Preface

1- This book addresses a problem of great scientific and practical interest for South-Eastern European countries, related to the relationship of “business-government” and the role of social enterprises. The content developed in this book with contributions from doctoral schools at the University of Rome Tor Vergata and the National University of Political and Administrative Studies in Bucharest (NUPSPA), is an eloquent expression of the New Public Management application, both in analysing the trajectories of reform, and the processes of modernization in the public administrations in the South-Eastern European countries. To these fundamental directions, in which the book has been conceived, has added specific instruments, as revealed by social enterprises through which the social dimension of the private sector is highlighted and enclosed in a comprehensive and specific concept, such as that of corporate social responsibility.

2- The various stages in which the South-Eastern European countries are in the process of European integration, as well as the traditions and the administrative cultures specific to each country, determines many similarities and differences in report with whom must be considered the modalities in which the European “best practices” can be incorporated in their administrative reform strategies. The South-Eastern European is an area, par excellence, emergent, for both economy and for the administration.

3- Therefore, all the studies and analyses presented in the book can be considered as a consistent and logical approach that can provide the foundation for relevant conclusions, which can be useful in designing specific actions of reform in the mentioned countries and, as well as in other countries. We are aware that, based on the content of the book can be developed more complex analyses and studies designed to enrich both public management literature, and also the innovative scope of the public sector. This book addresses both, academics and social research, public administration experts, as well as the responsible persons for implementing strategies for administrative reform in the South-Eastern European countries.
4- The first part focuses on the analysis upon the trends within the processes of modernization and development of public administration systems at European level. The five contributions refer to the reference theoretical background of comparative public administration, which represent a prior research axis of EGPA-GEAP and PSGs (Permanent Strategic Group), which adopt for some years this thematic, especially the book of G. Boukaert and C. Pollitt regarding the comparative analysis of public management reforms (strategic directions and intervention domains).

5- The editors’ option to select and introduce papers by attributing the centrality to relations between Southern Europe and Eastern Europe is a significant one. Till recently it has been used with predilection within the literature and by researchers the confrontation between the main European partners (Northern Europe vs. Continental Europe) or the confrontation between Northern Europe and Southern Europe (W. Kickert) or more recently between the Southern Europe countries (E. Ongaro). From this perspective, the paper builds the connection bridge between the two types of dialogues promoted by EGPA-GEAP: TED – Trans European dialogue (Occidental Europe vs. Eastern Europe) and EGPA-GEAP MED (mainly addressing to Southern and Mediterranean European countries). Southern Europe starts to become one of the main strategic concerns of European Union, as it is shown by the cases of Greece and impoverishment and convulsion social processes, as a consequence of financial crisis; Ukraine (country which has the neighbour border with Romania), Crimea situation, the fender role played by Italy regarding the mass immigration from Syria and Africa, the adherence to European Union requests, after the adherence of Slovenia and Croatia.

6- The geographical dimension represents an opening of new European partnerships, not being the only relevant feature of this work. The various chapters attempt to investigate how the transition countries, especially Romania, can become a field of study and deepening for the countries of Southern Europe, in terms of benchlearning. In this respect, we refer to the contributions of Lucica Matei, Marco Meneguzzo et al. and Cristina Mititelu (Italy-Romania perspective) and Cepiku Denita and Cristina Mititelu contributions (perspective of Albania, Romania), which certainly can provide interesting insights for new EU membership contributions, Bogdan Beceanu and Ani Matei in the comparison between the various countries in the region.

7- Comparative Public Administration is then enriched with two important points regarding research methods contained in the work of young researchers. Cristina Mititelu contribution introduces benchmarking dimension of innovation processes from the bottom up, referring to innovations found in public policies and local services policies, referring
to the experience of EPSA (European Public Sector Awards) promoted by EIPA. We also need to highlight the partnership between Italy and Romania financed by the European Union (Twinning Projects) on the transfer and initiative of hundred Italian projects in Romania. Bogdan Berceanu’s contribution introduces in the study of compared public administration the systemic analysis method to resolve crises occurred and emergence. Systemic analysis becomes indeed increasingly more interesting after the pioneering studies of the 70s, as demonstrated by numerous studies on system thinking and system dynamics in the formulation and implementation of public policies (Conferences on System Dynamics, the work in Italy of Gloria Fiorani on local government’s policy, culture and health).

8- Finally, we wish to highlight the enthusiasm, willingness and ability of prof. Lucica Matei, to whom we want to dedicate this book for the promotion, management and use all opportunities offered by EU funds to promote conferences and exchanges of ideas on the reform of Public Administration; many of these contributions were presented at international conferences like NISPAcee (Macedonia, 2012) and were realized through projects such as “Jean Monnet” coordinated by NUPSPA on South Eastern European developments administrative convergence and enlargement of the European Administrative Space in Balkan States (Athens, 2010; Rieke 2011).

9- The second part of the work deals with the “Business-Government Relationship (BGR)” from a point of view that integrates innovative and original traditional BGR’s perspective, focused on the relationship between profit-oriented private companies, financial intermediaries and national and local government, with the relationship between the government and the nonprofit sector. The Dialogue EGPA-MED 2014 on the theme “Societal governance” and “government for civil society”, organized by the University of Tor Vergata, attributed particular relevance to this theme, emphasizing the close link between public governance and public management in with the social innovation processes and the role played by social enterprises. This theme begins to acquire increasing importance in the context of the PSG of the EGPA GEAP, particularly to those dealing with the tertiary sector and public-private networks, mainly representing an important link between research and contributions developed by the European Academy of Management, on the one hand, and by university research networks over the third sector and social enterprises (EMES, ISTR). In areas of partnership between public and non-profit organizations, co-production and creation of social enterprises in social innovation processes are the countries of Southeast Europe a major redefinition of the scope of public policy level and to raise capital to respond to urgent requirement of employment opportunities, especially reducing youth unemployment, growing social unrest and reducing health and social work services, social welfare and education.
10- The central place of social enterprises in public policy intervention at the local level, in view of the relationship with the government sector and third sector is comprehensively analyzed by the contribution of Lucica Matei and Cristina Sandu, where there is also the European benchmarking. The comparative study refers to well-known models of social enterprises – the British and the French model, and highlights current patterns of development in South-Eastern Europe: Poland, Czech Republic, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia, FYROM, and Ukraine.

11- The contribution of Andrea Bonomi Savignon and Luigi Crovo presents a theoretical analysis of the concept of an integrated BGR with the third sector and presents the results of a detailed study for nonprofit organizations and Italian social enterprises, based on the 2011 census, paying particular attention to human resource management, ICT and management positions.

12- The contribution of Marco Meneguzzo, Rocco Frondizi, Nathalie Colasanti, Monica de Melo Freitas and Ricardo Altimira Vega explores the experiences of social innovation carried out in some South Europe countries, by introducing the concept of social innovation and its contribution to the creation of public value.

13- The traditional line of research on the contribution of BGR in the book is highlighted by Ani Matei and Mihaela Tuca. Their research shows the logical dynamics and the evolution of CSR in the countries of Southeast Europe, linking ongoing trends in Europe (www.csreurope.org) and action plans initiated by the European Union introducing rules of social and economic responsibility in the Public Administration system. In this sense, we can offer as an example, the introduction of ISO 26000 Standard and the adoption of sustainability reports, GRI (Global Reporting Initiative).

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