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## INTRODUCTION

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The current issue of the journal «Public Administration Issues» is published in challenging times. It seemed that 2020 and 2021, the years of the spread of COVID-19, mass lockdowns, the slowdown of country economies and restrictive measures in the field of governance, were the «bottom»; an upswing was expected ahead, a return to «normal life». However, these expectations have not been fulfilled, and the new threats and contradictions of 2022 and 2023 have surpassed in scope and consequences for international stability what was previously considered catastrophic. It becomes necessary for public administration to find a new solid ground to be able to go beyond the previous theories and practices of «prosperous times» since they are poorly applicable in survival conditions.

Researchers from different countries and regions are responding to the situation of a complex political, economic, social, civilizational, and inter-country crisis in several spontaneously emerging directions. We have tried to select the articles of this issue in such a way that they reflect the most popular areas of crisis public governance in both theoretical and practical terms. It should be noted that articles on the problems of governance under the conditions of COVID-19 were almost not present in the current editorial portfolio, thereby confirming the thesis about the transition to a new phase of crisis governance priorities.

Traditional priorities of governance and theoretical approaches have become a weak component of national administrative systems and its analytics in the context of the recent crisis. Today it becomes clear that the carriers of administrative systems are not governments, nor individual political actors, but states as a whole. States have their own history, embodied in values, in the vision of relations with other states, in alliances and civilizational missions. The value-based approach to state management does not coincide with the focus on efficient service provision. It raises questions about what is more important: the development of new services, prosperity at any cost, or values; state-public partnership, which is a product of a compromise between lobbying active social groups and business, on the one hand, and the political and bureaucratic elites, on the other, or following the country's non-compromising strategic priorities? These issues are especially acute in countries outside the so-called «developed Western democracies», since researchers of public administration in these countries are less exposed to the traditions of considering governance in the context of the established concepts of NPM, GG/NPG, Neo-Weberian ethics-centric approach. The article from South Africa is fully driven by the quest for a «new theory», it represents one of the «first swallows» of the emerging wave of non-Western-oriented theorizing in the field of public administration.

The search for new theoretical foundations of public administration forces us to rethink the ideas of a steady growth in civic participation in governance, characteristic of «prosperous» times and traditional democracies. In particular, the participation of ethnic minorities at the local level of government may not only expand, but also reduce due to the processes of urbanization, increased unemployment and

poverty (the example of Vietnam). Moreover, the participation of civil society in the management of the resources of national parks in Indonesia encounters fundamental limitations associated with insufficient resources, relationships with the authorities, and the capabilities of local civil society structures themselves.

Human capital is currently becoming the central link in the formation of national public administration systems. It is the human capital that can ensure the adaptation of governance systems to negative changes and crises. The role of human capital in its social, ethnic, and labor aspects is clearly underestimated in traditional concepts of public administration, which assume that exclusively innovative and meritocratic qualities of human capital, regardless of national characteristics and traditions, division into migrants and indigenous people, without a targeted program of social support for special groups of the citizens can improve the quality of management and provision of public services. Authors of the articles in this section pay special attention to national employment programs for the unemployed (Israel), a comparative analysis of programs to support migrant workers and workers of Thai indigenous nationality (Thailand), an affirmative policy regarding the social capital of special social groups at the local level (Indonesia). All these articles show that the regulation of human capital in the current situation needs to be carried out on the basis of country conditions and specifics, and that for developing countries this regulation differs significantly from standard recommendations.

The last section of this issue of the journal deals with the problems of supporting innovation, interaction of urban development projects, and combating corruption in crisis conditions. What unites these seemingly different problems is the fact that the solutions proposed by the authors take into account the complexity of the declining resources for management. So, at the city level, it is proposed to look for a way out, ensure sustainable development and optimize costs due to the synergy of various urban projects (Russia). The energy crisis generated by a combination of corruption, circular debt and insufficient incomes of the population can be overcome only by increasing GNP and improving energy transmission and distribution mechanisms (Pakistan). Finally, the survival of innovative processes in crisis management, as the literature review shows (the last article of the issue, Brazil) should be based on the experience of business, flexibly responding to unstable development. Despite difficult times, it is highlighted in the articles in this section that the progress of administrative systems is possible, but this requires going beyond the established governance schemes, taking into account the specifics, flexibility in development and implementation of managerial solutions.

Concluding the introduction, I would like to draw attention to the wide representation of countries and different regions of the world in this issue of the journal. Nine articles of the issue were written by authors from eight countries, spanning different continents and regions outside of North America and Europe. This feature was also traced in the two previous issues of the journal; it evokes ideas about the emerging trend in research which has both regional specifics and a vector of going beyond the standard theories of public administration.

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