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Activities V

Governance - selected issues

Ladies and Gentlemen,

After the general introduction in the last class, today we will develop the topic of "governance". For while last time we considered it in fairly general terms, we shall now see that it is somewhat more complex in detail.

We said to ourselves recently that 'governance' was supposed to be a kind of answer to the shortcomings of 'new public management'. That, of course, is not changing. However, it is worth knowing that there are also proponents of a view that, in a sense, treats "governance" as simply an extension of the former's arm [see **Kettl 2000; cited after: Supernat 2009, pp. 140 - 141**].

According to J. Supernat, the view of separating and treating NPM and "governance" separately is most convincing. However, he stresses that numerous points of contact and the fact that it is difficult to speak of one concept without the other cannot be overlooked [**Supernat 2009, p. 145**].

T. Bovaird and E. Löffler are of the opinion that attempts to define 'governance' are like opening Pandora's box. This is due to the multitude of such attempts that already exist. They add, however, that the definition itself is not so crucial, as many practitioners already become more familiar with it in the course of their own work. Defining it does, however, serve to structure the discussion around what is nonetheless a difficult issue. It can also be said that, according to the authors cited, the overall key difference lies in the distribution of emphasis. NPM emphasises the selection of tools adequate to the achievement of the objective of the measures. "Governance" focuses on the effective involvement of as many different organisations as possible and their cooperation to achieve the best possible results [**Bovaird, Löffler 2009, p. 8 - 9**].

The same authors mention three currents of "governance", which are "corporate governance", "global governance" and "good governance". The latter seems to be of particular importance. Among the elements of "good governance" are: stakeholder involvement, transparency, equality agenda, ethical and honourable behaviour, responsibility, balance [**Bovaird, Löffler 2009, p. 10**].

The latter concept, "good governance", was introduced in the early 1990s by the World Bank. In Europe, good governance emerged mainly through the EU's cohesion policy. In its

White Paper *European Governance, the European Commission* outlined five determinants of "good governance", i.e. openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence, i.e. the integration of the management of different public policies between different levels of public authority within the framework of what is known in the European Union as "multi-level governance". [Chrisidu-Budnik, Korczak 2012, no. 1-2, p. 90]. This, of course, is not the only possible approach, but as I signalled above - it is difficult to find one proper definition [see also Kulesza, Sześciło 2013, p. 119].

It is worth devoting a little attention to the "stakeholders" mentioned. Analysing the considerations of A. Chrisidu-Budnik, it can be roughly stated that these will be all entities that, for various reasons, are interested in the activities of a particular organization. An example of the latter is also public administration [Chrisidu-Budnik 1997, Vol. XXXVIII, pp. 37 - 38].

E. Löffler lists as examples of 'stakeholders' among others: citizens as individuals, loosely organised community organisations, non-profit organisations, business representatives, media, public agencies, elected politicians and trade unions [Löffler 2009, p. 219].

Finally, it should be mentioned that all concepts of "governance" have certain elements in common: **1) the** adoption of a scenario with different "stakeholder", where collective problems can no longer be solved by public authority alone, but require the cooperation of different players and which manifests itself in practice through mediation, arbitration and self-regulation, which can often be more effective than public authority intervention, **2) the** recognition of both formal and informal rules with the assumption that negotiations between "stakeholders" seeking to use their influence/power can change them in specific situations, **3) not** focusing only on market mechanisms as in typical NPM, but also paying attention to hierarchies in the public sector and cooperative networks as potential structural simplifications in appropriate circumstances, **4) there** is no reasoning with the logic of ends and means, inputs and outputs, but the dominant focus is on the specificity of social interaction processes as valuable in themselves, **5) as** inherently political concepts, they deal with the interaction of "stakeholders" who compete with each other to pursue their own interests and therefore cannot be left to managers or professional elites making decisions [Löffler 2009, pp. 217-218].

As we can see above, the theme of networkedness emerges again. Meanwhile, the necessary conditions for the emergence of a network state are **1) the** presence of the principle of subsidiarity, **2) the** government administration not undermining the independence of local self-government and seeking to strengthen the potential of the non-governmental and private sector [Chrisidu-Budnik 2009, p. 168].

Network administration is administration with the help of third parties, as well as so-called joint administration, which means combining the activities of formally separate organisations to achieve particular public goals. A special case of the latter is the cooperation of administrative bodies of the European Union member states responsible for the implementation of EU law in a specific field, and of the European Commission within the framework of obligatory cross-border networks of public administration bodies [Supernat 2006, pp. 130 - 131 and the authors cited therein].

In conclusion, there is no disagreement that good governance is a bottomless pit. Both foreign (quoted earlier) and Polish literature are in agreement here. As D. Sześciło puts it,

("good governance") remains viable only as a general set of values characterising a democratic state which bases its economic system on the market model. However, it is in vain to seek in this set of values a uniform, comprehensive and detailed recipe for a state leading to global convergence of governance mechanisms. The normative character of the concept of good governance is thus apparent, as it does not bring any standard of state action that can be operationalized [Sześciło 2015, p. 65].

R. Kusiak-Winter observes, meanwhile, that both in Anglo-Saxon countries and in the European Union the importance of centralised administration structures is decreasing. Numerous public offices and agencies are being created, whose activities are characterised not so much by hierarchy as by the aforementioned networking, coordination, but also elements of authority. In turn, the deficit of democratic control in the aforementioned structures is to be partly compensated by the factors of professionalism and independence [Kusiak-Winter 2017, Vol. CXI, p. 111].

The above also leads us to the issue of numerous contemporary administrative entities, as well as the growing number of public tasks and the multiplicity of legal forms of action, in other words, the multiformity of administration. This one, in turn, is advisable both in quantitative and qualitative aspect when it contributes to the realisation of the common good [Kusiak-Winter 2018, no. XVI/1(3), p. 72].

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