

AN INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE POLITICIZATION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN ROMANIA

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Abstract: Previous studies on Romania pointed toward a high level of politicization that exists especially at the central public administration. The paper aims to describe the formal and informal institutional setting of the interaction between politicians, top civil servants, and political advisers in Romania, with the goal of systematically analyzing who they are, what are their responsibilities, and how they collaborate. In particular, we aim to describe the number of political appointees in each ministry (respectively, ministers, secretaries of state, and sub-secretaries of state), their roles, the frequency of their turnover, and the relation with their advisory cabinet and top civil servants. Romanian political appointees have rather large advisory cabinets compared with other countries, and therefore we will describe their composition (director of the cabinet, permanent advisors, and honorary advisors), recruitment, roles, involvement in the decision-making process, and interaction with civil servants. In addition, we will describe the positions of top civil servants (respectively, general secretary, deputy general secretary, general director, and deputy general director), their numbers, roles, and interaction with political appointees and their advisors. The methodology that we will use will be rather descriptive and will be based on existing legislation and interviews with key informants. Few databases or sources of documentation exist on political appointees and their advisors, and therefore it will be difficult to conduct a longitudinal study to identify historical trajectories. However, this study aims to be a radiography of the current situation and a point of reference for future comparative studies.