

András PATYI – Ádám RIXER (eds.)

**Hungarian Public Administration
and Administrative Law**

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In 2014, it was published a significant work referring to public administration in Hungary with the title of Hungarian Public Administration and Administrative Law. The publisher is Schenk Verlag in Passau. The book had come to fruition by cooperation between Lajos Lőrincz Research Centre for Public Law – Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary (KRE-LLKKM) and National University of Public Service (NKE). The authors made a very remarkable gesture with dedicating their work to the memory of Lajos Lőrincz, who was the most prominent representative of the near past to the science of Hungarian public administration and an ordinary member of Hungarian Academy of Sciences. (This scholar was the only member at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences who researched the administrative sciences in the last seven decades.) The editors of the book are András Patyi, the rector of the Hungarian University of Public Service and Ádám Rixer, the Head of Department of Administrative Law of the Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. As a co-editor Gyula Koi, senior lecturer at the Institute for General Administrative Law of National University of Public Service helped the edition. Altogether twenty-two authors contributed to the book.¹ They all have PhD degree or habilitation, which increases the scientific importance of the work. The authors have created one of the most important public administration monographs about Hungary. Additionally, it is important to remark, that for those states, which are not considered to be model procreators, it is a very significant performance to make such a monograph in the language of the great public administration systems (USA, France, Germany). Furthermore this work is very recent, because Hungarian public administration had just been reformed. As a consequence of the crises, neo-Weberian concepts strengthened in Hungary. Among the reforms introduced from 2010, the authors markedly focused on the reform steps of the Magyar Zoltán Public Administration Development Programme published in the summer of 2011. This programme was named after Zoltán Magyar, the internationally acknowledged scholar of the science of public administration. This neo-Weberian programme's aim was to strengthen the state, and in parallel, it proposed to develop performance, efficiency and effectiveness. To fulfil the vision of a good state, Hungary made an agreement with OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). As a result, the organisation

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helped in preparing and developing the reform by making analyses, evaluations, training programs and recommendations. On one hand, reforming of the public administrative system means a return to former systems. For example, the Institute of District Government's Offices which has a centuries-long tradition, has been re-established. On the other hand, new solutions have been adopted, for instance the one-stop shop system, which helps the citizens to get their different types of cases arranged. The book comprehensively presents us the picture of the Hungarian public administration system and administrative law in 552 pages. Because of the complexity of the public administration phenomenon, the authors access it in inter- and multidisciplinary ways. The book's structure is made of seven parts and nine-teen chapters, explaining different areas. In addition, it has substantial lists of abbreviations, cases and indexes, plus a glossary, which also helps in understanding. Part I is the introduction. Among other things, this extensive part (133 pages long) explains methodology issues of scientific analyses of Hungarian public administration, reveals the traditional features of the public administration and the effects on it. Furthermore, it also draws the attention to the importance of analysing the change of features and weight of principles of the organisation of public administration and of administrative competences. Part II focuses on the administrative sciences in Hungary. Particularly the science of public administration and the study of administrative law are highlighted. It involves the introduction of the scientific institutes and journals. In the case of Hungary, the beginning of the science of public administration started in 1769, when the education of Polizeiwissenschaft² was established. Part III introduced the legal groundings of Hungarian public administration. It summarises the constitutional basis, presents administrative justice, prosecution service and the Institute of Ombudsperson. It is interesting, that the author also writes about the relationship between civil organisations and public administration, involving not only the most common opportunities of participation for citizens such as national referendum proposal but *inter alia* social negotiations and lobbying activities, too. Part IV concentrates on the institutional system: central administration, territorial public administration local and minority self-governments. As a consequence of the latest reforms the central administration has been strengthened. With this change the significance of the deconcentrated organs had increased in Hungary. Part V underlines the financial and organisational aspects of the Hungarian public administrative system. It processed the questions of public finances, public services and the tasks from the membership of the European Union. Part VI analyses the procedural law and E-government strategies. Hungarian administrative procedural law is based on the Act on General Rules of Administrative Proceedings and Services (hereinafter: GRAPS). However, this act has been renewed in order to orientate present expectations. This information is elaborated on in detail in the chapter. Moreover, one independent chapter deals with the administrative sanctions and another with E-government and information communication. The chapter of E-government presents the important documents and recommendations for national states and gives a short review of the Hungarian solutions of E-government. Part VII summarises

2 Polizeiwissenschaft is considered to be german origin science. However it began in France with the study of Nicolas Delamare who published his famous work *Traité de la Police* I-IV from 1705 to 1734. For this phenomenon, see: Gyula KOI: A közigazgatás-tudományi nézetek fejlődése. Külföldi hatások a magyar közigazgatási jog és közigazgatástan művelésében a kamealisztika időszakától a Magyar-iskola koráig. Budapest 2014, 46–48.

the Hungarian civil service system. In Hungary more than 1.1 million people are financed from the state budget. This number involves not only civil servants (approximately 100,005 people), but other employees for example uniformed services (police, intelligence services, and the army, with a special constitutional status); judges, prosecutors, political appointees, and public servants (approximately half million people). Doctors, nurses, teachers, social workers, etc. of public institutions are also members of this group. Apart from this, the author also outlines the legal framework genuinely. All in all, this monograph is a prominent and important source on the Hungarian public administration and administrative law for the past seven decades.

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