

Book Review

EDOARDO ONGARO

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT REFORM AND MODERNIZATION,

Trajectories of Administrative Change in Italy, France, Greece, Portugal and Spain,

Published by Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Glos, UK, 2009

Public management reform is a topic that sparks a growing interest in Romania. After (too) many years when the legalist model has dominated the system, nowadays all the topics related to managerial reform are increasingly being studied.

In this context, Edoardo Ongaro's new book, *Public Management Reform and Modernization*, is of particularly importance. Although it is available (for the moment) only in English, it is a mandatory reading for anyone interested in this field.

The book is a thorough analysis of public management reform in the „Napoleonic” states (France, Greece, Portugal and Spain) and tries to establish patterns of reform and comparisons at this level. Such an approach is extremely difficult and requires both a general understanding of public sector management reform and an analysis capacity specific for the studied countries.

Public Management Reform and Modernization focuses on very contemporary topics for the Central and Eastern European countries: public sector reform in the context of a fluctuating political-administrative environment, organizational performance measurement, financial management, human resource management, organizational reforms etc.

The author's approach to analyze and explain the dynamics of the public management reform in Italy is a complex one and full of lessons for the scholars and practitioners in Romania. Mr. Ongaro's ability to initiate a strategic perspective regarding the change of an administrative, structured, legalistic and highly influenced by politics model is impressive.

We believe that this book has two main advantages for those interested in the administrative reform in Central and Eastern Europe, in general, and in Romania, in particular: a flawless methodological approach of the trend and direction of public management reform and an intelligent application of the concepts to a specific area, different from the Anglo-Saxon one. We need books such as this one primarily

because they teach us what understanding and implementing managerial reform (broadly defined) to specific situations means; if we had several similar approaches in the Central and Eastern European countries, researchers and practitioners' work would be much relieved.

Eduardo Ongaro's book should be included into the library of those who believe that public management reform is both possible and necessary.

Călin Hințea

Associate professor,
Public Administration Department,
Faculty of Political, Administrative
and Communication Sciences,
Babeș-Bolyai University,
Cluj-Napoca, Romania
Tel.: 0040-264-431.361
E-mail: hintea@polito.ubbcluj.ro