

# LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN ROMANIA IN COMPARISON WITH LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION OF OTHER COUNTRIES

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## Abstract

*This paper aims at analyzing the emergence and development of leadership in public administration in Romania, compared to leadership within the public administration in other countries: UK, USA, Norway, New Zealand, etc.*

*It is known that between public administration and government of Romania in other countries there are many differences, related to the way it is perceived by the public sector and the concept of leadership is not entirely new in the public sector. But over time, more attention was paid to it in the private sector. Thus, in Romania, in the public sector leadership development has been addressed only rarely and briefly. Currently, Romania is unable to mobilize a large number of leaders because has started gradual reform so the image or reputation of the organization, organizational culture must be assessed and controlled, should be directed towards achieving goals. And all this, because leadership is based on knowledge and skills essential to help public institutions, providing premises for an efficient administration, which significantly contribute to community welfare. On the other hand, countries such as Australia, Germany, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway, Britain and the U.S. have devoted considerable attention to this subject in recent years, broad context that triggered the renewal of strategic planning processes for civil service leadership, new institutions were established to identify future leaders within the administrative sector and for their professional development, have started programs to supplement current development*

*and management development programs in public leadership.*

*In Romania, the future government leaders must first be identified, so public institutions should consider the leadership skills and recruit future leaders from among university graduates in the field.*

**Keywords:** Leadership, Public administration, Public institutions, Leader

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Despite the fact that the importance of effective leadership is recognized globally, we must realize that the concept of leadership in public institutions has different meanings in different countries. Although the issue of leadership was accentuated in deepening the reform process, there was nothing done to cultivate leadership in this regard.

The emergence and leadership development in public administration in Romania is not a new or unique concept, just as there is not new to other countries around the globe. However, it has now become a subject of great interest.

Of course, between public administration in Romania and other countries there are big differences related to how the public sector is perceived today and how the national interest should be seen now or in the future. Precisely for this reason, a solution to all current problems that public sector faces in Romania could be the development of a certain type of leadership that provides solutions and matches very well to public administrative structures of our country. As numerous studies show, leadership is the core of good public governance [1].

Despite the fact that this concept of leadership is not new in the public sector, more attention was given to it in the private sector, and is a topic frequently developed in corporate management literature. That is why in Romania the need to develop leadership has been addressed only rarely and briefly. Of course, developed countries, such as Australia, Germany, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway, UK and USA have devoted considerable attention to this subject in recent years, even having statistical centers that measure the perception and efficiency of leadership in their public administrations.

Changes in organizations are more and more frequent. These developments occur at a faster rate and therefore employees are expected to be even more adaptable. Certainly, in this context, leaders play an important role in setting an example for all these values, behaviors and considerations that are expected from employees.

Leaders should be aware that changes in an organization are supported and implemented in a manner that results not only in performance but also in the general understanding and satisfaction of all [2].

As has been established that leaders play an important role as agents of change, it was observed that the priority of leadership depends on the state of the society, on the structure of public institutions as well as on the reform.

The development of leaders is more important in a diverse society than in a homogeneous one, the leaders must transmit new values, to handle conflicts positively and to form coalitions to support reform. However, leaders play a much bigger role in a decentralized administrative-territorial structure and branched, which is natural, than in one that's centralized and polycentric.

Romania, as a country that started gradual reform, is unable to mobilize a large number of leaders at the moment. However, as the reform produces positive results as it initiates and develops all administrative-territorial structures, leadership itself becomes necessary and highly sought after.

Currently, in all countries of the world, including Romania, there are increasingly many reasons for the development and application of the science of leadership, the leader and public organizations that depend on the formulation of visions of their activity

in the future. The leader, who is bold, full of discernment, open to new ideas and insights, is essential for steady progress and superior achievements [3], according to a report by UNDP (United Nations Development Program).

Obtaining performance in public institutions requires a particular concern for innovation, creativity and change. Successful leaders in future institution will have the responsibility to create an organizational culture, employees will be encouraged to seek new ideas, build relationships of mutual trust and create an environment in which to learn from one another. Effectiveness of leaders depends not only on their skills but also on the involvement, support and participation of the whole group. Precisely for this reason, the leader must be in constant dialogue with people, to communicate their vision, so they notice opportunity and to form an image of the future. This new perspective on human behavior emphasizes the importance of social needs, attitudes and meanings which guide human actions, especially in public institutions.

Thus, in Britain, the reform of public administration positions leadership in the sixth step as importance. According to recent studies, the role of leader in the civil service in the UK is to maximize public value, created in its area of competence. Moore argues that the proposed model for developing a public service leader must take into account [4]:

- If the proposed result is valuable, important for the citizens, the customers of public institutions;
- If it supported from the political point of view and
- If it's administrative and operational feasible.

UK public administration, leadership is a way of mobilizing those working in public institutions to be more responsive to the public, so to citizens, and more intensely involved in the design and delivery of public services. Therefore, in the English concept, leadership is a means to revive public services. It also emphasizes the importance of clear vision and explicit values that are essential for a motivated workforce. Therefore, the leader is asked to concentrate on organizational implications on its potential to motivate the entire workforce, all

employees [5]. The role of leader in shaping organizational culture is important, it is one that promotes collective values, and not individually.

Also, in New Zealand, the focus is on accounting and cooperation within public administration, the reason why great importance is given to leadership, to achieve all the objectives in the public sector.

Leadership image is based on historical requirements and characteristics of society and the governments that serve them. Society in Romania, however, becomes more diverse and institutions become more flexible. New situations require the occurrence of new kinds of leaders.

To remove many difficulties of management in public administration, an effort is required to understand the actual underlying problems of public institutions. In principle, we believe that they are:

1) Vision and values are not shared by all: the institution does not declare its aims or there is no deep understanding and loyalty towards it, at all its levels;

2) There is not a strategic path worth following: strategy is not well developed or the statement of purpose is not correctly expressed and fails to meet the requirements, the needs and realities of the general trend of public management;

3) Weak alignment: failure of alignment between structure and shared values between vision and systems, structure and institution systems provide and develop insignificantly the strategic means;

4) Wrong style: management philosophy is inconsistent with the vision and shared values, or style does not consistently embody the vision and values statement purposes;

5) Poor skills: style does not match the skills or managers lack skills to form a proper vision;

6) Lack of trust: staff does not trust management, emotional control is exhausted, and this results in blocking communication, few solutions to problems, poor cooperation, teamwork diminish;

7) Inconsistency: the values do not match patterns; there is no correlation between the things civil servants value and believe in, and what they really do.

These seven chronic problems can be solved and are characteristic of all institutions.

I am convinced that leaders can address these issues and create better public institutions. But to succeed, they must change their mood; strengthen confidence, review the structure and systems. Most leaders try to create quality institutions, cooperative, productive, with many skills, informed, profitable. And they begin to appreciate the people, that highest aspect, as much as profits, i.e. the basic aspect. Thus, the increasingly importance of large public institutions, is human capital. In the new economy, human capital replaces financial capital as a strategic resource; human resources become the main source of competitive insurance company, the only resource capable of producing and reproducing all other resources available to an institution [6].

Leadership plays an important role in the implementation of public administration reform in Romania just because it focuses on two of the most important aspects of the reform: change and people (intellectual capital). Leadership therefore occurs on two levels: the relationship between humans and the behavioral and institutional change. Effective leaders inspire people. In Romania the changing public institutions, which actually translates by changing attitudes and behavior of employees, roves once again that the Romanian institutions undergoing reform need leaders.

Leaders in public institutions can help spread, promote and maintain new values that are necessary for successful public sector reform.

While public leadership clearly includes central government leaders, like political leaders, leadership vision for the future is becoming wider. This includes leaders as change agents spread in public organizations to continue the reform process. Leaders prove to be effective by their ability to persuade, motivate public employees and to direct efforts for the common goal [7].

Under the current process of public administration reform, Romania has developed a systematic strategy for structuring and fostering leadership in public institutions. Sure, unlike public administration in Romania, governments of developed countries have begun to develop such strategies, while most developed countries already have such a strategy. For

example, the UK has recently set a model of leadership development in the public sector. Leadership and education in this regard is big business, with approximately \$ 50 billion spent annually just for leadership development [8].

In a more comprehensive study on leadership development in Europe, it was found that there was a marked increase in activity leadership development in all countries in 1990, up from an average of 5.4 days a leader per year to 9.3 days and, despite a lower than average investment in leader education, institutions in the UK have spent on average £ 1,056 on leader per year [9].

**Table no. 1 - Key trends in UK and U.S. leadership development programs [10]**

<b>Key trends in UK and U.S. development leadership programs</b>
- Need analysis generally regarded as an important element but rarely included in practice.
- Promotion of models implemented in order to develop leadership, linked to a series of planned changes.
- Use standards and frameworks leadership competence.
- Wide range of funding bodies.
- Increased emphasis on the importance of learning and deepening tactics and leadership strategies.
- Increased use of community mentoring and coaching.
- Widespread use of active learning, including experiential learning and reflection.
- Increased use of case studies and problems to strengthen the links between research, theory and practice.
- Increasing the collaboration learning about leadership.
- Using online communities to facilitate communication and e-learning.
- Increased clarity and emphasis on values, beliefs and goals of leadership.

However, the Norwegian Government is currently conducting a comprehensive process of renewing its strategic plans for leadership in the civil service to reflect the

growing interest of the public sector for change.

In other countries, including Sweden and the USA, new institutions have been established that aim to identify future leaders within the administrative sector and for their professional development. In Sweden, the National Council for Quality and Development was recently created, whose main task are to identify potential leaders.

However, there are countries that want to develop their programs and to supplement existing public management development with leadership programs. For example, in Finland, such a development program leadership includes creating new management development programs, after evaluating the previous ones. In the Netherlands, Superior Public Service was expanded to include all drivers at high levels of government to deal with the increased need for leadership at the top level of government [11].

The expansion to come as leaders in public administration in Romania has a deep practicality and will be analyzed in detail. Thus, we stipulate the main steps to be followed:

- The first step is to identify potential leaders. In this context, public institutions must analyze and set out the leadership skills, i.e. all personnel. Choosing future leaders from the field of university graduates in the country and beyond, is another way of recruiting.

- Given that the right people were chosen for leadership development, a second step will include the following incentives: helping, reasoning and learning. Of course, at all this, a system that will include monitoring and training of leaders will be added, which in turn will have direct responsibility for developing future generations of leaders. And last but not least, it will be the importance of continuous training of future leaders.

- Heads of public institutions will have to provide more time for training leaders, this being essential for the expansion of the leadership program. Analyses have stated that one of the best methods to successful private business is that managers must spend at least a quarter of their time to train future leaders.

- Create a report that will include the best result, or a reward for a more effective

leadership. However, it will encourage those in public administration tasks and duties with greater tenacity, arriving in time to reach their full potential, thereby contributing to sustainable institution's efforts to train future leaders.

Regarding the development of their leaders in government, industrialized countries have created some specialized institutions for leadership development. In this context, some countries have focused on training future leaders through intensive courses. So, remember countries like Japan, Korea, Austria, Belgium, Finland, Poland, the Netherlands and Portugal, giving training for central and local government leaders.

Training and counseling procedures were adopted in the Netherlands [12] and Iceland for leaders both present and future, all in collaboration with private sector professionals. With that method, in a limited time, a leader will address weaknesses with the designated teacher and get advice from him as to improve their capacity for leadership in the future.

The Government of Iceland supports leaders in the organization and develops ways of cooperation without direct participation of the institutions to which they belong. Thus, this strategy has proved necessary in the transmission of values and general interests of leaders and in terms of acquiring knowledge from each other.

Poland has implemented the strategic business plan of management for all government leaders. However, there were difficulties in implementing that policy and organizational culture. Poland's public sector leaders are themselves reluctant to implement such modern public management, human resources, thus making it difficult to obtain the structural performance of personnel and benefit from new institutional structures.

#### *Women leaders and their involvement in public administration in Romania*

Although in Romania improvements were observed in recent years, they speak very little about women leaders in government. Conversely, in other countries, see the case of Norway, this involvement is supported through the establishment of a 4-year plan to increase the number of women occupying positions on various public functions on

higher levels of administration from 22% in 1997 to 40% in 2002 [13].

Echoing what has been said, it appears that women leaders suffer in regards to public administration in Romania in terms of leadership issues, through the exploration of an untapped field.

The public sector is a dynamic one that is subject to many pressures for change. Leaders are increasingly concerned, at least declaratively, about the importance of knowledge in development organizations in which they are working. They associate success or failure with the creative capacity of staff, innovative potential that the organization has [14].

Use of knowledge is not a simple thing, as with most intangible resources. Image or reputation of the organization, organizational cultures are just a few examples of areas where substantial difficulties in managing dematerialized elements.

How can they be measured? How can they be measured and monitored? What can be better directed towards achieving goals? These are questions that leaders are facing in modern institutions and they continuously try to find answers, together with those they represent.

Leadership based on knowledge contribute to the development of core competencies for public institutions providing prerequisites for efficient management to meet the requirements of citizens to contribute significantly to improving the quality of life in their area of influence, and the welfare of the community. Through development and recovery, the expected value of the organization's stakeholders is accomplished. Learning is considered to be one of the most important ways in which to build knowledge-based organization, and public sector leaders have a great responsibility, aiming to reduce the gap from developed countries.

Figure 1 represents the cycle of knowledge, reflecting the fact that learning helps to build knowledge which will be used later and in turn, the use of this knowledge leads to the need for new learning and accumulation of new knowledge.

**Fig. 1 Life cycle of knowledge [15]**



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