

ABSTRACTS

György Jenei

EFFICIENCY OF GOVERNMENTS, GOVERNMENTAL PERFORMANCE AND SUBSTANTIAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORMS

The improvement of efficiency is important, but it is only a measure of how much each unit of output costs. When you evaluate the performance of a public organization you have to measure effectiveness as well which is a measure of the quality of the output.

Public opinion wants efficient public organization but it wants effective public organizations even more. Citizens may be pleased that they spend less per student on education than other countries, but if their schools are worse than in other countries, they are not likely to be pleased for long.

In the last decades the EU governments have been facing principal challenges consisting of technological, economic, ecological and demographic components. The answer to these challenges has been substantial public administration reforms. It is still an ongoing process and it needs a broader view of public policy making including four dimensions: the European territorial states, the regions, the autonomous networks and the EU institutions. A shift from government to governance is the core of these reforms.

Keywords: efficiency, effectiveness, performance improvement, challenges to governments, substantial public administration reforms.

Gergely Egedy

THE NEOCONSERVATIVE STATE FROM THATCHER TO CAMERON

The issues raised by the last twenty-five years for the role of the state are profound and complex. The welfare state in Britain had reached its zenith in the post-war years and by the end of the seventies the interruption of economic growth and the emergence of new challenges led to a deep crisis about the affordability and desirability of the welfare state. In response, the neoconservatives under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher considered it their top priority to dismantle the social-democratic state and to put an end to the corporatist experiment. However, the neoliberal economic policy pursued during the

eighteen years of the Conservative governments failed to produce the results that had been expected by the ideologues of the New Right. The Thatcher and Major governments simply could not scale down the state to the level regarded by them as optimal. The New Labour under Blair offered a slight change of direction but it did not discard the neoliberal approach to the economy. The major aim of the British state has come to be accommodation to globalization; this version of the state is characterized by the author as the "competition state". David Cameron, trying to renew Conservative politics introduced the concept of "compassionate conservatism", which stressed the importance of mending Britain's "broken society". Therefore the neoliberal dimension of the Cameronite competition state is likely to be tempered by the recognition that Thatcherism failed to provide for a balanced social and economic development.

Keywords: New Right, elimination of the state, strong state, competition state, compassionate conservatism

Zsolt Boda – Gábor Scheiring

ON THE POLITICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE MEANING OF PUBLIC SERVICES

The neoliberal reforms of public services have provoked lively political and academic debates about how far the criterion of market efficiency can and should be applied on public services. The present paper argues that the organizational and institutional choices about public services have political consequences in a sense that the efficiency criterion is not external to them. Based on Bruno Frey's motivation theory, the literature of institutional trust and the collective action theory of Elinor Ostrom, the paper argues that communities can organize efficiently their public services according to different mechanisms, assuming that the necessary normative and descriptive frames are present in the society. Among those mechanisms the collective coordination – alone or with other coordination schemes – might be an effective way to organize and secure public services.

Keywords: public services, public goods, neoliberalism, governance, collective action, trust

László Vass

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Politico-administrative relations constitute a country-specific dichotomy. The role, functions and positions of the actors of this relation may be examined only within the specific conditions of the given countries. Although a comprehensive theory for the analysis has not been formulated yet, we may use

practical, descriptive models in order to introduce the main types of the politico-administrative relations. In this paper, the metaphoric “village model”, suggested by B. Guy Peters is used for the better understanding of the politico-administrative relations. As addition to the political family village, the administrative village and the functional village, also the model of the “open village” by Theo J. Toonen gives a chance to integrate the latest politico-administrative developments into the model. The political neutrality of public administration is discussed as a myth never realized. But impartiality as a core value is playing a more and more important role in the operation of the heavily politicized public administrations. There are three main reasons of the increasing politicization of public administration. First one is politicization as participation in the political decision making, the second is politicization as partisan control over the bureaucracy, and the third is politicization as political involvement of the civil servants. The paper concludes with a list of the specifications of the Neo-Weberian model of public administration as formulated by Gert Bouckaert.

Keywords: dichotomy of politics and public administration, public services, politicisation, Neo-Weberian public administration

Ida B. Kelemen

WOMEN MPS – WOMEN’S REPRESENTATION?

The article examines the activity of women MPs and the effects of their presence within the Hungarian Parliament during the periods 1998–2002 and 2002–2006. The study investigates the MPs’ activity on the plenary sessions, the themes of plenary speeches and the presence of women in standing committees. Research findings indicate that the function of women MPs in the Hungarian Parliament can best be described with active and professional participation in the enactment process. Women’s preferences manifested in their parliamentary work support the assumption that their strengthening political impact would primarily bring about changes in areas women are most directly affected by.

Keywords: parliament, national assembly, representation, gender, equality of opportunities