

Foreword

In every country, public administration constitutes a permanent and essential element of social and public space. This is so in functional terms – when we consider a group of activities and implementation actions performed in a constant, purposeful and planned way in order to fulfil the needs, tasks and interests belonging to the public domain. This is also true in institutional terms – when we focus on structural solutions serving executive management (auxiliary or even servitude) in view of the objectives and lines of action. And this is also the case when we consider the various bodies of an institution, that is distinct entities equipped by law with decision-making powers of a comprehensive nature, as well as offices – organizational units functioning under different proper names, which integrate the institutional, material and staff structures performing an auxiliary or supportive role with respect to one or a few organs. At the heart of public administration activity lies the need for the implementing service of needs, tasks and interests belonging to the public domain. In fact, there are few areas of activity, in which state administration with its various competences does not appear in different roles. Knowledge regarding this administration is a resource used in various theories and practices.

This publication, prepared by a team of authors invited by Professor Jolanta Itrich-Drabarek, Head of the Department of State Sciences and Public Administration at the Faculty of Political Sciences and International Studies, University of Warsaw, deserves attention for several important reasons. First of all – it concerns matters we face daily as citizens and residents of municipalities, counties and voivodships. The book presents synthetic knowledge indispensable to residents and their relations with public offices and authorities. This knowledge is of vital importance to all those who wish to understand the current ongoing processes and in order to actively participate in their shaping. Second of all – the initiator managed to assemble a team of distinguished authors who guarantee the high quality of this publication. It consists of several hundred terms which in an orderly manner present the values, principles, normative solutions, institutions, procedures and staffing solutions in public administration in Poland. The subject matter is presented in institutional, functional and praxeological terms and shows the relations between public administration and the state. The publication presents a comparative background with standards found in international law and solutions practiced in other democratic countries. It summarizes the administration performance standards, including standards governing the relationship

between the state, administration and politics. Hence, the publication may also be useful to specialists dealing with the issues of civil society and public authority in Poland. Third of all – the presented material focuses on presenting solutions and therefore particular entries will outlast relatively frequent changes regarding detailed normative solutions. And finally – the encyclopedia has its internet version, which allows for successive updating in response to changes in normative regulations and public administration practices.

The encyclopedia emphasizes the social dimension of public administration formed in response to community-based relations between people within the framework of society, seen as the widest form of a community. This comprehensive community is characterized by a relative distinctiveness within the frame of institutionalized territorial social relations, which emerged as the result of the division of needs and tasks into those attended to in the individual and community-based mode and the appearance of needs and tasks rising from the individual – group relation in response to the formation of the private and public domain. The encyclopedia summarizes the different ways of defining public administration and shows elements common to all descriptions, which are designated by tasks, activity and the position of the state; the law establishing the system, functions, tasks, competences and procedures for the operation of administration; the organization of society. In this publication the reader will find content regarding the basic administration models, areas of differentiation and unification, functions, modes of operation, competencies and institutional solutions in state administration, including government administration (at the central and territorial level and local government administration in municipalities, counties and voivodships. He will also find information regarding the specificity of administration in large cities.

This publication is characterized by a detailed description of local government issues found in many entries. The legal and factual formation of local government in a manner consistent with European standards is one of the greatest achievements in the process of political system changes after 1989. Local government has a dual identity: community-based and institutional-administrative. In this publication these mutually interrelated identities are explained in a substantive and comprehensive manner. In local government, sovereignty, participation and self-governance in many cases overlap, creating a new quality. In fact, there can be no civil society without local government matters. The basis in this respect is provided by the concept of the autonomous and independent management of matters based on, and within the limits, of the law. This management is conveyed by citizen corporations formed on the basis of the criterion of territorial affiliation to local and regional communities. It is impossible to understand the mechanisms of public authority without reflecting upon the subject of local government. The local government is part of the community framework embracing territorial units, which take into consideration social, economic and cultural ties. A substantial part of public tasks delegated to the local government

by legal acts are implemented at its own responsibility and in its own name. The particular Encyclopedia entries show the changing trends that influence local government matters. You will find information regarding the strengthening of local government in such areas as: legal guarantees, tasks and responsibilities, legal status, participation in the creation of law, finances, human resources, relations with government administration, the extent of autonomy in forming associations. The publication presents the process of expanding the scope of local government activities in the state structure: from restrictions at the local level to being present also at the regional level (autonomously or concurrently with government administration).

The authors of the publication reflected their explicit opinion that local government is foremost the right and capability of local communities to fulfill their interests. Therefore, attempts undertaken in order to apparently strengthen the state at the expense of the local government cannot be ignored. There is no doubt that the road to the optimization of public administration leads through improvement and not through the constriction of local government. The publication gives an extensive knowledge on the main areas of tension and problems occurring in local government. These may be found: in mutual relations between the communal and administrative – institutional identity; in the structural and financial system and within the competence scope of the local government and the state; in equalizing living conditions in the strongest and weakest territorial units; in relations between the local regulatory authorities and the implementing bodies; in the activity of the members of local communities, without which the idea of self-government lacks buoyancy. The value of this publication lies in the fact that the above mentioned problems are not only noticed but also substantially discussed.

In Poland today, the majority of matters of the public sphere depend on the shape and capacity of the functioning of public administration. This publication encompasses public administration in a dynamic way. It shows the “trail” of historic change: from commanding administration to public service administration and from classic administration to the new public management and public policy and participatory administration. The background of this presentation gives rise to the dispute between the concept of omnipresence of the state and the administration and the concept of subsidiarity. The particular entries include the main directions of administration modernization connected with: its changing position in public space; system and structural transformation; professionalization; strengthening transparency, integrity, impartiality and accountability; increasing operational efficiency; proinnovative changes; adapting to act in changing situations and tensions and in states of emergency; preparing for effective operation in the common European administrative space; opening to the challenge of the personalized communication civilization era.

In this book the reader will find the distinction between the subjects of classical administration and the administrating bodies, including the new public

administration bodies: economic and professional self-governments and non-governmental organizations performing administrative activities within the institution of public-social partnerships and economic operators within the framework of a public-private partnership.

The publication contains terms that show the significant process of withdrawing from formal and quantitative criteria in assessment procedures and in public administration management systems in favour of quality criteria; from traditional control to assessment as a mechanism of evaluation (attributing value) of results based on the criteria of legality, appropriateness, accuracy, durability of the effects, efficiency and social usefulness. This process concentrates on the significance of the achieved effects and the quality of programs, projects and policies.

In comparison to other books found on the publishing market, this item to a far greater extent successfully integrates the approach appropriate to political science, administrative science, administrative law (in the political system, material and procedural aspect) and administrative policy. The approach is interdisciplinary. This is undoubtedly a value and specific feature of the book, which should be sought in search of various approaches to particular issues regarding public administration, but which can also be regarded as a comprehensive monographic study on administration, which also includes an extensive bibliography note.

Grzegorz Rydlewski

Introduction

After 1989 public administration in Poland underwent changes due to the social and political transformation. Many already existing entities received new competences and assignments, new bodies were created and permanently incorporated into the social and political system. The quality of the functioning of public administration in Poland is influenced by reforms and modernization processes, changing legal conditions, the development of social, economic and technological potential, emphasis on the efficiency of administration staff, processes of Europeanization and globalization, as well as the scale, size and scope of tasks of territorial units.

The Encyclopedia of Public Administration is an attempt at redefining the basic concepts connected to the different role of public administration in the Polish political system after 1989. New definitions of these concepts are necessary, because public administration is a permanent element of the political system. On the one hand, its role and assignments are of a permanent nature – it is tied to the maintenance of the states' function (with respect to territorial division, the constant fulfillment of the basic needs of citizens, being an active animator of cultural, economic and social life, both at the central and local level). On the other hand, the role and assignments of public administration are variable – with respect to adapting to the changing surrounding conditions and economic, social and political changes.

The *Encyclopedia* is a result of the work of a team of notable researchers from national and international science centers. Representatives of such academies as the University of Warsaw, Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, University in Wrocław, Cracow University of Economics, Maria Curie Skłodowska University in Lublin, Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Zawodowa w Oświęcimiu (Public University of Applied Sciences in Oświęcim), University of Zielona Góra, Universität Potsdam (Germany) and University of Pittsburgh (USA) have participated in developing the Encyclopedia entries, as well as the Ministry of Finances and Chancellery of the President of the Council of Ministers employees. Other participants include a team of graduate students working under my guidance.

The Encyclopedia entries do not depict detailed information regarding legal basis – there is no cross-reference to specific articles and paragraphs, and the titles of acts are simplified. However, the annex lists all legal acts connoted in the entries. The term “official” is used in most of the entries in a broader sense,

ie. it refers to persons employed in Polish public administration and occupying “official positions”.

Finally, I wish to extend my sincerest thanks to all those who have engaged in this difficult and important undertaking – the formulation of entries of the *Encyclopedia of Public Administration*. I would like to encourage all those interested to make use of the electronic version: encyklopediaap.uw.edu.pl.

Jolanta Itrich-Drabarek