THE 8TH EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
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REALITIES AND PERSPECTIVES

The European Citizen and Public Administration

The Legal Framework for Regionalization of Romania

Ion Popescu-Slăniceanu[1], Cosmin-Ionuț Enescu[2]

Abstract: Deepening relationships and interdependencies today between states and other participants in international relations, globalization issues and solutions, acceleration of socio-political phenomena bring new problems to the people. Among the issues at the heart of contemporary research interest is public law and relative to new forms of international cooperation, development cooperation and regional integration at the state and sovereignty, the need for democratic values, the development of local autonomy, the rights human. In Romania, regional experiences, in different forms, dating back to the interwar period. Currently, the institutional framework, objectives, powers and instruments of regional development policy in Romania was established by Law no. 315/2004 on regional development in Romania, but not developing regions and municipalities have no legal personality and therefore be a reform aimed at regionalization of Romania. Under the provisions of article 3, 1 of the Constitution, republished, Romanian territory is organized administratively into communes, towns and counties. It is therefore necessary to amend the Constitution in order to create the legal framework for regionalization constitutional Romania and then passing bills related to regionalization and administrative decentralization to properly delineate the respective responsibilities of administrative units in Romania.

Keywords: region; regionalism; local community

Deepening relationships and interdependencies today between states and other participants in international relations, globalization issues and solutions, acceleration of socio-political phenomena bring new problems to the people.

Among the issues at the heart of contemporary research interest is public law and relative to new forms of international cooperation, the development of international cooperation and regional integration, at the state and sovereignty, the need for democratic values, the development of local autonomy, respect human rights.

There are two main directions in which the sovereign state, classically understood, has to face a new way of putting the issue and turns and will continue to change. One is the international dimension, consisting of moving from mere international cooperation to integration, both international regional and universal international. The second is the internal dimension, with the objective of strengthening the autonomy of local and regional public decision to downgrade baseline levels and judicious sizing municipalities.

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It was felt that the term region means space - a certain space limitations more or less flexible and a human group, a human community with specific characteristics, especially with a certain unity or identity. Thus, space and human group, the first basic elements of regional definition positions the region as an intermediary between the local community (with a clearly defined territory) and state (defined territorially by other states, the nation lives). But these two concepts of space and group can be immediately "re" in two different directions leading one towards regionalization, other towards regionalism, the first focusing on space (and organizing therein), the second of the group, community - identity and action (Alexandru, Popescu, Cărăuşan, Enescu & Dincă, 2003, p. 458).

According to the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS)[1] identifying administrative units depending on the size of the territory there are: the village, the department / county and regional level.

In this regard, the regionalization of the Community Charter[2] states in article 1 that the region means an area forming in geographically, net drive, or a similar set of territories where there is continuity, the population has some elements common and who wants to keep the resulting specificity and develop in order to foster progress culturally, socially and economically.

The common elements of a population mean a specific policy on language, culture, tradition and historical interests of economy and transport. It is essential that these items be collected in all cases.

Various legal and policy title and that these entities can receive the various states autonomous communities, provinces, nations and so on - are not excluded.

Also, art. 2 of the Charter expressly states that the Member States of the European Community are invited, given the will of the people, historical tradition and the need for efficient and proper administration of their functions, in particular the planning of economic development, to institutionalize regions their territories or to keep them where they exist. NUTS classification is hierarchical in the sense that each member state divided into three levels: NUTS 1, NUTS 2 and NUTS 3. The second and third levels are subdivisions of the respective first and second level. A Member State may decide to extend the hierarchical levels of detail, subdivision NUTS 3 level.

The appropriate level of NUTS must register a class of administrative units in a Member State shall be determined on the basis of demographic thresholds referred to as, where stands the average size of this class of administrative units in the member state:

- NUTS 1 - 3 million minimum, maximum 7 million;

- NUTS 2 - 800 000 minimum, and maximum 3 million;

- NUTS 3 - at least 150 000 maximum 800 000.

The population of a territorial unit consists of persons residing in the area concerned. Where, in a Member State for a certain level of NUTS no administrative units of sufficient size specified criteria, this level of NUTS is constituted by aggregating an appropriate number of existing administrative units joined sizes small. Aggregation is based on appropriate criteria, such as geographical location, socio-economic, historical, cultural or environmental.

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[1] Regulation (EC) no. 1059/2003 of 26 May 2003 on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS) published in the Official Journal no. L 154/2003, p 1-41. That regulation was amended by Regulation (EC) no. 1888/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2005, published in Official Journal no. L 309 1 25.11.2005, by Regulation (EC) no. 105/2007 of 1 February 2007 the Commission published in the Official Journal no. L 39 1 10.2.2007 and Commission Regulation (EC) no. 176/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 February 2008 published in the Official Journal no. L 61 1 5.3.2008.

[2] Document prepared by Parliament and adopted as an official document of the European Union of 19 December 1988.

Legal doctrine established genuine classification of different types of regions (Tanasescu, 2002, p. 5):

- political regions components of a state which is the boundary between federal and unitary states with powers in the legislative and executive matters, but still retains a court only in the central state (Spain, Italy);
- built region - a result of the creation of a unitary state by joining several states that still retain some individuality (UK, which today tends toward federalization);
- diversified regions with regional frameworks established not only the criterion of territorial and political, but also other criteria such as language and culture (Belgium, before its transformation into a federal state);
- classical administrative regions created by decentralization as local authorities administratively autonomous.

Regionalism, in turn, is a movement that comes from below and is aware of common interests (the region being perceived as a homogeneous territory by people who live it) and at the same time, their aspiration to participate in the management of these interests. Regional consciousness is very close, on a larger scale, of conscience "local businesses" that exists at the local level. Hence the notion of community evolves naturally aspiring to manage affairs for the estimates to be able to know them, understand them, and direct them to defend such local interest. In particular, the regional community is considered better able to deal with these things in comparison with the state, regarded as too remote and too big, accused of wanting to impose a single model, and in any case not having a suitable size for solve in an effective manner their problems.

Regionalism corresponds to the collectivities deep desires to be responsible for resolving issues that concern them directly (Trailescu, 2005, p. 92).

Examples of regionalism are concerning South Tyrol in Italy, Corsica in France, Bavaria in Germany, Catalonia in Spain, Scotland in Britain.

Regionalization, unlike regionalism has a downward trajectory, has other purposes and aims other means of implementing the goals than those used for regionalism. This is the fundamental difference that recurs in every phase of "regional process".

It can be said that regionalization is usually important to get care for a country or to Europe at a better balance in the distribution of wealth by trying to raise the less developed areas. In turn, regionalism has the golden rule to reach the region to the power of decision in all its components as aspects assertion of identity, memory and identity-action (Alexandru&Badescu, 1997, p 31).

In Romania, regional experiences, in different forms extremely shy but are old, still in the interwar period.

Draft form, promote administrative reform in 1921 (project Argetoianu), but has not been completed, setting target regions administered by regional council (composed of representatives from the county council) President - representative of the executive power, exerting guardianship the administrative districts and communes (Negulescu, 1925, p. 562)

Constitution[1] of March 29, 1923, provided in art. 4, the division of the country into districts and counties in common. "The number, extent and territorial subdivisions will be determined by the type of administrative organization under the laws".

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[1] Published in Official Monitor no. 282 of 29 March 1923.

Administrative unification Law[1] of 14 June 1925 represented a milestone in the administrative life of Romania since, on the one hand was available and to some extent has used the findings, analyzes and projects the time, and on the another part were based on the provisions of the new Constitution.

The country was divided (art. 480) in 71 counties, 498 net, 8879 of the 71 urban communes of the county seats including 17 cities, 94 urban communes, 10 suburban communities and 8704 rural municipalities.

Under the empire the same Constitution of 1923, but under a new regime, with different views on the administrative life of the country, Romania has experienced a new and exciting model of administrative organization of the territory established by Law on organization of local administration 3 August 1929.

Basic Law provides that municipalities and county joint so organization based administrative regions would have been unconstitutional. Therefore, the legislature has resorted to an innovation by creating local Ministerial Directorates, the number 7, as centers of local administration and inspection. They were actually decentralized organs of central authority. Local Ministerial Directorate was composed of local ministerial director and the heads of local executive bodies Ministerial Government[2].

The 7 Local Ministerial Directorate were held in major provincial centers: Bucharest, Cernauti, Chisinau, Cluj, Craiova, Iasi, Timisoara, from January 1, 1930.

In the administrative-territorial organization established by law in 1929, including Ministerial Directorates Local renounced July 15, 1931, after coming to power the Government Iorga.

Through successive amending laws (11 laws change to 1936) returned to the Act of 1925.

Concern to give the administration an active role in the life of the state, justified voting the new administrative law.

Administrative Law[3] of 27 March 1936 provided for a division of the territory, according to art. 4 of the Constitution of 1923, the counties and municipalities invested with legal personality and its own patrimony and with its own management. It was also maintained place as a mere administrative district of the county, the role of control of the activity of rural communities.

A second regional organization type, very different from the legal one between 1929 and 1938-1940, the provinces, 10 in number, which were distinct territorial collectivities, with legal personality. The system comprises but one intermediate level of local territorial communities, the provinces, and not two, as counties were only administrative-territorial districts, unincorporated. Obviously, under the royal dictatorship of the time, nor can there be local autonomy (Popescu, 1999, p. 146).

A third regional experience was between 1950-1968. The system was designed with two intermediate links, region and district (Sageata, 2004, p. 79).

Thus, on September 6, 1950, were abolished by Law No. 5 of the 58 counties (and the 424 common place and 6276 rural and urban), being replaced by 28 regions (composed of 177 districts, 148 cities and 4052 communes).

On September 19, 1952, amended by Decree Law No. 331. 5/1950 so that by merging, the number of regions was reduced to 18: Arad, Bacau, Baia Mare, Barlad, Bucharest, Cluj, Constanta, Craiova,

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[1] Published in Official Monitor no. 128 of 14 June 1925.
[2] Law on organization of local administration of 3 August 1929, published in Official Monitor no. 170 of 3 August 1929.
[3] Published in the Official Monitor of Romania, Part I, no. 73 of 27 March 1936.

Galati, Hunedoara, Iasi, Oradea, Pitesti, Ploiesti, Stalin, Suceava , Timisoara and, for the first time after the union, an administrative entity created on ethnic Hungarian Autonomous Region.

Decree 12 of January 10, 1956, again amended Law. 5/1950 repealing the Arad and Barlad the regions.

Then, by Law no. 3 of 24 December 1960 have been redistribution of territories and rename regions. Hungarian administrative entity was renamed Mures-Hungarian Autonomous Region by putting the same time and territory. Finally, the number of areas has been reduced to 16[1].

The Law no. 2 of 16 February 1968 on the administrative organization of the territory of the Socialist Republic of Romania[2], in effect today, Romania is organized into the following administrative units: counties, cities and communities.

The drafting committee of the draft Constitution, the idea of regional, historical provinces return to form (with the possible retention of the counties, but only as administrative-territorial districts, and not as local regional authority) has not been accepted (Iorgovan, 1998, pp. 39-42).

The transient, Department of Local Government had the power provided by the Government Decision no. 761/1997[3], to fulfill the tasks of promoting regional development policy, pending the adoption of the Law on regional development in Romania, which was to determine both the institutional framework and the principles, objectives and instruments of regional development policy in Romania.

The need for administrative-territorial organization of regional type was demonstrated by the Green Paper highlighted "regional development policy in Romania"[4].

Green Paper represented a synthesis document aims to establish regional development principles for achieving integration of Romania into the European Union.

Regional development policy objectives proposed in this study are the following:

- preparation for integration into the European and Romanian insurance eligibility for access to EU structural funds for development;
- reducing disparities between different "regions" of Romania;
- integration of public sector activities in a broader concept of regional development.

The study attempted to substantiate the idea that the current administrative-territorial structure of the country, characterized by the existence of the 42 counties can not provide an effective basis for regional development. It is therefore proposed that based on the experience of EU countries to use a smaller number of macro development, obtained by combination of several counties, determined as part of these structures on the basis of assessment development indices and the elements their common or complementary.

The project aimed to introduce a system of statistical data collection methodology adapted European and structured development highlighting macro-regions.

Paper does not contain, however, changes in the administrative-territorial structure of the Romanian state, as macro-economic development regions are structures and not administrative. The question arises whether the widespread application of this system will lead gradually to diminish the role of

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[1] For data on the evolution of the legislation see http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regiunile_Republicii_Populare_Române.
[2] Republished in the Official Monitor, Part I, no. 3 of 23 January 1981.
[3] Published in the Official Monitor of Romania, Part I, no. 338 of 2 December 1997.
[4] Green Paper-regional development policy in Romania, published by the Romanian Government and the European Commission, PHARE, Bucharest, 1997.

counties as administrative - territorial units in the design and implementation of development policies. On the other hand, the experience of regional development in Romania, has caused some counties are now aggregated in the same macro-regions, have different degrees of development to counties who at that time were focused regional centers and funds the region for their own development.

This explains the current competition between capital cities counties to become the capital of the region. For example, the desire to become the capital of the region of the city of Pitesti, it considers that it meets the requirements to become the capital of a future that will be incorporated regions Arges, given some arguments such as:

- is one of the most important railway junctions in the country and being linked to the capital city and a highway. It is also positioned on the Pan European Transport Corridor IV (also has one of the most spectacular roads in the world, Transfagarasanul, which is ranked 8th in the world in the Top10 of spectacular roads).
- there is the possibility of extending to aerodrome twin Bradu common neighbor Pitesti and turning it into the airport.
- the economic, Pitesti is one of the largest centers of industrial development, especially by car industry, becoming a major exporter and one of the largest contributors to GDP (second contributor after Petrom).
- health and education stands are classified county hospital emergency Pitesti and two universities;
- is the seat of the Court is to Pitesti, among the 15 in the country, which allows organizing this instance at regional level;
- from historically was the capital of Romanian First Campulung Arges, Curtea de Arges belonging to both municipalities.

Currently, the institutional framework, objectives, powers and instruments of regional development policy in Romania was established by Law no. 315/2004 on regional development in Romania[1], but not developing regions and municipalities have no legal personality and therefore be a reform aimed at regionalization of Romania.

Under the provisions of article 3, 1 of the Constitution, republished Romanian territory is organized administratively into communes, towns and counties.

It is therefore necessary to amend the Constitution in order to create the legal framework for regionalization constitutional Romania and then passing bills related to regionalization and administrative decentralization to properly delineate the respective responsibilities of administrative units in Romania.

To achieve the basic objectives of regional development policy, Law no. 315/2004 allowed for the creation of the 8 regions through voluntary association of counties, as follows:

North-Eastern Region - which groups Bacau, Botosani, Iasi, Neamt, Suceava and Vaslui.

South East Development Region - which groups Braila, Buzau, Constanta, Galati, Tulcea and Vrancea.

South-Muntenia Development Region - which groups Arges, Calarasi, Dambovița, Giurgiu, Ialomita, Prahova and Teleorman.

Development Region South West - which groups Dolj, Gorj, Mehedinti, Olt and Valcea.

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[1] Law no. 315/2004 was published in the Official Monitor of Romania, Part I no. 577 of 29 June 2004.

Western Region - which groups Arad, Caras-Severin, Hunedoara and Timis.

North-West region - which groups Bihor, Bistrita-Nasaud, Cluj, Salaj, Satu Mare and Maramures.

Central Development Region - which groups Alba, Brasov, Covasna, Harghita, Mures and Sibiu.

Bucharest-Ilfov region - which groups Bucharest and Ilfov county.

Development Region is neither a local distinctive local or decentralized an administrative organs of the central government. Development region is formed on a county level through their association. It constitutes neither by associating basic local territorial communities or by attending only part of a county (Popescu, 1999, p. 150).

Former communist states has an obvious heterogeneity of the organization of the territory. You can still distinguish two major cases:

State organized by departmental system, generally small areas, the size of NUTS 1 regions in the EU, which renders their transition to the regional system.

State organized by the regional system through administrative reforms generally recent (Hungary, Slovakia, Poland) as a measure of administrative systems to connect with those of the European Union countries.

Romania has a distinct event is organized by departmental system, dating, without modification, for 45 years, one of the oldest, characterized by fragmentation on both levels, county and municipal. At the same time, it is the only country that since 1989 has not corrected the failure by administrative reforms.

Administrative reform in Hungary (1990) was to create a higher administrative level, regional, grafted on existing counties, according to the administrative systems of the European Union. Each region included between 2 and 3 counties, with an average size around 13,300 square kilometers, with the exception of the month of the administrative area of the capital.

Administrative reform in Slovakia (1996) was directed towards fragmentation by increasing the number of districts from 38 to 79, in conjunction with the nearly 3,000 existing units locally. It is a typical bottom-up regionalization, new districts responding to the desire of local self-determination.

Although the surface Slovakia can be a single European region, to avoid fragmentation at higher level, districts were aggregated into seven regional units, very different both in size and number of administrative units included.

Administrative reform in Poland (1999) resulted in the reduction of principalities, the senior administrative structures, from 49-16, accounting is, with some exceptions, the existing administrative cutout between 1950 and 1975. Administrative reform of 1950 divided Polish territory, comparable in size to that of Romania, in 17 voivodships, the regional administrative units, 280 units of lower level and 2985 communes as local administrative structures. Subsequent reshuffling of local administration remained regional system, abolished in 1975 when it was suppressed intermediate level into the upper fragment.

Today, more than two decades of revolutionary change in 1989, place increasingly often question whether administrative structures established in 1968, based on political and economic reasons of time, longer correspond to the current state. Some argue whether increasing the number of administrative units, the reestablishment counties "abusive abolished" others either support them to

create fewer administrative structures "European" capable of turning into "strong local territorial communities" with all current administrative-territorial disputes.

Not in terms of the number of regions not reached a consensus and proposed several solutions, some opting for a number of 8 regions, 16 others for a number of regions.

Therefore, it requires an analysis to clarify issues and to provide an alternative solution, a viable model for optimization of the administrative-territorial map of Romania in accordance with regionalization criteria used in EU countries. Romania is one of the largest ex-communist countries that have a large fragmented administrative structures both at the top level and at the local level (42 counties - in fact, 41 counties and in Bucharest, 104 municipalities, 216 cities and 2859 communes)[1].

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[1] http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki.

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Comparative Study on Local e-Government
"Romania and Turkey"

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Abstract: This paper is designed as a comparative study between Romania and Turkey on certain aspects of local electronic government elements of several localities of those 2 countries. The differences between the countries considered in this study are not neglected, starting with culture (organizational, but not only) and ending with economic aspects. In the paper we will present: the IT framework in which public administration operates (with features on each country); macroeconomic issues with direct impact on the development of e-government - where we present financial information on investments in IT sector in both countries; and the municipal web sites analysis of the countries – were we try to find, using a predefined scale, common elements and differences that arise when we look at the development of the local e-government. **Objectives:** We will find out why Internet users in Turkey visit and interact more frequently with the Local Administration Web Site than those in Romania. The intention is to build the architecture of a Web site designed to provide good interaction to citizens. **Approach:** This paper is an in-depth analysis of official web sites of town halls. We used a predefined scale taken from similar studies, but adapted to extract relevant elements. For a more accurate study we compared cities were the difference (in terms of finance and inhabitants) is not too big. **Results:** As a result we will find out why Internet users in Turkey visit and interact more frequently with the Local Administration Web Site than those in Romania. The **Value** of this article is the comparative study itself, by this, we may start developing better Web sites, dedicated to the use of citizens.

Keywords: e-gov; electronic; digital

1   Introduction

The computers and the Internet have changed significantly the way in which the citizens can have access to public services. The informational society is more and more present in all the activities of the public sector, including through complex applications of electronic governance.

Today, for interacting with the public administration a computer connected to the Internet is usually enough. Connecting from a browser to the Web page of the institution you look for is enough (generally) for obtaining and sending information to/from the public administration. Scientific literature presents 5 pillars of interaction of the PA with its environment: *(1) Displaying information on the Web pages – one-way communication, (2) Two-way communication, (3) Financial systems and Web transactions, (4) Vertical integration (inter-department) and horizontal (intra-department) of the public services available on-line* and *(5) Citizen participation to the government activity* (Pardo 2000; Baltac 2008; Vrabie 2009).

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Since the early 2000s, "information society" initiatives are observed all around the world. The Lisbon Strategy which aims to make the European Union the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010 is one of the efforts to adapt to this change: The eEurope 2002 Action Plan, the eEurope 2005 Action Plan, and i2010 (updated in 2005) redirected towards new targets with information, innovation and social inclusion as its core topics.

2 E-Transformation

2.1 Romania

For the municipalities in Romania electronic governance is a relatively new practice (the first national project on this theme was initiated in the year 2003 - www.e-guvernare.ro[1]) and it includes digital governance (the offering of public services through electronic means) as well as digital democracy (citizen participation at the governance activity); (Holzer & Kim, 2005).

The conceptual frame marked by those five pillars found in the Introduction chapter of this article, is necessary only for the understanding of the evolution of eGovernment. In Romania, in this moment there are 41 districts and 103 municipalities, from which only 96 (93.20%) are present on the Internet.

In Romania, only few of its municipalities (we will find in the following pages more detailed information) have a Web site sufficiently developed to allow communication as it is described in the pillars 3, 4 and 5. Practice has showed that there is no lineal evolution and this is a good reason to expect that at the next analysis the number of municipalities that use well developed Web platforms to be greater.

To the point, the elements taken into account in the analysis were: the presence of transparency elements, the management of electronic documents, useful content, methods of bidirectional communication and some general elements regarding the Web site taken into discussion (graphic interface, the easiness in navigating, the richness of information connected to the municipality etc.).

Given the above, not to load with less relevant information, we took into consideration just the first two web portals of the emblematic cities in Romania and Turkey (Bucharest and Constanta vs. Eskişehir and Bursa).

2.2 Turkey

In Turkey, transformation into an information society has gained the momentum since 2000s. Turkey has become a party to the eEurope+ Initiative, which has been designed for EU candidate countries in 2001 and started the "eTransformation Turkey Project" in 2003. Vision is on the production of science and technology, using ICT as an effective tool, value with information-based decision-making processes, success in global competition, and welfare"[2].

E-Transformation Turkey Project by (then the Prime Ministry State Planning Organization (SPO)); now Ministry of Development, Information Society Department has envisaged a number of actions in formulating the Information Society Strategy: All public institutions, NGOs and universities are related (State Planning Organization 2003). Basic steps to mention a few are: Information technologies

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[1] Law no.161/2003 sets the legal basis of the National Electronic System, with the declared purpose of ensuring access to "public information and provision of public services towards physical and juridical persons.

[2]http://www.bilgitoplumu.gov.tr/Portal.aspx?value=UE9SVEFMSUQ9NSZQQUdFSUQ9MTQwJlBBR0VWRVJTSU9OPS0xJk1PREU9UFVCTElTSEVEX1ZFUlNJT04.

infrastructure and training aimed; enactment of the draft law for the Right to Access planned; determining the minimum information to be presented and the presentation principles on public websites, provision of the application as per Web Accessibility Initiative has started (www.w3.org/WAI). In the next stage, determining standards of e-services provided by Local Administrations where responsible agency was Ministry of Interior General Directorate of Local Administration and related agencies are SPO Turkey, Municipalities Union, Metropolitan Municipalities, The Union of Special Administration, The Union of Village Headmen, and NGOs (State Planning Organization 2005). The objective was "to identify the principles of interoperability required for the e-services provided by local administrations, communications between local administrations and central government as well as among local administrations".

Investment cost, project duration, complexity of action (e.g., number of agencies involved in the implementation, requirement to extend the implementation to local level, different technological infrastructures used in implementation and level of integration" (State Planning Organization 2006) have impacted the complex system of e-local governance in Turkey. The initial years (2006-2007) defined as "the period for founding infrastructure and quick win projects": the comprehensive foundation of technological infrastructure, the establishment of the legal infrastructure which needs further inputs and enactment of regulations, publication of standards and establishment of organizational structures required for the subsequent phases. Quick wins imply addressing the actions that have already been initiated and from which high benefits/ greater impacts can be obtained in the short term by accelerating them with relatively minor interventions".

For this paper's framework, a directly related project is the Local e-Democracy Program (State Planning Organization 2006): Local e-democracy applications at municipalities will be made widely available; these applications will be standardized, all Municipalities implementing these applications will be responsible for fulfilling the minimum standards. Multimedia resources will be published on municipality web sites for better communication of local policy priorities to the citizens. A feasibility study will be conducted regarding e-polls/surveys, and pilot implementation will be done in a selected provincial municipality. These measures are designed to give an integrated framework for public administration and local governments. Some municipalities are better than others in providing those project targets including Internet access centers and training programs. E-participation avoding philosophy, estabishing new services, easening access to information, problems of supporting infrastructure for being on-line 7/24, limitations on disability friendly web sites and services, motivational problems, limitations on information access, and computer literacy constrains should be handled (Balcı and Kırılmaz 2009)

Table 1. The History oh IT in Romania and Turkey and Its Dynamic

	Romania	*Turkey*
First e-gov project	2003 – e-guvernare.ro	2001 - eTransformation
% of municipalities with an active Webpage	97%	93%
Elaborated software (GIS, video, etc)	13%	15%
On-line payment	8%	2%

Source: Catalin VRABIE and Kemal M. ÖKTEM

3 Economic Issues with Direct Impact on E-Government

3.1 Romania

Romania has at this moment about 90,000 - 100.000 employees in the IT producing 10% of GDP. This element is very important statistic to note in the context of the whole country because here we can see that the agriculture produces 13% of GDP (the number of farmers is estimated at several million). According to the Manufacturers and Distributors Association of Information Technology and Communication Equipment (APDETIC), 47% of Romanian households had at least one computer in 2010 and Internet penetration rate was 35-36% in the same year (the entire IT market from here estimated at 1.9 to 2 billion dollars - excluding telecommunications segment).

About 75% of private sector investments are made in that SMEs account for 60%, while public sector has only 25%. These values are about 5% of EU average, which is very little. But obviously not all those elements have direct impact on the development of e-government (most of those investment are enterprise type) but cannot be ignored.

In Romania citizens have an average income of 3.864 euros per year. It is not surprising to learn that less than half of households have a computer in their possession. For a good e-government development of this percentage must increase (the first very important step). Items that could help in this regard are too complex and not covered by this study.

In terms of IT, local government in Romania has the necessary hardware infrastructure, but there are gaps in the application segment. Furthermore, IT departments are undersized as personal, which highlight the need for services. Budgets for current expenditure are generally satisfactory, but for large development projects, additional funds are needed.

We chose a sample of 50 Romanian public institutions - 21 county councils and 29 municipalities to take a short interview to the heads of IT Departments there. The study was conducted by telephone in June this year and aimed to provide analysis of existing IT infrastructure in local government. The questionnaire consisted of nine single or multiple choice questions (though the final it proved to be a discussion). The questions included the topics such as IT infrastructure, servers and applications, IT department size, the dependence grade from the institution top management in terms of IT strategy, budget expenditures last year (software vs. hardware), existing requirements and possible direction of the budget for next year.

In general, IT departments are undersized to the local government needs, both through wage policy, completely not competitive with the private sector, and a lower attractiveness when comes to professional challenges and development opportunities. Thus 28% of institutions surveyed have less than 2 employees (in IT departments), 57% have between 3 and 6 employees and 15% over 6. Obviously, there is a correlation between the number of employees of IT services and size of the institution: 16% of them having fewer than 100 PCs, and 24% over 200. The degree of computerization of these institutions seems to be quite high, the differences between the number of employees and users are minimal, moreover, the ratio of the number of users and the PC is about 1-1.

In terms of servers and applications, the situation is as follows: 22% of respondents have less than 3 servers, 47% have 4-6 servers, 20% 7-8 and only 11% more than 9 servers under administration. Since virtualization projects are not so many in the public or software applications *as a Service* are not yet so largely spread, these servers are conventional equipment, running a single application and with no attached storage system. A conclusion drawn from here is that the infrastructure level for application is

290

not quite as we may be expected. The questionnaires showed that, from this point of view, 28% of institutions have less than 5 applications, 55% between 5 and 10 and only 17% have over 15 functional applications. Critical applications in these institutions are related to: paying taxes, e-mail, document management, portals, GIS, project management, planning applications, building permits, accounting applications, payroll, ERP, HR, registry, authorization commercial, etc.

The amounts allocated for spending on IT has never been large in to the public sector. This is reflected in all aspects: from salaries, to technologies used or projects initiated. Insufficient budgets have been an obstacle in the development of large projects, but a pretty big hope is the European funds that these organizations can go in several sectorial programs. Yet, on the terms of current expenditures on IT Services, the department chiefs questioned declared in a percentage of 45% that they are satisfied with the budget; 37% consider it poorly; and 18% very poor. These budgets were for 12% of organizations involved in the study under 100,000 euros, 24% between 100,000 and 300,000 euros, and 20% over 300,000 euros. In 44% of cases, the IT budget allocated was not specified.

Less than half of the institutions invested in software applications last year (it must been seen as a first element of this lack of investments the financial crisis that has hit the public sector badly in Romania). The most popular were Geospatial solutions (38% of those who have invested in software) and Document Management (37%), and the ERP (34%) and CRM (24.5%). However, most public institutions surveyed did not make any investments in the application software last year.

3.2 Turkey

ICT investments in Turkey in 2010 are 25.05 billion $ which is a share of 3.40 % in the GNP. There are 174,367 employees (10-11% of the total employment) working in this sector (DPT 2011a) Internet users is 37.6% (of the age group 16-74). Public ICT investments is above 2 billion $ in 2011.

"E-transformation" should well exceed the expecting an automated computarization of public offices. Public administration as a sub-system of general socio-economic systems, is in a dynamic interaction of equilibrium with physical environment, legal system, government policies, and level economic development, etc. (Öktem and Aydın 2005). Major difficulties in implementing e-government process in Turkey stated as budget constrains (80%), legal limitations (75%), and digital divide (55%) (DPT 2007).There is still a long way to go in terms of increasing computer and Internet usage by citizens. In addition to low usage rates in the society and the differences observed in different groups, another problem we face is the fact that the Internet is not used very effectively. According to the results of the 2004 ICT usage survey on households and individuals, Internet is used for obtaining information and playing games (93.2%) or for communication (76.21%). Only 8.2% of the Internet users access the Internet specifically for training related to employment and the proportion of those who use the Internet to order or sell goods and services is only 3.5%.

In Turkey, the proportion of individuals who have received no education/training on information technologies (IT) is 92%. The segment trained on IT usually consists of young people who benefit from the basic computer literacy programs which are becoming more and more widespread in educational institutions in particular and those who usually need IT skills to find a job (State Planning Organization 2006: 7). in Turkey, more than half of the population (62%) have no idea about the Internet. This is applicable particularly for segments other than students, employees and those who are looking for employment; which shows that there is a need to undertake intensive efforts to raise awareness and motivation in specific segments of the society.

In Turkey Public sector investments in ICT have quadrupled since 2002. (DPT 2011). Especially in education sector there is a huge increase: Universities and the Ministry of Education have a share of 43%; then comes Department of Social Security and the Ministry of Interior.

A report by James Erickson of Forrester Research dated 2011[1] on "Turkey Public Sector Market Analysis" provides a background of the dynamics in the public sector market in Turkey. This analysis addresses market opportunities in Turkey. For better focusing on public sector IT initiatives, trends, policy issues, ICT donor activity, and a national ICT investment framework, one could overview and assesses local public sector competitors in Turkey and global competitors such as: Cisco, Google, IBM, Novell, Oracle, RedHat, VMware/EMC, SAP, and Sun Microsystems.

Only 14% of municipalities use mobile on-line account payment systems (POS) in the field (Ministry of Interior 2011). 36 of them are using e-signature and 73 mobile signature systems (integrated on: management information systems 51; geographical information systems 21, and software implementations 85). Only 5% of municipalities use vehicle following system with GPS. Only 6% has digital archives integrated with MIS or GIS. Only 3% has completed GIS and 4% is actively using that. Only 1% has video-based city info on their web sites. 46% of municipalities have complied with the requirements of e-transformation Turkey project on interoperability. Citizens prefer mostly to use real estate tax inquiries links. Only 7% has user satisfaction surveys. Only in 8%, it is possible to pay for tax, fee, and charges. Only 1% has an impact analysis of cost-benefit on ICT investments. They are facing difficulties in financing and finding expert personnel.

4   Research Study: Cities Comparative Study

The present study aims to radiograph the status of the official Web sites for two municipalities in Romania and another two from Turkey (we have chosen for both countries emblematic cities). The elements used in this research are taken from a previous study: "Digital governance in Romanian municipalities 2010" (Vrabie, 2010) and "A longitudinal assessment of municipal Web sites in Romania 2012" (Vrabie 2012), adapted afterwards to take in relevant values for both countries.

The obtaining of data was made through individually accessing of each official Web site of the municipalities. Once accessed the Web site, the elements presented in the table 1, received a value of 0 or 1 (0 = it doesn't exist; 1= it exists) for every element submitted to the research, for example: "Can you submit petitions on-line?" or: "Is there an electronic map of the municipality?"

Obtained results

Bucharest (Romania)

Transparency:	4.17
E-Doc:	5.00
Communication:	5.00
Useful content:	5.00
General info:	4.33
Final result:	**4.70**

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[1] http://www.forrester.com/rb/Research/turkey_public_sector_market_analysis_data_tables/q/id/59362/t/2.

The Romanian capital has ranked first among Romanian municipalities, obtaining the highest score.

The mayors' office in Bucharest was situated in 2007 on the 37th spot in the world on eGovernance (nevertheless better than in 2005, when it was in the 64th position), outmatching cities like Brussels (38th place), Athens (52nd place), Kuala Lumpur (64th place), Budapest (67th place) or Chisinau (69th place). In the same study, this time at the continent comparison, Bucharest occupies the 19th position in Europe, after Helsinki (1st place), Madrid, London, Vienna; but also in front of the Danish capital of Copenhagen (22nd place) or other cities like: Oslo (27th place), Lisbon (28th place), Warsaw (34th place) etc[1].

Constanta (Romania)

Transparency:	4.17
E-Doc:	4.17
Communication:	3.33
Useful content:	3.33
General info:	4.00
Final result:	**3.80**

Constanta city hall web site has ranked ninth among Romanian municipalities. Constanta is a city in Romania with a great tourist character but, unfortunately, is almost untapped on its website. There are several images accompanied by advertising links to other sites, but unfortunately that's about all. Mamaia (a Black Sea resort - rightly considered the Romanian seaside pearl) is almost invisible on the web page (it should be noted that Mamaia is a neighborhood of the Constanta city).

The possibility to change the language in order to view information on the web site is an element that helps to increase the city visibility abroad, but unfortunately the only language is English, despite the fact that many foreign tourists visiting the city are from the German speaking countries.

Bursa (Turkey)

Transparency:	3.33
E-Doc:	2.50
Communication:	3.33
Useful content:	4.17
General info:	3.00
Final result:	**3.27**

This municipality has put "CORPORATE" link in the first place. Under this link, one can find mission and vision statements. Its mission on the web is emphasizing a participative, transparent administration; employing scientific methods for better quality in providing services.

In terms of transparency, a careful analysis could reach to the strategic plan[2] (a total of 87 pages for the year 2010-2014) which includes a SWOT analysis: Regarding the weaknesses, red tape (bureaucracy) and over 70%, inefficient work process flows over 40%, inadequate relations with

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[1] Digital Governance in Municipalities Worldwide (2009) - A Longitudinal Assessment of Municipal websites Throughout the World, 2009 - Marc HOLZER, Seang-Tae KIM.
[2] http://www.bursa.bel.tr/dosyalar/2010-2014_stplan.pdf.

stakeholders almost 40%, qualification problems of human resources around 35%, not being transparent and objective organization almost 30%. In general, navigation is relatively practical. And if one considers that on the first page at the bottom, there are some useful links for local citizens such as transport services on the road, rail, sea; news on the artistic performances, veggie prices, social housing; social services on problematic issues like drug abuse, etc. .

Eskişehir (Turkey)

Transparency:	3.33
E-Doc:	2.50
Communication:	3.33
Useful content:	2.50
General info:	3.33
Final result:	**3.00**

Eskişehir municipality has put its "CORPORATE" link as the third title on its web as well[1]. Its mission has a broader sense of citizenship as a solution provider to problems of urbanization in Turkey: providing a city ambiance for better growing up of the youngsters, and better future expectations for fellow townsman.

Its performance program for the year 2010[2] presents a detailed list of investments, cost of projects, and so on. In the strategic plan for the years 2011-2015[3], there is a SWOT analysis at a general level. It states that a weakness of the municipality is inadequate income. And ironically, although the mayor himself is an ex-rector of the university, the report emphasizes the problem of low level of coordination between municipality and the university. Although it does not mention e-government initiations, we might think that it has been implied, since, as a part of its strategy, it claims to an active and swift municipality organization besides being a leading one. On the first web page, there seems to be a good looking design, relatively less shiny. Main subjects such as geography, education and transport, with list of information, not necessarily active.

5   Concluding Remarks

As referred, the initial years (2006-2007) of e-government in Turkey focused on founding infrastructure and quick win projects: (1) technological infrastructure which needs further improvements; (2) the establishment of the legal infrastructure which needs further inputs; (3) enactment of regulations which needs monitoring and betterment; (4) publication of standards which needs dissemination and acceptance; (5) establishment of organizational structures which needs finish ups; (6) quick wins which needs finalizing & cost-benefit / impact analysis in the short & long terms which needs interventions.

It should be remembered that investment in education in Turkey (especially IT) preceded the implementation of e-gov projects. Romania made the mistake first to invest in very ambitious project but proved (at large) to be a failure because the target market of users was not yet familiar with using the Internet and / or computer in the concept of e-gov idea. Although it may seem strange but here,

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[1] http://www.eskisehir-bld.gov.tr/kurumsal_misyon.php.
[2] http://www.eskisehir-bld.gov.tr/dosyalar/performans-prog/2010.pdf.
[3] http://www.eskisehir-bld.gov.tr/dosyalar/stratejik_plan/stratejik_plan.pdf.

despite the fact that the graph that show the computer and the Internet use is growing, the users are not interested in working with state institutions in this form, why? Population does not see the opportunity that a computer opens to them. What to do? Well ... the state must, by developing an adequate legal framework and then by investing in education to intervene, to move things in this direction. The e-gov project developers have to add modules of training among the users. Another recommendation for IT management of public institutions of local government in Romania would be to focus on the strengths of the area that they deserve. If it's a tourist area, posting legislative items on the site (as required by law) may not be exactly necessary. A site rich in multimedia elements could attract more. For a highly industrialized city, the component business would be more interesting to exploit, etc. Mere fulfillment of legal obligations is not enough. Municipalities in Turkey (and we're sure other countries as well) have understood and adapted to these issues. This is another important reason that differentiates the two countries analyzed. Therefore, number of visits to municipalities a web site in Turkey is much higher than in Romania (when other variables remain more or less equal).

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THE 8TH EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
EUROPEAN INTEGRATION
REALITIES AND PERSPECTIVES

A Comparative Perspective on
Emerging Administrations in Italy and Romania

Bogdan Berceanu[1]

Abstract: Modern society is highly reformist. There are many attempts at generating agreement between the way things ought to be and the way they are – between ideals and practice. We live in what has been called an organization society. Part of this organization is the system of public administration. The aim of the paper is to present comparative perspective on the dimension of emerging administrations understood as changes and reforms that suffer the Italian and Romanian public administration under the pressure of the European Union rules. The study is using the concept of emergence to research and to analyze the nature of the changes in the public administration starting from the approach of the systems theory.

Keywords: emerging administrations; change; reforms; Italy; Romania; European Union

1. Introduction

In the context of the European Union, the national public administrations acquire an increasing relevance, as they become key players in the European policy-making mechanism. Their responsibilities, previously limited to the national level, are extended to the implementation of EU policies and legislation and, equally important, to the management of EU funds.

European Union (EU) through its policies and legislation has a great impact on economic and social conditions in Member States and thus on their economic competitiveness. As national public administrations as well as the judiciary are the guarantors for its implementation, the interest of Member States in public governance of other member states has increased over time.

Conceptually, it is on that basis that we will analyze the nature and kind of change determined by the European Union. We make reference to the definition proposed by Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004, p. 8): 'Public management (PM) reforms consist of deliberate changes to the structures and processes of public sector organizations with the objective of getting them (in some sense) to run better objectives subject to change characterizes *management* as a *new* way of conducting the business of the state as opposed to traditional administration, more concerned with the review of law in an area of public life, its enforcement, and the making of decisions on cases that are submitted to the public service.

Thus the two fields public administration and public management cover more or less the same territory, but traditional public administration is more concerned with the preparation and enforcement of law, and the regulation of public powers in the relationship of the public sector with citizens, whilst public management puts emphasis on the employment of (scarce) resources in the pursuit of given objectives (Ongaro, 2009).

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Thus, we can say that the reforms adopted by the governments from South-eastern Europe represent a part of the emergence of public administration system and a consequence of the process of European integration. The term "reform" also entails a specific type of change, i.e. beneficial change towards a 'better' state of affairs in the future: the term 'reform' is deeply rooted in the politics of improvement (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004, p. 15).

Taking into consideration the above exposed relation between the concept of "emergence" of public administration and the reforms, in this paper, we will make a comparison study regarding the main reforms that suffered the public administration system from Italy and Romania in the last years.

2. Theoretical Background: Emerging Administrations

2.1 Emergence and Public Administration

The concept of *emergence* is utilized to research and to analyze the nature of these changes in the public administration, starting from the approach of the systemic theory.

Emergence is one of the concepts from the general study of complex systems (in which category we can also include the public-administration system) that promises to reshape the way analysts think about change and development. It is the way in which new, unexpected, and qualitatively distinct configurations appear in complex systems (Galatzer-Lev, 2002).

Emergence signifies *a kind of change* (Pepper, 1929). But not all change is emergent. This paper focuses on emergent change, because it is less understood and we need more effective ways of working with it. Knowing the dimensions of emergence regarding its forms of change provides us the perspective of the reforms that happens at the governmental level in the public administration.

2.2 Emergence, Change and Reforms of Public Administration[1]

In social systems, emergence can move us toward possibilities that serve enduring needs, intentions and values. Forms can change, conserving essential truths while bringing forth innovations that were not possible before. In this case, the European Union has a significant role in influencing the transformations which are happening in the government and public administration. This is so because emergence is a product of interactions among diverse entities. Since interactions do not exist in a vacuum; the context also matters.

Emergence is part of a cycle of change (Holman, 2007, p. 112). Regarding the states from South-Eastern Europe we can affirm that this change is a complex one, and we can identify three processes as part of this cycle of change: transition, reform and convergence. All of them represent the forms of emergence (Figure 1). As part of this cycle, emergence is the one that is closing the changing cycle.

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[1] Berceanu, B. (2013). Reforming Governments in Emerging Administrations. Case study: Southeastern Europe. *Journal of Public Administration and Policy, No. 1, Vol. VI.* NISPAcee Press.

Figure 1. The Cycle of Change and the Forms of Emergence (Berceanu, 2013, p. 84)

Transition is the first process of the cycle of change which can be identified at the level of state and public administration. Generally, it means a process of passing from a condition or form to another one. This process can also be synonymous with: democratization, marketization and strong state and nationhood building (Arfire, 2011).

Generally, we can say that *reform* means significant process changes in which implementation as well as policy development contribute to efficient and effective national development (Farazmand, 2002, p. 6).

Administrative reform means different things in different nations with different political systems (ibid.):

- It generally means a process of changes in the administrative structures or procedures within the public services because they have fallen out of touch with the expectations of the social and political environment. This assumption on the term of reform is more common in developed and industrialized countries with a strong political system and a stable democracy;

- or, administrative reform is referred to as modernization and change in society to effect social and economic transformation. There reforms are more common to the transitional countries, which are pressed by international bodies to modernize and homogenize their governmental system.

Convergence can be seen at the public-administration level as a consequences of applying EU legislation at the national level. Convergence is defined by the extent to which domestic administrative styles and structures reveal similar characteristics because of the reforms taken under the influence of the European Union (Berceanu, 2012). Different administrations develop along the same path in a way that produces more homogeneity and coherence among formerly distinct administrations (Matei and Dogaru, 2010).

3. Comparative Study of Emerging Administrations in Italy and Romania

For member countries of the European Union (as well as for accession countries and others influenced by the EU even though formally not belonging to the EU), Europeanization processes may be drivers of change. Such global pressures should have produced their effects globally – however, such effects have been studied much more in some countries than in others, an unbalance which in itself may provide a motive for the study of these countries. We will try to see how the change imposed by the EU and concretized in reforms are leading to the emerging administrations in Italy and Romania.

3.1. Italy

The need for administrative reform in Italy in the early nineties was driven by the following factors: an obsolete administration: no government-wide reforms since 1865; an inefficient administration: islands of excellence in a sea of general inefficiency; a costly administration: crucial need to balance the budget and reduce public debt.

The process of change that began was led by two main objectives: to reduce the overall costs of administration and its services and to improve the effectiveness and quality of the services provided. The first goal was in response to the problem of the ever growing public debt, which was no longer sustainable especially according to the new requirements that public spending had to meet in order for Italy to join and stay in the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). The second goal, improving the quality and effectiveness of services, was in response to the growing expectations of citizens, who were more and more dissatisfied with the public administration's performance (Cepiku, Meneguzzo, Colangelo, Griordano, 2008, p. 46)

In Italy, more than in other countries, administrative reform goes together with constitutional reform. Institutional innovations were necessary to ensure stability, legitimization and decisional power of Government institutions. The bureaucratic burdens on individuals and businesses had to be reduced. The public administration needed to focus on results and not on processes (Bassanini, 2000).

The first steps of the reforms were made in many directions (see Table1): towards a more transparent and accountable administration (1990); towards an administration closer to citizens and their expectations (1990) and introducing "Serice Charters" (1994); towards a more flexible and efficient use of human resources in the civil service, with the reform of the Senior Civil Service and application of Civil Law to Civil Servants (1993 and 1998) (Cepiku, Meneguzzo, Colangelo, Griordano, 2008, p. 47).

Table 1. Public Administration Reform in Italy

NMP levels of Change	Public Management Reforms in Italy	Time period
Organisational change and downsizing	New organizational models at the macro level	1990
	New institutional arrangements	1993
	Fusion of ministries	1997
Public competition	Competition between public health organizations	1990
	Competition between other public agencies in allocating regional instruments funds	1996
Market type mechanisms	Constricting out to private profit and nonprofit organizations	1990
	Constructing in	1996
Introduction of private management systems and techniques	Accrual accounting introduced in local government and healthcare organizations	1990
		1993
	Responsibility centers and reorganization of budget items	1994
	Audit, control and budget systems	1995
	Fixed-term contracts limited in time and new managerial positions	1997
	More flexible HRM practices	
Performance measurement and definitions of results standards	Accrual accounting	1990
	Costs control and management planning	1993
	Strategic planning, budgeting and auditing	1993

Source: Adaptation after Meneguzzo, 1999

The process of change the Italian public administration was concretized by the adoption of some important laws. In this sense, we underline the Laws 142 of 1990 and 81 of 1993 introducing the direct election of mayors and presidents of the provinces brought stability, legitimization and a modern set-

up to local government. Law 241 of 1990 was enacted to bring greater transparency and accountability to administrative procedure and to streamline processes. With Decree 29 of 1993 the reform of the status of civil servants began, the concept of the separation of policymaking and administration was established and the premises for introducing private sector management features into public administration were laid (Bassanini, 2000, pp. 229-252).

The general strategy and guidelines to reform the Italian public administration were issued by the Italian Ministry for Public Administration and Innovation on 28 May 2008. This strategy, enacted into law on 4 March 2009 (Law 15/2009), provides a comprehensive reform design for the Italian public administration (the "Brunetta Reform").On 27 October 2009, the government approved Legislative Decree 150 (the Reform Decree), implementing the Brunetta Reform in the field of regulation of public employment and efficiency and transparency of the public administration (OECD, 2010, p. 9).

3.2. Romania

In comparison with Italy where the main reforms were taken to join the EMU, in Romania the main reforms were taken in order to consolidate the administrative capacity and to fulfill on of the criteria imposed by the process of accession to the European Union.

Thus, a consistent set of measures needs to be implemented in a clear time framework in the areas of civil-service reform – aimed at creating a professional, stable and politically neutral corps of civil servants – local public administration – aimed at continuing the decentralization/de-concentration process of public services – and central-government reform – aimed at improving the policy formulation process (Profiroiu et al., 2006, p. 4).

The newly adopted strategies were in charge of the Ministry of Administration and Interior, which monitors the application of the provisions comprised in the reform and restructuring strategies and programs of the central and local public administration according to the European Union. A more formal institutional-driven approach to the reform process was also implemented. Specialized governmental structures, such as the Central Unit for the Reform of Public Administration (within the Ministry of Administration and Interior), the Superior Council for the Reform of Public Administration, Coordination of Public Policies, and Structural Adjustment as well as the Unit for Public Policy, were created.

In 2004 the Updated Strategy for Accelerating Public Administration Reform was adopted in Government Decision No. 699/2004. One of the most important components of this strategy was the continuation of the decentralization and deconcentration processes. These principles were also stipulated in article 130, paragraph 1 of the revised Constitution from 2003.

The changes made in the revision of the Constitution from 2003 regulate a series of aspects concerning public administration (Matei, 2009, p. 80):

- Public administration from the administrative-territorial units is based on the principles of decentralization, local autonomy and devolution of the public services;

- The County Council represents the authority of the public administration for the coordination of the activity of commune and town councils aimed to achieve the public services of county interest;

▪ The Government appoints a prefect in each county and in Bucharest Municipality. The prefect is the Government's representative at the local level, and he leads the devolved public services of the ministries and other bodies of central government.

Regarding the central public administration, there has been a major reorganization of the executive in 2003. The main novelty was the appointment of three deputy prime ministers responsible for coordinating the activities of other ministries and institutions responsible for the establishment of new structures under the direct authority of the legislative process. It was decided that the number of ministries was to be reduced, and new ministries were created to help the process of EU accession, such as the Ministry of European Integration (Macovei, 2005, p. 36). Another aspect of the government reform was that of civil service. According to the Strategy for administration reform, the institutions responsible for civil-service reform were: the National Agency of Civil Servants for the management of the civil service and the National Institute of Administration for continual training of civil servants. The objectives of the reform in this area illustrated long-term reform measures: developing the management of transformation in the period 2004–2006 and stabilizing and consolidating the system of civil service in the period 2007–2010.

4. Conclusions

The research undertaken in the paper associated the emerging administrations form Romania and Italy with process of change and reformation of the public administration. The analysis outlined that it is a consequence of European integration and Europeanization which represent the implementation of common rules and strategies in order to fulfill the objectives imposed by the European Union. For the Romanian case, the changes of the public administration system were very important step in the process of accession to the European Union, and it continued after 2007, too. For Italy, the redesigning of the public administration system was also directly related with the EU. In this case it was regarding another stage of the long process of European integration, that of fulfilling the criteria for joining the European Economic and Monetary Union. As final remarks it is also important to underline that both states made some very important changes in certain main areas, such as: the redesign of the government structure trough downsizing and reorganization of the state; the decentralization of powers, tasks and functions to local authorities, the completion of civil service reform and the creation of the premises for a transparent and efficient system of public administration.

The emerging administrations from Italy and Romania were underlined also by the reform strategies implemented by the governments from the both countries. The reform scheme drawn by strategies included the modernization of the public administration, innovation and digitalization within the public administration and throughout the country, and development of a relationship between the public administration, citizens and businesses.

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The Impact of Information and Communication Technology in the Government Reform

Liviu Bozga[1], Mihaela Mateescu[2]

Abstract: The deep transformations of the society induced by the development of IT had determined significant changes in almost all the fields of activity. Many countries started to implement information and communication technology in the public administration as a fast way to the performance and efficiency of its services. This paper aims to underline the significant improvement determined by the use of information technology, with focus on e-services. It is mentioned also the effort of Romanian Government to align with the requirements of the EU on the computerization of governance. Also there are presented some recommendations for the improvement of e-governance in Romania.

Key words: e-government; e-administration-governance; e-services; information and communication technology

JEL Classification: K23 O38; H70

1. Introduction

In the last decades, we have been the witnesses of a rapid development of IT and its applications, among which one of the most widespread is the Internet. The significant reduction of computers purchase prices and the fast increase of Internet accessibility gave the possibility of more and more people to use them. The results obtained in many domains through the IT implementations had opened the door for the introduction of this technology in public administration. Based on the finding that government information is often unclear, inadequate or outdated, people have realized the necessity to modernize the government activity and improve the citizens' access to the government information. It became obvious that progress in this domain can and should rely on information technology and its applications.

New concepts emerged: e-government, e-governance and new connections were made between government and citizens: the e-communications through the e-services.

The extensive use of IT services transforms and develops the organization: it becomes more effective, more transparent and less expensive related to its internal processes. In addition, it has a significant impact on the production, processing and transfer of information. The use of information technology influenced internal government processes at all the levels: local, regional and national. The new way of communication between government and its clients

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includes changes of the government structures, too. The new e-communication permits a transition from a passive information transfer to the people to an active involvement of the citizens and simplification of public administration by use of ICT (Batalli, 2011). The modernization of the public administration means also changes of the government structures and their transformation into new competitive systems, more transparent and with increased participation of the citizens and community to the government act. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have changed the process of governance in the world and represent a way of governance improvement in the benefit of citizens (Archman & Iglesias, 2010).

The capacity of a country to implement these technologies is dependent on the existing reality of the country and its stage of development. It is considered that Internet experience, organizational reputation, website/portal quality are the main factors determining the confidence in on-line government services (Beldad et al., 2012).

2. Changes in the Activity of Government as an Effect of IT

The introduction of information and communication technologies in public administrations influences the mechanisms of control, supervision, communication, and information management. As a consequence of the implementation of IT and use the electronic means in the government's activity internal and external changes have occurred.

A concise and clear conclusion regarding the impact of IT in the government activity says that 'the clearest positive impacts generated by IT on public administration are in the areas of efficiency and productivity of government performance' (Cordella 2010; Şandor, 2012).

Although in most cases governments start with the delivery of online information, the demand for more complex services appears in time. Generally, the services develop gradually; and some features become available earlier than others. In some cases the public demand is the driving force; in other cases the cost reduction has the main role.

The implementation of ICT in order to make government services and information easier accessible to citizens has impact on the following aspects:

- Continuous Service Model: The interaction between government and the public using various IT applications allows people to ask questions via e-mail, use search engines or to download all kind of documents. In fact, all the applications become available and online 24 hours/day, 7 days a week. The systems and processes need to be permanently adapted to this new reality. As a consequence, in this new communication medium the citizen receives a response to his/her request immediately online or by e mail, replacing the traditional channels such as telephone, physical counter etc.;

- Content Integration: The design of a complex system containing a large volume of data and information, easily accessible by a normal user, is involving several technological issues. Firstly, these systems need to be based on strategies that combine

integration, evolvability and upgradeability. These strategies require cooperation between all departments of the government. Also, to insure a real time source of data, it is necessary to have an adequate portal connected to the relevant information sources;

- Human Resources: The use of ICT's in an organization requires knowledgeable employees, up-to-date information technology workers able to operate and manage the new systems. Also it is necessary to develop a process of training for the existing workforce in order to understand and begin to use the new tools;

- Information Confidentiality: It is well known that any computer system is vulnerable to external attacks. Such system contains information that should be available only to authorized people – the IT system needs to assure both availability and confidentiality for the information;

- Personal Data Privacy: Because some phases of information processing need detailed personal data about citizens and businesses, there are necessary safeguard measures to protect all these data against unauthorized access (Tejasvee & Sarangdevot, 2010).

3. ICT as a Change Driver for Public Administration

Information and Communication Technology are important initiators and drivers of change in an organization, being recognized that the use of ICT creates new possibilities, and has the potential to reinvent organizations and their services.

In this respect, three strategies for the implementation of ICT in an organization were identified (de Jager & van Reijswoud, 2008):

- Business process automation (BPA);
- Business process improvement (BPI);
- Business process reengineering (BPR).

The impact on the organization is reflected in the increase of the efficiency of the users' work, as a consequence of replacement of handicraft activities by automated processes.

A complex management system is usually implemented in order to manage, hand on and store information, replacing the papers. The related processes are reconsidered and improved by introducing some moderate changes. Very often, many of the existing problems of the organization are eliminated through the implementation of IT.

The introduction of IT after a fundamental and critical rethinking of the organization's processes improve performance of it in terms of costs, service delivery, quality and speed. Today, in many countries government reform focuses as a first step on the introduction of IT.

The introduction of the new technologies in public administration of European countries generates organizational changes including:

- the nature of public service jobs (job design, necessary skills);

- the organizational structure (from hierarchical to network oriented), or even virtual organization);
- virtual teams (for data exchange and experience sharing between government bodies);
- the participation of the citizens in the governance process citizenship.

The main ICT tools used for governance include channels of online participation, interactive spaces which allow users to connect and communicate each other. These 'technologies of connection' allow people to communicate, give feedback, ask questions complain, exchange information, and build relationships (Commission of the European Communities, 2001).

The use of IT services provides more qualitative and quantitative services, changes the way in which services are offered to citizens and businesses and permit a quick and easy access to information. In the same time, it helps the public to actively participate in policy formulation, ensure the transparency in the use of public funds, as well as positive effects in the diminution of bureaucracy (Litan et al., 2011).

On the other hand, the introduction of the information technologies in public administrations enhanced the mechanisms of control, supervision, communication, and information management. Despite of these advantages, there are some limitations of using IT in Public Administration. The main limitation refers to the absence of the characteristics of verbal communications (face-to-face) in the virtual communication medium, promoting task-oriented, depersonalized and anti-normative behavior.. It is an anonymous depersonalized message (Lamerichs & TeMolder, 2003).

The development of electronic services at the European level is in attention of the European Commission, which planned to introduce 20 basic electronic services, 12 for citizens and 8 for the business sector. These e-government services are included in the e-Europe Action Plan.

4. Trends in the Future. New Channel for e-Communication in Public Administration

The development of technologies and the introduction on the market of new devices created opportunities for governments to offer and use these new channels to interact with citizens. The smart phones are the most quickly adopted and widespread technology. All these new technological challenges are reflected in the activity of governments, too.

The new environment brings some challenges for the public officials, such as the implementations of multi-channel platforms. Devices like smart phones, interactive voice response systems, digital television, self-service terminals, are already use for a long time in the private sector. Although many governments are aware of this new trend, only few developed countries currently use them. Digital channels encompass websites, mobile-based services and public access points such as kiosks. In multi-channel delivery, public services can be delivered by using a mix of channels, complemented by human interaction and networks.

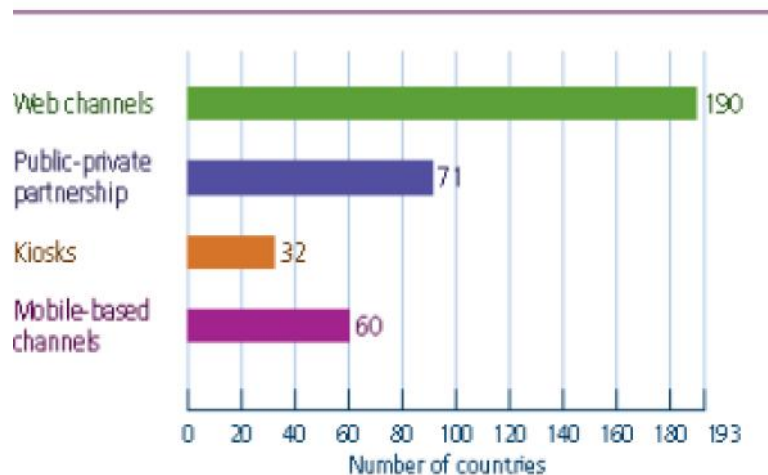In Fig 1 is presented an overview of the new channels already used for public service delivery in EU:

Figure 1. Overview of Channels for Public Service Delivery in EU

Source: United Nations e-Government Survey, 2012

A new term 'mobile government (or m-government)' emerged: it is an extension of e-government to mobile platforms, as well as the strategic use of government services and applications via cellular/mobile telephones, laptop computers, personal digital assistants and wireless internet infrastructure.

Comparing with e-government, m-government has some additional benefits like convenience and flexibility, better services to the citizens, ability to reach a larger number of people through mobile devices than would be possible using wired internet only. SMS is another widely used data application. Mobile technologies with the use of smart phones and web enabled phones represent an important channel in multi-service delivery. M government and specifically the usage of mobile-based channels will continue to develop and expand in the coming years. It is interesting to mention the rapid increase in mobile applications in EU, from 14 Member States in 2010 to 29 in 2012.

5.   The Use of Information and Communication Technology in Public Administration in Romania

After 1989 Romania has began a process for modernization of the public administration, which started from the social and economic realities of the country and defined the logistic and legislative framework for the restructuring of public administration. In the next period, after the adoption of the legislative support necessary for the application of the information and communication technology, the adequate infrastructure steps were made in the development of the national e-government infrastructure.

The Law no. 161/2003 included some measures for assuring transparency in public services, both at central and local public administration level. In this context, it was created the Portal www.e-guvernare.ro.

The e-Government portal - www.e-guvernare.ro - was launched in September 2003, providing a one-stop shop to public services online, and incorporating a transactional platform enabling users to register for interactive and transactional services. Romania's national portal received in 2003 an achievement award from the World Summit of the Information Society for its comprehensiveness and innovation.

Since 2003, a fast-developing infrastructure made it possible for the Romanian government to deliver a number of interactive and transactional services online, such as VAT declaration, a fully operational e-procurement platform, submission of statistical information, electronic payment of social security contributions and of local taxes, advanced job search facility and civil service recruitment platform.

Romania's national portal www.e-guvernare.ro aims to progressively make all services and information accessible through the portal. However, the success of these efforts depends to a great extent on how well the targeted users for such services, citizens in general, make use of them.

However, the development and use of IT for interaction with public administrations in Romania is below the average of the other countries of Europe. There are still differences amongst Member States and the take-up of e-government services by citizens is still low. In 2009, only 38% of EU citizens used the internet for accessing e-Government services, compared to 72% of businesses.

According to the UN e-government survey conducted in 2008, Romania comes under mid range countries by utilization of e-government (percent of utilization 37%). This level of e-government usage suggests that a big part of the adult population remain outside of the world of digital government. It also proves that Romania needs to increase its efforts to encourage potential users to use the available online e-government services.

The e-government services usage in Romania in 2007, comparatively with the last situated, top countries and EU average can be seen in Figure 2.
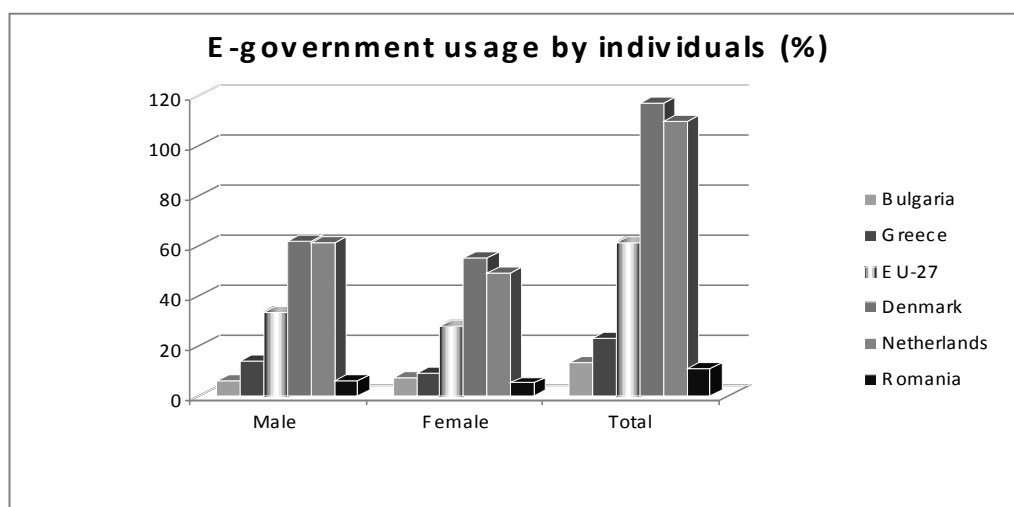

Figure 2. Rate of e-government services usage by citizens in several European countries

Source: Eurostat Yearbook, 2009

The most frequent types of electronic interaction with public administrations are: obtaining information, downloading forms, returning completed forms. In Romania only 33.4% of the population is using Internet, as compared to the EU average of 63.8%.

The top internet countries in Europe are: Germany (55.2 %), UK, France, Italy, and Spain. Romania is situated on 8th place with 7.4%.

Romania needs to increase the access of population to the ICT services in order to improve the public administration on national level. Beneficial use of information technologies involves awareness of the technologies and their benefits to individuals, availability of the technology. On the other hand, in Romania the percentage of the government budget for R&D is the lowest among peer groups and EU27 (Borisov & Bărbulescu, 2012).

In terms of overall public administration performance, Romania scores significantly below the EU-average which implies negative perceptions of the quality of public services and the quality of policy implementation. This performance has hardly changed in recent years.

In terms of the use of tools for administrative modernization (eg IT-based solutions, performance orientation and evidence based steering) Romania performs below the EU average. This is primarily due to a lower availability of business related e-government services (eg electronic submission and payment of corporate tax returns, submission of social security contributions and the registration of start-ups) as well as limitations in the implementation of modern human resource management tools such as flexible modes of tenure and salary systems as well as decentralization of powers and responsibilities for human resources.

According to the Digital agenda[1], e-Government services offer a cost-effective route to better service for every citizen and business and participatory open and transparent government. E-government services can reduce costs and save time for public administrations, citizens and businesses. They can also help mitigate the risks of climate change, natural and man-made hazards by including the sharing of environmental data and environment-related information.

The analyses of use of online services by the citizens in Europe in 2009 indicate that aprox. 28 % of the European citizens accessed information on public authorities' websites and only 13 % of European citizens sent information electronically within last 3 months.

There are significant differences between the percentages of use of online services in EU countries. So in Denmark almost 65 % of the citizens looked for information from public authorities online compared to only 6 % of citizens in Romania (Fig. 3).

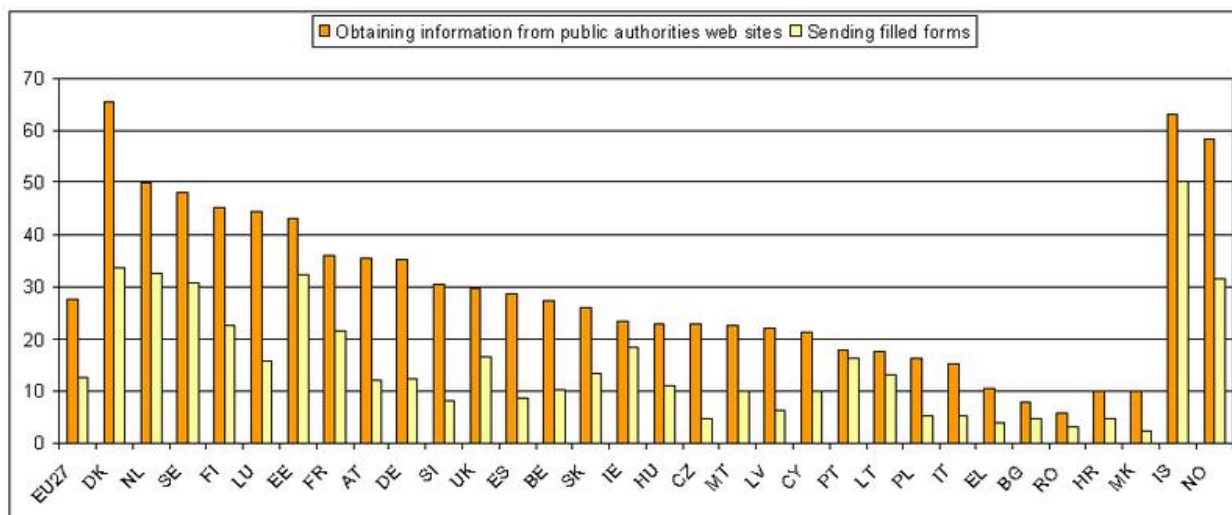[1] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digitalagenda/ scoreboard/ index_en.htm.

Figure 3. Online Interaction of Individuals with Public Authorities, 2009

Source: E-government Statistics, 2010

Comparing the European countries, Denmark, the Netherlands, Estonia and Sweden are the leading countries, where the highest percentage of citizens sends electronic forms to public administrations. In Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Greece and Romania, the percentage was below 5 % in 2009. Some differences were observed regarding to the interest in using e-government services by the citizens. In EU, more than a third (35 %) of individual Internet users had already used e-government services in 2009 and only 37 % of them have been interested in replacing personal visits to public authorities with services via the Internet. The highest proportion of Internet users who are not interested in e-government services are in Latvia, Czech Republic, Romania and Ireland.

Considering the Report *Government for the People* published by The United Nations in 2012, having in mind the existing situation in our country and the permanent monitoring of the level of implementation of electronic government in the countries by the EU Commission, it is obvious the immediate need of improvement of the e-governance in Romania. Several possible measures are presented below:

- initiate a program for training of citizens in order to understand the advantages and utility of electronic communications;

- create some open offices in the halls of local and regional authorities to permit the access to the information portals;

- promote in schools campaigns regarding the new technologies, especially the new ways of communications; their advantages and the main domain of application;

- activities in the rural areas to demonstrate the importance of communications through Internet;

- develop an unique point of access for citizens and businesses to all relevant services from the local, regional levels of administration.

6. Conclusions

Due to globalization and technological innovation, people started to seek more advanced public services from their governments. After more than thirty years of information revolution and notable results of the implementation of IT and its applications, we assist now to a modernization of public administration, partly due to the implementation of the information technologies.

Because of the advantages that IT brings for a social and economical growth, all the developed countries have adopted IT in their public services and participate in a race to successfully adopt e-government applications to deliver better service to their citizens and acquire a more modern appearance. So, the public management reform and the government modernization take place in almost all of countries.

This paper aimed to evidence the relation between government modernization and IT. It is mentioned the impact of electronic applications to the improvement of the communication between public authorities and citizens with emphasis on the public services.

There are mentioned the beneficial results of electronic applications: the increase and the improvement of the participation of citizens to taking decisions, rapid, efficient, transparent, fast connections between authorities and their clients (businesses /citizens). The authors particularly insisted on the implementation of e-services and mentioned their advantages referring also to the future trends due to the new technological advances development and the appearance of new communication devices. In fact the implementation of IT in public administration is a continuous process, which must develop and align to the new trends.

In Romania the implementation of IT in public administration has recorded some progress, but there are a lot of things to do in the future, from the investment in IT infrastructure to the training of the people to better understand the real benefits of this modern way of communication and learn to use it.

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