

# NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT MODEL A SPECIAL ALTERNATIVE FOR THE ROMANIAN LOCAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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## Rezumat

Lucrarea are la bază cercetare care a fost demarată acum câțiva ani. Obiectivul principal al acestei cercetări este de a contribui la inovarea managementului public prezent în administrația locală din România, având la bază exemplele de bună practică din administrația publică din țările europene și nu numai. Echipa noastră de cercetare a creat un nou model de management public având ca suport un sistem de comunicare și tehnologie informațională. Cercetarea a fost demarată printr-o diagnosticare a managementului public din administrația locală din România și intenționează să demonstreze că există o alternativă de a transforma administrația noastră publică într-una mai transparentă și eficientă. Elementul cheie al modelului este componenta de management public, dar este susținut de alte 2 componente: informatic și comunicațional. Modelul a fost definit pentru fiecare nivel managerial: management superior, managementul de mijloc, managementul inferior. Lucrarea conține o sinteză a noului model de management public pentru administrația publică locală din România.

**Cuvinte cheie:** model de management public, tehnologie de comunicare informațională, administrație publică

## Abstract

The paper is based on a special research started few years ago. The main objective of this research is to contribute to the innovation of the public management from the Romanian local public administration based on the best practices from the developed European public administration and not only. Our research team set up a new public management model supported by the informational technologies and communications. The research started with a very special diagnosis of the public organizations from the Romanian local public administration and intends to demonstrate that there is an alternative for transforming our Romanian public administration in a more transparent and more effective one. The key component of this model is the public management component, but this is supported by other two components: informatic and communication. The model is defined for each managerial level: top public management, middle public management and low public management level. The paper contains a synthesis of our New Public Management Model for the Romanian Local Public Administration.

**Keywords:** public management model, informational communication and technology, public administration.

**JEL Classification:** H00 and O21

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, fundamental changes have been transforming societies all over the world. These changes include the development of a global economy, the end of the Cold War, the rapid progress and widespread adoption of information technology (Gascó, 2003). The public sector too is being transformed, leading to the emergence of what has been called the New Public Management (Christensen and Lægreid, 2008). In our days it is very common to talk about e-governance and most of the public institution implement this new style of public administration (Brown, 2005). The Organization

for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) observed in 1995 that 'a new paradigm for public management has emerged, aimed at fostering a performance-oriented culture in a less centralized public sector.' The report noted that implementation of the new paradigm was far from complete, and varied from country to country (OECD, 1995: 8).

Based on this international context, a set of common themes in the experience of public sector reform in this diverse group of countries and outlined the major characteristics of NPM:

- providing high-quality services that citizens value;
- demanding, measuring, and rewarding improved organizational and individual performance;
- advocating managerial autonomy, particularly by reducing central agency controls;
- recognizing the importance of providing the human and technological resources managers need to meet their performance targets; and
- maintaining receptiveness to competition and open-mindedness about which public purposes should be performed by public servants as opposed to the private sector or non-governmental organizations (Borins, 1995: 5-11).

Defined in this way, the New Public Management can be interpreted as an agreement between the public and their elected representatives on the one hand and the public service on the other (Di Kate, Osborne and Ferlie, 2005). The public and politicians want high-quality public services and better performance by public sector organizations, what former Vice President Al Gore called 'government that works better and costs less'. To get it, they are willing to give public servants more managerial autonomy, as well as the human and technological resources (i.e., training and information technology) to meet their goals. In addition, the public and politicians are willing to reward strong performance, for example through performance pay. The last component of the NPM paradigm is a way of enforcing this agreement. If public servants do not improve performance, politicians and the public are willing to introduce competition within the public sector, or move activities to the private sector or NGOs.

This new agreement marks a significant shift from traditional practice. Under the old model, public servants were expected to give politicians unbiased policy advice and to implement the decisions taken by them. In return, they could expect to work in anonymity, with security of tenure. While security of tenure explicitly referred to changes of government, it was implicitly taken to mean lifetime employment. In marked contrast, the new agreement is silent about lifetime employment. Indeed, the combined impact of budget cuts needed to restore fiscal balance and the growing application of information technology (IT) is expected to reduce the size of the public service until a new, lower equilibrium is reached.

Three factors, operating together, have tended to drive the adoption of NPM. They are economic pressures, high-level political commitment to change, and a set of ideas to shape change (Gow and Dufour, 2000). The reform of the public sector and the new public management it can be implemented with success only with the help and the full commitment of the public servants that need to be very motivated and have strong knowledge about public management domain (Androniceanu, 2008).

In relation with this reality, our research team designs a new public management model for the Romanian local public administration which is based on Information and Communication Technologies.

Accordingly, the reform process is looking in figure no.1:

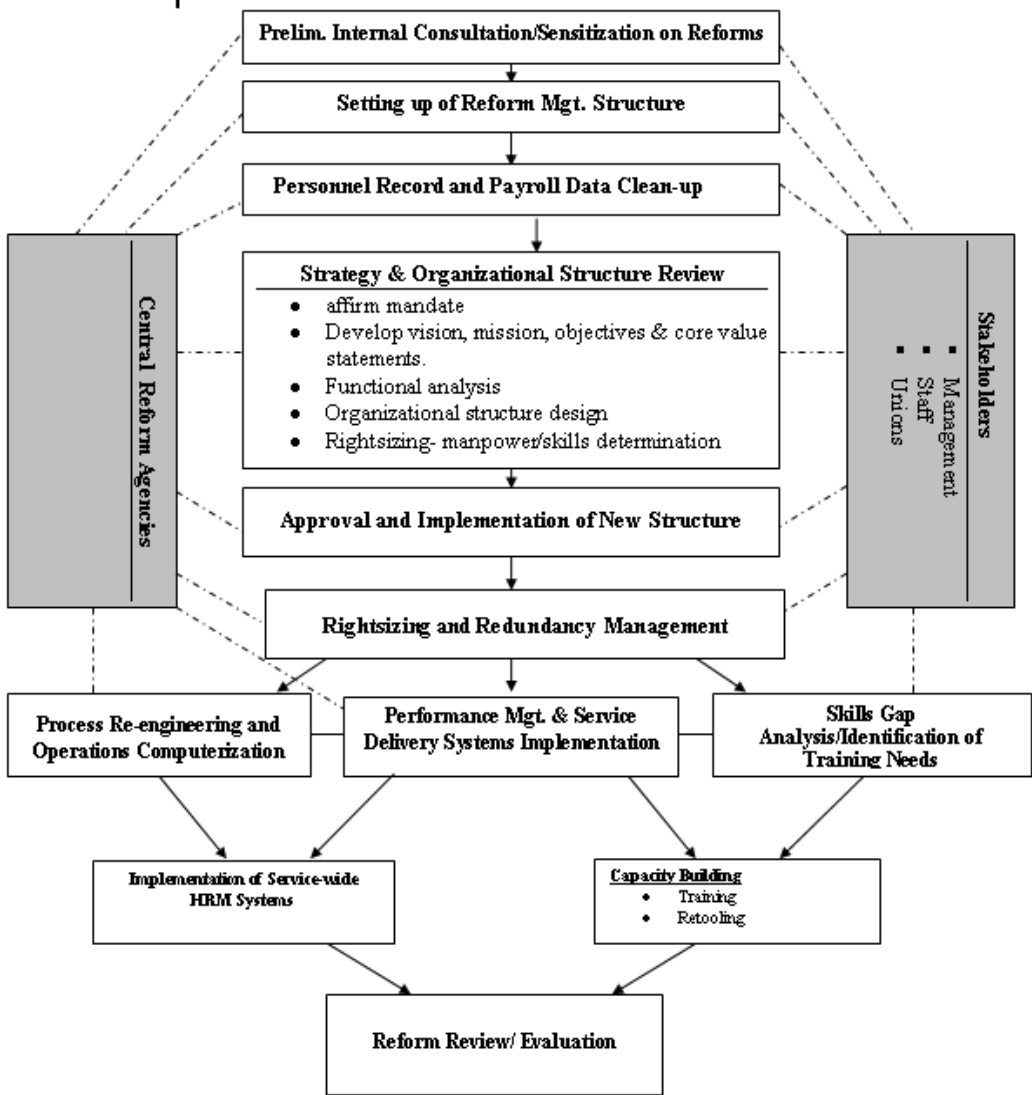


Figure no.1 The general frame for the new public management model

The new model is based on very deep comparative analyses in few developed EU countries, but is designed for our local public sector. In figure no.2 are presented the key components of the new public management model for the local public administration and the way of approaching the public management process.

- External environment evaluation
- Internal environment evaluation

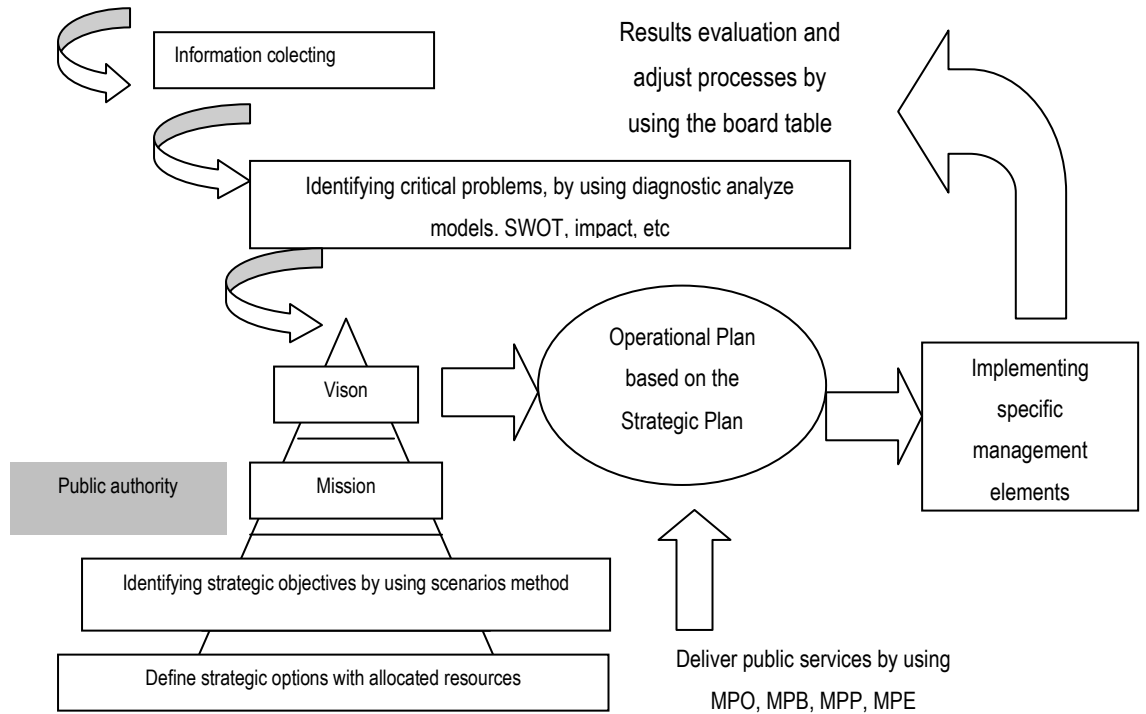


FIGURE. NO. 2 THE WAY OF APPROACHING THE PUBLIC MANAGEMENT PROCESS AT THE LOCAL ROMANIAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Based on these essential elements, the research team designed the new integrated public management model which includes the communication and informa

tics components. If we can see how looking the scheme of the new model for public management is designed for the Romanian local public administration, we can see figure no.3.

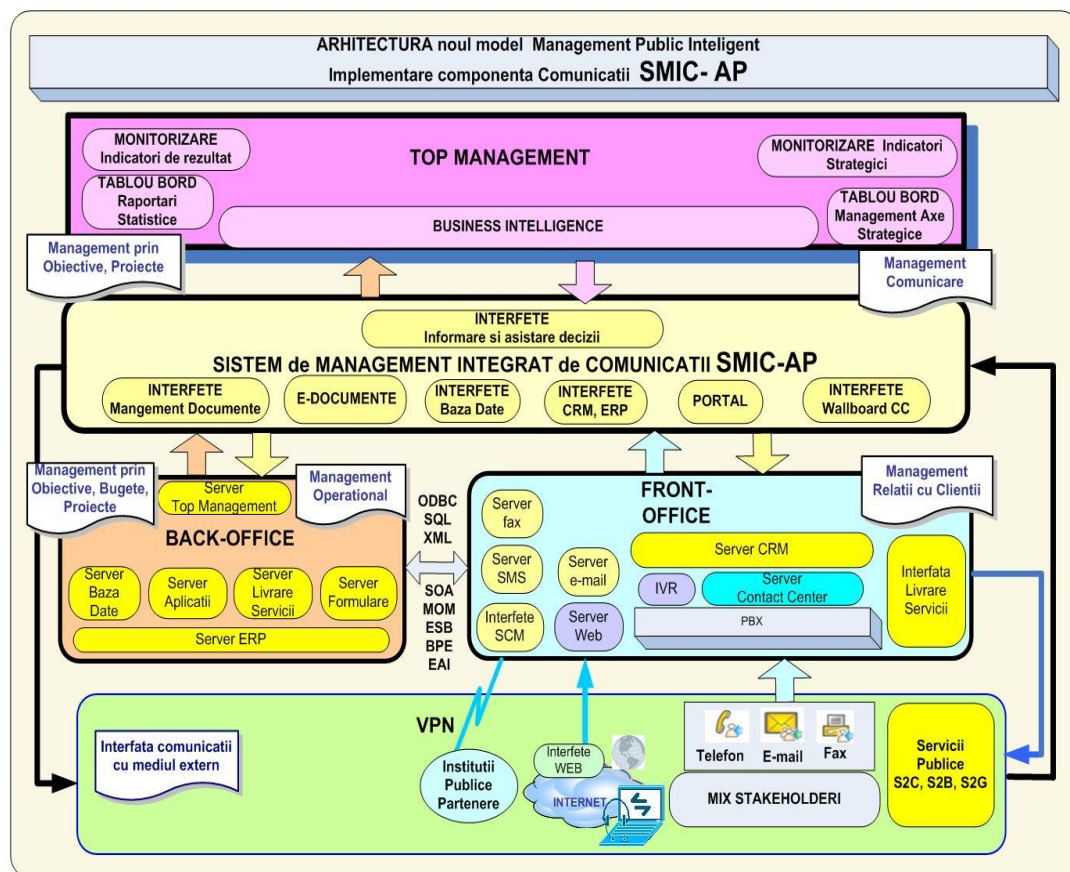


FIGURE NO. 3 THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE NEW INTEGRATED PUBLIC MANAGEMENT MODEL FOR THE ROMANIAN LOCAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The main advantages of the new model are:

- the reduction of the written documents circulated in the informational system;
- the reduction of the period for delivering public services;
- the time reduction for producing and for delivering the public services;
- increasing the transparency of the delivering process;
- improving the accessibility of using the public information by the civil servants and by other stakeholders;
- improving the quality of the decision making process;
- more efficient informational systems based on an IT platform and a very special call center station;

- the substantially reduction of the total cost for delivering public services.

## 2. CONCLUSION

The new model represents an alternative for managing the Romanian local public institutions more efficient in the interest of the public citizens and other stakeholders. The model involves a lot of changes on each managerial level, and some very special technical investments. That means financial efforts, but if we look on a medium and long term, we can understand the major advantages of implementing the new model proposed and the sustainability of it.

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