

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS OF THE ROMANIAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION*

Marius Constantin PROFIROIU
Ana-Claudia ȚAPARDEL
Christine MIHĂESCU (DEMETER)

Abstract

The performance of public administration is one of the top priorities of the national governments worldwide, not only for Romania. The role of a performing management system at the level of public administration is to ensure a high quality and efficiency of the adopted policies and strategies, of the provided public services and of the administrative act itself, and to guarantee the advantage of a competitive and efficient administration both in relation to its own citizens, and in competition with other cities and countries throughout Europe and all around the world.

Following these considerations, and based upon an empirical research conducted with the aid of a survey regarding 'The analysis of the performance level of the Romanian public administration' the article aims to (1) identify modern management tools that determine and influence the performance of Romanian public institutions, (2) analyze the effects of using project management as organizational capacity development instruments by public administration in Romania, and (3) determine the influence and effects of the external factors on the performance and development of Romanian public administration.

Keywords: public administration, performance, performance management, strategic planning and management, project management.

Marius Constantin PROFIROIU

Professor, Department of Administration and Public Management, Faculty of Administration and Public Management, Academy of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania

Tel: 0040-213-191.900

E-mail: profiroiu@gmail.com

Ana-Claudia ȚAPARDEL

PhD Student, Management Faculty, Academy of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania

Tel: 0040-740-211.175

E-mail: tanacaludia@yahoo.com

Christine MIHĂESCU (DEMETER)

PhD Student, Management Faculty, Academy of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania

Tel.: 0040-723-367.937

Email: demeter.chris@gmail.com

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1. Introduction

In the current context, the Romanian central and local governments are pursuing the performance of public institutions, based on the criteria of efficiency, performance, competitiveness and quality. It is a common goal undertaken in order to provide efficiency and effectiveness of their delivered activities in terms of providing better services to the population, to implement significant public policies, and to run appropriate projects.

Taking into consideration the expansion of New Public Management in the current managerial activity of public organizations all around the world, modern management instruments (such as strategic planning and management, performance management, project management and others) are essential to be used, implemented, and evaluated in order to ensure the performance and development of Romanian public administration.

The research will provide a presentation of the instruments and factors that can influence the performance of public administration and aims to reach the following goals:

- To identify modern management tools (such as strategic planning and management, performance management, project management) which determine and influence the performance of Romanian public institutions;
- To analyze the effects of using project management as an organizational capacity development instrument by public administration in Romania; and
- To determine the influence and effects of external factors on the performance and development of Romanian public administration.

2. Methodology

With regard to the research methodology, the paper relies on an empirical investigation conducted using a survey regarding 'The analysis of the performance level of the Romanian public administration'. Aiming to identify the level of performance of the Romanian public administration the questionnaire was adapted to the particular conditions prevalent in Romanian public institutions and includes the following data categories (objectives and hypotheses), which have been analyzed and interpreted:

- Analysis of the use of modern management tools (such as strategic planning and management, performance management, project management) which can determine and influence the performance of Romanian public institutions;
- Analysis of the effects of using project management as an organizational capacity development instrument by public administration in Romania; and
- Analysis of effects and influence of the external factors on the performance and development of the public administration in Romania.

The questionnaire was aimed at two main target groups, namely civil servants from the central level of the Romanian public administration and civil servants from the local level of the Romanian public administration.

The questionnaire was conducted on a sample of 800 civil servants, using the survey method of sociological research; it was distributed to the respondents using the web platform www.chestionare.ase.ro. The survey was conducted in January and February 2013, the response rate was 46.25 % (representing about 370 respondents).

The purpose of the article is to identify modern management tools that can determine and influence the performance of Romanian public institutions, the effects of using project management as an organizational capacity development instrument by public administration in Romania, and the influence and effects of the external factors on the performance and development of Romanian public administration.

3. Strategic management and project management – essential instruments for the performance and development of Romanian public administration

Performance management represents the use and development of management instruments that help to periodically examine the results and efficiency of public policies, services and programs in order to improve them. Governments are developing performance standards regarding public policies, services and programs, as well as in the management and administrative functions. Furthermore, they adopt the same instruments and measures as methods of assessing their activities and enhancing their reporting mechanisms under political programs and mandates.

In this analytical perspective, strategic and project management become critical preconditions to performance. If strategic management and/or project based management are not present, a high level of performance is unlikely to occur.

Also, we have to avoid the mistake of limiting public management to the executive function because it is a continuation of the old dichotomy legal vs. managerial approach and it is not in line with the New Public Management approach, seen in all western countries, approach which places a strong emphasis on strategic and project management.

The strategic management and project management approaches are referring to the importance of management systems and instruments that are used by the public administration. Even more, as so much of public administration literature has demonstrated, public administration performance rests not only on the management and organizational capacity but also on the political choice and structure, because there is a noticeable increase in the influence of the political system on the management functions from public administration and some other external factors that define governance capacity (O'Toole and Meier, 1999). The paper focuses on strategic management, project management and organizational capacity instruments and performance outcomes.

3.1. Theoretical framework of public administration performance

The performance of public administration is an ambiguous concept in the academic public management context, because it refers to a new concept of New Public Management (NPM) with new approaches to public management reform. Performance is a key word in the context of New Public Management (OECD, 1993), it has various

meanings in different contexts (Carer, 1991), making the design of performance indicators very difficult. From this starting point, performance management and NPM reforms have gradually become an integrated part of modern governance arrangements (Pollit and Bouckaert, 2004). Performance is not a unitary concept (Bouckaert and Halligan, 2008, p. 14), but a combination of input, activity, output, effect/outcome and trust.

Referring to the New Public Management and the reform of public administration worldwide, performance is linked to outputs and outcomes (Boyne *et al.*, 2005; Ingraham, 2005). While there is no universal definition of performance and the literature came up over time with a lot of dimensions of performance, performance is frequently linked with the terms of efficiency and effectiveness and sometimes with equity (Berman, 2006). From this common perspective of defining performance, we could link the organizational capacity (inputs) of public institution to performance (outputs) as a connection between organizational resources, management system characteristics and policy results.

With regard to the concept of public administration, we understand it as organisms that are directly subordinated to the political power and that are in the service of the Executive in the political process (Bossaert, 2002). This is very important to mention, as long as external factors (such as political will or power) are influencing the performance of public administration and public administration itself. As for defining the roles of public institutions, these are using the managerial, political and judicial processes in order to accomplish the mandates of legislative, executive and judicial leadership, to assure the regulations and services for society on the whole as well as in its segments (Alexandru and Cărăușan, 2005).

The connection between the performance of public administration and its capacity has been shown by many authors (Eisinger, 2002; Meier and O'Toole, 2001; Sowa, Seldon and Sandfort, 2004; Berman, 2006; Hou and Moyhihan, 2008), most of them considering that organizational capacity and internal resources are conditions to achieve performance.

The connection between performance and organizational capacity goes, as described by Boyne (2003) in five dimensions or five internal independent variables that can predict the performance of public institutions: resources, regulations, market structure, management and organizations. The external factors that influence the performance of public administration (at the central or local level) are: the political factor (political changes and policymakers), social and economic ones (global economic crisis, national social movements and trade unions), existing legislation, and the responsibilities and the government policies undertaken at national, European and international levels (EU, IMF, World Bank).

3.2. The link between performance and strategic planning and management

It is obvious that strong and reciprocal connections exist between performance and strategy, and between performance management and strategic management. It might be said that a public institution is performing when it applies strategic plan-

ning and strategic management instruments. Also, strategic planning and management suppose a permanent revaluation and measurement of existent strategic plans and achieved objectives and goals, based on performance instruments and criteria.

According to Poister (2010, p. 246) public administration and public institutions 'will need to link their strategic management and ongoing performance management processes more closely and in a reciprocating relationship in which strategizing is aimed largely at defining and strengthening overall performance while performance monitoring helps to inform strategy along the way'.

If Bryson (2010, p. 255), Poister (2010, p. 246), Bryson, Berry and Yang (2010, p. 495) and many other authors affirmed that strategic planning became an ubiquitous practice in the US public sector in the past 25 years and that it will play a more critical role in 2020 than it presently does, Poister and Streib (2005) affirmed that strategic planning became a centerpiece of orthodox public management. If private companies use strategic management on a daily basis, public administration, facing a lot of complex situations (such as increasing responsibilities and diminishing resources) also needs to develop a clearer strategic vision.

Also, in the present we can see a transfer from strategic planning to strategic management, which represents a more evolved way of strategic planning with a strong emphasis on implementation. If strategic planning can be defined as a deliberative and disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is (its identity), what it does (its strategies and actions), and why it does it (mandates, mission, goals, and the creation of public value), strategic management may be viewed as the appropriate and reasonable integration of strategic planning and implementation across an organization in an ongoing way, in order to enhance the fulfillment of its mission, meet its mandates, learn continuously, and sustain the creation of public value (Bryson, 2010, p. 255).

Bryson (2010, p. 255) also noted that one of the most important functions of strategic management is to link budgeting, performance measurement, and performance management to meet mandates, to achieve agreed mission, goals, strategies, requirements for success, to allow for desirable changes in ends and means and to achieve significant public value over time.

Taking into consideration the fact that public sector organizations operate in a very complex environment, characterized by permanent changes and influenced by external and internal factors (such as political, economic and social factors, the legal framework and the national governmental policies and international responsibilities), public managers will need to link strategic planning more closely with performance management processes by shifting from strategic planning to strategic management, moving from performance measurement to performance management, and by linking strategy and performance management more effectively (Poister, 2010, p. 249).

In the context of permanent pressure for accountability and commitment for results, adaptation to change, competition and stakeholder's interests (Boyne and Walker, 2010, p. 191) strategic management is an essential tool to increase organizational

performance because strategy seeks to match organizational internal capacities with their external environment. Also, according to Berry (2007, p. 332) strategic management will have to manage change by linking agency strategies with performance measures.

3.3. Project management and organizational capacity building

From the operational performance perspective of governments, public institutions are designed to run projects/programs. Their activities and processes should be designed almost on a project based management structure, even if the current organizational management of public institutions is dominated by mechanistic, control based organizational models. The utilization of projects for achieving large processes, relatively unique, with high strategic importance, implies specific organizational competences (organizational capacity) besides individual competences, in an organization oriented towards projects (Gareis, 2010, p. 583).

When we refer to performance within a project or program we consider the performance of the project or program in itself – or at most, the management of the project or program – but less the organizational capacity of public institutions for managing projects. The latter concept would refer to the degree in which a public institution has the technical and management capacity to implement projects/programs. Project management is an important instrument of the organizational capacity of public institutions that leads to institutional performance. According to Kelly and Riverbank (2003) organizational capacity is defined through the following aspects – managerial policies, resource management and projects management – as the ability of public administration to fulfill the objectives of management policies, management of resources and the project management.

4. Analysis of the performance level of Romanian public administration

As it was mentioned above, the methodology used for this analysis consists of an empirical investigation materialized by conducting a survey among civil servants from central and local public institutions in Romania. The survey had different questions referring to the perception and understandings of civil servants about the level of performance of Romanian public administration and the influence that strategic management, project management and other external factors have on the performance of public institutions. The questions were structured on three levels: referring to central level institutions, local level governments, and the institutions where the responders are working.

A total of 370 valid responses were collected from public servants (working at both central and local levels): 65% of responders are working for the local government and 19% are working for the central administration, while 37% held a managerial function and 47.5% held an executive function; 24% are members of a professional association, 32% are members of a syndicate and only 8% are members of a political party.

In order to determine the relevant professional and educational background of the responders and their understanding of the concepts, we included questions intended

to verify the respondents' knowledge and perception on the extent to which the influence of the management elements we included in our research manifests itself on public administration performance. Thus, from the answers given, the responders' knowledge on the specific elements we considered as relevant for the performance of public administration reached the 'advanced and intermediary' level on subjects such as: public management (76% of the responders), public policy (71%), strategic management (70%), project management (77%), and performance management (71% of the responders).

As referring to our first objective, to demonstrate how modern management tools determine and influence the performance of Romanian public institutions we asked our respondents to rate the performance of public institutions. The perceptions of civil servants regarding the performance level of public administration from central, local and their institution is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Respondent's perception regarding the performance of public institutions

Performance level of	Very low (%)	Low (%)	Acceptable (%)	High (%)	Very high (%)	No answer (%)
Central public administration	6	23	25	5	1	40
Local public administration	7	20	27	6	1	39
Their own institution	4	14	28	10	4	40

Regarding the central level, 23% of the responders considered that performance is low and only 1% very high, while 20% of responders suggested a low level for the local government, and 27% an acceptable one. Referring to the institutions where they are working, 14% of respondents consider that performance is low and 28% that it is acceptable.

4.1. The link between performance and strategic planning and management

In order to emphasize the reciprocating connection between strategic management and performance, we raised the following questions and gathered the answers as we show below:

To the question asked on public strategies ('Regarding the public strategies existent at the level of the Romanian public administration, how can these be characterized'), the answers revealed that only 12% of respondents described these strategies as being coherent, integrated and well-structured, 43% characterized them as deficient and nonexistent de facto, 22% did not answer this question and 23% of respondents offered some pertinent observations and comments on this question, such as:

'Everything is done without a strategy, only under the influence of political factors. Each administration is doing projects, but not depending on the needs and measuring the results, only based on political influence and relations; in this way, funds are spent without providing an economic benefit to the community.'

'There is no consistency of these strategies; strategies and projects are implemented without coherence'.

'All local development strategies are made by private consultant companies, which are not very well documented in the field and regarding the specific needs of public institutions and communities.'

'Every political change means a new strategy; there is no continuity, no predictability (...); de facto, there is nothing (...).'

'Strategies disregard the real identified needs, are not based on impact studies, and only their formal public debate is ensured (display on the site, formulating proposals which are rarely considered by initiators, generalization of tacit approval).'

'Strategies are not based on community needs. They do not pay due attention to these instruments. The elaboration procedure was not done from the bottom up. There is no coherent prioritization based on needs and resources.'

'There aren't implementation monitoring systems or evaluation of impact and effectiveness systems and if such systems exist, there aren't effective and results are not taken into account.'

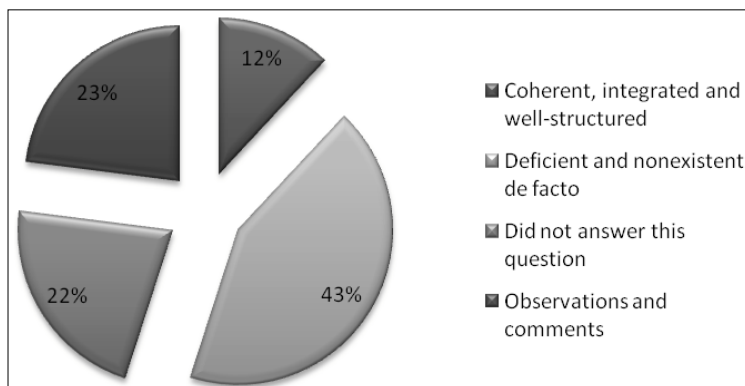


Figure 1: Public strategies

The answers to the question 'In terms of management system, how much do you appreciate that the government of Romania applies strategic planning and management?' revealed the following:

- Regarding central administration, only 14% of respondents considered that the strategic planning and management applied at this level is high and very high, 24.5% appreciate it as acceptable and almost 29% of respondents consider the applied strategic planning and management as being low and very low;
- Regarding local governments, only 11.4% of responders evaluated it as being high and very high, 22.7% appreciate it as acceptable and 33% consider that the strategic planning and management applied at the level of local communities is low and very low; and
- Referring to the institutions where the responders are working, only 20% of them answered that the strategic planning and management system and tools are included in their activities are high and very high, 26.3% appreciate it as acceptable

and approximately 22.3% considered that the strategic planning and management applied is low and very low.

Taking into consideration the answers and comments made regarding this question, we can agree upon the fact that there are some deficiencies in the application of strategic management, development and implementation of strategies at the level of Romanian public administration, such as (Țapardel, 2011, pp. 221-223):

1. The lack of a long term vision and the lack of perspective regarding the establishment of strategic objectives (goals) of the public local administration;
2. The lack of integrated and global vision at the level of local communities;
3. The lack of continuity of the strategies at the level of local communities; and
4. The lack of resources for the development of local projects and the maladministration of the existing resources at the level of local public administration.

John Bryson, regarded as one of the parents of strategic planning, proposed a strategic model which is methodical, participative, conventional and particularly well adapted for public organizations (Young, 2003). According to Bryson (1995, p. 23), the process involves ten stages (elements): (1) initiating and achieving agreement on a process of strategic planning; (2) identifying organizational mandates; (3) clarifying the mission and common organizational values; (4) performing a SWOT analysis (evaluating the internal and external environment in order to identify strong and weak points, opportunities and threats); (5) identifying strategic problems faced by the organization, which may influence the process of strategic planning; (6) formulating strategies to manage and solve the problems faced by the organization; (7) revising and adapting the strategic plan; (8) determining an efficient and adequate vision for the organization; (9) developing an efficient implementation process; and (10) final re-evaluation of the strategic plan and of the process of strategic planning.

The answers to the following question ('regarding strategic management as a tool to guarantee the performance of a strategy, to what extent your institution takes into consideration the following specific elements?') are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: The strategic model elements

The strategic model elements (%)	Very low	Low	Acceptable	High	Very high
a. The existence of a strategic planning process;	4.46	9.41	25.25	16.83	9.41
b. Agreement and involvement of all stakeholders in the strategic planning process;	4.95	17.82	20.79	11.88	8.91
c. Existence and/or establishing a mission and a vision for future development;	4.95	10.89	21.29	15.35	11.88
d. Clarify and establish strategic objectives both internally and externally;	5.45	11.88	20.30	15.84	11.39
e. Conduct a SWOT analysis (assessing the organization's internal and external environments to identify strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats);	5.94	16.83	17.33	15.35	9.41
f. Identify strategic issues they are facing with and which can influence strategic planning process;	4.46	13.86	16.83	17.82	11.39

The strategic model elements (%)	Very low	Low	Acceptable	High	Very high
g. Formulation of policies, strategies and action plans to manage and solve the problems they are facing with;	4.46	14.36	18.81	15.84	11.88
h. Adoption of action plans for the plan and strategic objectives achievement;	5.45	9.90	22.77	16.34	10.89
i. The existence and development of an efficient implementation process;	7.43	12.38	21.78	14.36	9.90
j. Final reassessment of the strategic plan and strategic planning process and its continuous review;	6.93	15.35	18.81	13.86	9.90

We can observe that the non-answer rate at this question is very high, oscillating between 35% and 36.5%.

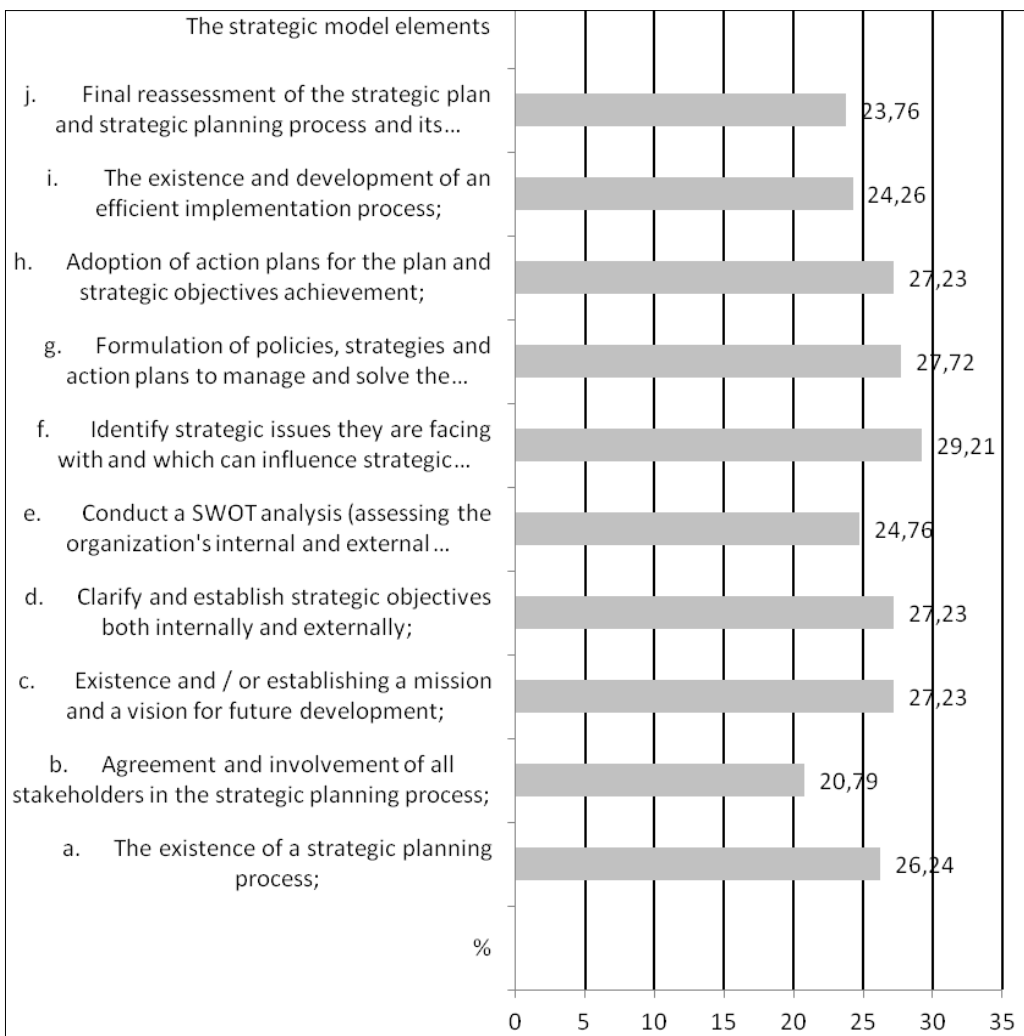


Figure 2: The strategic model elements

Analyzing all these answers and making a classification we can see that the elements of strategic planning and management most taken into consideration (which received high and very high consideration) are:

1. Identify strategic issues they are facing with and which can influence strategic planning process – 29.21%;
2. Formulation of policies, strategies and action plans to manage and solve the problems they are facing – 27.72 %;
3. Existence and/or establishing a mission and a vision for future development;
4. Clarify and establish strategic objectives both internally and externally – 27.23%, and
5. Adoption of action plans for the overall plan and the achievement of strategic objectives – also 27.23%.

At the same time, in the strategic process, it seems that civil servants pay less attention to:

1. Agreement and involvement of all stakeholders in the strategic planning process – 20.70%;
2. Final reassessment of the strategic plan and strategic planning process and its continuous review – 23.76%;
3. Existence and development of an efficient implementation process – 24.26%; and
4. Conduct a SWOT analysis (assessing the organization's internal and external environments to identify strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats) – 24.76%.

Therefore we can conclude that even if the strategic management process within Romanian public institutions show improvements in terms of strategy elaboration and development, establishing strategic plans and objectives, it is deficient in terms of effective implementation and reassessment processes and in terms of taking into consideration the influence and role of environmental factors (external and internal, stakeholder agreement and involvement).

These deficiencies can negatively influence the performance of the strategic planning process and lead to the failure of the overall strategy, as well as the performance of the entire public institution.

4.2. The link between performance and project management

From the project management perspective, in order to analyze the effects of using project management as a modern management organizational capacity building instrument that leads the public administration to higher performance, we raised the following question: 'To what extent do you think the system of project management is applied in public administration in Romania?'. The answers for different administrative levels are presented in the following table.

Table 3: Usage of system of project management

Administrative level	Very low (%)	Low (%)	Acceptable (%)	High (%)	Very high (%)
Central public administration	4	32	33	25	6
Local public administration	6	31	34	19	10
Their own institution	6	19	33	28	14

The answers revealed that only 33% of the responders considered that the project management system applied in the central administration is acceptable, while referring to local governments 34% of responders evaluated it as being acceptable; referring to the institutions where the responders are working, 33% of them answered that the project management system and tools are included in their activities in an acceptable degree.

To the question ‘To what extent are specific tools of project management used in institution in which the responders are working’, 44% from the responders considered acceptable and high the following project management tools: cost - benefit analysis, impact analysis, decision making tree, risk assessment analysis, cause and effect diagram and Gantt chart. Other project management instruments mentioned were: critical and stakeholders’ analysis, flow diagram, fishbone diagram, methods of stimulating creativity (brainstorming), SWOT analysis, monitoring, intermediate evaluation and PEST Diagram.

In line with the second objective of this paper (to analyze the effects of using project management as an organizational capacity development instrument by public administration), we included questions that connect the project management system with the criteria that we considered to be defining for the organizational capacity of public administration.

Thus, we developed questions to analyze the impact and effects of integrating a project management system in public administration. The answers revealed that the effects are on: strategic planning and organizational strategy capacity (41% of the responders considered it acceptable and high), organizational structure (40% of the responders considered it high and very high), decision making process (49% of the responders considered it acceptable and high), and it impacts and produces internal working procedures and delineation activities (acceptable and very high level for 47% of the responders).

As referring to the decision making process, it is very much influenced by the institution’s management function and its organizational structure. Management is a dynamic process, by which organizations are directed, controlled, and held accountable, consisting of various elements and activities. Governments throughout the world are structured differently – no universal governance model applies to the public sector process in institutions. Nevertheless, certain governance principles are common across the public sector. Common principles of governance encompass policies, processes, and structures used by an organization to direct and control its activities, to

achieve its objectives, and to protect the interests of its diverse stakeholder groups in an ethical manner. The decision making process in public institutions is the hierarchical decision-making. Even more, 'the closer the decision-making process is to the local level, there are more chances for decisions to better adapt to the various changes'.

Some other effects that project management could have on public institutions were suggested by the responders: direct benefits for the citizens, activities that could be more easily monitored, accountability of public institutions, staff motivation for the personnel, improved internal communication among the structures involved in project management, acquiring new knowledge in some fields and absorption of European funds.

Regarding the questions 'To what extent the use of project management in public administration can lead to different organization outcomes', the answers we received state that: project management integrated in public administration leads to a public administration focused on results (62% of the respondents answered high and very high), institutional performance (62% of the respondents answered high and very high), increase the absorption of external funds (64% of the respondents answered high and very high), effective use of resources (61% of the respondents suggested high and very high), and administrative capacity development (63% of the respondents answered high and very high).

Referring to the European Funds for instance, as an example of projects run by public institutions, the countries with appropriate institutional settings and policies may absorb important funds in order to support their economies. The countries with a lower capacity will reach much sooner the saturation point after which the funds for aid become unproductive.

4.3. The link between performance and external environmental factors

The performance of a public institution is linked with and influenced not only by modern management tools (such as strategic and project management), but also by other tools and factors because public sector organizations operate in a very complex environment, characterized by permanent changes and influenced by external and internal factors (such as political, economic and social factors, the legal framework, national governmental policies and European and other international responsibilities).

Thus, considering that public administration performance rests not only on the organizational, administrative and managerial issues but also on political influence and other external factors that define the context of public organizations, we explored these connections.

Referring to the question 'To what extent political factors (political changes and policymakers) influence the activity and performance of Romanian public administration?', the answers revealed that 39% of the respondents considered that the influence of political factors in the central administration is high and very high, in the local governments 34.3% of the respondents considered it as being high and very high, and re-

ferring to institutions where the responders are working only 25% of them answered that the political factors' influence in their activities is high and very high.

Table 4: Political factors' influence

Political factors' influence Answer	Central administration		Local government		Public institution	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Very low	1	0.27%	1	0.27%	9	2.43%
2. Low	4	1.08%	11	2.97%	19	5.14%
3. Acceptable	12	3.24%	22	5.95%	38	10.27%
4. High	44	11.89%	59	15.95%	55	14.86%
5. Very High	100	27.03%	68	18.38%	38	10.27%
Do not respond	78	21.08%	78	21.08%	80	21.62%
Not completed/not answered	131	35.41%	131	35.41%	131	35.41%

In the case of the question 'To what extent economic and social factors (global and national economic crisis, social movements and trade unions) influence the activity and performance of Romanian public administration?', the answers revealed that 31% of the respondents considered that the economic and social factors' influence on the central administration is high and very high, in the local governments 31.6% from the respondents answered high and very high, while referring to the institutions where the responders are working 29.5% of them answered that the influence of economic and social factors in their activities is high and very high.

Table 5: Economic and social factors' influence

Economic and social factors' influence Answer	Central administration		Local government		Public institution	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Very low	4	1.08%	1	0.27%	6	1.62%
2. Low	14	3.78%	9	2.43%	7	1.89%
3. Acceptable	27	7.30%	31	8.38%	40	10.81%
4. High	70	18.92%	66	17.84%	62	16.76%
5. Very High	45	12.16%	51	13.78%	47	12.70%
Do not respond	79	21.35%	81	21.89%	77	20.81%
Not completed/not answered	131	35.41%	131	35.41%	131	35.41%

For the question 'To what extent the legal framework and existing legislation influence the activity and performance of Romanian public administration?' the answers revealed that 31.4% of the responds consider that legal framework influence in the central administration is high and very high, in the local governments 32% of respondents suggested that it is high and very high and referring to the institutions where the respondents are working 32.7% of them answered that legal framework influence in their activities is high and very high.

Table 6: Legal framework influence

Legal framework influence Answer	Central administration		Local government		Public institution	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Very low	3	0.81%	3	0.81%	3	0.81%
2. Low	13	3.51%	11	2.97%	10	2.70%
3. Acceptable	27	7.30%	26	7.03%	27	7.30%
4. High	49	13.24%	54	14.59%	48	12.97%
5. Very High	67	18.11%	65	17.57%	73	19.73%
Do not respond	80	21.62%	80	21.62%	78	21.08%
Not completed/not answered	131	35.41%	131	35.41%	131	35.41%

The last questions was ‘To what extent the government policies and responsibilities undertaken at national, European and international level (E.U. Relations, I.M.F., World Bank) influence the activity and performance of Romanian public administration?’. The answers revealed that 31.4% from the respondents considered that the influence of government policies and international responsibilities in the central administration is high and very high, in the local governments 25.4% from the respondents suggested it as being high and very high and referring to the institutions where the responders are working 36.5% of them answered that government policies and international responsibilities’ influence in their activities is high and very high.

Table 7: Government policies, and international responsibilities

Government policies & International responsibilities Answer	Central administration		Local government		Public institution	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Very low	0	0.00%	3	0.81%	7	1.89%
2. Low	12	3.24%	15	4.05%	13	3.51%
3. Acceptable	28	7.57%	44	11.89%	40	10.81%
4. High	53	14.32%	58	15.68%	56	15.14%
5. Very High	63	17.03%	36	9.73%	42	11.35%
Do not respond	83	22.43%	83	22.43%	81	21.89%
Not completed/not answered	131	35.41%	131	35.41%	131	35.41%

Analyzing all these elements we can see that the political factors together with the government policies and international responsibilities have a stronger influence on the central and local administration activity and performance and a lower one on the activity of institutions where the respondents are working. Regarding the economic and social factors, the legal framework and existing legislation, we can easily observe that these other external factors exert a balanced and equal influence on the three levels of the Romania public administration.

Even so, the impact of these factors is a very important one, being measured as high and very high to a percent which varies between 25–40, and which is emphasized by the number of civil servants that refused (from different reasons) to respond to these questions (about 50%).

Taking into account all these observations and the fact that politicization does not correlate quite positively with performance, we can agree that for a good manage-

ment and for achieving a higher level of performance, the Romanian public administration has to act in the following directions:

1. To permanently consult and analyze the external environment and its factors of influence, taking into consideration citizens demands and expectations, the stakeholders' interests (Țapardel, 2011, p. 225), the pressure of political representatives and leaders, the economic and social aspects; and
2. The development of a concrete, flexible and efficient legal framework, which has to be adapted to the particularities and realities of the Romanian administration and also to the governmental policies and responsibilities undertaken at national, European and international level.

5. Conclusions

In a very complex, dynamic and changing environment, strategic management and project management are managerial tools that lead the organizations to higher performance.

The analysis of the performance of Romanian public administration that we conducted demonstrates the following: (1) the need to increase the awareness of the decisional factors to embrace the utilization of such instruments in order to use them as political and managerial tools at the same time; (2) the need for the clarification and improvement of these instruments; and (3) the importance of taking into account the influence of external factor (such as political, economic and social factors, the legal framework, governmental policies and international responsibilities) in order to achieve a good management and a higher level of performance.

Public institutions need to implement a performance management system in order to provide better public service to citizens, to promote sustainable public policies, to insure a transparent decision making process, to spend the public money in an efficient and accountable way, and to achieve measurable results in implementing strategies, programs and projects.

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