National School of Political and Administrative Studies
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PhD THESIS

THE ROLE OF LOCAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN PROMOTING CULTURAL RIGHTS IN ROMANIA

- summary -

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Content

Abstract

This work resids among the studies designed to investigate in detail the processes of transformation of the public administration in Romania, following within its local component the emphasis placed on the institutions, instruments and procedures intended to facilitate citizens' access to culture and education. Following the examination of the conceptual lines drawn by theorists in the specialized literature, we will try to identify the current state of affairs and the weak points in the system, to contribute to the highlighting of the legislative course of these fields - culture and education - in Romania and to identify solutions to improve the functioning of the mechanisms for applying related public policies at the central and local level.

In the *Introduction*, we presented the motivation of the research, the definition of the terminological landmarks necessary to study the topic and the presentation of the methodology used. The first chapter looks at the conceptual approaches related to cultural rights and specifically to the right to education, including a review of the specialized literature. Here we focused on the presentation of the relevant historical landmarks in the field, we followed the evolution of the flow of academic debates, we identified the principles of cultural rights, we followed their mirroring at the international level, and finally we highlighted how these concepts were reflected in the fundamental laws of of Romania, from their appearance in the 19th century until the Constitution that is in force today.

The second chapter is dedicated to analyzing the impact that the reforms of the public sector in the last decades have had on the way in which it concerned itself with ensuring access to public services, with an emphasis on cultural and educational services. We debated how modern local public administration should function within society, particularly in relation to the themes of interest of this paper, culture and education. In this chapter, we started from the main approaches identified in the specialized literature and later focused on theories from public management that could have developed the tools necessary to analyze public policies in our field of study.

The *third chapter* represents a comparative analysis between five different European political-administrative systems. At this point we have focused both on the fundamental laws and the subsequent legislation that regulates the operation of local public institutions with responsibilities in ensuring public cultural and educational services. I also included a comparison of the cultural patterns of the civilizations that gave rise to these nations and a brief presentation of the pre-university educational systems that they develop to ensure access to culture and education, paying special attention to higher secondary education (in the sense which UNESCO grants to high school education according to the international standard classification of education, ISCED 2011, recognized within

the OECD through the ISCED 3 classification and transposed in Romania by art. 23, paragraph (1), letter c), (ii) of the Law of National Education no. 1/2011, updated, with subsequent amendments and additions) and the curriculum dedicated to the arts.

Following the analysis of the fundamental, international and national documents, after the review of the managerial and legal concepts that make up the tools of the public authorities in order to apply public policies, *the fourth chapter* includes the presentation of the results of a case study that we carried out by applying some sets of online questionnaires within public cultural and educational institutions at the level of administrative-territorial units (cities and communes) from the counties that are part of the South-Muntenia development region. In addition to the comparative case study, this approach represents an additional attempt to gather information regarding the state of affairs in 2021, social, cultural and administrative behavior and the perceptions of actors directly involved at the local level in the processes of development and application of cultural policies and educational.

Because the implementation of a public policy requires, in addition to a thorough documentation, also a consultation of the actors directly involved and affected by it, but also the direct action of the actors of the political-administrative system of the state, in *chapter five* I extracted those provisions with regarding the field of culture and education within the political programs of the main parties on the Romanian political scene, at the end of 2021. We analyzed the programmatic documents of the factors that can influence - through their activity or inactivity - in the case of holding the executive political power, during the policies national public in culture and education. Finally, based on the studies presented up to this point, we have launched several proposals for legislative changes. The last part includes *the conclusions* of our research, observations on the path taken to achieve the proposed objectives and discussions on the validity of the hypotheses stated at the beginning.

Certainly the present work is not an exhaustive one, but following such an approach, the deficiencies within the system can be discovered and, at the same time, the solutions for their remedy can be distinguished. Regarding the detailing of the steps to be followed in this scientific approach, to ensure efficiency, the research tools were selected and applied according to the objectives pursued: general (overall) and specific (chapter). Direct observation and participatory observation are the starting points of the research, the researcher not only witnessing the actual situation in Romanian society, politics and public administration, but also, to a certain extent, involved in the socio-political events of recent years.

Introduction – methodology

- summary -

Today, at the European and international level, the importance of human rights is strongly emphasized by the global economic and political context characterized, unfortunately, by successive crises. The struggle for dominance over exhaustible resources, economic wars, the emergence of a new type of conflict - *the hybrid war* - in which non-state actors are also involved, the human dramas generated by the new waves of immigration but also the effects of the health crisis have determined the bodies that supervise the observance of rights and civil liberties to meet at a more frequent and more alert pace than ever in forums, conferences and extended working sessions precisely to be able to face challenges that threaten the very foundation of the construction of the European Union but also of the international law system. Not infrequently, topics on the global public agenda addressed the theme of respecting citizens' rights and their freedom of action within society.

The field of human rights was constituted by successive contributions made by researching the great principles in the matter, the normative provisions, the institutions. But, like any other theoretical science, pure and applied, the science of human rights has progressed under the conditions of alternation of bright periods with others of obscurity [1]. Through the public administration system, the state not only *manages* its day-to-day existence, but also *plans* its future existence. The survival of the state largely depends on how it *organizes* the welfare of its own population - by increasing the birth rate and discouraging emigration - and on the intelligent and sustainable way in which it *exploits its* territory - the natural resources at its disposal.

In this sense, a state truly aware of its own existence and especially its own future will do its best to strengthen its pillars of values and principles that helped to create it. While doing this strengthening, the state foresees as precisely as possible the steps it needs to take in the medium and long term. Because the natural way in which the roots of the civilization of the inhabitants of a certain area developed is, in our opinion, the natural way in which the society of the future can evolve in the same space, without succumbing to foreign influences through assimilation.

Hence the special interest we should give to cultural rights, with an emphasis on the right to education. Once the visionary benchmarks for future development are established, they must be systematically presented to citizens. From the beginning of life and throughout it, in all aspects, citizens must have the opportunity to be educated, informed in the spirit of freedom, having the opportunity to develop and communicate their own critical and innovative thinking. Even in Article

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[1] Irina Moroianu Zlătescu, *Human rights: an evolving system* (II edition, Bucharest, IRDO Ed., 2008), p.24

11 of the Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights, we find the following wording: " *free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the most precious human rights.* "[2]

Once we established our area of interest in the sphere of the right to culture and the right to education, we set the following set of ***premises as the basis of our approach*** :

1. The guarantee and protection of human rights marked the evolution of societies and state constructions after the Second World War;

2. Decades of conflict mediation by international forums and the economic and military equilibrium situation of powerful states have led to the disappearance of large-scale conflagrations and their restriction to the regional or local level - generally on the periphery of geo-political spheres of influence - and to a reduced period of armed clashes. Thus, for much of the world's population, peace has enabled decades of economic prosperity, technological development, and cultural flourishing;

3. The development of democratic institutions in a growing number of states, especially after the end of the Cold War and the lifting *of the Iron Curtain* , allowed citizens ever- wider access to information and innovation;

4. Western (Anglo-American) democracy brought with it a market economy model that favored the export of concepts and procedures from the private environment to the public sector. Thus the idea of a public management necessary to manage the growing number of requirements that the modern state must satisfy in the relationship with the citizen-client appears;

5. Operating with a series of concepts from the private environment has produced a true transformation of the way public policies are conceived, adopted, implemented and communicated;

6. The globalization of culture and society based on consumption have led to the need to build protection mechanisms and tools, to defend the local specificity of populations, customs, cultures and civilizations threatened with extinction;

7. Classical education systems were caught in the vice of adapting to the economic demands of society and preserving local identities, being the ones called to prepare the new generations of citizens of a globalized world.

The attestation of these premises began with the presentation of scientific currents in the field of administrative sciences and in the field of human rights, as well as the theories they generated regarding cultural rights, exposed over time in numerous specialized academic works. In this way we tried to substantiate the first steps in order to reach ***the objective*** ours, namely the elaboration of public

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[2]Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen 1789 – See https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/contenu/menu/droit-national-en-vigueur/constitution/declaration-des-droits-de-l-homme-et -du-citoyen-de-1789 accessed June 2020

policy proposals and the indication of how to transpose this time into the legislation that regulates the role of local public authorities in guaranteeing cultural rights and citizens' access to culture and education.

During this scientific approach, we started the research following three working *hypotheses* :

1. If a society aims to connect and adapt to the rapid pace of evolution of technology and science, this can also be done by developing an adequate education system, with innovative teaching methods, capable of providing citizens with the skills necessary for survival and personal development in society of the future, as well as the ability to know and defend their rights and freedoms.

2. The more local public authorities and implicitly subordinate institutions are delegated more and more duties at the national level, including in the fields of culture and education, the more important their role becomes in guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of citizens.

3. The more a state manages to ensure the application of coherent public policies, aimed at determining the creation, operation and consolidation of cultural and educational institutions connected to the dynamics of the information society [3], the more this state can guarantee and expand citizens' access to culture and education, while preserving national, regional or local cultural specificity.

This the research questions to which we sought the answer during our work were also generated :

1. What are the principles of public administration reform that can ensure the necessary measures to adapt it to the increasingly diverse needs of citizens today?

2. What type of instruments are needed to be able to implement the changes necessary to strengthen the role of the public administration as a guarantor of cultural rights?

3. Which are the local public institutions, in Romania, that need to be reformed in order to adapt to the requirements of the current society so that cultural rights - especially the right to education - are guaranteed for future generations?

4. What are the public policies with local impact necessary for access to culture and the right to education to be ensured to citizens in the context of the increased role of the use of artificial intelligence?

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[3] By this phrase we understand the type of society characteristic of our century and which involves an increased use of information in all spheres of human activity and existence, with a major economic and social impact that subsequently leads to the creation, dissemination and application of information in the political, educational or cultural environment .
- see the publication *Information Society in Romania of* the National Institute of Statistics, available at https://insse.ro/cms/files/publicatii/publicatii%20statistice%20operative/seria_statistica_de_intreprinderi_societatea_inf ormationala_2018.pdf - accessed May 2021

5. What type of high school education organization model should be put into practice so that the application of public policies in education has the maximum proposed effect on the young generations?

The present research was constructed with a methodological architecture combining qualitative and quantitative methods in order to address all aspects of the research questions and to maximize the validity of the research. The approach of our research is rather part of the interpretative tradition. The model is predominantly qualitative, a secondary quantitative component was used only to capture a few frames from the reality of the day, in order to validate our propositions. During the research I used methods such as: direct observation, participatory observation, document analysis and online questionnaire. For conceptual clarifications and coherence in argumentation we will define each time - in the order of their appearance in the text - the terms we will use and their meaning applicable to our work.

Public administration is a field that, over time, has inspired numerous predominantly qualitative researches, often empirically based (descriptive works; examples of good practices; case studies, etc.), but also quantitative, the latter being increasingly used often as support for the application of public policies. Most of the time, however, these scientific contributions with a strict, rigid character, failed to constitute the right support, so necessary for those assigned to adopt difficult political decisions. In such policy-making contexts, there is a new role for natural science. The facts that are taught from textbooks in institutions of higher education are of course extremely useful, but they are no longer sufficient. Because they strictly refer to a standardized version of the natural world, but featuring the unnatural conditions characteristic of a laboratory experiment. The real world is quite different when we interact with it, either destructively or constructively. Thus, contrary to the impression conveyed by theorists, most problems, in practice, have more than one plausible answer and many of these have no answer. It is thus concluded that the most important paradigm regarding government is its public character, and under this screen competes a set of sub-paradigms *that* inspire researchers in the field of administrative sciences [4].

In this sense, in the case of our work, we focused on an interpretative approach, using *multiple sources of information and narratives* [5]*,* in an attempt to understand the behavior of the actors who play their determining role, naturally, on the stage of public administration (institutions , organizations, individuals). We started from a broad, philosophical vision of the values and principles that led to the normative consecration of certain rights - cultural rights - and discovered the tools that can be used to apply these norms. Further, we narrowed our analysis to a few cases presented

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[4]Norma M. Riccucci. "The Logic of Inquiry in the Field of Public Administration", in Keifeng Yang and Gerald J. Miller (ed), *Handbook of Research Methods in Public Administration Part I* , *Theory-Based Public Administration Inquiry* , (Boca Raton CRC Press, Taylor & Francis Group, 2008), pp. 3-13
[5]Septimiu Chelcea, *Course: Sociological Research Techniques (* Bucharest, SNSPA, 2001), p.21.

comparatively, but in a comprehensive manner, which involved cultural, managerial, administrative patterns and constitutional design. The data thus collected contributed rather to a direct analysis, through comparisons and contrasts, which subsequently determined a theoretical interpretation of what was presented in the case studies. We later focused the research even more in an attempt to capture *the perspective of the social actor* [6], presenting a case study carried out, this time in a specific way of the quantitative method, being aware of the fact that we do not have the necessary resources to carry out this type of research - which looks indirectly, coldly, at social reality using statistical and probabilistic methods, based on a large number of cases and sampling - as the profile institutes do. I therefore used an own quantitative tool only to converge, towards the end, all the collected data towards the theoretical construction of some proposals for improving the current way of transposing into practice the perennial values and principles from which I had initially started.

Undoubtedly the increasing complexity of the activities of governmental and non-governmental organizations has led to the need for more and more rigorous research in the administrative sciences. However, it cannot be disregarded that in the field of public administration predictability and control are influenced by the political factor and the social factor, thus generating the impossibility of full scientific objectivity [7]. These divergent realities have led some theorists to assert that complete objectivity cannot be achieved within the administrative sciences. Thus, because it cannot always fulfill the rigors of a normal science, in the classical sense of the definition of science, the science of public administration - according to theorists Silvio O. Funtowicz and Jerome R. Ravetz - could rather be categorized as a *" post-normal science"* [8]. The two researchers mentioned earlier developed this concept in their work in the early 1990s , using it to describe the existence of social and ethical complexity in the environments we study. A *postnormal science* is one in which objectivity is not always achievable.[9]

The strategy through which we led the research to achieve the proposed objective is therefore one with a design " *with a predominance of a research paradigm* " - [10]the qualitative one in our case - and presupposes, in the first two chapters, an analysis of the specialized literature in the field human rights - with an emphasis on cultural rights - and in the field of modern public administration theories - with an emphasis on public management. Later, in the third chapter there is a comparative case study regarding the institutional framework and good practices regarding access to culture and

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[6]Ibidem, p.23.
[7]Norma M. Riccucci. "The Logic of Inquiry in the Field of Public Administration", in Keifeng Yang and Gerald J. Miller (ed), *Handbook of Research Methods in Public Administration Part I, Theory-Based Public Administration Inquiry* , (Boca Raton CRC Press, Taylor & Francis Group, 2008), pp. 3-13
[8]Silvio O. Funtowicz and Jerome R. Ravetz. "Science for the post-normal age", Futures, 25 (September 1993):739–755.
[9]Norma M. Riccucci. "The Logic of Inquiry in the Field of Public Administration", pp. 3-13
[10]Septimiu Chelcea, *Course: Sociological Research Techniques (* Bucharest, SNSPA, 2001), p.29

education in 5 countries in the European space (4 members of the European Union - Spain, Poland, Romania and Croatia and a non-EU country – Iceland).

Chapter four includes the data of a case study centered on a set of public institutions at the local level in Romania. In this sense, we will motivate why we focused on the seven component counties of the South-Muntenia development region, where we selected a series of public institutions with a role in the application of public policies in the cultural and educational field to which, at the management level, we asked them to answer the questions of a questionnaire regarding the art classes held in general high school education. A second type of questionnaire, with the same theme, was applied to groups of high school students, in their final year (12th grade), at 5 different high schools, with distinct profiles, from different specializations, both from the environment urban as well as rural.

In the fifth chapter, we shed light on the national and local executive and legislative capacities of political actors in Romania, resulting from the last elections in the 2020 electoral year. Then we present a presentation of the main national political projects of the formations that obtained representation parliamentarian, considering that this way we will identify if and how much space they allocate in their projects to the field of culture and education and we will determine to what extent it will be possible to obtain support for the promotion of public policy proposals in the mentioned fields. The rapid dynamics of the formation and dissolution of national governing alliances and coalitions led us to stop with the study of political programs at the time of September 2021, at which time we had a right-wing political coalition situation, built as a result of the negotiations held immediately after the announcement of the election results parliament and the investiture of the new legislature. At the end of this chapter, we launch a series of proposals for legislative changes, both in the form of *law ferenda,* and in the form of proposals for actions that will underpin a future set of public policies that can be taken over and promoted by actors interested in this regard.

The system of using references will be in accordance with the Chicago/Turabian model, with citation by footnotes and bibliography at the end of the paper. Exact citations, *" ad litteram"* , are enclosed in quotation marks and marked in italics. Where appropriate, footnotes provide additional explanations of terms, concepts, paradigms, authors, or works cited.

In order to facilitate the creation of connections between the exposed theories, I used schematic figures and synthesizing tables based on the information from the bibliography, to which there are numerous references and citations. Also, I also presented, in summary form, a series of articles considered founding for human rights theories and for those on modern public administration. This is also the reason why some of the bibliography we refer to is dated more than three decades ago.

Chapter I

Cultural rights: theories, developments, applicability
- summary -

In this chapter, divided into 5 sections, we propose a foray into the history of the ideas that led to the emergence of the concept of fundamental human rights, in order to then analyze how the branches related to cultural rights, especially the right to education, came from it, in order to finally observe how these concepts were transposed along the type in the fundamental laws of our country and in the related public policies.

During the first chapter, I approached from a philosophical-legal perspective the topic of individual rights and freedoms. I showed how they evolved, how they were seen by those who tried to give them a legitimate framework by drafting acts and documents that would regulate freedom in such a way that everyone could enjoy it, I observed how they were interpreted by different authors and how they understood them.

So, after establishing the principles of cultural rights and the right to education, in particular, which emerged from the synthesis of the relevant theoretical currents in the field, after analyzing the impact of their transposition in the activity of international bodies with a mission in the defense of human rights, we observed the transposition in the constitutional legislation of Romania of cultural rights, especially the right to education, from the Organic Regulations, to the Constitutions of the Principalities, of the Kingdom and then of the Republic. At the same time, I briefly presented the main provisions of the subsequent legislation, with reference to education, aimed at facilitating, ensuring and guaranteeing access to education and culture.

Returning to the first two premises stated in the introductory part of the paper, they were confirmed in this chapter where we could observe how the guarantee and protection of human rights marked the evolution of societies and state constructions after the Second World War. Undoubtedly, this generated a consistent period of conflict mediation by international fora and the establishment of a balance between the world's main poles of power. This balance in turn led to the disappearance of large-scale conflagrations and even a reduced period of armed conflict, which for a large part of the world's population translated into prosperity, development and prolific cultural production.

Chapter II

The impact of public administration reforms on the way of guaranteeing cultural rights

- summary -

The process of remodeling and transforming the way public administration was theorized and applied within democratic states after overcoming the economic crises of the 70s [11]actually meant an adaptation of the way states responded to the changing needs of citizens. The trends of association in international organizations, the globalization of the economy, the voluntary surrender of sovereignty, the challenge of the role of nation states, the increase in the importance of non-state actors and environmental problems have led governments to fast, innovative and often experimental actions. For these reasons, the traditional approaches to public administration and the theories that accompanied them encountered numerous challenges and were fined.

In our case, regarding the theoretical part, we continue throughout this chapter also taking into account the historical and sociological approaches of the New Institutionalism. According to them, the functioning and performance of institutions are historically and culturally interconnected. Historical institutionalism emphasizes the series of past dependencies that are assumed to predetermine future institutional development. This type of approach gave rise to the phrase *legacy public policies* . On the other hand, the sociological approach of the new institutionalism places greater emphasis on cultural imprints and moral templates, stereotypes, which provide frameworks for guiding human actions. Because of them, adaptation problems arise with the introduction of new formal rules and the emergence of new institutional structures.[12]

For the present chapter, over the course of five sub-chapters, we have chosen to address mainly the paradigm of the reform of the local public administration, and implicitly of its institutions, which has sparked numerous theoretical but also practical controversies since the 80s of the last century - the *new public management* . Today *, the digital revolution* has brought with it another current of approach to the transformation of the public sector, which determined the challenge of the ideological hegemony of the NMP and its replacement with a vision adapted to the new challenges, *a new public governance* that responds to the needs of citizens. Starting from these paradigms, we will decipher the institutional framework developed at the level of political decision and public administration, for

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[11]Olivia Alecsoiu, *The Oil Crises and Their Impact on the "Thirty Glorious Years"* Astra Salvensis, VIII (2020, no. 15), p.31-51, https://astrasalvensis.eu/%3Fmdocs-file%3D2055+&cd =4&hl=ro&ct=clnk&gl=ro, acc. Aug. 2020
[12]Sabine Kuhlmann and Paolo Fedele, *New Public Management in Continental Europe: Local Government Modernization in Germany, France and Italy from a Comparative Perspective* Chap3, pp.49-74 in Wollmann, Hellmut/Marcou, Gérard: *The provision of public services in Europe* . Palgrave: MacMillan. 2010 https://doi.org/10.4337/9781849807227.00010

the application of public policies derived from the principles of cultural rights. In this sense we focus on two aspects: 1) conceptual clarifications regarding the public sector and 2) the emergence, evolution and dissolution of the concept of new public management.

In general terms, I also used a classical approach in analyzing the discourse used in *the form of rhetoric, argumentation, syllogistic*[13] regarding the new public management. We also used the method of analyzing *frames already existing in the perceiver's memory*[14] starting from the broader framework of public administration, I then narrowed down to the level of public management, selected one of the reforming paradigms in its sphere - the *new public management* - and tried to deconstruct it in the theories and currents of thought that were the basis of its emergence , so that at the end of the chapter we clarify the component concepts that we can later capitalize on in chapter III dedicated to the comparative study between European political-administrative systems. In order to facilitate the creation of connections between the exposed theories, we also used summative figures and tables extracted from the bibliography, otherwise there were numerous references and citations to it, as we will also present in summary form a series of articles considered the *founders* of the new public management theories . This is also why some of the bibliography I referred to is dated over two decades ago. We presented one by one, preserving the chronology of the emergence of the theories that came to explain why, how and in what context the NMP appeared, so that near the end we reach the way in which the principles of cultural rights were transposed within national and local public institutions.

So if in the first chapter we managed to summarize the general principles of cultural rights and implicitly the right to education , we believe that during this second chapter we managed to answer the first two research questions. In this sense, we have identified the principles of public administration reform that can ensure the necessary measures to adapt it to the increasingly diverse needs of citizens today, and we have highlighted the tools available to local authorities, precisely to put these principles into practice in in order to satisfy the general interest of citizens

This chapter validates both the fourth and the fifth premise from which we started our scientific approach, and we can thus affirm that Western (Anglo-American) democracy brought with it a model of the economy market and a public administration model that favored the export of concepts and procedures from the private environment to the public sector.

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[13]Ana Irina Kantor, *Analysis of political discourse - course support* . (Cluj-Napoca.2003) p.2
[14]Ibidem *,* p. 6

Chapter III

Cultural rights, from national to local level - comparative case studies e
- *summary* -

At this stage we propose to lean on the legislative basis of local autonomy to identify its possibility to make functional the administrative institutions that should manage public policies in the field of education and culture at the local level. Thus, from our point of view, this chapter can be seen as a report on the current state and consequences of local autonomy in the context of administrative reforms of five states of different sizes, with different administrative-territorial organization, different cultures and different histories but common aspirations.

The reason why we chose these five states is, beyond the complexity and distinctive note of each one's administrative system, the desire to compare an old member state of the European Union (Spain - 1986) with a state from the first wave of the Union's expansion to the east ex-communist (Poland – 2004), a state from the second stage of eastward enlargement (Romania – 2007), a new EU member, but former member of a federation of states (Croatia – 2013) and a member state of the European Economic Area, belonging to the tradition of political-administrative organization specific to northern Europe.

This comparison is made in the context of the emergence of the reforms generated by the transition from a centralized totalitarian political system to a political system based on liberal democracy and the free market economy, but also the integration of those associated principles into the state administration system initially of the *new public management*. These processes were approached from the perspective of the new public management paradigm, with reflections on guaranteeing the cultural rights of citizens but with special attention to the cultural patterns of each individual nation.

We therefore went through 5 territorial administrative organization models of some European states, 4 of which are members of the European Union and the fifth is part of the European Economic Space. For each of them, I have presented from the constitutional level to the level of subsequent legislation, the way they integrate the principles regarding cultural rights, the right to education and the architecture of the legislation generating public policies in the field. With numerous similarities but also with defining particularities for the cultural and historical heritage of each state under analysis, we highlighted that in all 5 cases the Supreme Laws guarantee respect for the right to individual development through access to culture and education. In all 5 case studies, the focus on the constitutional architecture also highlighted the modern organizational character of the public

administration according to democratic principles regarding aspects related to: local autonomy, transparency, citizen participation, *inclusivity* , proportionality, responsibility, efficiency, effectiveness and rule of law. [15]These principles were, as we found, also the subject of multiple attempts at reform, overlapping almost entirely with the impact generated by the application of the concepts of organizing the central and local public administration according to the new public management.

The way of structuring the institutional architecture of the political-administrative systems presented in this chapter can undoubtedly also be read in the key of the cultural dimensions presented by us and developed meticulously by Geert Hofstede and his collaborators in order to discover the values of the national culture of the states of the world. Cultural patterns can provide us with surprising explanations regarding the interaction between public managers and public officials, between public officials and citizens, or regarding the degree of resistance to change in the public sector in the case of successive reform processes.

Even though the cultural compass tool provides us with a comparative analysis of up to 4 state actors [16], we used the data available for all five systems analyzed in our paper and presented them in a comparative table to observe possible similarities or differences between the patterns cultures of the nations that were the object of our study. Of course our interpretation may in turn be exposed to subjectivity and cultural stereotypes specific to the culture we are a part of and can undoubtedly be improved with further observations. The comparative analysis carried out in this chapter contributed to the confirmation of two more premises from which we started, those relating to the pressure on the education systems in order to adapt to the demands of the economy and the labor market. The same systems are also called upon to find the most appropriate training methods in order to preserve and transmit particular national, regional and local cultural elements.

In all five analyzed cases, beyond the similarities and differences of political, administrative or cultural structure, it was confirmed to us that the right to culture and the right to education are guaranteed at the constitutional level and also by specific laws. We therefore also have a confirmation for the third premise from which we started at the beginning of our study, namely that the development of democratic institutions in a growing number of states - especially after 1990 - allowed citizens ever more extensive access to information and innovations. This fact was corroborated with the increasingly significant influence of democratic and economic principles of the Western (Anglo-American) type and contributed to the process of globalization of culture and the development of a society based on consumption.

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[15]Diana-Camelia Iancu, *The European Union and public administration,* p.35
[16]According to https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/croatia,poland,romania,spain/ accessed April 2021

Motto: Do you think it is possible to live without art and culture?

Yes! But it's not worth it "

Thomas Caragiu[17]

Chapter IV

Perceptions regarding the guarantee of cultural rights through local public administration institutions - case study

- summary -

In the previous chapter, I presented the cultural patterns observed in areas delimited not only territorially but also administratively. I followed the organization of the studied states as it derives from their constitutions and subsequent laws. I specified the way in which public institutional construction, national and local, can facilitate citizens' access to culture and education and I exposed the connection between national culture, the way public administration is organized and the style of modern public management, characteristic of each of the 5 analyzed states.

As I presented at the beginning of this paper, in the following, during 4 sub-chapters, we also make known the results of a research carried out with specific means of the quantitative method, out of the desire to provide our scientific approach - predominantly qualitative - with a component that verifies in a quantifiable way the perspective of social actors. [18]Nevertheless, we remain consistent with the view that the science that studies public administration is located on the fine border that delimits positivism and postmodernism, the nature of administrative science being subject to perceptions based on beliefs, patterns and presuppositions. On the one hand post-positivists emphasize the importance of multiple measurements and observations, each of which may have different types of error; admitting that in the end they can detect multiple realities manifesting simultaneously, postmodernists on the other hand, who value hermeneutics and phenomenology, rather value case studies and the presentation of cases of good practice. [19]As in the case of any research carried out in the social sciences and the present one involves not only the assumption of some decisions about the methodology, but is also subject to the subjectivity of the ontological and epistemological perceptions of the researcher.

So, in addition to document analysis, comparative case studies, direct observation and indirect observation, we consider it important for the structure of our study and the use of a quantitative

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[17]According to www.radioresita.ro/cultura/foto-in-memoriam-toma-caragiu-se-poate-trai-fara-arta-si-cultura-da-dar-nu-merita
[18]Septimiu Chelcea, *Course: Sociological research techniques* , p. 23
[19]Norma M. Riccucci "The Logic of Inquiry in the Field of Public Administration", pp.3-13

research method to be able to take a *snapshot* of the perceptions that both those who applied cultural and educational public policies and those who benefited from them had them at the beginning of 2021 . In order to find out how the cultural and educational activity is carried out at the moment in Romania, in order to observe the trends, desires, syncopes and perceptions at the level of citizens, we decided to collect a series of information related to the topic of local access to culture and education with the help of the *questionnaire technique* . [20]In this sense, the method of application was that of self-administration, the actual investigation tool was the questionnaire, built and applied online, and the distribution process was carried out exclusively by electronic means.[21]

Through this approach, we examine the validity of the premises presented in the introductory chapter, especially the premise regarding the globalization of culture and the premise regarding the challenges of education systems. At the same time, after analyzing the results of the questionnaires, we can see if our hypotheses are confirmed regarding the importance of the role of local public authorities (and of the cultural and educational institutions subordinate to them) in guaranteeing cultural rights. Last but not least, such a study can indicate a possible answer to our research questions regarding: local public institutions that need to be reformed; the public policies that should be developed or modified and the high school education models that should be applied so that cultural rights and especially the right to education are guaranteed, achieving an effective application of public policies that affect young generations.

In order to narrow our research area, we followed the indicator regarding the school dropout rate and chose to focus on one of the 8 development regions of Romania [22], a country that was part of the case studies presented in the previous chapters. At the level of this region, we followed a target group made up of leaders of deconcentrated, decentralized and local institutions of culture and education, to which we applied a questionnaire composed of questions regarding access to education and culture and the teaching method of arts subjects at the level of high school. At the same time, in order to obtain the perspective of the direct beneficiaries of the education process and evaluate their degree of access to cultural events and activities, we also directed our attention to a second group consisting of young high school students in their last year of study in within some urban and rural educational institutions. In this case, we further narrowed the research area, following the population indicator, and developed a separate questionnaire, with questions related both to the conduct of art classes during the 4 years of high school, to the students' perception of the administrative side of education as well and their reporting to local public authorities.

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[20]Septimiu Chelcea, *Course: Sociological research techniques* , p.18
[21]Ibid
[22]As they are defined in Romania by Law no. 315/2004, with subsequent amendments and additions

As we observed in chapter III, the administrative-territorial organization of Romania being on two levels, the public administration authorities through which local autonomy is exercised in the counties are the county councils led by a president elected uninominally, and in the case of urban or rural territorial administrative units are directly elected local councils and mayors. In the case of the economic region subject to our analysis, we therefore have 7 distinct county councils, led by 7 council presidents, 48 local councils and mayors of urban localities and 519 local councils and mayors of rural localities. They are joined as authorities of the public administration by 7 prefects, who hold positions of public dignity as appointed representatives of the Government at the local level, who lead the decentralized public services of the ministries and other bodies of the central public administration in the administrative-territorial units.[23]

Next, I detailed the method of carrying out the survey undertaken, the structure, format and size of the questionnaire for each target group as well as the content and type of questions. The period of their application was between February 1 and 28, 2021. The method of application was self-administered, online, due to the conditions specific to the health alert states imposed by the central authorities. In building the applied forms we adapted the models used by the US National Agency for Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) [24]in the most recent campaign to assess the skills and knowledge of American students, in public and private schools, in the subjects of art (arts music and visual arts).

In our research - mainly in this chapter - and later in the proposals presented, we took into account the recommendations addressed to the national institutions of culture and education according to the report A/HRC/37/55 from 2018. Keeping the benchmarks drawn by the documents drawn up by the Special Rapporteur in the Field of Rights Cultural from the United Nations, from 2018, addressed to the UN Human Rights Council (A/HRC/37/55), in this chapter we sought to identify - among some public workers in culture and education but also some students at the end of high school - perceptions of local acts and practices in the field of culture and education.

I ended this chapter on a note of optimism, in the short and medium term, also presenting concrete examples of public program projects aimed at facilitating access to culture, especially for young people.

In the face of these challenges, the Romanian education system needs a rapid transformation in order to come to the real support of society. In this chapter we tried to capture at the level of a single region and, subsequently, at the level of one of its component counties, the perceptions of experts, practitioners, in the cultural and educational fields, but also of the young beneficiaries of

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[23]Administrative Code of Romania GEO no. 57/2019 art.249-250 -
http://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/215925, accessed July 2022
[24]According to https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/arts_2016/#/

their efforts, regarding the current state of affairs in the system. We started from simple questions related to respondents' reporting of reading, music and dance to see their appetite for arts-related activities and to discover if there are inclinations towards developing artistic skills in a formal, institutional setting.

We found that problems related to adequate funding are indicated by both practitioners and students as the main causes of dysfunctions in the system. To these problems are added the syncopes regarding the virtual mode of interaction, imposed more and more by the current social context. Large discrepancies between the level of allocation of time spent online by educators or managers and young graduates can be an indicator for the inefficiency of the online education process.

On the one hand, educators uncomfortable with the artificiality of virtual pedagogical interaction, are forced to make sustained efforts to adapt effective teaching and assessment procedures. On the other hand, young people, removed from the institutional educational environment, find it increasingly difficult to find the motivational resources for studying and for the appropriate reception of information.

Motto: "Ars longa, vita brevis, occasio praeceps,
experimentum periculosum, iudicium difficile"[25]

Chapter V - Culture and education: Quo vadis, Romania?
- summary -

As we presented, in the second chapter, public policies represent everything that an executive decides to do or not in his governing act, and political parties play an essential role in democratic systems, contributing to the constitution of both legislatures and national executives and local, so any approach to building a sectoral public policy must take into account the political programs proposed by the actors present on the political scene. If in chapter 3 we presented comparative national models of political-administrative organization following *their* legal and institutional framework, focusing on the fields of culture and especially education, and in chapter 4 we turned our attention to an empirical study focused on the level regionally in Romania, in this chapter we will try to capitalize on the information and results obtained up to this point. In this way, we will get closer to achieving our objective established at the beginning of the paper, namely: the elaboration of some public policy proposals and the indication of how to implement them in practice.

Considering the definition from which we started in the approach to public policies but also what we presented in the previous chapters, the model used as a template in order to achieve our objective was a circular one. In the case of our study, in order to be able to propose a new public policy to the national decision-makers, we first analyzed the views of the political actors with parliamentary representation regarding culture and education in order to identify if there are the bases necessary to create bridges of communication and further promotion. Once the political component of representation was exposed, we turned our attention to the construction component of public policies according to the political programs of the parliamentary formations, which are also the ones that have the greatest influence (through the number of local elected officials at their disposal) in the practical transposition to local level of their desires. We therefore have 5 parliamentary parties from whose political program we present the vision related to culture and education in the order of the component of the governmental arch of power and then of the opposition parties, at the date of this study (end of September 2021):

Taking into account the above, taking into account the specialized literature (examined in chapters I and II), taking into account the elements highlighted by the comparative analysis (performed in chapter III) and analyzing the results of our research (exposed in chapter IV) to fulfill

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[25]Latin saying that proclaims the permanence of art in counterweight to the ephemerality of life, about meaning and origin see also https://literarydevices.net/ars-longa-vita-brevis

the proposed objective, in this chapter we have presented a number of eight proposals that could be the subject of public policy initiatives.

It is equally necessary to mention that in developing the recommendations we also took into account the report presented to the United Nations General Assembly by the special rapporteur for cultural rights in 2021. It includes proposals regarding the need to create conditions that enable everyone, including marginalized members of society, to participate in cultural life in a meaningful way, including by dismantling barriers such as poverty and discrimination; ensuring the right of every person to participate on an equal basis in defining and redefining cultures.[26]

The theoretical aspects derived from the specialized literature, treated at length in the first two chapters of our paper, were carefully followed in their practical form during the third and fourth chapters. So, by comparing the education systems of the five proposed countries, we took the necessary steps to validate our first hypothesis, generating information that supports that if a society seeks to connect and adapt to the rapid pace of technological and scientific evolution, this can be done and by developing an adequate education system, with innovative teaching methods, capable of providing citizens with both the skills necessary for survival and personal development in the society of the future, as well as the ability to know and defend their rights and freedoms.

Later on, corroborating this analysis with the interpretation of the results of the forms applied to the two groups mentioned in chapter IV, we consider that the second hypothesis launched in the introductory part was also validated, namely to what extent local public authorities and implicitly subordinate institutions are delegated at the national level more and more attributions, including regarding the fields of culture and education, their role becomes more important in guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of citizens. And finally, the exemplification of successful models - with measurable and visible results at the level of citizens - in the application of public cultural and educational policies led to the validation of the third hypothesis with which we operated, namely, how much a state manages to ensure the application of coherent public policies, aimed at determining the creation, operation and consolidation of cultural and educational institutions connected to the dynamics of the information society, the more this state can guarantee and expand citizens' access to culture and education, while preserving the national cultural specificity, regional or local. This chapter, five, was dedicated to the examination of the possibility of effective transposition into practice of some proposals to improve national and regional activities in the fields of culture and education, so that towards its end we elaborate the recommendations that we derived from this study.

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[26]See https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/a76178-report-special-rapporteur-field-cultural-rights-karima-bennoune

General conclusions

- summary -

As we mentioned in the first lines of the paper, this research project is among the efforts aimed at observing the processes of evolution and transformation of the public administration, from the last decades, both in the European Union and in Romania. Focusing on the local component of the public sector, with an emphasis on the institutions, instruments and procedures aimed at facilitating citizens' access to culture and education, we tried to examine the conceptual paths of international as well as local theorists. We proposed, on the one hand, to identify the current problems of the system and the aspects that can be the subject of reforms, and on the other hand, to contribute to highlighting the legislative course of this field in Romania. Before concluding, we must therefore discuss the correctness of the premises from which we started, the validation of our hypotheses, possible answers to the research questions and possible legislative changes derived from the empirical study.

In the introduction of this paper, I included the motivation for the need for research, I presented the methodology used, the premises, hypotheses and research questions, as well as the terminological landmarks necessary to study the topic. In order to facilitate the creation of connections between the exposed theories, I used schematic figures and synthesizing tables based on information from the bibliography, to which there were numerous references in the footnotes. Also, throughout the entire work, I also presented in summary form a series of articles considered to be the foundation for human rights theories, as well as modern public administration, a fact for which part of the bibliography I referred to is dated more than three decades ago .

In the first chapter I approached from a philosophical-legal perspective the topic of individual rights and freedoms. I showed how they evolved over time, how they were seen by those who tried to give them a legitimate framework by drawing up acts and documents to regulate freedom in such a way that everyone could enjoy it, I saw how they were interpreted by different authors and how they understood them. We focused on the presentation of the relevant historical landmarks in the field, followed the evolution of the flow of academic debates, identified the mirroring of these principles at the level of international bodies and highlighted how these two concepts were reflected in the fundamental laws of Romania since their appearance in the century XIX to the Constitution that is in force today.

Considering the first two premises stated in the introductory part of the paper, we can say that they were confirmed in the first chapter where we could observe how the guarantee and protection of human rights marked the evolution of societies and state constructions after the Second War World. This fact led to a long period of conflict mediation by international forums and to the generation of a situation of economic and military balance between the world's main poles of power. This balance

has in turn produced the disappearance of large-scale conflagrations and their restriction to the regional or local level - generally on the periphery of geo-political spheres of influence - and to a reduced period of armed clashes, which for a large part of the world's population meant an interval of several decades of peace translated into economic prosperity, technological development and cultural flourishing.

The second chapter was dedicated to analyzing the impact of the reforms of the last decades in the public sector on the way in which it concerned itself with ensuring access to public education and culture services. We started from the main approaches identified in the specialized literature and later focused on the concepts of public management that gave us a possible tool needed to analyze public policies in our field of study. I have therefore conducted a review of the main views on public sector reforms of the NMP type, developing in turn the ideas they have subjected to debate and how the paradigm has appropriated them. Within this reforming current we presented clarifications on how we could lean on public sector institutions and identified the global framework of the principles of the right to culture and the right to education that states should transform into public policies that to provide citizens with free access to personal development, while keeping the connection with their cultural identity roots untainted.

If from the first chapter we retained as principles of cultural rights: *freedom, accessibility, free of charge, obligation, inclusiveness, cultural identity, protection of cultural heritage* and *quality education* , during the second chapter, we brought clarifications regarding the public sector and identified the answer to the first research question, emphasizing as guiding principles regarding public administration reform: *effectiveness, efficiency, economy, accountability, transparency, decentralization, outsourcing and inclusion.* Thus, we concluded that these principles can provide the necessary strategies to adapt the public sector to the increasingly diverse needs of citizens today. And in order to be able to unravel the second research question, throughout this chapter I highlighted the tools available to local authorities precisely to put these principles into practice in order to satisfy the general interest of citizens, and I divided them into two categories: *legal instruments* and *managerial instruments.*

Also in the second chapter we were confirmed the presumption (premises 4 and 5) that Western (Anglo-American) democracy brought with it a model of the market economy that favored the export of concepts and procedures from the private environment to the public sector. Public management is transforming according to the needs generated by the growing number of requirements that modern society must satisfy in the relationship with the citizen-client. This metamorphosis has led to a rethinking of how public policies are designed, adopted, implemented and communicated.

The third chapter, after a brief exemplification of the transposition of NMP principles by different states, included an approach to the term decentralization and the principle of subsidiarity,

also seen as instruments for transferring decision-making power to the level of local authorities. We then went on to expose some European political-administrative systems and presented the mechanisms they develop to ensure respect for the right to culture and education within comparative case studies. In these studies, we applied sociologist Geert Hofstede's concept of the dimensions of national cultural values and used *the cultural compass* developed based on this concept to analyze the cultural patterns of 5 European states. We therefore went through 5 territorial administrative organization models of 5 different states, 4 of which are members of the European Union, and the fifth part of the European Economic Area. For each of them, I have presented from the constitutional level to the level of subsequent legislation how to integrate the principles regarding the right to culture and education and the architecture of the legislation generating public policies in the field.

With numerous similarities but also with defining particularities for the cultural and historical heritage of each state under analysis, we highlighted that in all 5 cases the Supreme Laws guarantee respect for the right to individual development through access to culture and education. In this way, we manage to have a confirmation for the third premise that was the basis of the development of our study, considering that it was demonstrated to us that the development of democratic institutions in an increasing number of states - especially after the end of the Cold War and the rise of the Iron Curtain - allowed citizens ever- expanding access to information and innovation. This progress, going hand in hand with the increasing importation of Anglo-American democratic and economic concepts, led to the globalization of consumer culture and society.

The response of the national states did not take long to appear, and the public administrations built protection mechanisms, to defend the local specifics of the populations, customs, cultures and civilizations threatened with extinction. The comparative analysis of the 5 administrative systems led at the same time to the confirmation of the last two premises (6 and 7) from which we started with regard to the classical education systems that were increasingly pressured to adapt to the requirements economic aspects of society and equally to adopt measures to preserve local identities, being those called to prepare the new generations of citizens of a world that seems to be tending towards uniformity.

Once the transfer from the theoretical plan was achieved, in chapter four I presented the results of the case study that I carried out by applying some online forms addressed to some public institutions of culture and education at the level of territorial administrative units (cities and municipalities) from the counties which are part of the Sud-Muntenia development region. In this way, we tried to concretely capture the local internal mechanisms, the transposition of normativity in practice and the vision of practitioners and beneficiaries about how they are guaranteed access to education and culture.

The chapters that included the comparative case studies and the debate of the results of the applied questionnaires also meant an approach through which we sought to verify the validity of our research hypotheses. The main element analyzed was the right of every person to receive education. By virtue of it, I considered that all citizens must be guaranteed access to elementary education free of charge and compulsory, so that later, depending on the administrative capacities of each state, the administrative apparatus can be organized so that the stages of secondary education and superior to be as accessible as possible for as many people as possible.

As we could see, when the public policies of the state were directed towards increasing the education level of the citizens, the positive results - visible through the literacy rate and high school graduates - were not slow to appear at the level of the whole society. From the analysis of the Icelandic, Polish and Spanish education systems, our first hypothesis emerges as valid, according to which through the development of an appropriate education system, with innovative teaching methods, it is possible to connect and adapt to the rapid pace of evolution of technology and science, the state becoming thus able to provide citizens with the skills necessary for survival and personal development in the society of the future, as well as the ability to know and defend their rights and freedoms.

The efficiency, effectiveness and economy of the way the state understood to apply the principle of subsidiarity transformed the local public authorities into determining actors of the progress and well-being of the communities. Through the institutions that fell to them in coordination, local public administrations took on more and more responsibilities in guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of citizens, even in terms of access to culture and education. The positive effect of building the *conviviality* of Spain's communities and the successful regionalization of Poland reflected progress at the level of the whole society.

Moreover, as it emerges from the study carried out on the two categories of people at the level of the South-Muntenia economic development region in our country - coordinators in education and culture and students - it was observed how strong the citizens' perception is of the importance of local administration institutions, especially the town hall and the local council. At the same time, the lack of visibility of the activity of cultural centers or clubs/palaces for children may indicate the need to change their way of working. This being corroborated with the data that indicated to us that the need for access and the interest of the new generations for art and culture is at a high level. Of course, it is not enough to measure perceptions for the subsequent issuance of some reform proposals, but this analysis, considered both in the context of the analysis compared to other political-administrative systems, and in the light of the national indexes and dimensions of cultural values developed by Hofstede, can constitute a concrete starting point in the application of modern principles of reform.

Even though we lacked the necessary resources to carry out a large-scale study on communities and large samples, being constrained including by the pandemic context in which we carried out our research, we are convinced that mirroring the concrete realities, identifying the needs of citizens and observing the way of institutional interaction represent fundamental elements for actors who develop and implement public policies in any society. Paradoxically, a recent dramatic event - the SARS Cov-2 pandemic - has determined a positive effect regarding the acceleration of the digitization of the education system and the transposition of art and culture events into the virtual environment, an objective towards which societies in more economically and technologically developed countries they were moving much faster than our country anyway.

However, after a year and a half of telework, online school and shows hosted on the main digital platforms, a large part of the institutions with the role of managing the application of public policies in the field of culture and education at the county level analyzed by us they either had no websites and e-mail addresses at all, or they were not functional, not up-to-date, and had little or no response to online inquiries. In this case, their disconnection with the needs of the generation that spends on average more than 3 hours a day in the virtual environment, that reads less and less printed books, that opens the doors of libraries in a decreasing number from year to year and that he knows almost nothing about the extracurricular activities that he would like and even be able to do with the facilitation of these institutions.

In contrast to this lack of transparency are all the other systems analyzed. In these cases, even despite the language barriers, the public institutions, both of the central and local administrations, have a high degree of transparency of the information related to the activity they carry out. Through the analysis carried out both at the normative level (constitutional and through secondary legislation), but also at the level of organization of the educational system, as well as through the interpretation of the results of the applied forms, we believe that hypothesis number two has been validated, clearly observing that the role of the authorities local public and subordinate institutions is an extremely important one in guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of citizens, which is why in recent decades they have received more and more attributions regarding culture and education.

Digitization, decentralization, establishing clear performance criteria, consulting local communities and experts, were closely related to public sector reform efforts in the states analyzed in our paper. The successful examples encountered led to the validation of the third and final research hypothesis launched at the beginning of this paper. In this sense, it was confirmed to us that ensuring coherent public policies can lead to the creation and consolidation of cultural and educational institutions connected to the dynamics of the information society as well as attractive mechanisms for their operation and can guarantee and expand citizens' access to culture and education, while preserving national, regional or local cultural specificity. The negative effect, however, in terms of

culture and education can consist in creating a distorted image of what art means, it can lead to accessing and memorizing false information and following pseudo-models whose purpose is exclusively commercial, because finally to find that the exercise of cultural rights was only an artificially maintained illusion.

The data presented in chapter five helped us to realize the connection between the theoretical construct achieved and what the political and administrative structure, national and local, allows in order to implement the recommendations derived from our research. In the end, I managed to outline a possible answer for the last three questions stated in the beginning of the paper. These answers converge, in our view, towards achieving the research objective developed in chapter five, in the form of the proposals presented.

Returning to the pyramid of needs proposed by Maslow, if we look at the need for education and culture as placed on the higher levels of self-esteem and self-actualization, and if we make their achievement a goal understood by as many citizens as possible, we will contribute certainty in creating that set of conditions that lead to individual fulfillment and freedom. We can thus achieve the goals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights according to which personal development is the central objective of education, development which actually represents the natural evolution towards a climate of tolerance, peace, collaboration and constructive intercultural dialogue.[27]

The nature of public administration, both as a field of academic research and as a field of professional practice, requires in the case of in-depth studies, the use of a diversity of research paradigms, models and methods depending on the specific goals, the communities targeted and the public services analyzed . The wide range of topics, issues and audiences in public administration exposes the researcher to a considerable number of research options and gives him the opportunity to analyze a wide variety of fields or subfields constantly seeking interdisciplinary arguments.[28]

There are certainly many lines of research in the field of guaranteeing cultural rights and the right to education in particular, lines that countless researchers have pursued or will pursue. From the very beginning, we proposed that our approach be transposed into a work through which we would reflect as objectively as possible the relationship between what a government proposes to do, at the level of principles and public policy programs, and the reality in the field of local public administration. Plus value in the public sector is a multidimensional construct that includes preferences expressed collectively and politically consumed by citizens, and which does not only

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[27]Irina Moroianu Zlătescu et al. *Education, the right to education and education for human rights* . pp. 8-30
[28]Jonathan B. Justice, " Purpose and Significance of Research Design" in Keifeng Yang and Gerald J. Miller (eds), *Handbook of Research Methods in Public Administration* Part I, Theory-Based Public Administration Inquiry, (Boca Raton CRC Press, Taylor & Francis Group, 2008) pp. 75-92

involve obtaining tangible results, but also the construction of prior procedures that can generate trust and social justice.

Perhaps the biggest challenge facing public administration today is keeping up with the ever-evolving needs of citizens while finding the resources and methods to guarantee their fundamental rights. The big questions to which all the involved actors of the public sector, at national and international level, are called to answer, are those related to the ways of revitalizing the public administration and reaffirming its essential role in the development of society, capitalizing on the important lessons of the NMP while new reforming currents are identified in a complex and unstable international context. Other questions, which require quick answers in the current global situation, concern strategies to justly manage the shift in attention given by the public sector from the delivery and provision of social services, to ensuring economic, financial, energy, environmental, food and social security. A final set of major questions to which experts in the field should find the right answers are, in our opinion, those related to the need to strengthen transparency, accountability and digital governance systems in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

The central challenge for public administration today is therefore not whether to focus exclusively on security in the strictest sense or on development issues per se, but to address in a balanced and integrated way all aspects of human security, which are interdependent . Finally, it is not only by addressing and eliminating the factors that cause violence and insecurity that problems of security and stability can be solved, but rather by directly and effectively addressing the problems arising from the failures of governance and public administration.

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