_\_\_

(e) Court of Accounts \_\_\_\_\_

(f) Minister of the Economy and Budget (Finance) \_\_\_\_\_

(g) Minister to whom your particular *grand corps* is responsible \_\_\_\_\_

(h) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

15. To which of the following types of organizations do you belong and have held continuous membership? (check all that apply)

(a) Professional associations \_\_\_\_\_

(b) Civil service associations \_\_\_\_\_

(c) Political party associations \_\_\_\_\_

(d) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

16. How many times have you held office in any of these types of associations? (check all that apply)

- (a) Professional associations \_\_\_\_\_ (number of times)
- (b) Civil service associations \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) Political party associations \_\_\_\_\_
- (d) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
17. How many times have you actively participated in political electoral and other campaigns? \_\_\_\_\_ (number of times)
18. How many times have you yourself run for political office? \_\_\_\_\_ (number of times)
19. (a) How many times have you been elected to office? \_\_\_\_\_ (number of times)
- (b) Total number of years you have held political office/s? \_\_\_\_\_ (years)
20. Following your return to your regular *grand corps* career position from a period of having served on detail, do you find that you are:
- (a) more involved in political activities? \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) involved at the same rate as before the period of detachment? \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) less involved in political activities? \_\_\_\_\_
21. Following your return to your regular *grand corps* career position from a period of having served on detail are the policy decisions you make both with a small group or others and alone:
- (a) more in accord with the major policies of the incumbent government than before?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- (b) less in accord with the major policies of the incumbent government than before?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- (c) about the same as before? \_\_\_\_\_
22. What is your professional title in the particular *grand corps* in which you serve on a career basis? \_\_\_\_\_ (please name)
23. Is the position you now occupy in the particular *grand corps* in which you are regularly serving at the:
- (a) beginning levels of the organizational hierarchy of your corps? \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) middle levels of the organizational hierarchy of your corps? \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) top levels of the organizational hierarchy of your corps? \_\_\_\_\_
24. What is the total number of years you have spent in government service in:
- (a) mainly administrative positions? \_\_\_\_\_ (years)
- (b) mainly political positions? \_\_\_\_\_ (years)
25. How many times have you been promoted within the particular *grand corps* to which you belong? \_\_\_\_\_ (number of times)
26. What is the highest college or university degree you have earned?  
\_\_\_\_\_
27. What is or was the profession of your:
- (a) your father? \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) your mother? \_\_\_\_\_
28. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_ (number of years)

29. Are you?

(a) Female \_\_\_\_\_ (b) Male \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you so much for your time and attention

If you wish to receive a copy of the cumulative findings of this survey in broad categories,  
please make a check here: \_\_\_\_\_

Should you wish to receive this at your home address, please give name and address:

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## *The National School of Administration in France and Its Impact on Public Policy Making*

### *Summary*

*The purpose of this paper is to determine the extent to which the graduates of the National School of Administration (Ecole National d'Administration) or ENA determine the making of public policy in France, in addition to its implementation. Four hypotheses intended to be tested. The first hypothesis states that there is as a positive association between the hierarchy of position occupied by the civil servant and public policy determination. The second hypothesis states that the policy influence grows with the length of the duration of the detached service the higher civil servants performs, while the third one assumes the influence on policy making by the civil servant grows after his return to the career post. The fourth hypothesis suggests that there exists a positive relation between the participation of civil servants in professional and political associations and the extent of their public policy input. Apart from testing this hypothesis, the paper also tries to assess the efficacy of the external controls (Senate, National Assembly, and other) and internal controls (Prime Minister's Office, Council of State and other) of the bureaucracy in order to determine whether the civil service might dominate the area of policy determination in addition to its implementation. In addition, the paper seeks to establish an empirical profile of the grands corps. In the end, this study makes evident that the higher civil servants, whether members of the grands corps or not, do not rule France. Furthermore, a major conclusion is that ENA itself has little, if any, direct impact in public policy making. Those of its graduates who become members of the grands corps, have substantial influence in public policy formation but this is exercised while serving on detail in mainly political positions, appropriately executing the responsibilities the particular position entails.*

*Key words: Ecole National d'Administration-ENA, graduates, grands corps, public policy making, decision-making, detached service, control mechanisms*

*Francuska državna škola za javnu upravu i njezin utjecaj  
na oblikovanje javnih politika*

*Sažetak*

*U radu se analizira mjera u kojoj diplomanti Državne škole za javnu upravu (Ecole National d'Administration, ENA), koji su odgovorni za primjenu javnih politika u Francuskoj, utječu i na njihovo oblikovanje. Provjeravaju se četiri hipoteze. Prema prvoj, postoji pozitivna korelacija između mjesta u hijerarhiji koje zauzima neki državni službenik i oblikovanja javnih politika. Druga tvrdi da utjecaj na oblikovanje politika raste usporedno s duljinom trajanja dužnosničkih (političkih) funkcija koje neki francuski viši državni službenici povremeno obavljaju, dok treća pretpostavlja da utjecaj na javne politike raste kad se državni službenik vrati na svoje karijerno radno mjesto. Prema četvrtoj hipotezi, postoji pozitivan odnos između članstva državnih službenika u profesionalnim i političkim udrugama i razmjera njihovog utjecaja na javne politike. Uz provjeru hipoteza, u radu se nastoji procijeniti učinkovitost vanjskog nadzora (Senat, Nacionalna skupština, i dr.) te unutarnjeg nadzora (Ured predsjednika Vlade, Državni savjet, i dr.) nad upravom kako bi se odredilo dominira li državna uprava područjem oblikovanja javnih politika, uz svoje redovite dužnosti njihove primjene. Nadalje, u radu se želi ustanoviti empirijski profil grand corpsa. Zaključno, studija je pokazala da viši državni službenici, bili oni članovi grand corpsa ili ne, ne vladaju Francuskom. Nadalje, jedan od glavnih zaključaka jest da sama ENA ima malo, ili uopće nema, izravnog utjecaja na oblikovanje javnih politika. Oni njezini diplomanti koji postanu članovi grands corpsa imaju značajan utjecaj na oblikovanje politika, no to se događa za vrijeme njihovih privremenih angažmana na političkim položajima koje obavljaju u skladu sa zadacima i odgovornostima koje takvi položaji nose.*

*Ključne riječi: Ecole National d'Administration – ENA, diplomanti, grand corps, oblikovanje javnih politika, odlučivanje, privremena služba na političkim položajima, mehanizmi kontrole*