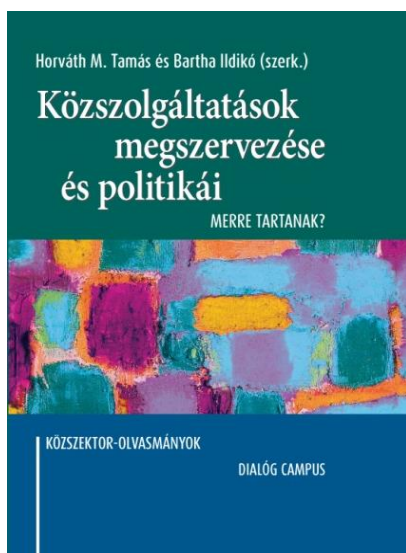


The Organization and Sectors of Public Services: Where to go?



Paying for heating, lighting and participation in various – educational, health and social – services is a necessity. It is, however, important to assess how much we have to pay and the quality of the service we receive in turn. The prices of public utilities, the quality and the efficiency at which hospitals and the educational system perform: these are central issues in today’s society. One or another – or, in times of crisis, all of them – may become the subject of heated political debate. Still, this is not the only connection between these issues: the organizational structures facilitating the everyday performance of different public services are also interrelated. The ways of solution change before our eyes, affecting the potential to access these services and the efficiency of their provision.

Not too long ago, the liberalization programs of EU sector politics, characterized by a call for marketization, were seen as the primary answer to the issues stemming from budget overruns and the various weaknesses of state solutions. Later, owing to the demand for the treatment of crises attributable to the weakening of communal control mechanisms, particular attention was paid to the content and efficiency of governmental functions. This book discusses the central issues of the field, centered on the government provision of the most important public goods and building from the ground up: namely, starting from the role of major sectors and offering a point of view that differs from usual approaches. The book examines different instruments in the policy areas of networked infrastructure, utility services, public education, healthcare services, spatial and urban planning and development, public authority (as a service) and law enforcement.

The work was undertaken by the MTA-DE Public Service Research Group based at the University of Debrecen Faculty of Law. The book is recommended especially to those working in connection with the policy areas covered within, to students of higher education and to any thinking citizen interested in recent developments and changes in government policies.

The book, while no doubt a massive work, seeks to foster its ease of reading by illustrating its findings through examples taken from the analysis of local solutions, drawing up explanatory figures and diagrams and highlighting characteristic tendencies in policy development. The categories used by the authors are easily searchable and the original glossary and various other editorial novelties facilitate getting familiar with the book even further.

Details of the book:

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Reviewers: Ilona Pálné Kovács, Zoltán Józsa, Ernő Várnay

Proofreading: Henrietta Regina Farkas

Publisher: Dialóg Campus, Budapest-Pécs

Year of publication: 2016

Size: 168*238 mm (B5)

Length: 936 pages

Binding: hardcover

ISBN: 978-615-5376-89-4

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