

THE EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN ROMANIA

SZABÓ-M. SÁNDOR

Babeş-Bolyai Tudományegyetem, Kolozsvár, Románia

szs_5@yahoo.com

Summary

The quick evolution of human society and the social-economical changes generate difficult and complicated challenges in charge of the public administration. In its turn the European integration presents a hard provocation with which the newly joined states (the last 15-20 years) and their administrations are dealing. In this context, the reform of the Romanian state, including the public administration, became priority.

Keywords: public administration, public management, reforms, evolution.

Signal Classification: EPAR21

Introduction

In the past 25 years the public sector from Romania went through a period which was distinguished by different changes in every domain : economy, political , social, cultural, religious. The communism regime had left prints which were hard to clean, the passing to democracy was very sudden, jumping over some steps. That is the reason why at the beginning of the '90 the democracy was perceived by the citizens like a total liberty. Even if initially the big changes were felt especially in the political sphere, gradually there were noticeable major changes at the administration, which required a reform in the public administration.

There were decisions about the abrogation and modification of some laws, adoption of new legislative acts, some of these were in contradiction with others. Simultaneously there were assumed institutional models from politically and democratically popular states. That is the reason why Romania tried the direct and

quick passing from a pre-bureaucratic state to a post- bureaucratic one. With the time the expectation of people reached a higher level but the performance of the administrative system couldn't reach them. Thereby was acknowledged the necessity and opportunity of the public management in Romania, a concept with several definitions.

One of the first theorists in this domain, Rosenbloom, thinks that *„public management consists in incorporating the approaches: managerial, political and legal in the process of accomplishment”* (Androniceanu, 2015).

Therefore, the public management appeared as a necessity being on a constant development. In the next few pages there will be described the evolution of public administration and management in Romania, based on the influence of political, economical, cultural and external elements.

The evolution of public administration

1. The influence of communist regime

In the second half of the XX century in Romania was established the communist regime which had an antidemocratical and anticapitalistic character, based on terror and fight for power (Drăgușanu, 2009).

The elections from November 1946, after placing Romania under sovietical influence, were named „free” but there were organized under tension, the result of the votes was modified in favor of the Democratic Party led by the communists - this fact fastened the ritm of sovietisation and the takeover of the power.

The fight for power was manifested in and outside of the communist party by the suppression of political enemies. In the party Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej and lately Nicolae Ceaușescu eliminated one by one their political opponents by naming to important positions their trusted men-they had benefits even after retiring. The communist repression was manifested with the help of Security founded in 1948 and the Police founded in 1949. Through those the enemies of the nation were obliterated in jails or working bearings.

On economical plan there were taken radical actions which lied in nationalisation of the main producing tools, the phasing of banks, collectivisation and industrialisation. After becoming the president, in 1974, Nicolae Ceaușescu succeeded to realize big investments (Danubius - Black Sea Chanel, The House of

Nation, The Iron Gates, Transfăgărașan). These lend to increase the external debt because they didn't take in account the principle of profitability. To be able return that debt, he decided to took some measures which required the restriction of import and internal consume, resulting serious consequences on the standards of living (Dondorici, Lica, Poama, Ionescu, Osanu, Stoica, 2007).

Simultaneously there were violated the provisions of RPR and RSR constitution, regarding the inviolability of person and domicile, the basic rights and freedom of men. Therefore, in 1970-1980 there were elaborated legal acts which concerned some measures regarding the establishment of the domicile in so named big cities. „*The Decree of State Council 307/1971 regarding the settlement of domicile in cities which according to the laws are stated big cities...*” (Ionescu, Gura, 2010). The problem of limited numbers of households started to extend at the time when industrialisation got launched. Even though year by year there were built more and more apartments, the number of households were little, it was necessary to took further actions. So to the person who was not involved in social- cultural activities or was part in the production process was forbidden to get established in those cities. The cities were defined by HCM, nr. 1651/31.07.1969 and these were: Arad, Brașov, Brăila, București, Cluj, Constanța, Craiova, Galați, Iași, Pitești, Ploiești Sibiu, Timișoara, Târgu Mureș.

„*The Decree of State Council 68/1976 hsd the purpose to decrease the migration of population to the big cities and to use the local manpower resources, considering his being the solution of household problems*” (Ionescu, Gură, 2010).

Moreover, there were taken multiple actions which meant to afford the cultural environment, actions which focused on reorganizing the education after the sovietical model, applying the press censorship, subordinate the Orthodox Church to the State, disbanding the Greco-Catholic Church.

Therefore we can say that during the communism the public administration from Romania was focused on fulfilling the needs of the party with any recourses, the efficiency and impartiality were nouns which couldn't be found in this domain.

All the measures adopted by the communists resulted the degradation of standards of living., these caused numerous revolts of the population which led to the fall of the communist regime in December of 1989 and the construction of democracy in Romania which during more than 40 years was defined by a dictatorial stile, where the power was centred in the hands of a single person.

2. *The influence of administrative factors*

The Constitution of 1991 modified in 2003 proclaims Romania a democratic and social republic in which the sovereignty belongs to the people. This requires a President, a Parliament, a Constitutional Court and a separate system which includes the High Court of Cassation and Justice. Romania is a democratic republic in which the executive functions are divided between the president and the prime-minister. The president is elected by voting for maximum two warrants of five years. The President names the prime minister who nominates the Council of Ministers. The legislative power is possessed by the Guvern and the two Chambers of the Parliament: the Chambers of Deputies and the Senate. The members of the two Chambers are elected for a warrant of four years in an electoral system. All the citizens who are older than 18 years have the right to vote. Romania is working based on a multiparty political system which does not allow to form majority party. In the last years it could be captured a stability of the political scene because of the fusion of small parties with the big ones. However the politics of Romania are still dynamic and unpredictable.

3. *The influence of political factors*

The build of a modern governmental mechanism by reforming the public administration means an action for the nations being in a process of transition, nation which passed from a dictatorial regime to democracy, like Romania.

After the fall of the communism regime the power was taken by the National Helping Front, a political structure which incorporated intellectuals, soldiers and ex dissidents. This announced the return to democracy and political pluralism (this fact made possible the apparition of PNT, PNL and PSD parties) and the organization of free elections which took place in 1990 and where Ion Iliescu won.

The reform of the public administration starts from the principle that *„in a democracy which works in an appropriate way the power has to be shared between the executive, the legislature and the judicial, between central and local level, between the state and the citizens and it has to be responsible”* (Crăciun, Collins, 2008).

In the past 25 years the management of the nation was in the hands of some important political parties. As we mentioned above, after the fall of the communism regime the power was taken by the National Helping Front which won the elections from May 1990 and which two years later divided into two parties :The Social

Democracy Party led by Ion Iliescu and the Democratic Party led by Petre Roman. Till 1996 the president of Romania was Ion Iliescu, and between 1996-2000 was Emil Constantinescu, who represented Romanian Democratic Convention. The elections from 2000 had offered to Ion Iliescu the second warrant as the president of Romania, in this period Adrian Năstase was the prime minister. It was followed by two warrants won by Traian Băsescu, in our days the country is managed by Klaus Iohannis.

No matter what parties had the power, the main problems with which the governments confronted were those about the real democratisation of society, reorganization of economy, creating the market economy.

Furthermore, all spokesmen of political parties, give importance to the depolitization of public institutions. It is known the fact that democratic model and the performances in public sector makes necessary the separation of politics from administration. In reality, the things are totally different, trying to setup client base politics in the important functions of public administration.

This is the reason why the main object in the reorganization of public administration from Romania is the professionalisation of it, by removing the political influence.

4. The influence of the economic factors

From the economic point of view, there were many factors that led to the necessity of adopting a planning reform. An essential role in this process is played by the minimum wage which, although it has been over 20 years since the fall of the Communism, is quite low. Statistics show that Romania is the second to last country in the European Union regarding the rate of the minimum wage.

Another factor that indicates the need of a public management reform is represented both by the Romania's internal and external public debt and the level of the budget deficit. The economic crisis determined the government to take drastic measures that generated significant consequences in terms of the living conditions.

5. The socio-demographic factors

According to the 2011 census, the population of Romania is 20 121 641 people, with a declining natural growth rate. Therefore, the falling birth rate on the background of an increasing death rate determined the authorities to apply some measures that would encourage the birth rate. Another problem that Romania is struggling with is the migration of the labourforce.

5.1. Majority and minority ethnicity

The Romanians constitute the majority of the ethnic groups in Romania with 88.9% of the total population. The second important ethnic community is represented by the Hungarians with 6.5% of the population, meaning 1 300 000 people. Then, the gypsies (Romani) represent a group of 665 000 people and the other ethnic communities are: the Germans, the Ukrainians, the Lipovans, the Turks, the Tatars, the Serbs, Slovaks, Bulgarians, Croats, Greeks, Ruthenians, Jews, Czechs, Poles, Italians and Armenians. From 745 421 Germans that lived in Romania in the 1930s, now the statistic show that there are only 60 000 left (The Demography of Romania, www.wikipedia.ro).

Therefore, measures for combating discrimination need to be taken into consideration, so all the Romanian citizens have the same rights and obligations regardless of ethnicity.

5.2. Religion

The largest religious denomination is the Romanian Orthodox Church and the majority of the country's citizens are Orthodox Christians.

However, *„Romania stands for the principle of religious liberty, which is stipulated in Article 29 from the Romanian Constitution, next to the freedom of thought and opinion. Although it is not explicitly defined as a secular state, Romania does not have a state religion according to its principle of equality between citizens regardless of their religious beliefs: the Romanian public authority must follow the principle of neutrality towards the associations and religious cults”* (The Demography of Romania, www.wikipedia.ro).

6. The cultural factors and the academia

The process of development of an economy may depend on the analysis regarding the cooperation between the government, the academia and the private sector.

Lately, it has been noted that the academia is playing an increasingly important role within the public management. The Faculties of Political and Administrative Science have been getting more and more involved in projects regarding the public administration reform, local and regional development policies and research studies. However, unlike the other highly-developed countries, the level of collaboration between the academia, the government and the private sector is quite low. The main causes are the fact that the private sector doesn't have enough resources to sustain a

high-quality research, then the government's lack of sufficient analysis in several areas of economy, so that it can make political decisions based on exhaustive research, and last, the deprivation towards the universities' possibility to provide funding resources and to have access to high-quality information that could generate the interaction with the deciders.

Therefore, a very important item on the public management reform's agenda is represented by reconsidering the role of the academia in the process of state development.

7. External factors

Two of the main external factors that have a major influence upon the Romanian's development are NATO and EU. After it had been through a complex process of adhesion, Romania joined the EU in 2007, although the association agreement was signed in 1993 and the associate status was acquired in 1995.

Looking closely to the extension of the integration process, the EU has been supporting Romania by consulting it, providing assistance and funding several projects according to the European standards.

The advantages of the accession of Romania to the EU fall into 3 categories: economic development, political stability and security. Regarding the first category, the development implied *„economic growth, increasing the foreign direct investments, setting up new production structures that would allow the manufacture of finite products with a higher added value and a higher quality, according to EU standards, greater consumer protection, the growth of the population's savings and investments, the reduction of the tax system by introducing more relaxed policies, the capital market extension (new capital flows, the diversity of the financial products), the business and private sector's development, the fostering of the competition, the access on the EU's labor market, the significant improvement of the living standard”*(www.mdplp.ro).

Therefore, starting the 1st of January 2007, the Romanians have been enjoying the same rights as any other citizen from the European Union, as well as *„the right for a fair remuneration; the right for better living and working conditions; the right for social protection, through a system that is provided by the host country; the right for the freedom of association and for the collective negotiation; the right for the vocational training; the right of equal treatment between men and women; the right to be informed, to be consulted and participation of the employees; the right*

for health protection and for the employment security; consular and diplomatic protection from another Member State of the EU; the right for child and teenaged protection; providing a minimum income for the elders; the right for professional and social integration for the disabled”(www.eurojust.ro).

Conclusions

The information above concludes the fact that, starting 1990 till the present day, the Romanian public administration has been in a continuously process of changing and developing, from both politically, economically, socially, demographic and culturally point of view.

The influence of the dictatorial regime had been experienced many years after the fall of the Communism, which had held back the process of a modern democracy, and the attempt of taking over some models from the democratic states didn't have the intended effect.

The concern for the achievement of a real reform in the Romanian public administration was imposed by the need for both the central and local public administration's capacity to develop and consolidate, so that it could function within European standards. The final goal is the quality improvement of the public services received by the citizens- the main beneficiaries of all the actions in the administration's activity.

Bibliography

- Alexandrescu, C., *Isărescu, despre efectele crizei economice asupra României, 2014*, [Online] elérhető a: http://www.dcnews.ro/isarescu-despre-efectele-crizei-economice-asupra-romaniei_443764.html#sthash.LbtJIsbN.dpf, last time visited on 25.06.2017
- Androniceanu, A., *Noutăți în managementul public*, [Online] available at: <http://www.biblioteca-digitala.ase.ro/biblioteca/pagina2.asp?id=cap1>, last time visited on 25.06.2017
- Crăciun, C., Collins, P.E., *MANAGEMENTUL POLITICILOR PUBLICE*, București: POLIROM, 2008

- Demografia României, [Online] available at: https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demografia_Rom%C3%A2niei/, last time visited on 24.06.2017
- Dondorici, F., Lica, E.E., Poamă, E., Ionescu, O., Stoica, R., *ISTORIE, manual pentru clasa a XII-a*, Târgoviște: GIMNASIUM, 2008
- Drăgușanu, A., *Regimul comunist în România (1948-1989)*, [Online] available at: <https://dunastu.wordpress.com/2009/04/26/regimul-comunist-in-romania-1948-1989> last time visited on 25.06.2017
- Iliescu, I., Cocone, I.F., *Care sunt avantajele aderării la UE?*, [Online] available at: http://www.mdpl.ro/_documente/info_integrare/eurodispecer/generalitati/38.pdf, last time visited on 23.06.2017
- Institutul Național de Statistică, *1. Populația la recensămintele din anii 1948, 1956, 1966, 1977, 1992, 2002 și 2011 – județe și categorii de localități*, [Online] available at: <http://www.recensamantromania.ro/noutati/volumul/>, last time visited on 24.06.2017
- Ionescu-Gură, *Dimensiunea represiunii din România în regimul comunist. Dislocări de persoane și fixări de domiciliu obligatoriu*, București: CORINT, 2010
- Iorgovan, A., *Drept administrativ. Tratat elementar*, vol. I, Ed. Hercules, 1993
- Katsarova, I., *SITUAȚIA ECONOMICĂ, SOCIALĂ ȘI TERITORIALĂ A ROMÂNIEI, Bruxelles, 2010*, [Online] elérhető a: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/note/join/2010/438617/IPOL-REGI_NT\(2010\)438617_RO.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/note/join/2010/438617/IPOL-REGI_NT(2010)438617_RO.pdf), last time visited on 25.06.2017
- Legea 215/2001 a administrației publice locale
- Pavelescu, T., Moinescu, G., *Drept administrativ român*, Ed. Tritonic, București,
- Retrospectiva aderării României la Uniunea Europeană*, [Online] la adresa: <http://eurojust.ro/retrospectiva-aderarii-romaniei-la-uniunea-europeana/>, last time visited on 23.06.2017