




# Professional regulatory entanglement: the curious case of project management in Italy

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## ABSTRACT

Growth in the internationalization of economic activity has favoured an increase in institutional control at a supranational level. A typical example of such institutions that wield this control is corporate professions such as Project Management (PM). Attempting to replicate the successful strategies of the collegial professions but embracing advantages presented by global markets, corporate professions is confronted by the dilemma of how to reconcile the demands of stakeholders at both national and global levels. This research investigates an international corporate profession, PM, and its development within Italy using a historical case study. Results shows an increase in the number of regulations faced by international corporate professions as they attempt to satisfy a number of different institutions (and their competing agendas) while attempting to colonize a national context. This we define as ‘professional regulatory entanglement’. It concludes that what was once a simple bargain involving two actors, the state and the profession, with a long established, commonly agreed and mutually beneficial agenda is now a much more complex system involving multiple actors and a number of competing agendas and this results in the homogenization of professional practice across the globe.

**KEYWORDS:** corporate profession; professional regulatory entanglement; project management; supranational institutions; professionalization

## INTRODUCTION

The intensification of international competition, in the last 30 years, and the growing internationalization of economic activity has favoured the increase in forms and instances of economic control at supra-/inter-national level (Hodgson and Paton 2016; Breitmeier 2016; Gronau and Schmidtke 2016; Chimni 2004). This phenomenon has stimulated the growth of industrial coordination across borders driving convergence of previously separate management systems and institutions.

Accompanying this has been the growth in one form of supranational institution: the corporate

profession. Attempting to gain the legitimacy and profile that the collegial professions such as medicine and law benefit from, several contemporary management occupational sub-disciplines are staging professionalization projects (Kipping, Kirkpatrick and Muzio 2006; Hodgson 2007; Sturdy, Wylie and Wright 2013; Thomas and Thomas 2014). Though achieving mixed outcomes, HRM (Wright 2008), strategy (Whittington et al. 1999; Noordegraaf 2011), consulting (Sturdy 2011; Collins and Butler 2019), marketing (Walker and Child 1979; Enright 2006), and project management (PM) (Wideman 1995; Hodgson 2002) have all made clear moves

towards professional self-organization and the achievement of some form of professional recognition. While occupational legitimacy in the form of professionalization is desirable in itself, the wider practical benefits to global economic organization that professional enclosure affords, such as standardization of process and practice, and regulation of practitioner provision, are also attractive.

However, the professionalization journeys of these managerial occupations are not straightforward (Morris, Patel and Wearne 2000; McKenna 2007; Faulconbridge and Muzio 2012; Brès et al. 2019). The plurality of the context they inhabit (see Nicklich, Braun, and Fortwengel [2020] for the German context) and most particularly the complexity of the international stakeholder environment brings a number of tensions; therefore, new occupations ‘forge new ways of relating to their work, to their colleagues, to their clients, and to the organizations that increasingly dominate their working lives’ (Gorman and Sandefur 2011: 276). One such tension is that between, on one hand, the economic pressure to create a homogeneous global professional system by standardizing process and practice across nations and, on the other, the cultural and regulatory pressures to create a more heterogeneous professional system by customizing process and practice to the requirements of a specific national context.

This problematic is evidenced most acutely in the Italian context where, rather than working primarily to fulfil market needs, the ‘professionalization projects are more likely to be coordinated from above by the visible hand of the state’ (Sabini and Muzio 2017: 833): a state whose approach to profession is characterized historically by a binary divide between ‘regulated’ (established)—and ‘non-regulated’ (emerging) professions. Here, the idiosyncratic relationships between stakeholders such as the agents of national Government and the public sector, professional associations, the European Union (EU), and the global corporations that draw on professional management services have heavily influenced, and in some cases obstructed, the development of the professions (Sabini and Alderman, 2021). Consequently, it is unclear how corporate professions navigate between the local and global contexts as they develop in their professionalization journeys.

The capacity of local incumbent institutions to influence their context in the presence of global challenger institutions is well known in neo-institutional theory as ‘institutional thickness’ (Amin and Thrift 1995). We argue the Italian ‘institutional thickness’ in the professional context is a necessary condition for the ‘professional regulatory entanglement’ to happen.

One of the management sub-disciplines that have arguably been most successful in its international professionalization journey is PM (Hodgson, Paton and Muzio 2015). Though achieving many of the artefacts of professional status, such as standardized bodies of knowledge (see Morris et al. 2006) and a level of professional regulation, and while attaining a degree of coherence, the relationships between national institutions and those institutions that operate across national boundaries have made this journey problematic.

The objective of this research was to characterize how the complex interplay<sup>1</sup> between national and transnational stakeholders affected the evolution of this corporate profession and to understand what this case can tell us about corporate professions in general. This will be done by exploring how the Italian state regulates the PM profession. This understanding will inform future analysis of wider corporate professionalism as it develops globally.

Our analysis highlights that the interweaving of multiple considerations drawn from multiple stakeholders active in the context combines to form a complex, and we would argue, suboptimal outcome for all parties. The result of these conflicting tensions is the production of ‘professional regulatory entanglement’ that we define as the increase in the number of regulations faced by international corporate professions when attempting to colonize a national context. The implication of this entanglement is the creation of a composite set of regulations that result from the necessary compromises made and this represents a suboptimal outcome for all parties.

The contributions towards the debates on professionalization are (1) the acknowledgment that professionalization projects have become quite complex involving multiple actors with different and often competing agendas; (2) the homogenization of professional practice at international level; and (3) the influence States (in State-regulated contexts) is

diminishing in favour of incumbent professional institutions maintaining their own influence.

The article is organized as follows. First, we explore current understandings of corporate professions (Kipping, Kirkpatrick and Muzio 2006; Muzio et al. 2011; Paton, Hodgson and Muzio 2013), we then describe contemporary PM before focusing on its emergence as a case study example of a corporate profession. Then, by drawing on the historical case, we explore the dynamics of professionalization within the Italian context and present its defining characteristics.

## LITERATURE REVIEW—PROFESSIONS AND THE STATE

### Corporate professionalism

Original studies of professionalization were mainly conducted in Anglo-Saxon contexts and focused on the ‘collegial’ professions of law and medicine (Macdonald 1995). Initial work by Johnson (1972: 45) noted that professionalism was defined not by the nature of any individual occupation but was characterized by a ‘peculiar type of occupational control’. Traditionally, professionalization has two key aspects. First, the regulation of production by producers, which refers to attempts to control how services are produced and consumed and secondly, the regulation of the production of producers, which refers to attempts to regulate the production of professionals themselves (Abel 1988). These aspects, in effect, represent a monopolization strategy where an occupational group seeks to have exclusive authority over both an area of expertise and those that have the right of access to it. Here, right of access usually relies on a combination of mastery of a body of formal knowledge and completion of a period of vocational training whereupon the practitioner is then considered worthy to be admitted to the professional community.

While professions are generally associated with ‘traditional’ occupations such as medicine and law, globalization, deregulation, and the rise of large professional service firms in the late 20th century (Powell, Brock and Hinings 1999) and the appearance of new expert occupations (Fincham 2012) have resulted more recently in a broader range of occupations such as Management Consultancy (Sturdy 2011), Human Resource Management

(Wright 2008), and PM (Hodgson, Paton, and Muzio 2015) seeking the benefits of professionalization. Though adopting the strategies of knowledge enclosure and control of access established by the collegial professions these, what have become known as, corporate professions (Kipping, Kirkpatrick and Muzio 2006; Muzio et al. 2011; Paton, Hodgson and Muzio 2013; Thomas and Thomas 2014) differ from the collegial professions in that they are to a large extent reliant on corporations as consumers of their services. This close association with corporates provides corporate professions with three distinct features that differentiate them from collegial professions (Paton, Hodgson and Muzio 2013).

First, corporate professions often offer organizational membership where companies are certified in exchange for their commitment to operate within professional codes of conduct. This differs from collegial professions where the main concern is with the individual practitioner. Secondly, corporate professions have developed enclosure mechanisms with more emphasis on competences and industry knowledge and experience’ (Muzio et al. 2011: 451). This differs from collegial professions where the main emphasis is on mastery of a body of formal knowledge proven by traditional examination. Thirdly, corporate professions display an inherently global dimension that reflects the nature of many of the firms and supply chains that use the services of these corporate professionals. This differs from collegial professions that are more often nationally bound.

It has been argued that these features represent a form of, what has been termed, corporate capture (Paton, Hodgson and Muzio 2013) and indicate corporate professionalism is increasingly weighted towards the interests of employer organizations at the expense of the individual practitioner. Indeed, there is a tacit acknowledgement that corporations may now constitute the key sites and vehicles for this type of professionalization (Dacin, Goodstein and Scott 2002; Suddaby, Cooper and Greenwood 2007).

This symbiotic relationship, though diluting the independence of the practitioner and indeed the profession (Empson and Chapman 2006; Faulconbridge and Muzio 2008) from the employing organization, offers in return a convenient and lucrative marketing opportunity as it provides professional associations a direct route to the significant number of potential

recruits within these corporations. Similarly, although more firmly bound within the corporate model, the practitioner still enjoys, albeit enacted in a different way, the traditional professional benefits of some form of occupational enclosure and collective mobility. Furthermore, the global nature of multinational companies brings corporate professions mobility on a much larger scale than collegial professions have previously been accustomed to.

### Global professionalism

Globalization, operating mainly through the medium of international firms and supranational professional bodies, heavily influences the shape of corporate professionalism. It exerts a strong push for unification and standardization of professional activity across national boundaries (Faulconbridge and Muzio 2008) while providing a larger market for professional services. Therefore, for global corporations and corporate professions, the focus is very much on transcending the boundaries of the nation-state to develop transnational standards, qualifications and codes of practice. While this complicity is mutually beneficial, it to some extent ignores the longstanding involvement of nation-states in the development of professions. This involvement plays out along two dimensions.

First, some professions, generally the collegial, emerged within nation-states developing specifically to fit that contextual niche. This trajectory led to identifiable degrees of difference in their practice when compared across separate countries. Therefore, the development of transnational governance regimes results in a process of homogenization where different forms of each profession found within separate countries are forced to harmonize as they venture internationally. There are other outcomes though. Research carried out within the EU indicated that due to expedience, the more practical outcome is that 'professional institutions within individual member states have to tolerate practitioners who have not necessarily been trained in the ways required for the achievement of professional status in that country' (Neal and Morgan 2000: 22). Furthermore, there is a growing tendency of professionals to exploit these new opportunities by qualifying in particular member states that are thought to offer an

easier entry route, before transferring back into their country of origin (Marraffino 2009).

Secondly, some professions (generally the corporate) emerged within industries dominated by global firms with an inherently international outlook. As part of their 'one firm' strategies (Boussebaa 2009; Muzio and Faulconbridge 2013), these firms develop globally aligned structures, practices and codes of conduct, integrated training and socialization programmes (Faulconbridge and Muzio 2012) and as a consequence of this are inclined to recruit professionals with homogeneous skills, values, and cultural orientations (Spence and Carter 2014; Spence et al. 2015). This path tends to lead to an inherently more homogeneous professional practice. In this context, therefore, global corporations and supranational professional associations are replacing the national professional association and nation-state as the principal sites 'where professional identities are mediated, formed and transformed' (Cooper and Robson 2006: 416). Corporate professions, nurtured by large corporations then, in effect, colonize different national contexts: for example, the US-based PM Institute (PMI) sells more 'Project Management Professional' certificates in India and China than in the USA.

Furthermore, large corporations themselves have also been active in challenging national professional regulations (Arnold 2005) and qualification frameworks (Suddaby, Cooper, and Greenwood 2007) in attempts to create a global market (Muzio, Brock and Suddaby 2013). Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) suggest that ideas and institutions, and we argue also professions, do not simply homogenize when colonizing a new field or environment. It is more of an active process of transformation where they are 'translated as they are embedded into new settings' (Czarniawska and Joerges 1996; Djelic and Sahlin-Andersson 2006: 22). The act of grounding these professions into different nation-states therefore follows idiosyncratic processes as they encounter diverse national institutions with different priorities and forms of influence.

While these tensions play out in many professional arenas, it is clear that the entry of supranational institutions and the development of transnational governance regimes has diluted the role of the nation-state in influencing

professionalization initiatives replacing it with new agents operating globally. While the role of global corporations is significant, they are not the only international agents in play. Others that are beginning to exert some influence include, for example, supranational organizations such as the EU, or regulatory bodies such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) (Olechowski et al. 2016). Whatever their nature, these organizations can serve to undermine, circumvent, or supersede national regulatory systems. For instance, the EU 'Directive on Professional Qualifications' (2005/36/EC) legislates for the mutual recognition of national qualifications across the EU and for the development of common deontological standards.

Therefore, in summary, when professions grow in the global context, nurtured by supranational professional associations, and supported by corporations they will work with a number of other global actors during their professionalization journeys. However, they will at some point encounter the interests of national institutions as they seek to gain national legitimacy.

Adopting the opposite perspective, to cope with challenges presented by corporate professions, national institutions may develop different reactions. Some may embrace bodies of knowledge, certifications, and accreditation systems bought from the 'outside', while others, such as the case we present here, may react in a more protectionist way. Ultimately, the type of reaction will depend on the balance of power between the supranational professional association and the national stakeholders that will attempt to influence the path of the professionalization of new occupations (Spence et al. 2016).

Ultimately characterizing these dynamics may provide evidence of a shift in the 'historical regulatory bargain between professional associations and nation-states.' (Suddaby, Cooper and Greenwood 2007: 334) as it is replaced with an alternative regulatory bargain that includes supranational institutions and global corporations.

Therefore, the concern of this article is to explore, using the case study corporate profession of PM, the dynamics that exist when corporate professions, fashioned in the global context, develop within the context of the nation-state.

## METHODOLOGY

To meet our research objective, we adopted a historical research method (Suddaby, Foster and Mills 2014), which is deemed to be the most suitable to interpret, analyse, and evaluate institutional change (Suddaby and Greenwood 2009) in a given organizational field (Scott and Christensen 1995). Here, the scope of the research is set as the evolution of the PM within Italy in the last 20 years. Hence, we set the 'organisational field', as the methodological unit of analysis, defining it as 'a community of organizations that partakes of a common meaning system and whose participants interact more frequently and fatefully with one another than with actors outside the field' (Scott and Christensen 1995: 56).

In this sense, 'history provides the longer perspectives, accounts for the complex causal patterns, and incorporates the contingent events that short-term process research has difficulty studying' (Wadhvani and Decker 2017: 122). Therefore, this method allows us to extend the insight gathered from the organizational field and make grounded assumptions.

To build this historical case study, we undertook an extensive analysis of archival data (with the intention of reconstructing events) and semi-structured interviews with people involved in this professionalization process (with the intention of comprehending the motives of their actions). Combining these two types of data allows judgements on actors' behaviour and evaluations of the historical case study to be made in relation to the theory of corporate professions and professional regulation. Its construction followed a two-step approach.

The first step consisted of two data-gathering activities: (1) a keyword search using the phrases 'PM' and 'Italian Project Management' was performed on the archives of the main Italian newspapers (Corriere, Sole24Ore, LaRepubblica) and (2) relevant material was sought on the websites of the PM professional associations and 'lobbies' [PMI, IPMA, ISIPM, ASSociazione Italiana dei Responsabili ed Esperti di gestione Progetto (ASSIREP), CNEL, COLAP]. These searches produced the returns depicted in Table 1. This stage allowed us to chart in detail the historical development of the PM profession in Italy through identification of key events and initiatives and, more importantly, to identify the key

actors involved. These archival data were stored and organized in NVivo10.

In the second step, from 2012 to 2015, we conducted 20 semi-structured interviews with key actors identified in stage 1 all holding key positions within a number of stakeholder organizations as listed in Table 2. All interviewees (but one) were Italian nationals. The interviews followed a standard protocol lasted between 30 min, and one and half hour and were recorded, transcribed, anonymized, and stored into NVivo10.

The actors in this story include individual professionals, professional associations, employers

**Table 1. Empirical data structure (archival)**

Document source	#	Year
Professional association's newsletters	1,504	2003–2018
Public documents	11	–
Newspaper articles	1,593	1990–2013
Journal papers	25	1988–2013
Social media discussions	15	2011–2018

**Table 2. Empirical data structure (interviews)**

Entity	Name
Professional associations	PMI—President of PMI-RC, Director of professional development (PMI-RC), Public Relations (PMI-RC), President of PMI-SIC, and Vice-President of PMI-NC IPMA—President of IPMA international, IPMA Vice President—international, Certification Management of IPMA—Italy, Board member and Academic, and IPMA Young Crew Italy ISIPM—former president and board member
Pressure groups	CEPAS—president COLAP—president and board member FCD—focus group
Technical entities	UNI—president and board member

(both corporate and public sectors), government (Italian and EU) pressure groups, and other public bodies. We focused on the Italian context as it exhibits a substantial degree of PM activity and it exists within a continental model of professionalism (Micelotta and Washington 2013; Faulconbridge and Muzio 2016), that is historically dominated more directly by the state than equivalent Anglo-Saxon models.

In all, we aligned this research with the four elements of description of methodology for historical cases: *reportage*, *explanation*, *understanding*, and *evaluation*. Indeed, the systematic collection of data based on archival documents has focused on the historical reconstruction of main events and semi-structured interviews served to (1) triangulate data and (2) understand the interpretation given by the actors involved. Therefore, through reconstruction of primary sources, we assembled the reportage in the section, 'Historical Perspectives'. This reportage then serves as a basis on which to contextualize assumptions on how 'professional regulatory entanglement' is created (explanation and understanding). In particular, we built our narrative by organizing past events into coherent periods (see 'Analysis of Intervention' section) that we use to test causal explanations (i.e. incumbent institutions, legitimacy of the corporate profession, and state attitude towards new occupations as an antecedent for the creation of a 'professional regulatory entanglement'). We complete the analysis by making an 'evaluation through hindsight' (Wadhvani and Decker 2017) in the 'professional regulatory entanglement' section, where we pass judgement on the behaviour and events described.

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: PROFESSIONS, PM, AND THE ITALIAN CONTEXT

### Professions in Italy

The relevance of the Italian context as a legitimate arena for researching professions and specifically their relationship with the state is considerable. Historically, the Italian professional landscape has exhibited a binary divide between 'regulated' (also called 'state-sanctioned') professions such as law, medicine, and engineering known as 'Ordini'

(guilds) and ‘non-regulated’ professions such as IT and management (Micelotta and Washington 2013).

The structure of the regulated professions in Europe originates from the medieval guilds. Typically, these were associations created around the 12th century in many European cities to regulate and protect the activities of members within an occupational category. However, as time passed, and with the rise of the free market ideology, many of the European nation-states, ‘viewed guild power as the enemy, and the limitation of production [of professional services] as a plot against the consumer’ (Krause 1996: 6). In addition, more recently, the capitalist view of efficiency became less sympathetic to the professional form of market enclosure leading to challenges to the monopolies created by the professions.

In Italy, after the unification occurred on the 17 March 1861, the first profession to be formally regulated by the state was the legal profession. This was done in June 1874 with the passing of law n.1938. Subsequent to this, other occupations followed leading to the current position where there are 31 state-sanctioned Ordini.

An Ordine can be thought of as ‘a public entity, indissolubly professional and institutional, territorially diffused, compulsory, formally distinct, and (relatively) autonomous, enjoying the power to regulate itself and to represent the entire professional group’ (Olgiate and Pocar 1988: 340). This professional system mandates that in order to practice, in some specific roles within the public sector, for example, doctors working in hospitals and architects supervising certain categories of public projects, an individual must register to be part of an ‘Ordine’. Joining an Ordine is subject to several requirements, such as passing a state exam, possessing specific educational qualifications, and taking an oath of observance of a deontology. Membership of an ‘Ordine’ brings a significant employability advantage as in 2016 the Italian public sector employed 3,356,691 people, representing 14.74% of total employment in Italy (ISTAT 2016).

However, closer scrutiny of this system reveals something of a compromise because with these advantages come attendant disadvantages as ‘professional codes of conduct specifically prohibit the use of contingency fees, the negotiation of compensation, the

advertising of professional services, and the creation of multidisciplinary practices’ (Micelotta and Washington 2013: 1143). So, although reinforcing the benefits of professionalism such as knowledge enclosure, perceived legitimacy, and access to enclosed markets, the Italian system, and specifically the presence of these institutionalized norms, also imposes some restrictions on their professional autonomy and their ability to freely market their services. This has contributed to a general sentiment that competition is not being achieved in the Italian professional service sector (Sterlacchini 2002; Pammolli, Cambini and Giannaccari 2007) rather, it could be argued that, professionalism is very much in control of the visible hand of the state.

It is notable that since the creation of the Ordini the Italian state has done little to reform them (Krause 1996); therefore, they possess much the same characteristics as they did when they were initially established (see Micelotta and Washington 2013). This leaves the Ordini with control of bodies of expertise, state sanction, and a historically embedded position gained in the century and a half since their formation. These factors bring them considerable power to defend themselves against outside interference (Sabini 2014, 2015) even as those who champion free market ideals see them as less necessary than in the past (Crompton 1990).

In addition to the pressures created by the free market (and as something of a consequence of it), more recently, the EU with EU Directive 2005/36/EC (recognition of professional qualifications) demanded an immediate reform of professions aimed at promoting competition and liberalizing professional services across its member states. Within Italy, the implementation of this directive initiated a decade of activity where reforms to liberalize the standard arrangements and counterreforms to preserve them were brought forward (Deiana and Paneforte 2010; Sabini 2019, 2013).

Eventually, at the beginning of 2013, as part of the process of implementing this directive Italy confirmed that knowledge-based occupations not currently within the ‘Ordini’ system could be organized into professional associations. This confirmation was the main action that initiated the activity analysed here as PM is a model example of a new knowledge-based occupation.

### The project management profession

According to [Daly and Heywood \(1999\)](#), hunting and gathering were humanity's first and most successful adaptation. The Oxford Modern English Dictionary defines a project as 'a planned undertaking'; therefore, the first projects implemented by *Homo Sapiens* around 200,000 years ago may have been those undertaken to find food. As groups grew in size and complexity to form societies, projects did the same. By Neolithic times, construction began to dominate as the main type of project. Simple buildings such as longhouses gave way to more complex structures such as Stonehenge (3000 to 2000 BC) and the Great Pyramid of Giza (2600 BC). About the same time another type of project, the military campaign, appeared as the Assyrian Empire began to take shape. However, construction remained the dominant expression of the project until more recent times.

It is difficult to argue that these early construction projects were managed in any way that could be associated with today's system of PM and certainly, the imperatives to meet a defined schedule at a specific cost would not have been present in their current form. So although projects have existed for thousands of years, PM has not.

It is impossible to put an exact date on the first appearance of the system of PM that we recognize today as the methods of which it is composed emerged over time. However, it is generally agreed that around the 15th century codified knowledge of rudimentary engineering science began to inform building work more directly than the previously dominant craft experience and skill. The main issue in early building work was the inability to separate the activity of design from the activity of construction, with building work generally done as a process of trial and error. [Garel \(2013: 665\)](#) suggests that 'project management made a major step forward when men were equipped with tools offering an intellectual representation of a future creation' and in the 15th century, one of the first to clearly separate design and execution was Italian architect Filippo Brunelleschi. Working on the Florence Cathedral dome, he used models and drawings to coordinate project tasks making it possible to move from a process of improvisation to a process of planned action

by conceptualizing in great detail the final form of the building. While drawings may have been used well before this, it is during this period that their use began to follow a recognizable system that evolved into what we now recognize as engineering design practice.

By this time, other complex structures such as ships were being designed and built, indeed the Venetian Arsenal was the largest, pre-industrial revolution, manufacturing complex ([Davis 2007](#)). Here again scientific principles, governing for example hull design, were beginning to emerge and to be of use these needed to be deployed within a more systematic process of management that applied to the entire endeavour.

By the mid-18th century, the first professional engineers were beginning to gain control of major construction projects and, as part of this, the separation of the conception of the project, the planning, and the execution of the project, the construction, became standard practice. This, it could be argued, was the main methodological adoption that facilitated future advances in PM.

The industrial revolution brought new vigour to the development of infrastructure and in the late-19th and early-20th centuries construction work increased at a prodigious pace and, significantly, economic imperatives created the need to more rigorously consider time and cost as well as the final form and function of what was built. The system that was to become contemporary PM with its focus on the achievement of objectives in relation to time, cost, and scope began to emerge.

Most agree that the first recognizable artefact of contemporary PM was the Gantt Chart developed by Henri Gantt at the Frankford Arsenal in 1917 for the US Army. Originally used for routine production scheduling and associated at the time with F.W. Taylor's system of Scientific Management ([Taylor 1911](#)), the Gantt Chart also proved a very useful tool for controlling the non-routine work of projects. The use of rudimentary PM tools such as this spread during the 1920s and 1930s across emerging industries. The Second World War and endeavours such as Operation Overlord and the Manhattan Project are often cited as examples of PM. However, while some project planning and scheduling tools were used, it is difficult to argue that the complete and integrated



system that we know today was present. Another form of activity and another imperative was required for this to be developed.

Following the Second World War, this imperative was found when engineering companies, working primarily in defence and aerospace, began to develop larger scale and more complex technical systems than ever before. Therefore, while PM was born in civil engineering and enjoyed its infancy in the major construction projects of the early- to mid-20th century, the standard narrative suggests that it reached maturity during the development of defence and aerospace systems in the 1950s and 1960s (Garel 2013), such as the Atlas and Polaris missile systems, which brought the first formalized project manager role and the Program Evaluation Review Technique (PERT). So, despite its rather lengthy history, PM as an integrated system, and indeed the term PM itself, seems to have appeared only in the early-50s (Morris 2013). Today, Project Management continues to develop adopting the latest in modern management theory and embracing the latest innovations in information technology as more productive ways to deploy the toolsets and methodologies are found (Morris 1997).

Modern project managers take responsibility for delivering packages of work on-time, to budget and within contractual scope. More recently PM has enhanced its standing as an expert occupation (Reed 1996) due to its inclusion in the group of the so-called emerging corporate professions (Hodgson, Paton, and Muzio 2015). Further, it has found increased utility as non-routine work has become more ubiquitous within project-based organizations. PM has been successful in defining a formal body of knowledge and setting up routes of access (Morris 2013). Other tropes of professionalism such as academic and practitioner publications, conferences, and seminars also feature.

Therefore, PM represents something of a showcase for corporate professionalism. The professionalization journey has been driven mainly by professional associations operating both nationally and globally. The largest global association is the US-based PMI, which began in 1969 in the USA and now boasts over 2.9 million members. The PMI, though centrally controlled and managed very much from the top-down, is organized as a collection of national 'chapters'. The

other significant association operating globally is the International Project Management Association (IPMA). Unlike the PMI, the IPMA manages from the bottom-up operating as an umbrella body for the independent national associations that form its membership. In addition, there are various national associations that are not affiliated to any larger global body.

More significantly, in some cases, corporate membership is also a key feature of these associations. Here, corporate professionalism departs significantly from more traditional forms of professionalism in that alliances have been formed between associations and employing organizations that facilitate the cross-fertilization of information and influence. In general, these relationships are seen as symbiotic with both parties gaining benefit (Hodgson, Paton and Muzio 2015). However, the involvement of corporate employers is one aspect that impinges on the more traditional, regulatory bargain between state and profession.

#### Project management: The Italian perspective

Italian participation in the development of early forms of PM in the construction and shipbuilding industries of 15th century was strong but it was not until the mid-20th century that other work began to emerge initially in the form of publications describing modern PM tools and techniques. For example, Professor Luigi Zignoli of the Polytechnic University of Turin described PM in his textbook 'Reticular Planning' ('Programmazione Reticolare') (Zignoli 1955) as a way to organize complex tasks. Then, in 1965, Mariano Ricciardi developed *Analisi Livellamento e Tempificazione Automatica (ALTAI)* which translates as 'integrated levelling and automatic timing analysis' (Ricciardi 1965; Russo Frattasi 1971), a methodology similar to the more famous PERT previously mentioned.

By the mid-1970s, Italian industry was characterized by the presence of foreign firms, indeed 'thirty-nine percent of the largest Italian. . . companies were subsidiaries of foreign multinationals' (Binda and Colli 2011: 20). Therefore, from this period, the practice of PM grew as it was imported through national subsidiaries of multinational corporations and their interactions with local Italian organizations within their supply networks. As a consequence of this, the professionalization of PM within Italy

began and eventually three professional associations emerged.

The PMI with three chapters: PMI-NIC (Northern Italy Chapter) set-up in 1996, PMI-RC (Rome Chapter) set-up in 1997, and the PMI-SIC (Southern Italy Chapter) set-up in 2004. These chapters were formed mainly as staff working for global corporations attempted to draw together communities of practice to promote PM methodologies. For example, PMI-Rome grew from an initiative by professionals within the corporate university of the oil company Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi's (Sabini 2014: 41).

The IPMA-Italy formed in 2012 when the Associazione Nazionale di Impiantistica Industriale, translated as Italian Association of Industrial Plant Engineering, created a section with the aim of collating and organizing the knowledge of PM acquired by its own member associations. This section later joined the federation of the IPMA under the name of IPMA-Italy (Sabini 2014).

Finally, the ASSIREP, which translates as the Association for Expert Management of Projects, was founded in 2013. ASSIREP represents all those who wish to certify the professional quality of their PM services provided to consumers, in accordance with Italian laws (n.4/2013). ASSIREP differs from the PMI chapters and the IPMA—Italy as it has no affiliation with a larger international professional body and is therefore considered more of a national association.

It is important to note that all of these professional bodies exist outside the Ordini system and are therefore considered unregulated. In other words, rather peculiarly, PM (and all other new professions) existed within the country but were not recognized or regulated by the state. While these associations to a great extent developed within the boundary of the nation-state, there is a much wider perspective that must also be considered.

### PM: The global perspective

As part of the EU, Italy is subject to EU regulation of professions. The current interest of the EU in professional practice is directly associated with its wider and longer-standing aim in relation to the mobility of labour. This originates with the establishment of the original incarnation of the current European

Community and the 1957 Treaty of Rome, within which Article 3 states: 'The activities of the Community shall include... the abolition, as between Member States, of obstacles to freedom of movement for persons, services and capital'. More recently, this aspiration is captured in the EU Single Market Strategy and is embodied in the four freedoms of movement for goods, services, capital, and people.

To enable this strategy, mechanisms have been created to support these freedoms. In relation to professional practice, the EU implements this strategy by working to ensure the harmonization of regulations that govern professional practice within EU Member States. Its overall aim is integration and this will be achieved when the regulations governing professionalism within all member states conform to a common regulation at EU level. In pursuit of this aim in 2005, the EU created directive 2005/36/EC—Recognition of Professional Qualifications in Practice (subsequently updated by directive 2013/55/EC). With this directive, by harmonizing professional qualifications, the EU is attempting to enable the free movement of professional labour.

Accompanying this directive is a list of professions governed by it. This list is currently limited to certain professions, generally those that are longer established such as medicine and those that are discrete and therefore easier to classify such as mountain guiding. Though this list is incomplete at present, the stated aspiration is that regulation will be extended to include all professions. While this is a straightforward aspiration, due to the disconnected and fragmented way professions are structured across a diverse range of occupations, any list of professions by its very nature will always be somewhat arbitrary and, as professions emerge and disappear, will remain in a state of permanent transition.

At present, this leaves some professions regulated and others unregulated by the EU, a somewhat unsatisfactory situation that, rather ironically, closely mirrors that of the original Italian state system of 'Ordini'. Notwithstanding these obvious shortcomings, in implementing this directive standardizing professional qualifications and so enabling professionals to work freely across Member States, the EU is, in effect, attempting to breach the national boundary that most professions had previously operated within.

In addition, outside the European context, there is activity within the wider global level to consider. This activity relates to the work of The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), an independent, global body with a membership of 162 national standard bodies. Through these members, ISO brings together experts to share knowledge and develop voluntary, consensus-based, market-relevant international standards that help to ensure quality, safety, and efficiency. To date, ISO has published 22,342 international standards and related documents, covering almost every industry.

In 2007, ISO began the development of an international standard for PM. The ISO technical committee dealing with PM, ISO/PC 236, was held by the American National Standards Institute. Released in 2012, ISO 21500—Guidance on PM, was intended to provide generic guidance, explain core principles and what constitutes good practice in PM. Crucially for this analysis, this ISO standard was informed by the PMI's Book of Knowledge (PMBOK 2008), a guide that had evolved over a number of years and had itself been influenced by a number of stakeholders within industry and academia.

Therefore, it is clear that the environment within which corporate professions are evolving is both plural, with the existence of multiple actors, and contested due to the existence of multiple agendas.

## THE SHIFTING NATURE OF THE REGULATORY BARGAIN

### Italian state intervention

This changing landscape of professionalism led the Italian Government to acknowledge that something had to be done about their outdated model of professional regulation. They appreciated the existing dichotomy in relation to regulated (Ordini) and non-regulated (non-Ordini) professions and realized that this was being exacerbated by the emergence of new professions that, in effect, was serving to increase the numbers of non-regulated professions. Additionally, it was becoming increasingly clear that the influence of external bodies could not be ignored.

To remedy this situation, they decided to implement the following package of measures (see

[Supplementary Appendix S1](#) for summarized activity timeline).

First, at the beginning of 2013 the Italian parliament issued law n.4/2013—'Provisions on professions not regulated by law'. This law is somewhat complex, but fundamentally it sets out guidance on how occupations not currently within the Ordini system can be organized into professional associations. In support of law n.4/2013, in February 2014, the Ministero dello Sviluppo Economico (MiSE), translated as the Ministry of Economic Development, which performs functions concerning promotion of competition, liberalization and consumer protection, produced a list of professional associations that represent the non-regulated professions. Interestingly, ASSIREP as the only national professional body (i.e. one not affiliated to an international association either the PMI or the IPMA) was chosen for inclusion on the MiSE list. Due to its inclusion, it enjoys the special status of the only PM professional association that can award its members the title of 'professional project managers' in accordance with law n.4/2013.

In parallel, and again in accordance with law n.4/2013, specifically Article 6 which states: 'The qualification to provide a professional service must be based on the compliance with the technical norms of UNI and ISO'. UNI (Ente Nazionale Italiano di Unificazione), the Italian National Committee for Unification and Standardization (the Italian equivalent of ISO), began the process of defining the boundaries of these new professions (see [Supplementary Appendix S2](#) for further explanation of the role of UNI).

The law, MiSE list, and the associated UNI technical norm in effect created the regulatory framework within which professions that were not designated as part of the Ordini could be recognized by public sector entities. Therefore, this is a critical enabler that might aid occupations, such as PM, to professionalize in Italy. This regulatory framework was then applied to the PM profession and in January 2017 UNI released the technical norm labelled UNI11648 that relates to PM.

A few months later in October 2017, another public entity, the Anti-Corruption Agency (ANAC), became involved. The remit of ANAC is two-fold; first, the prevention of corruption within public

sector procurement by ‘creating a collaborative network within public administrations...’; and secondly, ‘...to increase efficiency in the use of resources...’ (ANAC 2018). In this case, ANAC’s purpose was to administer the rules for public procurement of services in order to ensure the selection of best candidate project managers for employment in public projects. To meet this purpose, ANAC issued further guidelines (based on the UNI technical norm) dictating that a project manager must possess ‘adequate competencies’ and a ‘successful training’. To evidence this, a project manager must either be a member of a state-sanctioned PM professional association, here state-sanction is defined as the association that is on the MiSE list (in this case ASSIREP), or be certified by passing an exam accredited by the Italian state accreditation body (ACCREDIA)<sup>2</sup>.

With the establishment of this framework, for the first time in the Italian public context, the profession of PM was recognized by the state and more importantly ANAC had officially introduced, the label ‘project manager’ which, rather surprisingly, had not previously existed in the lexicon of public service terminology. This represented significant progress as the ‘lack of formal professional recognition for PM had precluded the Italian public administration from employing project managers or procuring their services’ (Sabini and Muzio 2017: 834). With these changes, the public sector could finally issue tenders for its procurement and, due to this new regulation, legitimately include the role of the project manager.

It is worth stating at this point that the Italian State’s primary interest should always have been in clarifying the ‘rules of the game’ for the sake of public good. In our following, detailed analysis of the actions taken by the Italian government highlights the complex interplay between national and transnational stakeholders. It demonstrates how ‘professional regulatory entanglement’ has originated and reveals implications for PM and the wider collection of corporate professions.

### Analysis of intervention

At first glance, each action would appear to be a legitimate attempt at reform. However, closer scrutiny indicates that each, in some way, resulted in a power struggle where professional associations lobbied in attempt to control the Italian public sector market

for PM professionals. The outcome of this lobbying activity in each case was the retention of some form of state control of professional practice.

First, the establishment of the list of new professional associations by MiSE could be construed in two ways, either as a direct attempt by the Italian Government to clarify how new professions might fit into the public sector or as a direct attempt by the Italian Government to both retain control of the right to award an occupation with professional status and also the right to appoint the body that represents that profession (Law n.4/2013<sup>3</sup>). Rather ironically, this list aims to define and therefore ‘regulate’ the professions ‘not regulated’ by the historical ‘Ordini’ model and could be interpreted as a demonstration of the unwillingness of the Italian government to venture too far from the traditional model of state sanction. With this action, which is effectively an extension of the ‘Ordini’ model, the state is attempting to continue to exert some control over the ‘production of producers’ (Abel 1988).

Secondly, the development of the UNI technical standard UNI11648 seems, at first glance, a legitimate attempt to characterize the profession and defines those able to practice it. However, closer scrutiny of the process of its development suggests other, less straightforward, development. The process (labelled U83000780<sup>4</sup>), undertaken to create this technical standard, took a rather lengthy 18 months to complete and, through public consultation, allowed the participation of all interested PM professional associations. The principal point of contention that emerged related to the method proposed for assessment of a project manager’s competence. A three-level assessment model comprising curriculum vitae, written exam, and oral exam was suggested by UNI and this was contained in a first draft offered to a public hearing (‘udienza pubblica’) that took place between September and November of 2015.

In response to this, the PMI introduced the content of this draft for discussion within its members’ webinar series (specifically on the 30 September 2015 webinar entitled: *How Italian Project Management certifications have changed*; and on the 27 October 2015 webinar entitled: *Instructions for requesting the modification of the technical standard*). These webinars explained the UNI process and

technical standard. Here, the PMI took issue with the misalignment between the UNI proposed three-level assessment model and their own two level-assessment model (used in their entry-level qualification the Project Management Professional certificate).

The tone was somewhat alarmist, with statements made such as:

the Italian professional association (ASSIREP) are afraid of an ‘open’ market (for project manager accreditation), we (PMI) cannot afford to let the market ‘close’ (reference to enclosure created by the MiSE list)  
PMI webinar – held 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

While the overt objective of the PMI in giving these webinars was to inform members of developments, it could be argued that the covert objective was to stimulate resistance among PMI members to this (what could be interpreted as) protectionist measure by the Italian state, aimed at ensuring that the PMI qualification was not recognized.

In addition to encouraging PMI members to comment, the PMI raised its concerns about the UNI method of assessment more directly in a formal letter to UNI arguing that:

oral interviews/role playing, as designed, implemented, and non-uniformly applied in the context of the UNI standard, do not meet ISO/EIC 17024:2012 requirements for construction of a “fair, valid, and reliable” assessment.

PMI letter to UNI – issued November 2015.

In December 2015, after the public hearing had completed, more than 600 individual comments, mainly from PMI members, had been collected—an unusually large number for this type of consultation. In February 2016, after two months of reconsideration, UNI amended the proposal, changing the three-level assessment to a two-level assessment to accommodate the comments received.

It therefore appeared that UNI had relented, seemingly bowing to the pressure applied by the PMI. They then launched an unprecedented second public hearing (March—May 2016) and this

proceeded more smoothly with the final UNI technical standard—UNI11648: Project Management—Qualification of Experts in Project Management (UNI website)<sup>5</sup> issued in January 2017. The implications for PM professional development in Italy are significant as this technical standard effectively sets the boundaries of the Italian project manager’s professional practice, specifically the knowledge that Italian project managers need and how to assess their mastery of this knowledge.

The establishment of this technical standard can be interpreted in two ways. First, as a genuine attempt to encourage homogenization of professionalization through alignment with international professional standards; and secondly, as the creation of a somewhat unnecessary ‘national tier’ so further adding to the entanglement of the overall regulatory framework. Again, this suggests that in Italy the agents of the state, while aware of the wider imperatives such as EU harmonization and international standardization, are still reluctant to relinquish fully the control that they are historically accustomed to with the ‘Ordini’ model.

Thirdly, ANAC, the independent body set-up by law n. 114/2014 to ensure no corruption within Public Administration, created a new code for public works procurement. This has also been the subject of some controversy. All parties involved in the ANAC consultation agreed that the person in charge of complex public projects had to be a ‘professional project manager’ so ANAC set out to:

...enhance the figure of [...] Project Manager, emphasizing the skills of planning and managing the development of specific projects, also through the coordination of all available resources

ANAC consultation document – issued July 2016.

The main issue that emerged was defining what the necessary qualifications or certifications should be to warrant the title of professional project manager. In the first draft proposal for consultation published in June 2017, ANAC stated that the project manager must possess a ‘professional qualification’ (‘qualifica’). In the context of ANAC, this means one that is approved only by ACCREDIA. At this stage,

it was clear that ANAC were following the traditional professional logic that specifies state sanction is required. Obviously, the Italian state-sanctioned professional body ASSIREP welcomed this development (see [Supplementary Appendix S3](#)).

However, as a result of this first round of consultation, ANAC received 50 comments all requesting the removal of the term ‘professional qualification’ in favour of the more elusive term ‘adequate training’ (‘formazione adeguata’). ANAC relented as evidenced by this excerpt:

the provision that required the ‘qualification’ of a project manager was changed, replacing it with the request for ‘adequate training’ in the field of project management  
ANAC official document—issued June 2017.

A second draft was produced which included the term ‘adequate training’. In effect, the terminology in this second draft was a dilution of that in the previous draft. While the terminology is (possibly deliberately) vague, it was seen by ASSIREP as a softening of the position on state sanction, since it can be interpreted as a way for other bodies, national or international, to provide the ‘adequate training’ required by ANAC guidelines. As expected ASSIREP responded negatively to this change publishing a petition (see [Supplementary Appendix S4](#)), which outlined their objections to the softening of the language claiming that the revised terminology could lead to an open market for project manager accreditation. A total of 585 supporters, mainly Italian project managers signed this petition. Therefore, ANAC made a second amendment producing a third (and final) version of the guideline that stated that PMs must have ‘adequate competence’ (‘competenza adeguata’) or have completed a ‘successful training’ (‘formazione con profitto’).

Again, this terminology lacks definitional precision but is interpreted as follows. First, holding ‘adequate competence’ can only be proven by membership of the PM professional association recognized by the Italian state through inclusion on the MISE list: in this case that professional association is ASSIREP. Secondly, completing a ‘successful training’ means gaining a qualification from a recognized Italian awarding body, in this case being

a recognized awarding body means being accredited by ACCREDIA the Italian state accreditation body.

The outcome is that project managers who want to work within Italian public projects need to prove themselves qualified but can only do this through an Italian route. Either ASSIREP certifying the project manager as ‘adequately competent’ or a project manager undertaking a ‘successful training’ provided by a certified ACCREDIA provider. All other certifications as awarded by, for example the PMI (the PMP qualification) or the IPMA (the IPMA D qualification), are not enough for a practitioner to be recognized in accordance with Italian law.

### Professional regulatory entanglement

While this outcome seems to indicate a clear case of Italian state-sponsored protectionism, the process that led to it suggests a more nuanced situation. It is difficult to argue that the Italian government was not influenced to some extent by an attachment to the historical, and nationally bound ‘Ordini’ model and because of this was reluctant to accede all control to an international model dominated by international professional associations. However, they demonstrated a willingness to accommodate some form of compromise in their acceptance of a closer alignment between the UNI and international standards of qualification.

This compromise initially appeared to set the foundation for a more straightforward regulatory environment where international standards could have been imported directly into the national context. However, this outcome was thwarted because of the intervention of ASSIREP and a cohort of Italian project managers (using the ANAC guideline). Both ASSIREP and this cohort of project managers had a vested interest in retaining a national level of control. This intervention had two outcomes. First, a reaffirmation of control enforced by both an agent of the state in the form of ACCREDIA and a partisan entity in the form of ASSIREP the ‘Italian’ professional association. And secondly, a more complex regulatory environment bound up in standards and legislation existing at national (as enforced by this action), continental (as advocated by the EU), and global (as advised by the ISO and regulated by the professional bodies) levels.

So, by seeking to retain some measure of control for professionalization the state has created a two-tier system whereby professional accreditation by international professional associations is acceptable to global corporations working within the Italian state but is not acceptable to some public works directly commissioned by the state.

This situation would appear to result in two standards of professional qualification: that legitimized by the Italian state and that legitimized by the international professional associations. However, when taken in context of the EU aspiration to achieve free movement of professional labour the situation is more complex as it highlights two further issues. First, the existence of two lists of regulated professions, one from the EU and one from the Italian State, where the EU list exists to enable transnational movement of professional labour so liberalizing the market for professional services and the Italian list exists to prevent it. And secondly, a direct contradiction in that the enclosure of the Italian public sector market directly contravenes the EU directive ensuring labour mobility.

This has further ramifications in that while the Italian barrier prevents the recognition of PM professionals accredited by the international bodies it also prevents the recognition of PM professionals accredited by national bodies, such as the UK Association for PM, leaving accreditation by international mandate and by transnational mandate impossible. The implication therefore is a reduction in the importance within the Italian context of the major international proprietary certifications (such as the PMI) that globally are coming to represent the *de facto* standard.

In this regard, it is worth to mention an analogous development in the recent case of APM versus PMI in the UK regarding the Royal Charter (mentioned in [Hodgson and Muzio 2011](#); [Muzio et al. 2011](#)), where the UK incumbent association—the APM, has seen a fierce opposition to its application for a Royal Charter by the IPMA—the PMI ([Hodgson, Paton and Muzio 2015](#)). The evolution of this case has also seen the UK regulator rewarding to the national association (APM) with the desirable status of Royal Charter. We argue that this situation can also be interpreted as state intervention resulting in an increase in professional regulatory entanglement.

## CONCLUSION

Historically, the Italian government has considered the control of professions by the state as a desirable way to protect citizens' interests by ensuring high standards of professional practice. This position is in sharp contrast to neoliberal principles of market self-regulation, principles that are in differing ways supported by other stakeholders. International standard organizations exist to create frameworks around which free markets can operate fairly and responsibly. The EU wishes to promote free movement of qualified expert labour. Global corporations, as clients and users of expert labour, require a consistent supply of competent, reliable, and, possibly most importantly, standardized forms of this labour. Professional bodies are service providers supporting members through provision of resources and accreditation, and global corporations through provision of standards, tools, and expertise. Using PM in Italy as a research case we have attempted to unpack this complex interplay between stakeholders and the conflicting local and global demands to understand how these influences are impacting the trajectory of corporate professionalism.

This analysis contributes in three ways. First, this research provides empirical evidence that what was once a simple bargain involving two actors, the state and the profession, with a long established, commonly agreed, and mutually beneficial agenda is now a more complex system involving multiple actors and a number of different and often competing agendas.

Secondly, widening our analysis to the trajectory of global professionalization reveals there is clear evidence of some homogenization of professional practice. The participation of the PMI in the process of creating the UNI standard indicates some direct influence of this professional body on national activity. While, the use of ISO21500 for PM as a reference by UNI (in creating UNI11648) represents an indirect influence, it should be remembered that ISO21500 is itself influenced by the PMI. Therefore, this suggests that the broader international interests that are trying to create a simplified order, that is one standard (ISO) and a number of recognized accreditation routes (national-based PM bodies and international PM bodies), and in effect colonize national contexts are having some success. This demonstrates that the

homogenization of professional practice supported by supranational organizations who aim to drive standard practice into national sites is occurring.

Thirdly, building on the second point, we argue that the national focus of the Italian state is diminishing as the bulk of the resistance to colonization was provided by other nationally oriented actors motivated by self-interest. It can therefore be concluded that while homogenization is occurring it is a more nuanced homogenization where the previously singular actor of the state and the previously singular actor of the profession now demonstrate fragmentation (Spence et al. 2016) with agents of the state and agents of the profession broadly acting to further their own more plural interests. This resistance is embodied in the increased regulation imposed to control professions within the national context; therefore, we have introduced the term professional regulatory entanglement and defined it as the increase in the number of regulations faced by international corporate professions when attempting to colonize a national context.

In summary, this article presents PM as a typical corporate profession and the Italian state as an extreme, but not unique, form of national entity. It argues that for corporate professions the bipartite bargain between profession and state is being altered in two ways. First, the once discrete bodies of national government and professional association each characterized by a unitary purpose now represent a diversity of interests. And secondly, additional actors in the form of supranational bodies such as the EU, the ISO, and global corporations are becoming influential in shaping the trajectory of professionalization and these agendas will have similar effects across the range of corporate professions. However, an important limitation to our study is its focus to one national case and one corporate profession, given this consideration we call for further research on the 'professional regulatory entanglement' which emerging corporate professions may experience in different national contexts.

## ENDNOTES

1. Here, we define 'complex interplay' as the set of interactions national and international institutional actors have while pursuing their interests and implementing their agenda.

2. ACCREDIA, in line with requirements of European Regulation EC 765/2008, attests the competence, independence and impartiality of certification, inspection, and verification.
3. Law n.4/2013—article 2, clause 7: 'The list of professional associations referred to in this article and the aggregative forms referred to in art. 3 [...] are published by the Ministry of economic development [MiSE] in the own website. ...'.
4. Project Manager: definition of knowledge, skill, and competence requirements (definizione dei requisiti di conoscenza, abilità e competenza).
5. The Technical Specification is intended to provide criteria for the qualification of experts in PM. The standard can be used for the selection of candidates and for self-assessment of all those who wish to submit their CV for a referenced position.

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## SUPPLEMENTARY DATA

Supplementary data is available at *Journal of Professions and Organization* online.

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