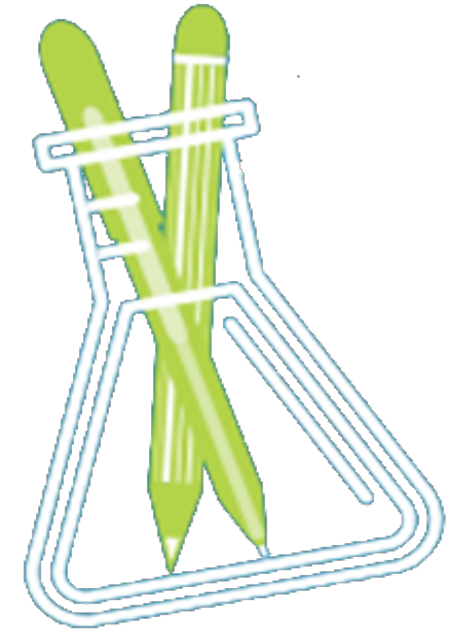


Measuring and Evaluating Determinants of Public Administration Productivity

Bureaucracy Lab

Development Impact Evaluation | Global Governance Practice

October 22-25, 2019, Brussels, Belgium



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Civil Service Surveys as Tool for Evidence-Based Public Administration Reform: Lessons from Surveys in 21 Countries

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Lessons from one decade of surveying civil servants in 21 countries

- New EU member states survey (2007-08)
 - 7 countries, 2.500 responses, as part of SIGMA/OECD project on post-accession sustainability of civil service reforms
- Western Balkans plus new member states survey (2010-11)
 - 9 countries, 10.000 responses, as part of SIGMA/OECD project on civil service professionalisation
- Developing and European countries (2016-17)
 - 10 countries, 23.000 responses, as part of UK DFID/British Academy project on what works in civil service management

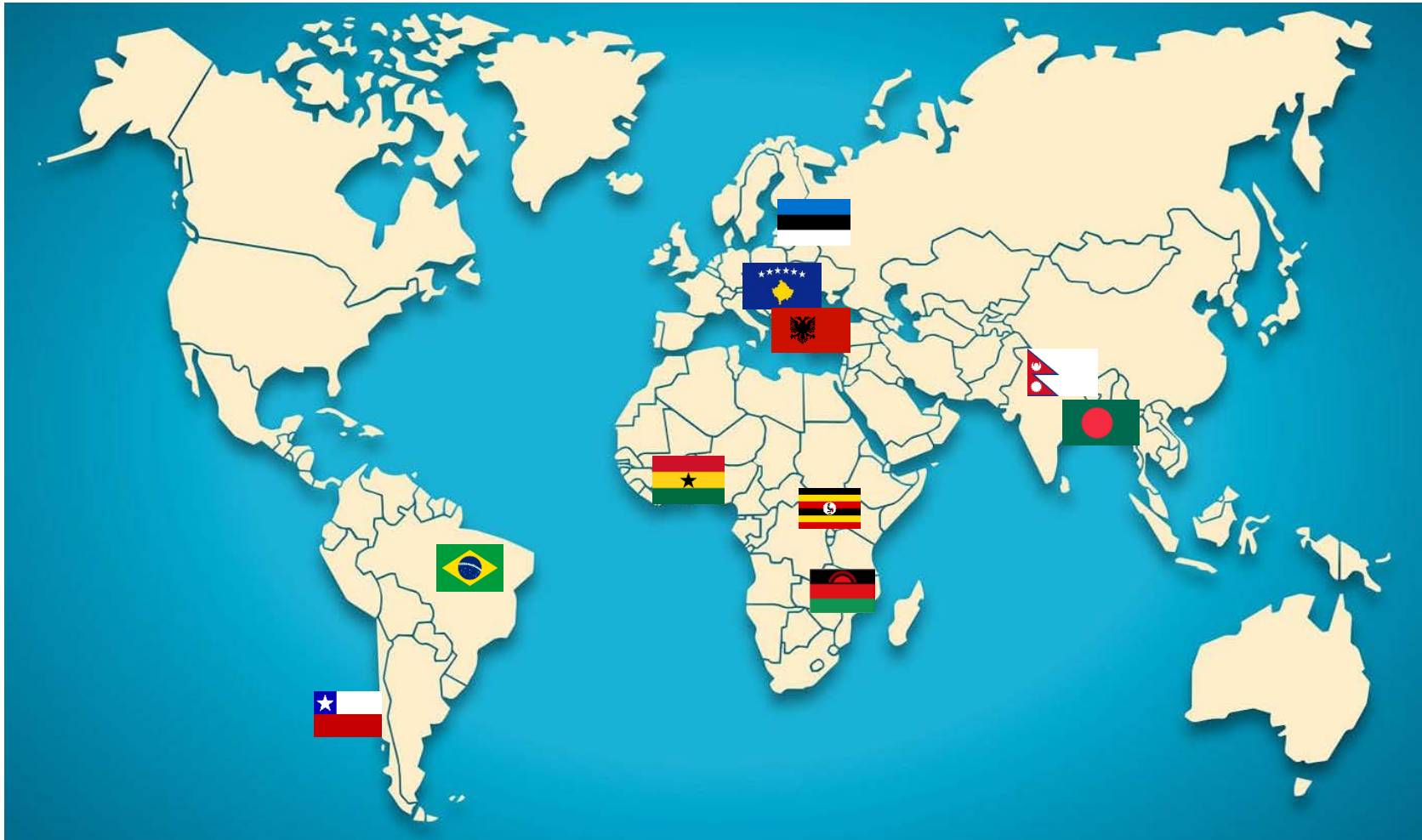
First wave: New member states after EU accession

- Concerns regarding
 - Reversal of pre-accession reforms
 - Persisting politicisation
- Lack of evaluation standards
 - European principles of administration? EU pre-accession conditions?
- Lack of systematic evidence
 - Run first civil service survey against all odds
 - Identify:
 - Major variation in reform pathways and management practices across the regions
 - Inform reform and amendment of civil service law in Lithuania

Second wave: EU Accession states

- Concerns regarding
 - Reform stagnation
 - Discrepancy between formal rules and actual practices
- Replicate civil service survey
 - Identify
 - Variation within countries across ministries
 - Poor quality of implementation
- Challenges
 - What it takes to implement civil service surveys
 - New questions: What works in civil service management?
 - E.g., is politicisation a problem? If so, how can it be curbed?

23.000 civil servants, ten countries, four regions



Survey of civil servants

- Main focus: administrative arm of central government
- 5 countries: online population surveys
 - Entire civil service: Estonia (3,555 respondents, 25% response rate), Albania (3,655, 47%), Kosovo (2,431, 14%)
 - Select institutions: Chile (5,742, 37%), Brazil (2,830, 11%)
- 5 countries: in-person informal quota sample surveys
 - Ghana (1,645), Malawi (1,232), Uganda (1,441)
 - Bangladesh (1,012), Nepal (1,196)
- 100+ cognitive interviews with public servants to gauge respondent understanding of survey measures



Learning about the Nature of the Civil Service

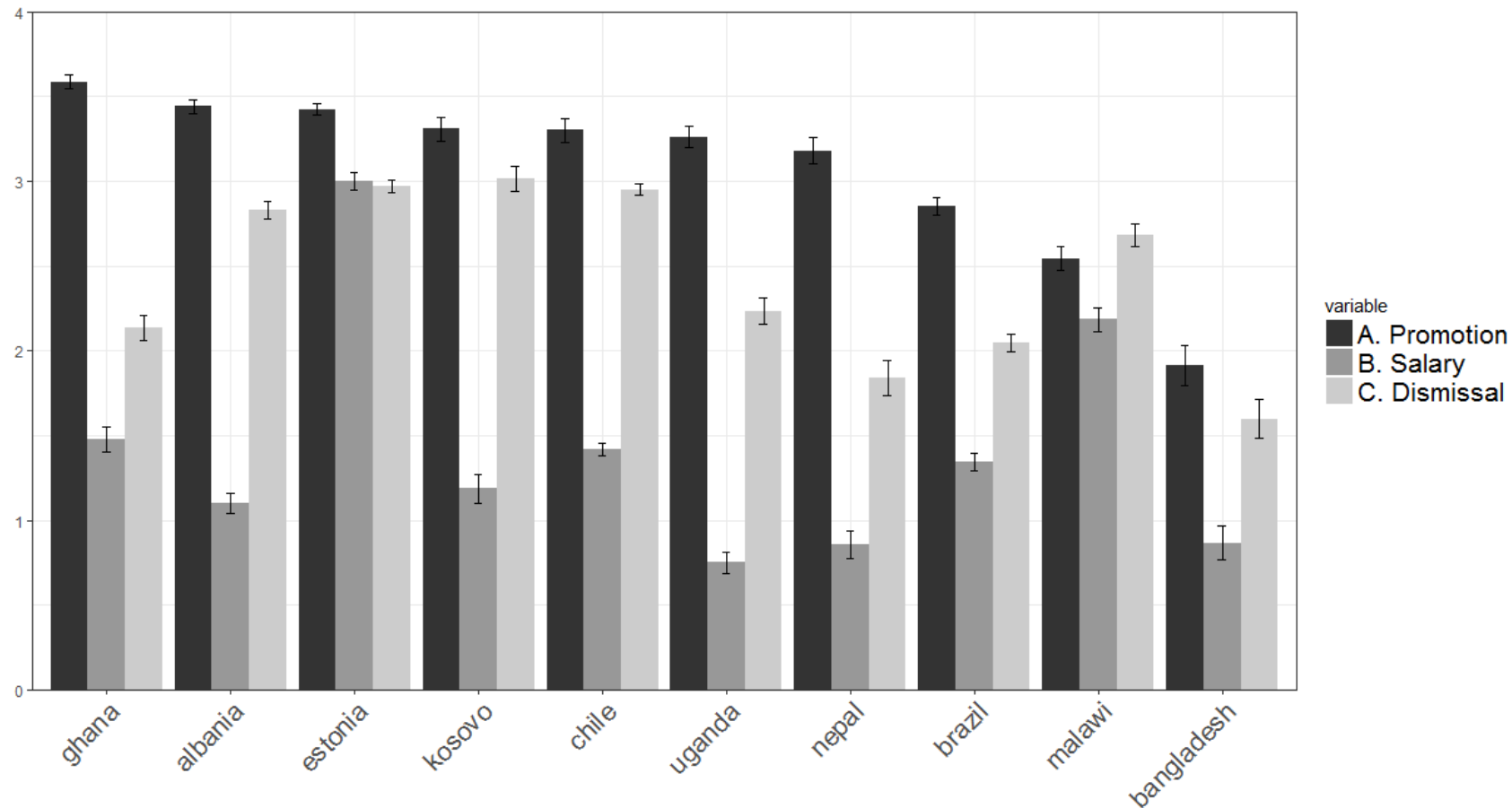
Data

vs.

Conventional wisdom

Two examples

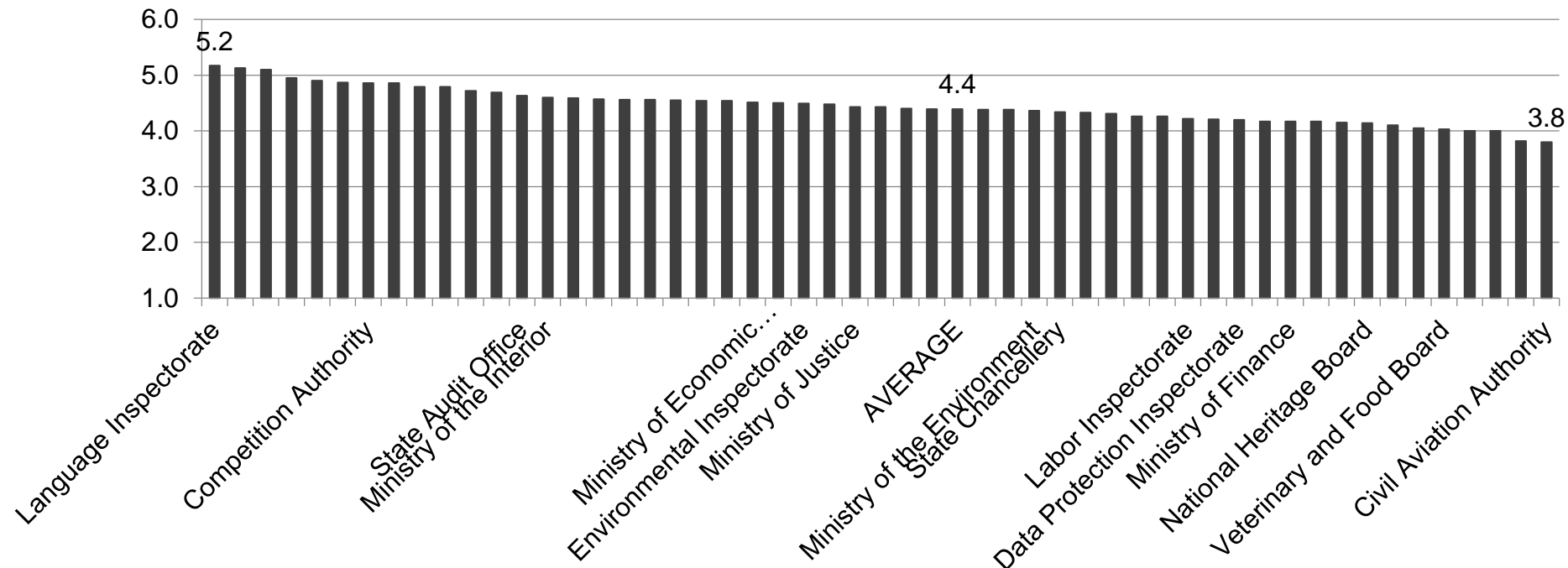
Public servants perceive some performance incentives in all surveyed countries, but typically for promotions, not pay



Measures: Importance of performance in future career advancement // 'I might be dismissed from the civil service if I do not perform well.'
'My work performance has had an influence on my salary in the public service.'

***Within* countries, differences between institutions are often larger than differences across countries**

Example: job satisfaction by institution in Estonia



Implications

- ⇒ Civil services are reformed institution-by-institution
- ⇒ Requires appreciation of institutional realities, identification of strengths and weaknesses at institutional level, rather than country ‘templates’
- ⇒ Intuition and conventional wisdom need not reflect civil service realities
- ⇒ Surveys of public servants one key tool for an evidence-based, institution-by-institution diagnostic of reform priorities

Thanks for your attention!

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