

# Foreword

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The present issue of Croatian and Comparative Public Administration brings six research papers elaborating different and interesting topics. These papers are grouped in three thematic areas, namely administrative modernisation, public law, and international relations.

The paper written by Oscar Mauricio Covarrubias Moreno from Mexico deals with coordination as an important part of public governance. It especially tackles the governance of complex issues, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which have increased the need for better coordination of many actors. The author proposes the VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity) concept as a tool for addressing these wicked problems. In their paper, Jiří Bečica, Roman Vavrek, Małgorzata Galecka, and Katarzyna Smolny from the Czech Republic and Poland, analyse using 11 indicators the management of 93 public theatres as specific public institutions in these two countries. The results show that there is no significant difference between the two countries regarding this issue, and that multi-genre theatres with a higher number of employees are less efficient than single-genre theatres. The paper especially shed important light on the measurement of efficiency of publicly funded institutions.

The second thematic area of this issue covers two important topics. The first one is the status of petty offences in Polish law, a debate that is relevant not just for the analysed country but has wider significance as well. The nature of petty offences is ambiguous and not clear in many administrative and legal traditions, where they keep swinging between criminal and administrative law. Marek Kulik and Maciej Błotnicki from Poland analyse this complex issue in the context of Polish law, starting from an analysis of the development of petty offences to their present status. The second contribution in this thematic area is written by Ana Đanić Čeko from Croatia, who analyses appeals in administrative disputes in Croati-

an administrative law using the historical-legal method and a normative analysis of the regulations from 1874 to 1991. She shows discontinuity in the legal regulation of appeals in administrative disputes in various periods over the last hundred years.

The third thematic area consists of two articles. Dalia Malik from Turkey researches conflicts in the Nile Basin and the change of power balance between Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan. Since there is no clear and comprehensive legal regulation of the use of the Nile River, the only way forward is cooperation between all basin countries. The article sheds light on shifts in the power balance in Northern Africa. The second article written by Ana Lasica and Višeslav Raos from Croatia deals with the influence of the “Catalan question” on institutional instability and changes to the Spanish party system. The authors offer five different interpretation frames for this issue and confirm previous research demonstrating that the unification of Spain was not followed by a strong national identity in Spain. Both Spanish citizens and politicians remain divided over this issue. The strategy of the current ruling coalition in Spain, according to the authors, seems to be appropriate for the continuation of efforts to solve this question.

I wish you all a pleasant reading and quoting of the articles of this issue!

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