THE MECHANIC PUBLIC SERVANT AND
THE POWER OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Marius VACARELU

ORCID [ID]: 0000-0002-8146-0871
E-mail: marius333vacarelu@gmail.com
Afiliation: National School of Political and Administrative Studies Bucharest

Abstract: It is a truism today to state the idea that "the world is facing profound changes never seen before." Not at all false, the idea allows for deep thinking but also the repetition of stereotypes or banalities, which does not help anyone concerned with making plans for the future.

In this formulation of ideas and thoughts, there are some areas that many people look at with fear, like public administration, justice, public budgets etc. On one hand, we have the fear of all civil (public) servants, who do not know how much of their activities will survive the new political-technological and socio-demographic changes, and on the other hand, we have those subject to public administration, who from the dawn of the new era seek a perfection of the idea of good governance to the highest possible level.

All these issues today are both in competition and in a certain form of ideological collaboration, and the text I propose tries to fix some of the lines of this new reality of public administration and what it will in turn determine in society, in an integrative visions.

Keywords: Public administration; public servants; Artificial Intelligence; fundamental changes; citizens expectations.

Introduction

Among the major problems of science, one stands out due to the expectations that ordinary people have of researchers and intellectuals – specifically, the desire to see the immediate positive applicability of the results produced by research institutes (in a broad sense, universities and any other form of legal organization of work that involves obtaining

predominantly theoretical results). This request is by no means objectionable; in fact, it is what drives progress, because any issue that remains at a theoretical, non-applicable level in a person's home or workplace is either considered unnecessary or too abstract, and thus implicitly lacking substantial value for use and funding. For this reason, we often find that many works criticize the way scientists from the later period of the Byzantine Empire discussed theoretical (mainly religious) matters, instead of seeking ways to improve the defense of the city of Constantinople, in order to make the Ottoman conquest as difficult as possible (Catalano, 2021).

We should neither be surprised by this nor criticize it so much – at least not in this century. Today's advanced science is something with varying degrees of intelligibility for the average person, who neither has the time nor the desire to understand all the mechanisms that led to the formulation of a discovery or invention. The everyday person needs a better life and will always seek the easiest ways to reach the desired level of comfort, and for what will set them apart from others, they will need a specific legal, technological, and educational framework that is as easy to understand and apply as possible, based on which they can achieve certain parameters. In all this demand that the average person places on universities and research institutes, we find the fundamental purpose of life: comfort should be easily attained, with the lowest possible costs, through the clearest and simplest procedures, all under extended and uniform legal protection throughout society.

1. The old Roman dictum „non schola, sed vita discimus" (we are learning for life, not for school) is still applicable today: researchers should not investigate something without understanding its practical purpose (direct or at least easily foreseeable), nor should scientific language be filled with neologisms that are almost impenetrable to the average person, because ultimately, major budget proposals are voted on by parliamentarians who will more readily allocate funds to what brings them votes and is easily explainable, rather than what might someday bring abstract improvements to only a small number of people. An

abundance of references may impress a funder, but ultimately, when asked: "What can be understood from your text, formulated in 5 sentences?", if a clear and rapid answer does not come, it will only serve to drive away anyone in the long term. That things are indeed this way is evident from the fact that thousands of scientific articles appear weekly, but very few have even 10 readers – and so, there is legitimacy in asking: "What type of science are we funding?"

2. However, there are many areas of life where the problems that arise cannot be solved in just a few sentences, and these multiply due to the technological developments of recent decades, as well as under the effect of major changes taking place in demographics, climate, pension systems, budget deficits, and, in general, under the action of people's supreme desire for freedom, justice for all and social balance (Palma & Lounsbury, 2017).

Far from being a philosophical matter, human society has reached a level of organization articulated enough for us to draw certain conclusions. Over two thousand years of habitation under various state forms in most parts of the world have become sources of wisdom in the political, administrative, legal, economic, etc. spheres, and – perhaps even more – have been recorded in several works. The effect of these works cannot be neglected, as they did not remain somewhere in a space accessible only to a few initiates, but – through mandatory education systems in every country – entered the consciousness of each nation, and especially became sources of inspiration for anyone wishing to educate themselves.

Let us not lose sight of a very important effect of the newest capabilities of the technology called Artificial Intelligence (AI), namely those of translation from different foreign languages and the effects it can have in the future on those who want to know situations that offer lessons for the future (Oldshue, 2025). Specifically, now even a North American can more easily access scientific literature (historical, political, economic, etc.) from Southern Africa or Polynesia, or an East Asian can learn about the different histories of the Latin American or sub-Saharan space, etc. Thus, in a world where access to information is easier than

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ever, the average person will be able to learn a lot, but – above all – will seek examples of good practices in politics, administration, justice, economy, etc., in order to compare them with what is happening in their own country.

In fact, the desire for "things to be better for us" is no longer just an ideal one; for decades, the circulation of valuable books has allowed access to the description of various good practices, implicitly offering an invitation to imitate them. Thus, we can safely say that the abundance of scientific or popular works on histories of all kinds are in fact also a way to promote good administrative and governance practices, offering real examples for any country that is capable of finding solutions – or at least a beginning of resolutions – in the vast amount of data available in libraries and online (Gesnot, 2025). Online translations today become an exceptionally useful tool for any member of parliaments or local councils wishing to serve the community at a level for which they previously would have had to invest large sums in buying books and perhaps translating them.

3. This abundance of intellectual resources, however, has consequences less desired by various politicians, because now their activity can be compared with other examples from history – or contemporary ones, and the result can be to their disadvantage. This is something that for hundreds of years the politician has not encountered, namely the possibility for any citizen, regardless of their socio-economic level, to be able to perform a fairly detailed analysis of any political party or leader in the public or private sphere. So, what is truly a unique advantage that technologies have developed in recent decades – through the huge public library called the Internet and through AI's text translation capabilities – is in fact a threat to ineffective types of governance at national or local levels. Without entering into political discussions about the factors that constitute the causes of adopting a path towards authoritarianism, let us just note that governance and those who carry it out are now easier to analyze, with scientific instruments and

comparisons accessible in different degrees of complexity to any diligent citizen.

It is evident, however, that the same dimension of documentation applies to public administration and public services in general. Practically, the situation in this sphere is even more interesting, because good practices are imposed with greater force as a reference for public officials, with an added degree of power compared to the situation in the political environment.

The cause of this increased impact is given by several characteristics that those who act in public services/administrative institutions have, and which are not necessary in the political sphere. Specifically, recruitment into public service is usually done based on educational qualifications, which is not necessary in the political environment, and hence, a necessary discussion regarding the quality of public officials, relative to that of politicians who have the right to lead institutions. Equally important is the obligation of continuous professional training that public functions usually have in their statutes, which – again – is not found in the political sphere. From these two characteristics, however, also emerge the expectations of the citizens, who will want responsible politicians and officials, capable of performance, and who this time have numerous examples to be able to analyze their activity, either based on historical examples, or on what they learn directly in various forms – press news, workplace, travel abroad, etc.

4. The increase in the training capacities of public administration – in fact, of its personnel – must be followed by application. Specifically, citizens are also part of this process of increasing documentation and training capacities – but in the private economy, which thrives on the success of selling its own production – and seek to reproduce the same typology of increasing intellectual potential in the public sphere. As citizens have this possibility of expression less often, usually through elections, it follows that they also have more time to analyze the performance of the political environment and public institutions, comparing both electoral promises and their fulfillment at the national

level, as well as other examples of good practices from other countries. In any situation, however, it is evident to everyone that learning possibilities have increased enormously, which raises citizens' expectations regarding the concept of good governance, moving more and more from a desideratum to the demand for its fulfillment.

Among the consequences of this public request, we will note one that is less visible to the ordinary person, but quite clear to those who try to understand legislative and administrative phenomena. Specifically, we are increasingly facing a standardization of human life, where people consume increasingly standardized products worldwide, and from this, a tendency towards standardization of both public life (mainly political) and, more importantly, the activity of public administration, which is a rather rigid instrument in itself for applying the normative framework (Patterson, 2025). It is evident to anyone that banking procedures are approximately the same everywhere; that countless electronic and mechanical products generally have the same operating logic for most of their action; that the typologies of education systems are quite similar at a universal level (Wilhelmsen 2025).

5. Public administration cannot be excluded from this global unifying trend, although national particularities or those specific to a certain administrative domain manifest themselves decisively (Christensen and Lægreid, 2025). Even if national particularities cannot be eliminated, within each country, public administration is seen and understood as a stable sector of society, which must be routine in terms of fulfilling public service. However, this implies that public officials should be as well-prepared as possible regarding what is new, and – at the same time – that procedures should be as consistent as possible within public administration, so that extended similarities can even be reached between the procedures used by different public institutions, which also leads to a unification of the vision of public officials. In fact, if the general efforts regarding good governance also move towards a certain automation – or even mechanization of what this concept contains

(Werner, 2025), it means that in a certain dimension we reach an automation of the public function.

The tendency towards standardization of administrative practices – implicitly of public officials' activities – is primarily driven by the speed factor. Today's communication paradigm is one of high-speed data transmission, which means that both the economic environment and citizens receive quick responses to their requests (positive or not). However, this rapidity is achieved by clarifying various provisions of normative acts, as well as by standardizing administrative forms, so that the public official can quickly verify received requests, and the requirements to be resolved are described as simply and clearly as possible, in the language prescribed by the legislator. In this regard, the use and support that Artificial Intelligence will offer is invaluable, and will certainly accelerate many of the already existing administrative procedures.

Another argument that strengthens the idea of administrative standardization can be explained more culturally, through the phenomenon of imitation (Laking & Norman, 2007). Thus, institutions in small localities have – with the help of the Internet – the opportunity to see and even copy the administrative acts (usually normative in nature) of specialized institutions in large localities, because there is a higher degree of professionalization there (based on a wider selection of personnel). Hence, a cultural influence, but one that has the direct effect of reducing the intellectual autonomy of public officials in small institutions. Thus, procedures that have proven useful in large localities/institutions will be adopted, and this ideational unification also contributes to increasing the degree of coherence of each individual state.

As studies in recent years affirm, one of the consequences of implementing artificial intelligence is the elimination of a portion of employees (Melendez, 2025). Evidently, public administration will not be an exception to this process, even if the speed of implementation will not always be the same, due to different national political practices and partisan political interests. But in any situation, the increasing degree of standardization of public administration, public servants, and generally the components that ensure the public-facing activities of public

institutions (procedures, especially) is evident. Thus, we will increasingly find ourselves in the presence of virtual public servants – therefore, mechanized – and why not, structural components of public administration that are equally virtualized (public relations departments, petition reception departments, etc.). Practically, with the help of AI, there will be a reduction in the number of public servants, which would relieve a part of public budgets from not insignificant costs.

At its core, this is the great challenge of the relationship between artificial intelligence and public administration, filtered through good governance: citizens may want more neutrality from public officials, even if they have less imagination in solving certain problems, rather than encountering their whims, whether due to a lack of professional training or other causes, such as corruption or certain political calculations.

For these reasons, it should come as no surprise that automation trends will provide an impetus for the difficult goal of reducing budgetary expenditures, which are increasingly high in every country. Practically, only with the help of AI will it be possible to achieve a higher level of neutrality even in countries with a rather unfavorable reputation regarding the integrity of public functions, which would bring greater satisfaction to citizens, making the neutrality of public administration increasingly easier to attain.

Conclusions

For several reasons, it seems that Artificial Intelligence will pose a threat to some of the old political-administrative practices, but not in the sense that these will no longer be possible, but rather through a change in perspective that it brings with it, namely the increase in the neutrality of the public function and public administration in general.

It is, however, to be observed that citizens desire a public administration as neutral as possible, in which the face/figure of officials is completely irrelevant, but which provides various public services

carefully, regularly, without taking into account the legal-political status of the various applicants for public service benefits.

The public function will thus transform into a place where most of the attractiveness will be represented by job stability, and perhaps the desire to "serve the community". In any situation, however, states will be constrained by budgetary calculations to promote digitalization and everything it develops, restricting the effective presence of people in administration, transforming officials into something increasingly neutral and more "mechanized" in their daily activity.

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