

INTRODUCTION OF GUEST EDITOR

Evaluation of the effectiveness of public administration is currently perhaps the most popular topic among authors who submit articles to the journal «Public Administration Issues», as well as the most attractive for its readers: evaluation articles occupy a great part of the Journal portfolio of articles in English, these articles are often cited in other publications, they are accessed regularly by readers on the Journal's website. The new challenges to public administration that have emerged in the context of the ongoing Covid pandemic are generating an expansion of assessment tools and areas that are based on modern public administration concepts: NPM, NPG, and the indicative approach.

This issue of the Journal presents the articles related to a number of different areas of performance assessment and subject fields of public administration in which this assessment is made:

- financial management (evaluation of the impact of external audit on fiscal transparency; evaluation of the influence of investment promotion policy and the level of economic freedom on the attraction of foreign direct investments; evaluation of the influence of financial local autonomy on the rural development);
- public-private partnership management, which potentially creates risks of non-transparent decision-making and ethical violations in obtaining municipal contracts for the provision of services (assessment using data obtained during a large-scale survey);
- local governance (assessed by the Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index);
- e-Government (assessment of the impact of Internet literacy of the population on the development of electronic services and e-participation platforms);
- the effectiveness of international development institutions.

The peculiarity of all these articles is the use of specially selected indices, indicators used for the purpose of evaluation. Thus, modern mechanisms for assessing the effectiveness of public administration are primarily indicative, they rely on the use of specially aggregated data and inevitably lead to general conclusions and recommendations, to the construction of theories of how public administration should be arranged and managed.

The other part of the issue consists of two articles devoted to the analysis of country cases related to the development of the pension system in the country (for example, Egypt shows that due to the authoritarian nature of the state, the harsh and unpopular solutions to the modernization of the pension system become available) and to the study of the socio-cultural roots of corruption at the local level (the case of Georgia). Both articles show that a case study approach that avoids general inferences and schemas is an alternative to data-driven public administration research.

A wide representation of authors from different countries in this issue of the Journal – from Asia and Africa, to Eurasia and Europe, shows that the two trends in public administration analysis described above have international significance and reflect the deep processes of «dividing» public administration analytics into data-based and case study approaches. These two types of analytics, although they may coexist, pursue different goals and lead to different kinds of conclusions.

Special Issue Editor
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