

Development, Public Administration and Local Structures: Relations of interdependence or confrontation?

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The meaning of Development (economic, social, and cultural in national, regional and local level) has never been agreed, to among the experis, as to what it really represents. Not all of the experts have come to an agreement as to a definite and an acceptable definition¹.

Some experts think of development as the increase of the produced goods, in a specific time in a specific society, through which there will be a growlh of the society's wealth as well as of the standard of livng of its member-citizens.

To others the concept of development includes the present condition, the expected one and a rationalistic process towards a specific progress through specific targets, etc.

Regardless of the diversity in meanings and definitions, what really matters for the common people is the improvement of his standard of living in the long run under conditions of stability and of a reasonable cost.

It is not so much to the writer's intentions to approach these parametars as to point out some of those factors that contribute and influence the «output» of development. Amongst them the Public Administration, in lts general dimension, is of great importance.

The contribution of Public Administration to the development of our country (and the need for modernization of some of its sectors) has been the topic of concern, through proposed measures, not only for the national experts but also for International Organizations, such as the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development.

Beyond the important changes that have taken place in the area of Public Administration, as a result of Political choices and of the substantial contribution of the administration executives as well, albeit toward the right direction, there is always room for improvements with up-to-date steps, some of which are underlined below.

The well-known problems of the Public Administration at the central level tend to become less sharp, yet some adjustments related to the mobility, training and productivity motives for the Execulive personnel should be seriously taken under consideration.

1. Const. GE. ATHANASSOPOULOS: Statutory Framework of Pegional Development. V. A', D' Ed. Athens 2002, pp.6,37.

At the regional level, again, it is necessary that some actions must be intensified if we would like to have an effective decentralization. This means strengthening of the political, administrative and developmental role of the Regional General Secretaries. It also means activation of the Regional Development Funds of the Regions, boosting of the Executive personnel and reconsidering, at the same time, the number of the Regions towards the direction of their reduction.

In that case, as it has been suggested by expert scientists (e.g. Prof. ATHANASSOPOULOS), the practice that France and Italy have followed could be «imported» to our country, to a certain extent (e.g. investment matters within their competence, etc.).

At the local level and, of course, with the State's intervention, the following measures should be given priority: the completion and re-development of the Local Self-Administrative Framework (at the level of Prefecture, Municipality, Community, Confederation); the reallocation of statutory capitals in favor of them; the introduction of a new Code of their Function; the expansion of their role in relation to the development sector and in new areas, such as the rendering of services to the citizens of their jurisdiction (e.g. environmental matters); the use of «electronic» operations, the prospect for a continuous training and up-dating of the Local Authorities, the upgrading of the executive manpower, etc.

In relation to the last one, the role that the Public Administration plays in the development process is of great importance in many ways. As a result of this, it is asked to serve its role without any confrontations, granting that the anticipating benefits will be common and needful for all-administrators and the citizens, especially the latter ones.

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