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Implementation guidelines of the new public management. cases of Romania and Sweden

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Abstract

Global transformations throughout the past decades impose that the public sector should act more efficiently in service of the citizen; therefore, public management has borrowed a series of organizational and functional principles from the private sector management. These public management reforms aim at depoliticization, debureaucratisation and improvement of the public sector, through the processes of liberalization, deregulation and decentralization of state institutions and state authority. A new pattern of public sector coordination, named *the new public management*, takes shape (NPM).

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1. Introduction

The new public management, which implies adapting specific managerial processes of the public sector to the current state of affairs, by adopting management techniques of the private sector, is becoming obvious throughout decisions and acts adopted by governmental policy-makers, thus shaping a series of reforms with the aim of maximising the efficiency of the resources available to a state.

The paper represents an empirical research on the concept of public management and on the reshaping parameters of the public sector brought by this process. Moreover, it names the most important decisions of Swedish and Romanian authorities since after 1990, with the purpose of highlighting liberalization, deregulation,

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depoliticization, decentralisation, and debureaucratisation processes within the public sector.

Towards New Managerial Processes in the Public Sector

The evolution of our society has raised numerous issues regarding the efficiency of resources and methods, as well as regarding the need to adapt organizations to the dynamics of their particular fields. It has become necessary to shape a coherent and specialized process to deal with these issues, bringing forth the birth of management. Nowadays, management influences all aspects of modern organizations and is a key factor of the evolution of our society (Certo, 2002, p.19).

Lucica Matei shapes an extensive perspective on the concept of management, defining it as “the ensemble of organizational and administrative techniques, of forecasting and modernizing organizational structures, of accepting new challenges in terms of competitiveness, regulations, social standards, multiple needs of consumers, resource restrictions (Matei, 2006, p.16).”

Public services have examined the management processes within the private sector, and the public institutions have adopted a new organizational culture inspired by the private sector, maintaining, however, the standards of the public sector and the particular public law juridical regime (Matei, 2006, p.71). The most important parameters of public sector reform brought by NPM are (Matei, 2006, pp.131-132):

1. From politics to management
2. From pyramidal administrative systems to “chester” administrative systems
3. From planned and hierarchical decisional framework to a dichotomy between basic activities and adopted operational services
4. From a process-based administration to a result-based administration
5. From collective delivering of public or social services to a flexible delivering of particular services
6. From “spending” to “cost reduction”
7. From state-owned property to state-managed property

The Coordination Process in Sweden from 1991 to 2012

Sweden has not undergone the state organization and functioning regime specific to the communist doctrine, although it was aware of the much-needed decentralization of the public sector, a distinct process of the new public management reform. In this chapter, several reforms launched by Sweden since 1991 are listed. Out of the necessity to increase “the productivity” of the public sector, new public management was successfully implemented in Sweden (Andersson, 2006, p.10).

The Carl Bildt Cabinet was invested on the 4th of October 1991 and has governed until the 7th of October 1994. The Cabinet’s most important new public management reforms refer to the fiscality reform (fiscal code simplification, consumer tax increase, public expenditure reduction), decentralization (the prerogatives regarding the management of medical or social systems were transferred to local authorities), privatization (supporting the privatization of state companies, as well as strategic services suppliers or educational institutions), and the deregulation and liberalization in the fields of energy, transportation, postal services and communications. Furthermore, the executive initiated negotiations for the EU accession of Sweden, which was possible in 1995 after a people’s referendum organized by Prime Minister Carlsson.

Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson started his second term after the elections in 1994. He continued the new public management reforms initiated by Carl Bildt, adding several new measures, such as balancing public finances, the deregulation of several other banking procedures or the privatization of a vast number of state companies.

After the resignation of PM Carlsson, Persson was elected to lead the Swedish government. He continued the fiscal reforms aimed at reducing the budget deficit of the country. The deficit in 1994 was 13% of GDP and it became 2.6% in 1997, thus awarding Persson with a high level of trust from the parliament. The new economical stability granted Sweden the ability to join the Economic and Monetary Union. Nonetheless, this was rejected by the population who voted at a referendum organized in 2003. Persson’s main NPM reforms and measures consisted of increasing the budgets of local governments and establishing several institutional anti-corruption mechanisms aimed at reducing the level of corruption in the public sector.

Following the 2006 elections, Reinfeldt was appointed Prime Minister. His mandate is characterized by a continuation of reform processes started by his predecessors and by coordinating the Swedish presidency of the Council of the EU. From July to December 2009, Sweden held the presidency of the Council of the European Union, and the Reinfeldt agenda was an ambitious one, aiming at finding functional solutions for the economic

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