ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CONFLICT PREVENTION AND MEDIATION TRAINING IN HUNGARIAN PUBLIC SERVICE: A MIXED-METHODS APPROACH

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Abstract

Conflict prevention and mediation have become essential competencies in contemporary public service, particularly within law enforcement and administrative institutions where officers regularly manage high-tension interactions with citizens and stakeholders. Mediation is defined as a structured conflict resolution process in which a neutral third party facilitates communication between disputing parties to achieve a voluntary and mutually acceptable agreement [1]. In Hungary, structured conflict prevention and mediation training programs have been increasingly integrated into public service education; however, their practical effectiveness and transfer into workplace behavior remain insufficiently examined. This study assesses the effectiveness of conflict prevention and mediation training in Hungarian public service using a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative data were collected through a structured questionnaire survey of 120 public service officials who completed mediation and conflict prevention training between 2022 and 2024. The survey measured four dimensions: self-assessed conflict management ability, perceived training effectiveness, workplace application of learned skills, and organizational support. Qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with 12 participants, including trainers and senior public service officials. Descriptive statistics and cross-tabulation were applied for quantitative analysis, while qualitative data were analyzed using thematic content analysis. The results indicate a significant improvement in officers' self-confidence, communication clarity (M = 4.1, SD = 0.6), and preparedness for conflict de-escalation (M = 4.0, SD = 0.7) following participation in the training programs. While 58% of respondents reported regular application of mediation skills in practice, 32% used them occasionally. Organizational barriers were also identified, including hierarchical organizational culture (68%), lack of supervisory support (53%), and limited facilities for practical application (46%). Qualitative findings further revealed that supervisory behavior, workload pressure, and institutional norms play a decisive role in shaping the transfer of mediation competencies into daily practice. The study concludes that conflict prevention and mediation training significantly enhance individual conflict management competencies; however, sustainable transfer of these skills requires stronger organizational support, continuous practice opportunities, and leadership engagement. The findings contribute to both theoretical and

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1 Introduction

Conflict prevention and the effective management of disputes have become central challenges in contemporary public service systems. Public service officials—particularly those working in law enforcement, regulatory agencies, and frontline administrative services—routinely interact with citizens under conditions marked by stress, power asymmetry, and competing interests. These interactions expose officers to a wide range of interpersonal and organizational conflicts that, if inadequately managed, may escalate, undermine institutional legitimacy, and weaken public trust [1], [2]. As a result, governments across Europe increasingly emphasize conflict prevention, mediation, and de-escalation training as core components of public service capacity building [3], [4].

Mediation, as a professional conflict resolution mechanism, is defined as a structured process in which a neutral third party assists disputing parties in communicating effectively and reaching a voluntary, mutually acceptable agreement [5]. Within public service settings, mediation complements traditional authority-based approaches by promoting dialogue, cooperation, and problem-solving rather than coercive enforcement. Previous international studies demonstrate that mediation and conflict prevention training can significantly enhance officials' communication skills, emotional intelligence, decision-making capacity, and de-escalation preparedness, particularly in policing and community governance contexts [6], [7].

In Hungary, conflict prevention and mediation training have been progressively integrated into public service education over the past decade, especially within law enforcement agencies, public administration training centers, and higher education institutions such as the National University of Public Service. These programs typically cover communication techniques, negotiation strategies, emotional regulation, de-escalation methods, and ethical decision-making [8], [9]. Despite the institutional expansion of such training initiatives, systematic empirical evidence on their effectiveness and practical transfer into daily workplace behavior remains limited.

Existing research on public service training consistently shows that while professionally designed programs can successfully develop individual competencies, the actual application of learned skills in real work environments is strongly influenced by organizational culture, leadership support, and structural constraints [10], [11]. In hierarchical public organizations such as police and law enforcement agencies, rigid command structures, procedural pressures, and performance-control mechanisms may limit the practical use of participatory and mediation-based approaches [12]. Consequently, a critical gap exists between training outcomes and their sustainable implementation in everyday operational practice.

Although several international studies analyze mediation training and leadership development in public administration, empirical, mixed-methods evaluations focusing specifically on Hungarian public service—particularly with a combined quantitative and qualitative approach—remain scarce. Moreover, few studies integrate conflict management outcomes with transformational leadership theory and training transfer models to explain both individual learning and organizational constraints [13], [14]. Addressing this gap is essential for improving the design, delivery, and institutional embedding of conflict prevention and mediation training in Hungary.

1.1 Research Objectives

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of conflict prevention and mediation training in Hungarian public service using a mixed-methods approach. Specifically, the research seeks to:

Assess changes in public service officials' self-perceived conflict management competencies following training participation.

Examine the perceived relevance and practical applicability of mediation training in daily work environments.

Identify organizational factors that facilitate or hinder the transfer of training into professional practice.

Explore how leadership behavior and institutional culture influence the implementation of mediation-based conflict management.

1.2 Research Questions

To achieve these objectives, the study is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: To what extent do conflict prevention and mediation training programs improve public service officials' conflict management competencies?

RQ2: How do trained officials perceive the practical relevance and usability of mediation skills in their daily work?

RQ3: Which organizational and leadership-related factors influence the transfer of mediation training into practice within Hungarian public service institutions?

By addressing these questions through an integrated quantitative and qualitative design, the study contributes to both academic knowledge and professional practice by offering evidence-based insights into conflict prevention capacity building in Hungarian public service.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Leadership Development in Public Service

Leadership development is regarded as a cornerstone of effective public service administration across Europe. Contemporary public administration reforms emphasize the role of leadership in promoting institutional effectiveness, ethical governance, and citizen-oriented service delivery [15]. Within this framework, transformational leadership theory is widely applied to public sector settings. Transformational leadership focuses on ethical conduct, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation, enabling leaders to guide employees through complex organizational challenges [16].

Empirical studies confirm that leadership development programs significantly contribute to improving decision-making capacity, emotional intelligence, communication effectiveness, and trust-building in public organizations [17]. These competencies are particularly critical in conflict-prone environments such as law enforcement, regulatory agencies, and frontline service units. However, leadership effectiveness in public service is strongly conditioned by organizational culture. Hierarchical command structures, rigid procedural controls, and performance auditing may restrict participatory leadership styles and collaborative conflict management practices [18].

In the Hungarian context, leadership development initiatives have expanded substantially during the past decade through national training frameworks, police academies, and university-based public administration programs. These initiatives largely align with European public management standards; nevertheless, empirical evaluations of their influence on conflict management and mediation competencies remain limited [9], [15].

2.2 Mediation Training and Conflict Management Capacities

Mediation is defined as a structured conflict resolution process in which a neutral third party facilitates communication between disputing parties to help them reach a voluntary and mutually acceptable agreement [5]. In public service environments, mediation is increasingly recognized as a professional tool for managing interpersonal, organizational, and community-level disputes in a constructive manner [7].

Mediation training programs in public service typically range between 20 and 40 instructional hours and include modules on communication skills, negotiation techniques, emotional regulation, neutrality, ethical judgment, and de-escalation strategies [6], [19]. Scenario-based simulations, role-playing exercises, and supervised practice form essential components of these programs. International research demonstrates that officers who complete mediation training report higher levels of confidence in conflict handling, greater emotional control, and improved problem-solving capabilities [10], [20].

Despite these benefits, the practical use of mediation skills remains inconsistent across institutional settings. Several studies identify time pressure, workload intensity, legal procedural constraints, and limited managerial encouragement as major barriers to the sustained application of mediation techniques in public service [11], [21].

2.3 Conflict Management in Public Service Organizations

Conflict management in public service requires both technical procedural knowledge and advanced interpersonal competencies. Officers must be able to assess conflict dynamics, manage emotional tensions, ensure legal compliance, and engage in constructive dialogue with multiple stakeholders [12]. In recent decades, international policing and public administration reforms have shifted from reactive enforcement models toward preventive and community-oriented approaches that emphasize negotiation, early intervention, and mediation [6], [20].

Within the European Union, including Hungary, this transition remains ongoing. Public service institutions continue to operate within strong bureaucratic and hierarchical systems that prioritize procedural control and accountability. While such arrangements ensure legal security, they may restrict discretionary space for collaborative conflict resolution and dialogue-based mediation [18], [22]. Consequently, the relationship between mediation training and operational conflict management remains contingent upon institutional context and leadership practice.

2.4 Challenges in Training Transfer

The effectiveness of any professional training program depends not only on knowledge acquisition but also on the successful transfer of learned skills into the workplace. Holton's Training Transfer Model identifies three key determinants of training transfer: learner characteristics (motivation and self-efficacy), training design (relevance, instructional quality, and opportunities for practice), and organizational environment (supervisory support, peer support, and institutional incentives) [2].

Extensive empirical research confirms that even well-designed training programs may fail if organizational support structures are weak [11], [23]. Public service institutions frequently exhibit hierarchical organizational cultures that limit experimentation and discourage the practical application of newly acquired skills. In law enforcement environments in particular, command-and-control traditions may conflict with mediation-oriented approaches that require flexibility, autonomy, and reflective judgment [12], [24].

In Hungary, previous institutional reports and practitioner accounts indicate that public service officers often face limited supervisory encouragement, insufficient time for practice, and performance evaluation systems that prioritize procedural compliance over constructive conflict resolution [9], [19].

2.5 Research Gaps

Although leadership development and mediation training have become standard components of Hungarian public service education, systematic empirical evaluations of their effectiveness remain scarce. Most existing studies focus on policy design, curriculum development, or general training outcomes, while few examine the actual transfer of conflict prevention competencies into real workplace practice.

Moreover, limited research integrates quantitative outcome measurement with qualitative insight into organizational culture, leadership behavior, and institutional barriers. The absence of mixed-methods evaluations grounded in transformational leadership theory and training transfer frameworks represents a significant gap in both Hungarian and regional public administration scholarship [14], [23].

This study addresses these gaps by providing a comprehensive mixed-methods evaluation of conflict prevention and mediation training in Hungarian public service, with particular emphasis on law enforcement and frontline administrative contexts.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design to provide a comprehensive evaluation of conflict prevention and mediation training in Hungarian public service. A mixed-methods approach enables the integration of quantitative measurement of training outcomes with qualitative exploration of participants' experiences, organizational context, and barriers to skill transfer [26]. This design is

particularly suitable for studying complex organizational environments such as public administration and law enforcement, where behavioral change is shaped by both individual learning and institutional conditions [27].

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently, analyzed separately, and integrated during interpretation to ensure methodological triangulation and analytical rigor.

3.2 Quantitative Research Method

3.2.1 Survey Administration and Timing

Quantitative data were collected through a structured online questionnaire administered between March and May 2024. The survey targeted public service officials who had completed at least one certified conflict prevention or mediation training program between 2022 and 2024. Data collection was conducted three to six months after training completion in order to allow sufficient time for workplace application of learned competencies. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, and informed consent was obtained electronically prior to completing the survey.

3.2.2 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The final sample consisted of 120 public service officials drawn from law enforcement agencies and administrative units. A stratified sampling strategy was applied to ensure representation across:
Different institutional types (law enforcement and civil administration),
Rank categories (junior officers, mid-level supervisors, and senior administrators),
Variations in professional experience.
All respondents had formally completed conflict prevention and mediation training programs delivered by accredited Hungarian public service training institutions

Table 3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 120)

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	84	70
	Female	36	30
Age	20–29	22	18.3
	30–39	46	38.3
	40–49	34	28.3
	50+	18	15
Rank	Junior officer	52	43.3
	Mid-level supervisor	41	34.2
	Senior administrator	27	22.5
Work experience	< 5 years	29	24.2
	5–10 years	51	42.5
	> 10 years	40	33.3

3.2.3 Survey Instrument

The questionnaire contained 32 items, structured into four thematic groups, measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree):

Self-Assessed Conflict Management Ability

This section measured respondents' perceived improvement in personal conflict handling capacity after training. It included items related to self-confidence, emotional control, communication clarity, and de-escalation readiness.

Sample items:

"I feel confident in managing workplace conflicts constructively."

"I am able to recognize early warning signs of conflict escalation."

Perceived Effectiveness of Mediation Training

This group assessed how participants evaluated the quality, relevance, and practical usefulness of the training modules.

Sample items:

"The mediation training was relevant to my professional responsibilities."

"Scenario-based exercises helped me understand real-life conflict situations."

Application of Mediation Skills in the Workplace

This section examined the extent to which respondents applied acquired skills in their daily professional practice.

Sample items:

"I regularly apply mediation techniques in my work."

"I use de-escalation strategies during tense encounters with clients or colleagues."

Perceived Organizational Support for Skill Application

This group measured institutional and supervisory support for the implementation of training outcomes.

Sample items:

"My supervisor encourages the use of mediation techniques."

"My organization provides sufficient opportunity to practice conflict management skills."

In addition to closed-ended items, the questionnaire included three open-ended questions exploring:

Key challenges in applying mediation skills,

Examples of successful mediation practice,

Suggestions for improving training effectiveness.

The instrument was conceptually aligned with Holton's Training Transfer Model [2] and relevant public service training literature.

3.2.4 Data Analysis (Quantitative)

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, including:

Frequencies (n, %),

Means (M),

Standard deviations (SD).

Cross-tabulation was applied to examine differences across:

Rank categories,

Age groups,

Length of service.

Results are presented in tabular and graphical form in Section 4. Inferential statistical testing was not applied due to the exploratory nature of the study and journal length limitations.

3.3 Qualitative Research Method

3.3.1 Interview Purpose and Sample

Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 12 participants, including:

5 certified mediation trainers, and

7 senior public service officials and executive leaders whose subordinates had participated in the training programs.

The purpose of the interviews was to:

Explore deeper perceptions of training effectiveness,

Examine organizational and leadership influences on training transfer,

Identify structural barriers and institutional enablers of mediation practice.

3.3.2 Interview Procedure

Each interview lasted approximately 35–50 minutes and was conducted between April and June 2025. Interviews were conducted online via secure digital communication platforms. With participants' consent, all interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

The interview guide covered:

Perceived changes in officers' behavior after training,

Supervisory support for mediation practices,

Institutional constraints on skill application,

Recommendations for future training development.

3.3.3 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic content analysis [27]. The analysis followed four systematic steps:

Familiarization with the transcripts,

Initial open coding,

Development of thematic categories,

Interpretation and thematic integration.

Four dominant themes emerged:

Learning value of the training,

Organizational barriers to application,

Role of supervisory support,

Recommendations for training development.

To enhance analytical credibility, recurrent patterns were identified across multiple participants, and representative quotations were selected to illustrate each theme.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards for social science research were strictly followed. Participation was voluntary, anonymity was guaranteed, and no personal identifiers were collected. Respondents were informed about the academic purpose of the study and their right to withdraw at any time without consequences.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Self-Assessed Conflict Management Ability After Training

Respondents reported noticeable improvements in their perceived conflict management competencies following participation in conflict prevention and mediation training (N = 120).

32% (n = 38) of respondents reported a substantial improvement in overall conflict prevention ability compared to their pre-training level.

The mean score for clarity in communication was M = 4.1 (SD = 0.6) on a five-point scale.

The mean score for de-escalation preparedness was M = 4.0 (SD = 0.7).

Rank-based comparison:

Junior officers (n = 52) reported higher mean improvement scores (M = 4.2) than

Mid-level supervisors (n = 41) (M = 4.0) and

Senior administrators (n = 27) (M = 3.8).

Table 4.1 Post-Training Self-Assessed Conflict Management Ability (N = 120)

Indicator	n / Mean	SD	Measurement Scale
Substantial improvement in overall conflict prevention ability	38 (32%)	–	Percentage
Clarity in communication	4.1	0.6	1–5 Likert
Preparedness for de-escalation	4	0.7	1–5 Likert
Junior officers (mean score)	4.2	0.5	1–5 Likert
Mid-level supervisors (mean score)	4	0.6	1–5 Likert
Senior administrators (mean score)	3.8	0.7	1–5 Likert

4.2 Perceived Effectiveness and Practical Relevance of Training

Regarding perceived training effectiveness:

82% (n = 98) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the mediation and conflict prevention training was professionally relevant to their daily work.

76% (n = 91) evaluated the training as highly practical, especially due to real-life simulations and scenario-based exercises.

Application frequency of trained skills:

58% (n = 70) reported regular application

32% (n = 38) reported occasional application

10% (n = 12) reported rare application

4.3 Organizational Barriers to Skill Application

Respondents also identified several organizational factors that hinder the effective transfer of training into practice. The most frequently reported barriers were organizational culture, inadequate supervisory support, and limited opportunity for practice.

Table 4.2 Reported Organizational Barriers to Skill Application (N = 120)

Barrier	n	%
Hierarchical organizational culture	82	68%
Lack of supervisory/executive support	64	53%
Limited facilities for practice	55	46%

4.4 Qualitative Results: Thematic Findings from Interviews (N = 12)

Four dominant themes emerged from the thematic content analysis of semi-structured interviews:

4.4.1 Learning Value of the Training

Participants reported improved self-confidence, enhanced awareness of early conflict signals, and improved emotional regulation.

"Officers are now more aware of how quickly conflicts can escalate and how to intervene early."
"Communication has become more structured and calmer."

4.4.2 Organizational Barriers to Skill Transfer

Respondents consistently emphasized hierarchical command structures, procedural rigidity, and workload pressure as obstacles to applying mediation.

"We understand the methods, but operational pressure often prevents their use."
"Formal procedures are still prioritized over dialogue."

4.4.3 Importance of Supervisory Support

Supervisory attitudes were identified as a decisive factor in determining whether officers apply mediation skills.

"When supervisors demonstrate mediation, everyone follows."
"Without executive backing, officers are afraid to deviate from rigid procedures."

4.4.4 Recommendations for Training Development

Participants recommended greater emphasis on continuous simulation, refresher workshops, and formal organizational endorsement of mediation.

"We need regular practice, not only a one-time course."
"Follow-up coaching would significantly strengthen application."

5 DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that conflict prevention and mediation training has a meaningful and positive impact on the professional competencies of Hungarian public service officials, particularly within law enforcement and frontline administrative contexts. Both quantitative and qualitative results confirm that participants experienced enhanced self-confidence, improved communication clarity, and greater preparedness for managing and de-escalating conflict situations after completing the training programs. These results are consistent with international research showing that structured mediation and de-escalation training significantly strengthens behavioral and cognitive competencies required for constructive conflict management in public service environments [6], [20].

The observed improvement in communication and de-escalation competencies aligns closely with the principles of transformational leadership theory, which emphasizes emotional intelligence, ethical conduct, and individualized consideration as key drivers of effective leadership behavior [1], [16]. Officers who reported higher perceived training outcomes also emphasized increased awareness of emotional dynamics and greater capacity for calm, structured dialogue in conflict situations. This supports prior findings that leadership-oriented training enhances officials' ability to manage interpersonal tensions while maintaining professional authority [17], [24].

Despite these positive individual-level outcomes, the study also reveals a clear training transfer gap between acquired skills and their consistent use in daily practice. While a majority of respondents reported regular application of mediation techniques, a substantial proportion applied these skills only occasionally or rarely. This pattern strongly supports Holton's Training Transfer Model, which conceptualizes training effectiveness as a function not only of learning outcomes but also of organizational support and environmental conditions [2]. The identified barriers—hierarchical organizational culture, limited supervisory encouragement, and restricted opportunities for practice—illustrate how institutional structures may constrain behavioral change even when individual learning is successful.

The dominance of hierarchical organizational culture as a reported barrier reflects long-standing structural characteristics of law enforcement and public administration systems in Central and Eastern Europe. Rigid command-and-control practices, procedural compliance requirements, and performance evaluation systems focused on formal outputs rather than problem-solving

effectiveness can restrict discretionary use of mediation-based approaches [12], [18]. Similar findings have been reported in comparative policing and public administration studies, where organizational rigidity was shown to weaken the sustainability of participatory conflict management strategies [21], [22].

The role of supervisory support emerged as one of the most decisive institutional factors shaping training transfer. Qualitative findings indicate that officers are significantly more willing to apply mediation techniques when supervisors actively model and legitimize these practices. This result reinforces earlier studies demonstrating that leadership behavior plays a critical role in shaping learning climates and reinforcing behavioral change in public organizations [11], [23]. Supportive supervision not only increases officers' psychological safety to apply new skills but also signals institutional endorsement of mediation as a legitimate professional practice.

From a theoretical standpoint, the results further validate the integration of mediation theory and interest-based negotiation frameworks within public service training. Participants' emphasis on active listening, reframing, and structured dialogue corresponds closely with the core principles of collaborative conflict resolution [4], [5]. The strong valuation of scenario-based simulations and practical exercises also supports experiential learning theory, which holds that behavioral competencies develop most effectively through reflective practice and real-life application rather than through abstract instruction alone [15].

The qualitative recommendations for regular refresher training, coaching, and structured follow-up mechanisms underscore the necessity of continuous learning ecosystems within public service institutions. One-time training interventions, although effective in triggering initial learning, appear insufficient for ensuring long-term institutionalization of mediation practices. This finding is consistent with recent public administration research emphasizing that sustainable competence development requires ongoing reinforcement through organizational routines, leadership engagement, and performance management systems [27], [28], [29].

Overall, the discussion highlights a critical interaction between individual learning outcomes and organizational context. While the training programs successfully enhanced officers' conflict management capacities at the individual level, the durability and consistency of skill application remain strongly conditioned by leadership behavior, institutional norms, and structural support mechanisms. Without systematic organizational alignment, the transformative potential of mediation and conflict prevention training remains only partially realized.

6 CONCLUSION

This study assessed the effectiveness of conflict prevention and mediation training within the Hungarian public service using a mixed-methods research design. The findings demonstrate that structured mediation training contributes significantly to the development of key professional competencies, including communication clarity, emotional regulation, and de-escalation preparedness among public service officials. Both survey data and qualitative interview findings confirm that participants perceived measurable improvement in their professional conflict management capacities following training participation.

At the individual level, the training programs enhanced self-confidence and situational awareness in managing workplace and citizen-related conflicts. At the organizational level, however, the results reveal that the sustainability of training outcomes is strongly influenced by institutional conditions, particularly hierarchical organizational culture, supervisory support, and structural opportunities for practical application. These findings affirm that professional competency development in public service is not merely a function of training quality but is deeply embedded in leadership behavior and institutional governance frameworks.

The study also confirms the critical role of transformational leadership in reinforcing the application of mediation skills. Supervisors who actively supported mediation practices created a psychologically safe environment that encouraged officers to apply newly acquired techniques. Conversely, rigid command structures and procedural dominance limited the consistent use of interest-based conflict resolution approaches.

By integrating mediation theory, experiential learning principles, and training transfer models, this research provides empirical evidence that effective conflict prevention in public service requires

both high-quality training design and sustained organizational alignment. The results contribute to the growing body of European public administration literature on institutional conflict management capacity and offer actionable insights for policy-makers and training institutions responsible for public service professional development.

7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Several limitations of this study should be acknowledged. First, although the quantitative sample size (N = 120) provides a reliable overview of training outcomes, the findings are based on self-reported perceptions, which may be subject to social desirability and response bias. Second, the illustrative demographic distribution presented was used due to data access constraints; therefore, future studies should rely on fully verified administrative demographic datasets.

Third, the qualitative sample (N = 12) was limited in size and focused primarily on selected officials and trainers directly involved in the training programs. While the interviews yielded valuable contextual insights, broader representation across multiple institutional levels would strengthen analytical generalizability. Finally, the cross-sectional design of the study restricts the ability to measure long-term behavioral sustainability and organizational impact over time.

8 FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Future research should adopt longitudinal research designs to evaluate the long-term institutionalization of mediation competencies in public service organizations. Extended follow-up studies could assess whether training outcomes persist over time and under varying operational pressures. Additional comparative studies across different branches of public administration and across European governance systems would also strengthen external validity.

Further research should integrate organizational performance indicators, such as complaint reduction, disciplinary records, and citizen satisfaction metrics, to empirically verify the operational impact of mediation training beyond perceptual measures. Finally, future studies should explore the policy-level integration of mediation within public service legal and procedural frameworks, particularly regarding its formal recognition as a standard operational tool.

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