

**IASIA CONFERENCE, 2015**  
Improving Public Administration Worldwide

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**Final paper – a case study:  
Impact of culture on the results of a tender for faculty for a post-graduate  
education program:  
the role of sense making, expectations and networks of potential teachers**

**for WG II: Public Sector Ethics and Culture**

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**ABSTRACT**

In the post-communist region many public tenders are initiated solely because of external normative constraints. Experience shows that regulatory instruments alone are not enough when material and cultural factors drive stakeholders towards avoiding the competitive process. Abuses are widely documented. The question is what can be done for making tenders an effective means by which the best candidates are selected? The paper presents the case of a tender for faculty recruitment and the results of the research examining the results, and the opinions of potential and selected faculty. The research proves that even when all countervailing forces to a decent tendering process couldn't be eliminated, a prior argumentative process targeting stakeholders' values, interpretations and expectations could impact actors' strategies. I propose that where pushing rules that "make no sense" for stakeholders imprisoned in a web of needs and routines do not work, the "sense making" of stakeholders should be changed. These stakeholders then will be the drivers for further change. This seemingly simple solution is unfortunately rarely applied in the public administration in the region.

**Key words: integrity, argumentative method, changing culture, tender, change management,**

**Impact of culture on the results of a tender for faculty for a post-graduate education program in Hungary: the role of sense making, expectations and networks of potential teachers**  
**by Katalin Pallai**

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*„In order to make anything change, just create the space.“ P.Senge*

## Introduction

It is a widely recognized problem in international development that some legal instruments, although in principle are useful and applicable when adopted by countries as a result of international normative pressure, often become distorted during the implementation process. Faced with the obligation of implementing obligatory formal rules that clash with local beliefs, informal practices, perceived or real interests, implementers tend to preserve their own practices as much as the rules can be stretched. Dimitrova (2010) captured this process in Central-Eastern European (CEE) countries by the metaphor that “European rules remain empty shells”. The risk of abusive implementation is especially high when the new mechanism substitutes practices supported by a web of material and normative interests. Effective implementation in such cases is a wicked problem: not only cognitive and emotional acceptance needs to be built for the new rule, but the negative impacts of interests and alliances supporting the old mechanisms need to be compensated as well. A transformation process is necessary that creates the new context wherein the new rule “makes sense”, both at the personal and organizational level.

The transformation process that changes the factors supporting the old practice is often long and complex. A key question is how to start? The formal adoption of the new rule is key but, in most cases, not sufficient for an effective implementation. Coercion, pressure and threat may be instinctive reactions of old-fashioned leaders facing current implementation problems, but these measures rarely bring the desired results in the long run because they fail to change the old culture and interest structure that supports the old practice. Stakeholders remain opposed to the new rules because from their perspective, they make no sense. This situation implies a potentially high risk for wrongful implementation, and, ultimately gives ground for stakeholders’ false rationalization. When stakeholders begin to create a positive rationale for breaching rules, claiming that “this is our culture”, the process of normalizing the avoidance practice begins.

It is obvious that substantial elements of the implementation context cannot be changed for each piece of new rule. To some degree, new rules often clash with the environment. My most general question is how can we still support the acceptance of such new rules? When I initiated the process described in the paper, my hypothesis was that principled implementation combined with a convincing

argumentative strategy can initiate change in stakeholders' sense making before all countervailing factors can be eliminated. If the rationale for the new rule is accepted, stakeholders are more likely to be willing to forego some of their interests in order to comply with the rules that they have accepted. Thus, effective tenders can be effectuated, even in a context where some countervailing material or cultural factors remain.

In order to test this hypothesis, I examined a concrete case of a search for faculty members for a post-graduate university program in Hungary. A tender implemented in a context where general trust in tenders is very low, calls are used only when organizers are obliged, and even in these obligatory cases the practice is often flawed. In the case presented, the tenderer, the Center for Excellence in Integrity (CEI) under my leadership, decided to break with the usual practice of not initiating a tender for recruitment even though this practice was not a requirement; this was an unusual step from a small unit that did not have the possibility to change the wider context of material and normative incentives. At the same time, assurance was given that during its preceding operation it had gathered a network of principled actors and had built its reputation of honesty and openness. The hope was that with these antecedents and additional validating tools, stakeholders could interpret the call as an invitation for a correct and proper process. The paper presents the results of a research carried out to assess the outcome of the tender and the perceptions of potential and selected faculty of the process.

The research questions were the following:

1. What was the experience of different stakeholders of the tender? Could the reputation and communication of the organizers change potential faculty's expectations and reactions?
2. What was the result of the tender? What is the difference between the composition of the old and new faculty? What are the parameters that have changed?
3. Can all differences between old and new faculty be caused by the change in method, or can any other causes also be explored?

The hypothesis set before the research were:

1. Active, principled communication and previous examples of principled action of the tenderer (CEI) played an important role in changing perception and expectations of a large part of potential faculty.

2. By the same token, trust-building strategy of CEI was screened through beliefs and attitudes of potential faculty, and could not change deeply rooted beliefs in all of them. Some perceived the tender according to the general pattern of the usual, empty process.
3. Most of the changes in the composition of the faculty is the consequence of the content and organization of the tender (i.e. change of curriculum and methodology, and the implementation of the tender) but the difference in culture, job seeking, working and material survival strategies of potential faculty members also played a role in faculty changes.

## The background

### The wider context

Two elements are relevant for the case as viewed from the wider context in Hungary: the practice of tendering and the material and social relations of faculty members and public universities. Regarding the first, it has been widely documented that in the Hungarian public sector tenders often suffer from the “empty shell-syndrome”. It is common that calls for procurement or employment positions are formulated to fit the characteristics of previously selected candidates: a process recently labelled as technicisation. (Javor-Jancsics 2013) It is a less documented but widely known phenomenon that lack of trust in fairness of tenders results in low participation. Often only those enter in the competition who either know that they are foreseen to win or become part of the number necessary to validate the process.

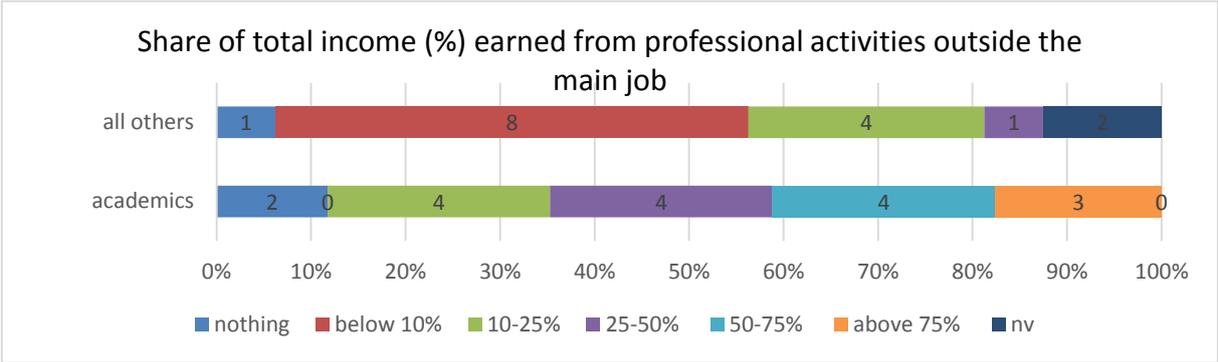
The second relevant component of the wider context is the material and social relation between faculty members and public universities. Salaries of faculty members are extremely low. This has not changed since the communist period. As it is completely impossible to live from the salary, most faculty members earn a relatively large part of their income from assignments beyond their main job. According to declared figures<sup>1</sup> given by old and new faculty members, more than 60% of academics

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<sup>1</sup> This chart probably reflects lower external revenues than the reality due to limited willingness to declare such facts. We will see later that some, and probably from the high earner group, refused to give data and some also claimed that it would be against their interests to declare the real figures.

earn above 25% of their income from activities apart from their main jobs, and the remaining 40% supplement their income by more than 50%. For the later discussion, it will be important to note that other faculty members (e.g. civil servants, consultants) are also dependent on revenues beyond their salaries, but to a lesser degree. From this segment, 1 respondent gave a figure between 25-50%, and one gave higher.

**Chart 1: Share of income from professional activities outside the main job**



Source: Szani 2015a

In this situation, it is clear for both administrators and faculty of the universities that the low salaries can only be compensated by access to extra revenues. Consequently, it is a logical practice that universities prefer to select their own employees when they have opportunities to offer extra work for extra money. The extra work is part of the informal package they offer to their staff in order to keep more capable staff members. By the same token, most faculty accepts the low salaries because the faculty position gives a relatively reliable access to extra revenues and leaves ample time to commit to extra work. This informal deal must work, even if the formal rules must be stretched. A tacit agreement bounds stakeholders to the resulting practices. Tenders are used to recruit only in cases where regulation obliges the universities, and often these tenders also become empty shells....

Dependence on revenue beyond the salary necessitates faculty to take on parallel jobs. The result is that, with the exception of a few intrinsically motivated professors, heavily overworked faculty members run hectically among jobs and have a limited time and energy for their main job: supporting and mentoring students in developing knowledge and ethos for their future jobs. Also an important component of this system is that nobody is confronted with the results, since performance evaluation is, as much as possible, avoided. In absence of reliable performance evaluation, the risk is high that networks are built on interests and access to work, and the alliances are not necessarily dependent on

the potential for quality performance but rather on clientelistic personal relations and loyalties. Having well placed connections and belonging to personal alliances and cliques is an effective access strategy to relatively well paid assignments. According to the answers given by the responders in our questionnaire, only 11-14 % of the extra work is obtained without personal ties! (Szani 2015b)

In this situation the integrity and quality of education is obviously at risk. Nevertheless, my aim in this paper is not to form an ethical judgement but to undertake analysis in order to understand and see what can be changed.

### The specific context

The National Public Service University (NUSP) is a public university that has relatively good financial possibilities, mostly due to its monopoly on in-job trainings for the public service and from government supported projects. These extra revenues allow the university to compensate low faculty salaries with relatively well-paid extra work. For permanent faculty positions and for some of the EU supported project work the university must recruit through tenders, for other positions faculty members are invited. Formally, the faculty tenders are open, but participation is minimal and “surprising new faces” rarely show up.

### The antecedents

In 2012 the Hungarian Government adopted the Public Administration’s Corruption Prevention Program and a large EU supported project was launched for its implementation. This was the point where the Hungarian anticorruption strategy formally made a turn towards a preventive public integrity approach. One important component of the implementation was that NUSP launched a post-graduate university program for training integrity advisers. During the yearlong educational program, experienced civil servants could deepen their knowledge in the field of corruption prevention and public integrity. The curriculum and education was mainly academic, and was provided by teachers invited by the organizers, mostly from NUSP and another related university. The second relevant step was that in 2013, shortly after the start of the post-graduate program, a government ordinance formally created the position of integrity advisers in public administration. All organizations larger than 50 employees are now obliged to appoint an integrity advisor.

The third relevant step for us was that in December 2013 the Center for Excellence in Integrity (CEI) was established at NUSP. Although a very small unit, it was set up with the significant purpose of propagating the new approach of public integrity and to become a center contributing to the strengthening of public integrity in Hungary and to supervise integrity education at the university. CEI created a small informal board comprised of those integrity experts who, before the CEI, had introduced the integrity approach and method to Hungary. Living up to its name, the center (CEI) was committed to operating in accordance with the values and rules of democratic public integrity and set a model and example with its operation. Its practice was different from the contextual routines on many fields: e.g. the center planned its strategy in an open participatory process, and, as much as it was possible, implemented its activities with transparency and recruited through open tenders. The participatory planning process in shaping its operational concept and the discussions about integrity during the events organized by CEI, shaped shared beliefs amongst the active members about integrity and some shared ideas about possible operational modes.<sup>2</sup> CEI also made an effort to actively communicate the principles of integrity and build a wider active network among integrity professionals and supporters who could impact even wider circles. Thus, as public integrity was a new field in Hungary, most professionals connected to the field either joined some CEI activities, were informed about them, or were, at maximum, one personal connection distance from it.

From the beginning it was obvious that, on the one hand, the model set and the principled operation of CEI gave hope to those who were already supporters of public integrity and could appeal to other people who, seeing the flaws of the actual system, felt uncomfortable and were searching for similar principled people. Most integrity advisors declared that the emerging network helped them to maintain their personal integrity and commitment while often working in difficult environments. At the same time, it became apparent that some clashes between the operation of the center and the imminent context were unavoidable.

## The case

By 2014, two groups of integrity advisors had already been trained and had started their work, and some experience had been collected about the work and challenges of integrity advisors. Also in 2014, the revision of the curriculum was initiated in order to adjust the teaching to the implicit challenges of

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<sup>2</sup> In transformative processes and scenario planning this is called „shared memories of the future”, a picture on the mind that can be recalled when relevant or necessary.

the new “profession”, of strengthening public integrity in the Hungarian public administration, and to be prepared for the demands of the newly legislated tasks of integrity advisers. The re-design proposed a decisive shift from the previous theoretical approach to a focus on practice, from the traditional academic to a competency-based education, and from an exclusively positivist to a combination of positivist and post-positivist methods. (Pallai 2015) The goal of the re-design was to equip students with trustable professional competencies for the key tasks in their future jobs. In the new curriculum the subjects covering specific professional practices make up 50% of the credits and time, more traditional lecturing takes only 25% of the curriculum, and personal competency development takes the rest.

For the delivery of the professional competence-focused new curriculum, in addition to the academic knowledge that had been the focus of the previous curriculum, it was recognized that specialized, practical experience was also needed from the faculty. It was also part of the plan that faculty members were expected to get involved in a collaborative process of curriculum design, had to coordinate content and approach, and fit their contributions into a consistent professional concept. It was clear that more was expected than the usual repetition of old lectures or minor adjustments to previous materials - the practices that faculty are generally accustomed to doing before teaching.

In this situation, a decision was made to recruit faculty through a competition open equally for NUSP faculty, other academics and practitioners with experience in the new field of public integrity or its related domains. The aim of the tender was to find the best possible educators who were also committed to getting involved in the demanding (and in the region unusual) design process. In the tender document, the concept of the new curriculum and the evaluation criteria of tender documents were shared. Candidates could participate in the tender with CVs, overview of their related experience and short concept notes about the contributions they could offer.

It was the first open tender for recruiting faculty for a post-graduate program at NUSP, and also probably the first non-obligatory such tender in Hungary. The call was posted at the NUSP website and the whole network of the center (CEI) was asked to distribute the call and help to find the best faculty members. Unfortunately, a short deadline was stipulated. After the short but intensive period of advertising the tender, 119 course concepts arrived for the 15 subjects from 47 applicants.<sup>3</sup> Out of the

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<sup>3</sup> Some candidates prepared concepts for more than one subject.

47 candidates, 13 were members of the previous faculty. From the short-listed candidates, a selection committee chose the commissioned teachers.<sup>4</sup>

As a consequence of the tender, the composition of the faculty changed considerably. The change is considered positive, as it happened in the desired direction: the share of faculty with practical field experience had increased and a wider variety of knowledge base was recruited. Our research analyses the change in the composition of the faculty, explores the potential causes of the change, and how old and new faculty members and other candidates experienced the process: the role of sense making of the new situation (recruitment by open competition instead of using mostly incumbent faculty), expectations about fairness of the recruitment process (i.e. seriousness/commitment of organizers to declared aims and rules), and the role of personal and professional networks and institutional and personalized trust.

## Method

The paper is based on the results of questionnaires and interviews made with previous, potential and actual faculty about the open tendering process implemented in November 2014. It explores material and cultural factors that could impact the results of the tender.

In the research, 5 partly overlapping clusters of potential faculty members were questioned:

- (1) faculty members who taught only in the previous program (only previous faculty);
- (2) faculty members who taught in the previous program and teach in the new program as well (common faculty);
- (3) new faculty members selected for the new program (new faculty);
- (4) persons who took part in the competition unsuccessfully;
- (5) outsiders, who theoretically have the right qualifications and competence to teach, were informed about the tender but did not take part in the tender.

Members of each cluster were asked about the reasons for their participation/non participation in the competition and their attitudes towards the new method for recruitment. As the focus was on old and new faculty members, a detailed questionnaire was used for clusters 1-3 and a shorter one for clusters 4 and 5.

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<sup>4</sup> In some cases more teachers were selected who had relevant proposals. For each competency subject one lead teacher was selected plus two team members.

35 respondents belong to cluster 1-3. Out of 24 previous faculty members (cluster 1), 14 answered the questionnaire, out of 10 common faculty, 8 answered, and out of 15 new faculty, 13 answered. As they are the focus of the study, the charts included in the paper present the distribution of their opinions. Cluster 4 and 5, with 23 respondents, are used only as control groups in certain aspects.

Table 1 shows that a large segment (between 40 % and 80%) of the persons belonging to clusters answered the questionnaire. A part (20%-60% by cluster) of the old and new faculty members were interviewed as well.

## Results of the research

### Network dependence of respondents

Two key results have already been presented: (1) according to declared figures<sup>5</sup> presented in chart 1 more than 60% of academics earn more than 25% from activities beyond the main job, and more than 40% earn more than the half; (2) Extra revenue dependence is much lower in the case of other faculty members (experts, civil servants and other professionals). (Szani 2015a)

Another important finding is that, on average, only 13 %<sup>6</sup> of the extra work of all respondents arrives without personal ties! (Szani 2015b) In this aspect, there is no difference between academics and other professionals. Out of the 39 respondent faculty members, only two respondents declared to have more than half of his/her assignments outside the main job without personal ties. These findings show the importance of personal connections in the access to extra work.

Two differences are between old (cluster 1) and new faculty members (cluster 3):

1. extra revenue dependence of faculty decreased in consequence of the tender: the number of respondents with more than 30% income beyond the main job decreased from an average 57% to 30%;

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<sup>5</sup> This chart probably reflects lower external revenues than the reality due to limited willingness to declare such facts. We will say later that some, and probably from the high earner group, refused to give data.

<sup>6</sup> 14 and 11% respectively to the two groups

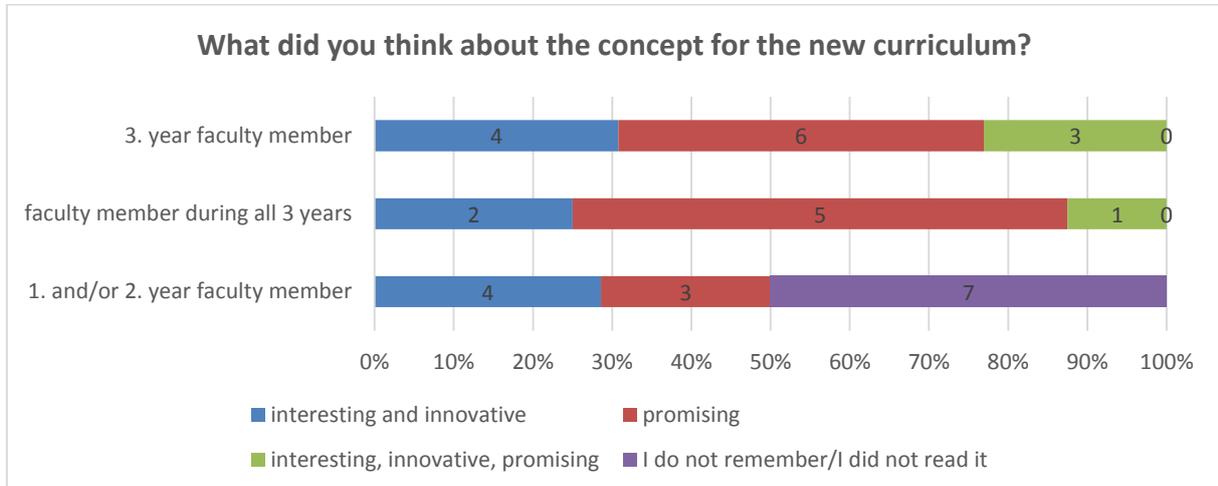
- among the decision criteria in accepting new assignments, the importance of the professional content had increased and the financial rewards had decreased in the new faculty group.

These figures show a shift towards faculty with relatively less dependence on extra revenue and higher importance given to professional content.

## Opinions about the tender

It is important to state that the tender was based on a professional content (concept for the revision of the curriculum) that had not been questioned by any respondent, either within the research or beyond. Chart 2 shows that all respondents from cluster 1-3 (old and new faculty), who remembered the concept, found it innovative and/or promising. Cluster 4 and 5 had similar results: in cluster 4, all remembered and approved, in cluster 5, only 3 respondents did not remember, and all others approved.

**Chart 2: Opinions about the educational concept**



Source: Szani 2015a

Although there was one option, -'I did not understand or agree with the concept', - no one chose it. At the same time, it is worth noticing (and later further investigating) that 7 out of the responding 14 old faculty members (1 clusters) answered that they did not read or remember the concept, and although we used the same e-mail list for the distribution of the tender document and the questionnaire, but out of these 7, only 3 responded who did not agree with the tender. (Chart 3)

The qualitative interviews revealed some of the arguments behind the support for the tender:

- *“The tender was important because it brought together good and committed faculty”*  
(remark in the questionnaire)
- *“The tender was important not only as a functional tool but a necessary component of such a public integrity project.”* (Tornai 2015: 7)
- *“The tender was important as it signals the change in culture and can contribute to the change of the context.”* (Tornai 2015: 7)
- *“It was a source of motivation for us who live in an environment with weak values.”*  
(Tornai 2015: 7)

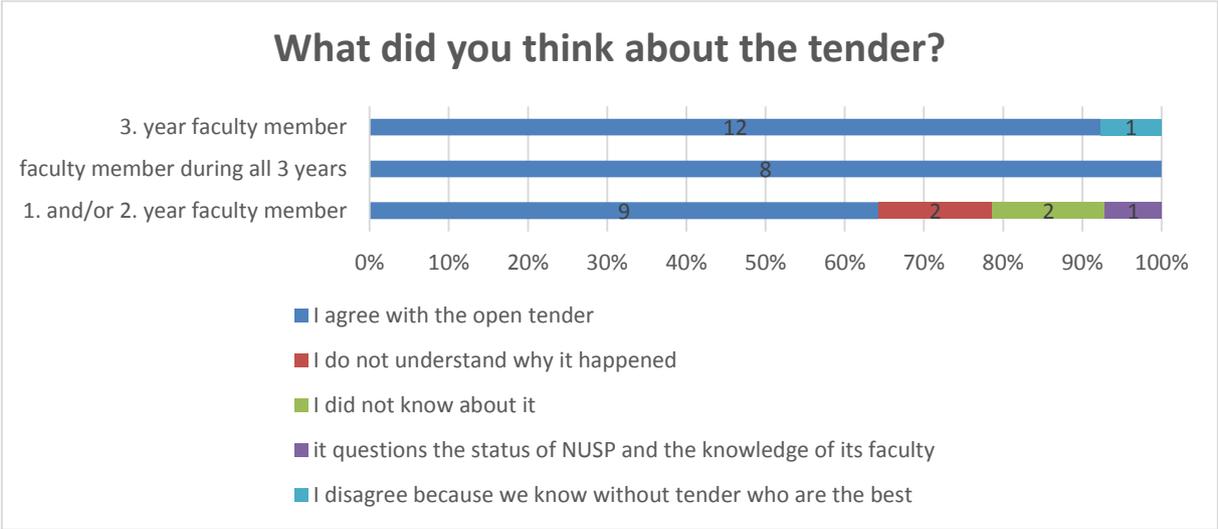
In the quantitative research, out of the total 58 respondents, only 5 respondents expressed disagreement with the tender. Two previous faculty did not understand why the tender was necessary. From these two, to the question: “why did you not take part?” one answered that he/she “did not feel like working on the proposal”, the other that he/she “did not see his/her role in the new concept”. (Chart 3) It is an interesting fact that the two are in the group most dependent on personal networks: 10 or 0 % of their work arrives without personal connections.<sup>7</sup>

Out of the whole group of 58 respondents, only 3 chose more critical options: one respondent from NUSP selected the option: “it questions the status of NUSP” and one new faculty member thought that “we know without tender who is the best”. Even with these doubts, they both participated in the tender. Only one out of 58 responded that he had “not trusted the process”. (This last one is not shown on Chart 3 as belongs to cluster 4)

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<sup>7</sup> Two more elements of the profiles of the respondents can be interesting, those who did „not understand why a tender was implemented” and who did “not feel like working on the proposal”: he/she obtains 0% of his/her work without personal connections and his/her declared criteria for decision about new assignments are “where did the job come from”, “time” and “pay”. He/she gave 0% for professional considerations. (In this mirror the tender screened according to the aims of the organizer.)

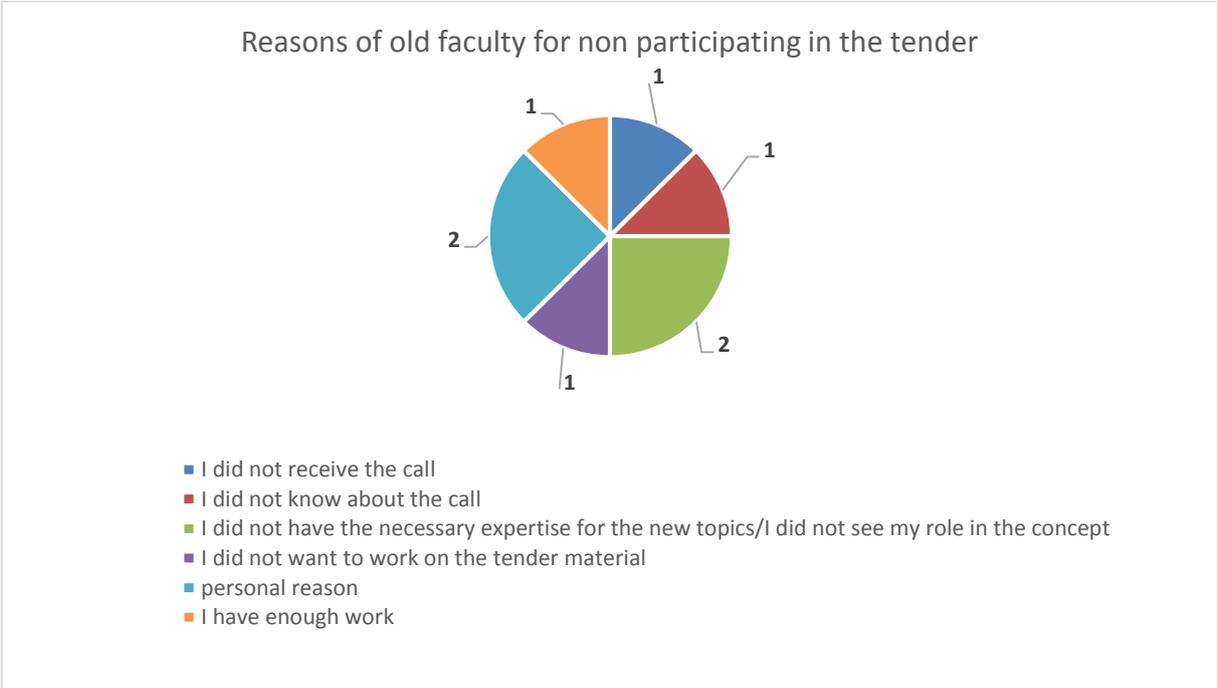
**Chart 3: Opinions about the tender among old and new faculty members**



Source: Szani 2015a

The responses for non-participation are summarized on Chart 4. Out of the 8 respondents, 6 give clear reasons that his/her professional profile did not fit, or they had no time or will to work. Only two chose the option “personal reasons” that could signal disapproval, but from their answers to the other questions, we can see that they approved the tender and the concept.

**Chart 4: Reasons for non-participation in the tender**



Source: Szani 2015a

The data also showed that the share of faculty refusing to participate in the tender was the highest among the academia. Out of the faculty of the old program, only 50% of members from NUSP and other universities participated in the tender, while this share was 70% among civil servants and 100% in the rest. The relatively high share of non-participating academia raised the question whether, in reality, disapproval could be higher than the share resulting from the explicit answers to the questionnaire.

The fact that the 9 old faculty members (cluster 1) who did not answer the questionnaire could be identified, offered opportunity for further investigation. A research assistant attempted to interview them without success. Then I made an attempt to personally ask this group. 6 out of 9 were NUSP faculty, and 5 of them belonged to a specific group of faculty members very active in the “secondary assignment market”. I could reach 5 out of the 6. The one who is not part of the group answered that she liked the idea of the tender, wanted to participate but finally, did not have time. The other 4 who belonged to the same group expressed strong opposition both to the tender and the research, but even they did not criticize the new educational concept either.

- *“If I am invited I come but I do not take part in tenders.”* (personal communication)
- *“The tender was inappropriate as it questioned our competence. I should be invited on the basis of my previous performance.”<sup>8</sup>* (personal communication) – *an argument repeated by all in this group.*
- *“We believed the tender was a strategy to squeeze us out from the program.”* (personal communication)
- *“I do not write a concept for a tender, as I have no time for it. I was involved in many parallel jobs and had no time to think.”* (personal communication)
- *“I do not write a concept when I am not sure that I will implement it. How would I know whether others would not steal my ideas?”* (personal communication)
- *“I did not want to get in confrontation with my colleagues who were all opposed.”* (personal communication)

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<sup>8</sup> With reference to the earlier mentioned lack of performance evaluation: interestingly this argument was also used by the faculty member who was strongly criticized by earlier students, but, not knowing the participants’ evaluation, this could even be interpreted as a candid position.

- *“Horrible idea. If we had filled up the questionnaire it would have become visible that 90% of our revenue came from extra work. I do not want to give ground for the university to burden more on us for the same salaries.”* (personal communication)

Although these voices represented a very small minority of the potential faculty, and maximum 30% of the old faculty, in order to present a balanced picture, it was important to hear them.

Understanding their position is crucial for the conclusions, as they reflect loyalty to their in-group members, lack of trust in the formal process and out-groups, and a sense making imprisoned in the general routines of the institutional and wider context. Some of these sentences clearly support the earlier conclusion on network dependence of university faculty members, and the second hypothesis that the tender could not change deeply rooted beliefs in all stakeholders.

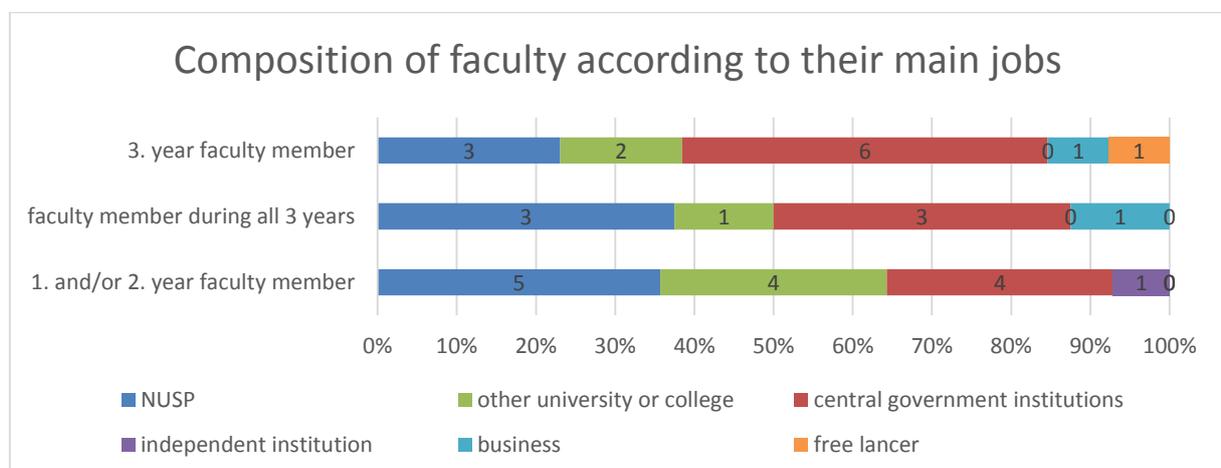
## Results of the tender

One important result is that the composition of the faculty expertise has considerably changed.

Contrary to previous years, all accepted faculty members had some experience relevant to the field of public integrity. The share of civil servants with practical experience has increased from approximately 35 % to 60 %, and the share of academics has decreased from 65% to 40%. (Chart 5)

This result was in harmony with the aim to shift the focus of education towards a more practice orientated education.

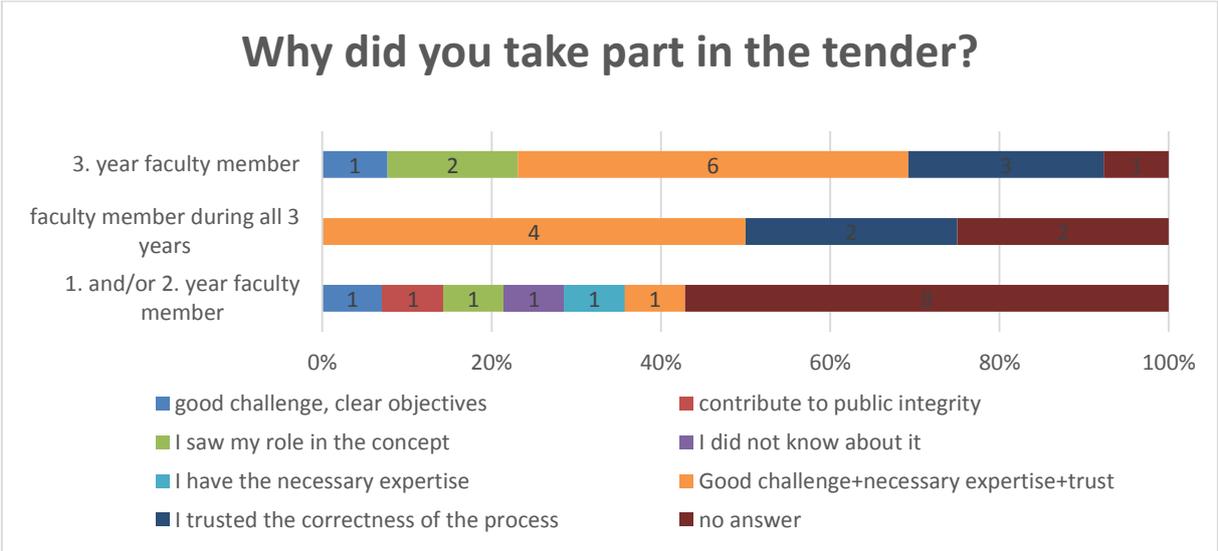
**Chart 5: Composition of faculty according to main jobs**



Source: Szani 2015a

The aim of the tender was to recruit reliable and committed professionals. The tender document clearly formulated the expectation that faculty had to take part in a demanding curriculum development process. The answers to the question about faculty’s motivation shows that the majority of selected faculty members had multiple commitments. (Chart 6) Nobody chose the option “financial reason”. This is not surprising. Because of the serious planning work and the need to design new courses, participation in this program could not be seen as “easy money”. (Out of those who did not answer this question, 8 in the last row are the ones who did not take part in the tender. Their answers are presented in Chart 4.)

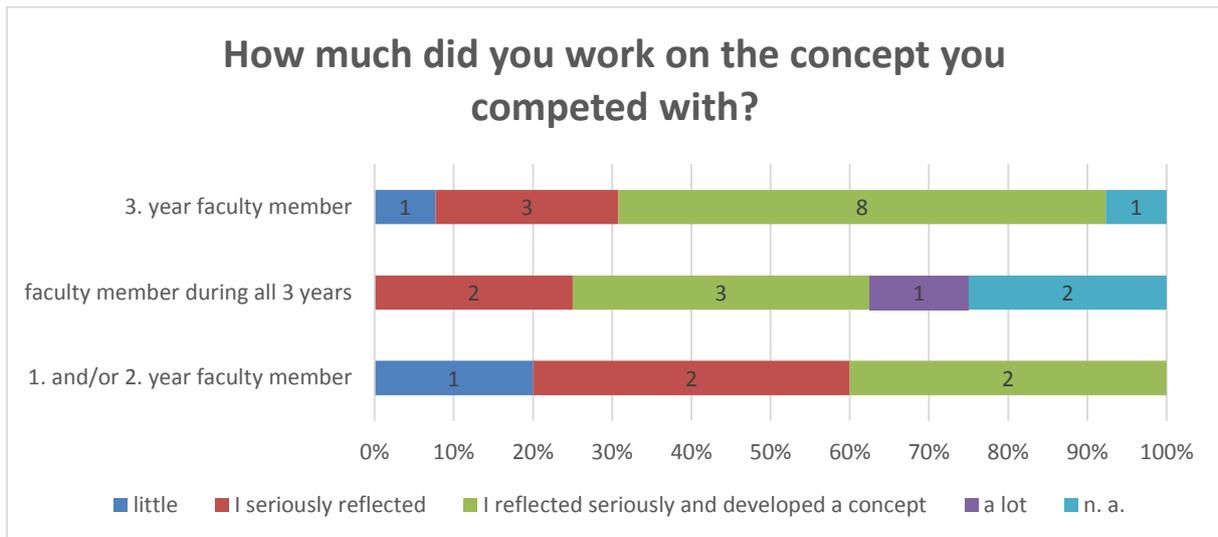
**Chart 6: Motivation to take part**



Source: Szani 2015a

Commitment and hard work is reflected in Chart 7 as well: the overwhelming majority of candidates worked seriously on their documents. This, indirectly, also means that they believed in the honesty of the process. Parallel results show that out of the 58 respondents, only one from Cluster 4 choose the option “I did not trust that decision on selection will be made on the basis of the documents sent”.

**Chart 7: Work on the tender document**



Source: Szani 2015a

The respondents could write further comments about the outcome of the tender in the questionnaire. These comments reflect realism:

- *“The tender was good as it selected competent and committed faculty, but not perfect as far as tenders being considered as a method.”* (Questionnaire)
- *“A great team was assembled. It is an honor to be part of it.”* (Questionnaire)
- *“An interesting and diverse team. This can be a strength but a challenge as well.”* (Questionnaire)

And finally some comments from the members of the selection committee:

- *“We had to make some compromises. With more candidates, an even better team could have been recruited.”* (Questionnaire)
- *“A few did not put enough thought in their concepts. For them, the result was a delusion. In summary, we could select good faculty and many committed people.”* (Questionnaire)

## Role of leadership and commitment

The qualitative interviews and the section in the questionnaire where respondents could write further comments reveal one more important aspect:

- *“Finally a post-graduate program shifted the focus towards practice and gave the opportunity to share what I know and believe in.”* (personal communication)
- *“I wanted to be part of this, as I felt the energy and commitment of the leadership to finally change a wrong practice and initiate committed education”* (personal communication)
- *“The tender and the process proves for me that I am not alone with my principles”* (Tornai 2015: 6)
- *“The process promised a motivating and reinforcing environment”* (Tornai 2015: 6)

After the tender, when the work had started, the faculty remarked:

- *“In the earlier program, quality depended on ad hoc decisions and relations of faculty. Now content is shaped in a planned process supported by methodology based on the experience of the leadership. Everybody will profit from this process.”* (Tornai 2015: 17)
- *“We are in a process that is an intellectual delight for me and deep learning about the field and my on part in it.”* (personal communication)
- *“I hope students will realize and value that finally a program offers consistent content and practice oriented method.”* (questionnaire)
- *“I hope what we will offer for our students will not only be the cognitive content but also that we will be able to transmit the ethos and commitment of our group as well.”* (personal communication)

Tornai (2015: 7) also mentions in his summary of the qualitative survey that “we experienced in all interviewed persons commitment and intent to connect to the evolving shared knowledge.” “They, without exception, face the process as a huge challenge.” (Tornai 2015: 8) Tornai (2015: 7) also mentions that these motivations appeared in opposition to the contexts where faculty came from, and who are deprived of such values, and filled with cynicism.

## Reflection on the results

### Role of extra work and networks

The research produced interesting figures on the network dependence of faculty and the dependence of academics on work beyond the main job. In view of these dependences, the tender for faculty members is not only an unusual method for recruitment (i.e. clashing with local practices),

it also breaks the informal rules that protect the material interests of internal stakeholders (i.e. clashing with interests). In this context, the responses testify that many are willing to forego material interests to some degree when the opportunity is offered to participate in committed work and to belong to a process and group with ethos and expertise. From the old faculty, a considerably smaller share of academia took part in the tender, which may indicate that this disposition was more prevalent among the group of civil servants who are less dependent on extra work and networks.

The role of networks can also infer that a strong opposition to the tender could be explored only in a group of NUSP teachers belonging to the same incumbent interest group. They are accustomed to being invited to teach in NUSP programs and had contested the operation of CEI from the beginning, possibly considering this program as taking away from their own turf. Their sense making remained fixed on the general pattern of a flawed tender process and competing group interests.

### Outcome of the tender

The concept and the tender were also accepted and approved by most who responded. This proves that it is possible to break routines as long as the commitment and purpose of the “routine-breaker” can be understood and accepted by the stakeholders. On the basis of reputation and communication, an interpretation of a credible tender process could be created in most potential faculty members. As a result of the tender, a faculty with expertise was formed, having a purpose and not only just another assignment.

The tender that was based on a clear concept for curriculum development also functioned as a mirror for potential faculty: they had to determine whether they had the expertise that would be needed for the program – a conclusion often avoided while accepting invitations, and in a system without serious curriculum planning and performance evaluations. The tender also functioned as a screen for commitment: it made clear the objective that each had to make the effort to select the relevant content from his/her expertise and work with others to fit in and develop it to adapt to the new curriculum – neither of which is expected in other similar programs. All these factors contributed to the norm building impact of the process.

## Outcome of the value and trust building strategy

I think such a tender alone without antecedents couldn't have brought the same results; this tender was built on the work accomplished by the Center of Expertise for Integrity.

According to my understanding the following happened:

- During the 11 months of its operation, CEI had contributed to public integrity with its leadership, expertise, ethos, and a lot-of work imbedded in communication practices. This had built up an invaluable reputation and trust. At CEI, a principled and committed group had formed. One faculty member remarked: *“Personal integrity and commitment of the leadership was so credible that when NUSP started to support the process I joined.”* (written note)
- The operation and events of CEI had given a model. One testimony: *“I entered, as I liked the approach, philosophy and the professionalism. Then the committed environment lured me in.”* (written note)
- The openness and transparency of CEI had resulted in wide awareness and recognition of its existence in the relatively small circle of integrity professionals (experts, trainers, advisors, etc.) Thus, the model could be envisioned as a possible pattern of functioning within the “cognitive map” of stakeholders who live in context functioning on different principles and routines. With an expression borrowed from scenario planners, a “shared memory of the future.” (Van der Heijden 1997) could be formed in the network.

The result was that those actively connected to CEI could understand the tender according to this memory. Those who had resisted CEI decoded the process according to the routines of the wider institutional context.

## Conclusions – the role of leadership and sense making of stakeholders

I started the paper from the material dependence of academics on multiple jobs. This is a factor that was beyond my control. With the research, I wanted to show that although wrong financial

incentives can play an important role in the lack of willingness of faculty to take demanding new assignments, their attitudes, sense making and expectations are equally important. Even when key material factors cannot be changed, principled commitment and consistent argumentative work can still bring some results. I think it is unfortunate that both are still in short supply in the analyzed context.

I wrote the paper because I wanted to show a case in which it was possible to change expectations and some other cultural patterns of a group, and to implement an otherwise flawed practice into a correct process - a change not before achieved through pressure alone, neither from above, nor from the outside. In the presented case, the tendering rules worked because credible people began to give relevance to them. Potentially, this could break cynicism in those who had already felt uncomfortable with the flawed practices and could gather many other supporters. Setting examples, building shared values and culture, offering the experience of belonging to a principled community could do a lot: the feel, the taste of it and the identity benefit from it.

The importance of the argumentative process I suggest is that it can create a common reading of events, purposes, principles, and even expectations. It can engender “shared memories of the future” that prepare stakeholders to understand the new pattern when it appears. When an open tender breaks the bad old pattern of distributing jobs on the basis of invitations, some accept it because they had long been prepared for it, and others because these shared “memories” can help them to understand the honesty of the new method. This is how they can connect to change.

How much can this strategy do? It depends. It is only one impact among a million other impacts in a complex social system. Other impacts will determine whether they can trigger a chain reaction of positive changes or whether they die out rapidly. I am convinced of - and particularly what actually happened has also reinforced in me – the notion, that beyond the elevated and personal good feeling, the success and direction of change depends also on the number and position of those who “get infected” and will eventually help to introduce changes in the wider institutional practices.

One of our group said: *“what you initiated around CEI engendered an ethos and a circle of committed people. Even if it cannot continue at the moment, it will not be lost. Wherever a window of opportunity will open again for positive process it will reappear and contribute.”* (personal communication)

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**Table 1**

Table 1: Key data about the five clusters of the quantitative survey

	1. only previous faculty	2. common faculty	3. new faculty	4. took part without success	5. invited but did not take part in the tender
Cluster participants identified and contacted in the research <sup>9</sup>	24	10	15	22	25 contacted
answered the questionnaire	14	8	13	13	10
responded that did not take part in the tender	9				10
answered the questionnaire plus interviewed		5	9		
refused to answer the questionnaire but reached for oral response	5				

<sup>9</sup> In clusters 1 to 4 all persons belonging to the cluster could be identified, and an attempt was made to contact them. In cluster 5 probably more persons belong but could not be identified.