

Institutional resilience: an insight from the local public administration of Romania

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Abstract:

Resilience is an essential element to be addressed in public sector organizations as they are most prone to crises and constant changes. For this reason, researchers' interest in studying resilience in public administration has increased significantly over the past years. The institutional resilience of the local public administration depends on the design of the institutions, on the human resources training process, and also on the organizational culture that dominates the institutional framework. In this respect, the present study aims to investigate the concept of institutional resilience in the local public administration of Romania. The research is a pilot study conducted in two District Halls in Bucharest, the capital of Romania. The main objective of the research is to assess the capacity of institutional resilience of the two District Halls, as well as to design proposals for improving it. The institutional resilience of the chosen District Halls (District Hall 2 and District Hall 3) is measured using four dimensions: The capacity of learning and innovation; The strategic capacity; Stakeholders' involvement in decision-making, and Transparency and communication. The research was conducted in a comparative manner, aiming to establish which is the most important dimension influencing institutional resilience in the two institutions as well as the differences between the level of resilience in the two District Halls. The research methodology consists of a sociological survey conducted using a questionnaire, designed by the authors, that measured the four dimensions of institutional resilience. The sample of the study consisted of 221 civil servants from the two District Halls. The research revealed that the most important dimension influencing the institutional resilience of District Hall 3 is the capacity of learning and innovation. In addition, the most important dimension influencing the institutional resilience of District Hall 2 is the capacity to design strategies and policies. On a whole, the study revealed that the two studied institutions present a medium to a high capacity of resilience, with no significant differences between them.