THEORETICAL ISSUES

Public Administration Quality:
Assessment Criteria in Comparative Territorial Frames

Konstantin Nikolaevich
KALASHNIKOV
Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences
Vologda, Russian Federation, 56A, Gorky Street, 160014
E-mail: konstantino-84@mail.ru

Abstract. The purpose of the article is to generalize, systematize and develop a number of key theories and concepts of public administration efficiency and quality. The author classifies and criticizes the conceptual framework of the study and evaluates the efficiency and quality of public administration. It has been found out that the traditional "functionalist" approaches based on assessment of the achieved socially significant results or economic growth are important, especially in the context of using the program-target method of administration, yet insufficient. The novelty of the research is that in contrast to the authors proposing assessments based on trivial indicators of regions' socio-economic development, the author substantiates the importance of using the complex approach in assessing the effectiveness/ quality of public administration, which helps consider not only the "effectiveness", but also the quality of procedural mechanisms of public administration (autonomy of the executive power in choosing mechanisms of the implementation of identified policy goals; level of transparency and objectivity of mechanisms of selection and job promotion, professionalization of government employees). The research methods include system analysis and applied conceptualization. The article considers the following three sources of basic criteria of the quality of public administration: 1) the system of criteria of M. Weber's modern state model; 2) B. Rothstein's theory of impartial political institutions 3) P. Evans' concept of embedded autonomy. The practical significance of the article is that it shows in detail and with examples of the Russian management practice that the use of theory-based criteria for assessing the quality of public administration is accompanied by a set of complex problems, both methodological and instrumental.

Many of these problems have not been solved yet. In the final part of the article, the author, referring to the current experience of regions, analyzes the difficulties of implementing the outlined concepts in the framework of practical assessment of public administration quality and efficiency. The author considers that a promising area for the development of this research is the development of methodological tools for assessing the quality of public administration at the sub-federal level, based on methodological criteria which are ignored in the modern practice of public administration.

Key words: public administration efficiency and quality, criteria, Weberian state, theory of impartial political institutions, concept of embedded autonomy.

Introduction

The issues of public administration quality and efficiency are at the center of attention of both executive authorities and researchers in various scientific spheres (the desirability of separating management by sphere, including public and commercial sectors, is interesting itself but still requires separate discussion)[1]. However, this diversity of research projects and published works which are often very superficial and "functionalist"- biased hides nearly total lack of valuable methodological approaches to the assessment of the quality of state institutions and, more importantly, ignoring the search of objective criteria for this assessment.

However, political and social science has formed some basic concepts, the use of which creates preconditions for objective assessment of the quality of public administration at the level of both executive bodies of the territory in general and in specific sectors. It is necessary to highlight at least three independent productive areas in assessing the quality of public administration. First, M. Weber's procedural model based on principles of selection, rotation, and material remuneration of public officials, which is one of the most important aspects of effective management

[2]. The procedural aspects are developed in B. Rothstein's and J. Terelya's theory of impartial political institutions, which nominates impartiality as an independent criterion of the quality of public administration [14; 22]. It is important to mention the scientific contribution made by American scientists P. Evans and M. Jensen to the development of the spheres under review. They paid attention to the delegation of authority and formation of mechanisms of effective communication in hierarchical structures at micro and macro levels, which proved extremely popular for deep understanding of the quality issues of public administration in modern political and economic conditions [15; 16]. F. Fukuyama outlined the key and most common errors of assessing the quality of public administration including the use of indicators of achievement in a number of evaluation criteria and disregard of exogenous factors in their formation be it political context, activity of the civil society, or participation of local communities. He suggested relying on the link of criteria of "efficiency − autonomy" in assessing the quality of administration as an alternative to controversial methodological approaches [21].

However, the resolution of the conflicts between the selected theoretical areas remain a serious methodological problem, which, as a rule, are private rather than fundamental.

---

[1]   H. Simon wrote that the differences between public and non-public administration are greatly exaggerated and relate to the degree, rather than the nature of the cause [5].

The article attempts to identify these conflicts and propose measures to address them, which would be another step towards the formation of optimal methodological frameworks for assessing the quality of public administration. Despite the fact that the use of each approach is associated with a number of instrumental problems, their detailed analysis is beyond the scope of the article. Its purpose is to conceptualize the difficulties and application constraints, especially in spatial dimensions, methods of assessing the quality of public administration, and to summarize the important criteria for such assessments to rely on.

Why is the development of the institutions of "negative freedom" not considered as an objective criterion of public administration quality

It is known that the current political system should be based on three main pillars — a strong state, rule of law, and democratic justice in steady equilibrium with each other [12]. However, although most Western countries have successfully achieved this structural balance, many developing countries still demonstrate various variants of branching in the indicated vectors. Thus, the imbalance between the democratic development and the formation of liberal institutions described by F. Zakaria in "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy" lies in the fact that political leaders, having the trust of the people and sufficient legitimacy, often tend to violate constitutional standards after assuming power or being re-elected [28]. F. Fukuyama, in turn, indicates the examples of differences in the development of state institutions and what can be called institutions of "limitation of authority" or, referring to the terminology of I. Berlin, the institutions of "negative freedom"

[1; 20]. Examples of imbalance between modern state structures, on the one hand, and successful protection of civil liberties and democracy on the other hand are so obvious that they can be detected even in aggregated data such as World Bank estimates[2] [17] (see Appendix 1). They indicate the absence of strong cause-and-effect relationship between the three indicated variables, therefore the democratic development cannot be considered a sufficient prerequisite for the creation of mature state institutions. The formation of functioning bureaucratic structures is an independent and a much more complicated task than organization and holding of free election [19].

However, the concept of governance quality ("good governance"), which first appeared in the documents of the UN Development Program, considers the state of institutions of the civil society, democracy, and the rule of law the main criteria of "proper" governance, along with the efficiency of the executive power understood as a compromise between costs and achieved results [24]. On the one hand, this problem definition seems quite adequate. It is impossible to ignore and deny the great expectations set for institutions of the civil society in the modern world in terms of enhancing the effectiveness of bureaucratic structures, whether it is fighting corruption or ensuring the quality and accessibility of social services. On the other hand, there are several

---

[2] World Bank methodology (authors — D. Kaufmann, A. Kraay and M. Mastrucci) is distinguished by the breadth of geographical representation and the possibility of dynamic mappings (with data on established methods from 1996). The World Bank toolkit helps identify valuable facts and patterns. In addition to fixing the overall global image by main components of assessing the quality of public administration, the study of changes in the situation for long time periods in conjunction with the indicators is also of interest.

reasons to question the productivity of such a broad approach to selecting the criteria for public administration quality. Leaving aside the deviations where civil union designed to control the government are formed at the initiative of the government itself as decorative and servile structure, and therefore do not have any influence on decision-making, we pay attention to fundamental constraints. First of all, it should be noted that external control itself, whatever it is, is unable to create effective institutions and mechanisms of the executive power "from scratch". On the contrary, the basic level of the quality of state institutions, which exists as a separate "constant" and is not dependent on external impacts, is essential [20]. Besides, control should be moderate, the bureaucratic structures must have a sufficient degree of autonomy and independence from the changing political conditions and fluctuations in public opinion. The idea of balance between autonomy in decision-making and control is in the framework of P. Evans' concept of embedded autonomy [15]. Executive bodies are to maintain the critical view from the society, but, firstly, it does not guarantee practical success, and, secondly, violation of optimal boundaries can give rise to forms of political corruption such as clientelism. Therefore, it is fundamentally important to separate the activity of executive bodies from the development of institutions of democratic justice and the rule of law for objective assessment of the quality of governance [21].

Thus, understanding the role of institutions of "negative freedom" in improving the quality of government structures and providing transparency in the decision-making process, one should neither exaggerate their importance

in the growth of the quality of governance, nor include them in the system of assessment.

Why should the quality of governance be analyzed regardless of political context

Assessment of governance quality is associated with the need to separate policy and management itself. The former is related to the activity of the state in the sphere of universal and global issues, the latter is referred to its actions in the implementation of specific measures. In order to objectively assess the quality of the executive power, it is necessary to exclude parameters of political preferences from the assessment. Prominent researchers and public figures such as J. Bluntschli, M. Weber and V. Wilson repeatedly stressed the fundamental importance of this distinction: management can be bad or good regardless of political context[3] [13; 23; 26]. German sociologist Max Weber in his famous lecture "Politics as a vocation" distinguishes, relatively speaking, between a political leader (a charismatic person) and a dispassionate government official [23]. Similar position is expressed by W. Wilson in the essay "The study of administration": he states that public administration is part of political life only to the extent a machine is an integral part of the production process. "If I see a murderous fellow sharpening a knife cleverly, — he writes, — I can borrow his way of sharpening the knife without borrowing his probable intention to commit murder with it; and so, if I see a monarchist dyed in the wool managing a public bureau well, I can learn his business methods without

---

[3] A famous phrase by I.V. Prangishvili "There are no poor or rich states, there is proper or poor governance" in its aphoristic form indicates that the quality of governance has its individual value beyond both political and economic context. The quality of the state, thus, represents a proportional correlation between resource potential and achieved results.

changing one of my republican spots" [26]. The theory of impartial political institutions which appeared a century later is, in fact, based on the same thoughts about the branching of the democratic system, which has two sides controlled by opposite rules: political bias of the participatory process and impartiality of the executive process [22]. Supporting this theoretical basis, F. Fukuyama takes it as an initial prerequisite for describing the common characteristics of the methodological framework for the assessment of governance. A significant feature of public administration is introduced by the point of ignoring the regime dominating in the country (democratic or authoritarian) [21]. We believe that this nuance reflects the meaning of paradoxical statements prevalent in political journalism claiming that in some totalitarian countries life is not worse than in liberal democracies. There is strange outrageous confusion between the concepts "state" and "democracy" in the criticism of "color revolutions" including on the part of their participants who are later disappointed that the democratic "revolutions" did not bring welfare. In fact, the solution to urgent and routine issues such as supplying settlements with drinking water, providing residents with education and healthcare services, fighting against unemployment and poverty are the objectives of government rather than democratic institutions [10; 19].

Russian scientists V.I. Yakunin, S.S. Sulakshin, V.E. Baghdasaryan and others and others in the book "The quality and success of public policies and administration" also stress their commitment to a marked duality principle. The proposed approach to the assessment of governance quality is based on comparing the results of management activities and publicly stated goals. However, criticizing alternative methods for susceptibility to influence of political preferences, the authors still refer to the method of expert interviews which is not devoid of subjectivity [6].

Erasing political undertones creates a number of interpretation problems. Indeed, if the quality of governance is measured without considering political aspects, one must impartially assess (the estimates may probably be high) the work of the US Ministry of Defense during the invasion of Iraq or Russia's "return of Crimea". If we agree with this principle, in fact, we get a sound argument in favor of the analysis of the Soviet administration in terms of finding the "best practices" or, approaching the problem from the opposite side, we can no longer explain any failure of the Soviet government by the viciousness of socialist ideas. The nomenclature principle of the state policy existed in the Soviet period by definition involved filling the "apparatus" with political appointees, but it was not always arbitrary, the professional qualities of "job seekers" were also taken into account. However, can one highly appreciate the work of the executive authorities who dedicate themselves to contradictory, absurd, or "annihilating" representative directives? Does this not contradict with the procedure requirements?

The separation between politics and administration is associated with difficulties of purely instrumental nature. For example, it is easy to constitutionally guarantee free social services but their practical implementation is extremely difficult. For example, during the assessment of performance of ministries there is the need to understand objective possibilities

of higher structural units start and end in terms of influencing the situation and where there are possibilities of negotiation between the civil society and legislative bodies with a slim chance to reach consensus. Indeed, there are many examples where criticism would be more fair to address to the civil society inactive to defending the interests of the population in, say, the allocation of budget funds, rather than to the executive authorities. What else except for lack of political traditions in reaching consensus between the civil society and the authorities, especially legislative, in the formation of the desired parameters and guidelines for the development of the healthcare system in Russia led to the formation of its eclectic and contradictory forms?

What criteria can serve as a framework for assessing the quality of public administration

Perhaps the most popular approach to the measurement of governance quality is the assessment of the social effect. Assessing the quality of governance from these perspectives means answering the question: how fully does the state implement its basic functions ensuring population's access to national (e.g., defense) and local (road-transport infrastructure, drinking water, etc.) public goods. Public goods provide benefits in a limited area, therefore they can form the basis for regional studies of effectiveness of executive authorities.

We recall that World Bank experts distinguish between three types of state functions according to the degree of difficulty: minimal functions, medium functions and functions of active interference. Minimal functions are basic and lay the basic principles of the state: defense, internal order, protection of property rights. As the state successfully

addresses its minimum objectives, it can claim to implement more "energetic" functions [27].

Thus, addressing the issue of public administration quality in the territory requires the correlation of the degree of implementation of state functions and its capabilities. In this case, state guarantees of the full range of services can be regarded as both insufficient governance and an achievement depending on how well these guarantees are fulfilled. Moreover, the provision of basic social services may be supervised by different levels of hierarchical structures, including those differentiated according to administrative and territorial principles (state authorities at regional and municipal levels), which adds to the complexity of assessment, including due to absence of such data set. Most often researchers have to confine to official statistics and expert reports. But how valid are the indicators – do they reflect the real situation in the selected aspect and from the standpoint of governance?

This problem is traditionally solved by using indicators which theoretically define the broad social result (in education it can be the literacy rate, in healthcare – morbidity and mortality rates). For example, methods of assessing the performance of healthcare systems in Russian constituent entities developed by the experts of the Higher school of health organization and management of the Russian Federation under the leadership of G.E. Ulumbekova, are based on indicators of public funding of healthcare and life expectancy at birth in the regions taken as a result. However, life expectancy is determined by a complex of factors, the efforts of the authorities being among them. With all the positive aspects of these methods it is impossible to separate the

efforts of executive authorities and the influence of the environment. For the same reason the growth of life expectancy noted in Russia is demonstrated by the Ministry of Healthcare as a healthcare performance indicator. Indeed, during 2000−2015 life expectancy in Russia increased by 5.5 years. However, the positive trend in life expectancy is a natural global process covering almost all world countries. During the same period, this indicator increased in developed countries (In the US − by 3.8 years) and in countries with medium and low level of economic development: Romania and Belarus − 4.3 years, Ukraine − 3.8 years, Tajikistan − 6 years. Finally, the contribution of activities of executive bodies, medical services, etc., to the growth of life expectancy is difficult to assess, especially in terms of how adequate it was compared to the desired or potential option[4]. Thus, the assessment of governance quality based on the results of activities has fundamental and insurmountable limits.

Theoretically this problem can be solved by econometric techniques, for example, estimate the degree of influence of a set of exogenous factors on the outcome on the basis of correlation−regression analysis and develop the necessary equalizing indices; however, this will significantly reduce the reliability and functionality of the assessment methodology in terms of practical governance. Experts note that it is more correct to consider the social result as a variable dependent on a certain criterion of state capacity, formed on the basis of more

reliable and theoretically sounds framework, rather than an independent criterion of governance quality [21].

Population surveys, being an alternative for statistical indicators, can be used as a basis for evaluating the activity of executive authorities but they are only indirect criteria of governance quality, therefore can hardly be interpreted. The citizens' opinion is important but it is not always competent. For example, the establishment of stabilization funds financed by commodity exports amid unstable commodity prices and maintaining the basic level of budget expenditures is a reasonable objective, yet the citizens are unlikely to agree to it [4].

There is a need to assess the system of governance prevailing in the country, industry or individual organization not from the standpoint the results of its work but from the point of view of the quality of institutions as such. There are variables reflecting the quality of the state in the procedural aspect. We have them in mind when we refer to effective modern state institutions established in post-industrial countries (recognized samples − Denmark, Sweden and Singapore), the effectiveness in this case is referred to as both social well-being and solely qualitative aspects (including absence of corruption). A classic attempt to define governance in the procedural aspect belongs to M. Weber. He formulated a number of criteria for modern bureaucracy (today referred to as "Weberian"). Government officials (bureaucrats) possess personal freedom and submit to authority only within the set issues, they are arranged in a pronounced hierarchy of offices with defined spheres of competence. Bureaucrats are hired on a contractual basis in strict accordance with their technical

---

[4] There are other limitations of these estimates. For example, V.I. Klistorin notes the risk of inconsistency between the indicators for assessing the effectiveness of authorities at the regional and municipal level in Russia and their real abilities to influence the situation, both due to the existing regime of inter-regional cooperation and active involvement of federal authorities in the regional policy [7].

qualifications; their career advancement is determined by personal professional achievements [2].

The theory of impartial political institutions became complementary to the concept of "Weberian" state. Impartiality, considered by B. Rothstein as a quality criterion of the executive power, is a property of governance, according to which government official implementing laws and policies should not take into consideration anything about the citizen or case except what is provided by law or policy in advance [22]. This principle also applies to social services, "recruitment" of government officials, and staff rotation which should be based on objective assessment of merits and qualifications, rather than on personal selfish motives and affections. The principle of impartiality has important advantages. Firstly, it combines three main features of modern governance: independence of government officials from principals and their political preferences, procedural maturity, and exclusion of discrimination forms from social services. However, as rightly noted by critics, the fact of impartiality does not solve the problem of quality of social services if the correlation between these variables is not proved [21].

At first sight it may seem that ideal Weberian bureaucracy already contains the criterion of professionalization of government officials. This is partly true: accounting of qualifications and merits of government officials is really built into the Weberian model. However, acquaintance with P. Evans' concept of embedded autonomy and some F. Fukuyama' ideas interpretations stemming from it inclines us to make a conclusion that a number of other elements conflict with important

modern ideas about professional development of government officials. For example, strict discipline and control is contrary to the idea of bureaucratic autonomy, according to which officials of executive bodies do not just blindly take orders from principals, but also act independently within their competencies by setting development goals and objectives, not to mention the free choice of tools to achieve them.

The level of education and professionalization of government officials are things that are more elusive to formal analysis and measurement. Today we are witnessing the spread of professional training practices for government officials in Russia (in the framework of higher and vocational professional education). But can this fact indicate the movement in the right direction? Unlike natural sciences, management, marketing, and administrative management provide nutritious environment for arbitrary opinions and unprofessionalism. These disciplines will never speak the language of theorems; however, management mistakes here are no less dangerous.

There is a reason to believe that at the level of theoretical knowledge and attitudes among Russian government officials there is adequate understanding of the need to improve the quality of public administration. The proof is the State program "Development of public administration in the Vologda Oblast for 2013−2018" which sets forth correct quality criteria: availability of competitive procedures as a condition for admission to civil service, sophisticated system of professional development and remuneration based on performance, etc. However, the indicators

indicating the movement to theoretically correct reference points are too formal. The revival of policy-making work in civil service is not yet an evidence of improving the quality of governance: legal acts can be dubious and mutually inconsistent. Professional development of civil servants may be limited to attending scheduled routine activities such as seminars or lectures (see Appendix 2). Assessing their quality is impossible. Finally, even the fact that selection and rotation of government personnel is carried out according to strict formalized procedures does not exclude the possibility personal preferences influencing the outcome.

Assessment of the quality of governance based on the procedural aspect should be accompanied by consideration of at least three circumstances. First, lack of its direct correlation with the quality of public and social services. We agree that selection of employees for work in government agencies should be carried out according to objective criteria, rather than on the basis of clientelism and political preferences. However, the execution of this principle itself does not guarantee that the selected employees will perform their work efficiently and be responsive to the consumer demands [3]. Second, the standard organizational algorithm for solving problems of social services, which states "a need as a problem, supply as a solution, and civil service as a tool" is no longer sufficient. Mechanisms of social services require a more flexible approach to the division of obligations in supply and quality of services [25]. Finally, the condition of total accountability of officials formulated by M. Weber is not certain in modern conditions. Although no bureaucratic system can realize

its own goal setting regardless of whether the regime is democratic or authoritarian, but the scope of orders and their amplification can vary greatly. Modern conditions demand the transfer of the freedom of decision-making to lower levels of the management hierarchy, the most important of them are taken not by a principal, but by an actor who possesses maximum operational information and can act on rapidly changing circumstances. Autonomy in modern bureaucratic structures is an important condition for governance quality and achievement of better results. However, autonomy cannot claim to be an independent criterion of governance quality for the reason that it has unstable boundaries. It is hard to state with certainty which "stone" generated this or that concentric circle of solutions. Moreover, a high level of independence in decision-making amid informational asymmetry may lead to negative consequences if the actor does not have sufficient skills or work motivation [16]. A reasonable solution to this dilemma is to study and evaluate the capacity and autonomy of bureaucratic structures in a single bundle: high capacity can justify broad autonomy and, vice versa, low performance requires the use of tools of strict control. For this reason, the most important aspect in assessing the quality of public administration is to determine the extent of balance between delegation of authority and system control in the context of the state structure with a particular level of capacity. However, what is meant by structure capacity? In the preferred variant, it should combine both procedural and functional elements while maintaining industry specification (for each separate industry or sphere the elements of capacity

may vary). Depending on this specific features capacity may reflect the ability of regional executive bodies to accumulate resources, monitor compliance with quality standards and availability of services, competently manage goal-setting, maintain the level of qualification and motivation of government officials and employees of subordinate organizations.

Conclusion

The paper should be regarded as both a continuation to the discussion initiated by a number of researchers about the choice of objective criteria for the quality of governance, and an attempt to focus on the practical aspects of measuring the effectiveness of executive authorities. The discussed conceptual and instrumental issues of assessing the quality of public administration deserve more attention than they currently receive.

Today, an important objective is the search for optimal models of assessing public administration quality based on the criteria described in the article. At the same time, none of them can qualify for completeness and versatility. Thus, the indicators of socio-economic development of territories traditionally used for measuring the performance executive bodies should not be perceived as a sole sufficient framework for assessing the quality of public administration. It is reasonable to consider indicators of the social effect as variables caused by the capacity of government authorities, rather than independent quality criteria. It is important to assess the balance between autonomy and subordination in relation to the measured level of efficiency of the bureaucratic structure. Objective assessment of the quality

of governance needs to take into account the procedural criterion which includes transparency and rationality of the procedures for personnel recruitment, promotion and remuneration. However, the Weberian criterion loses its value without the accompanying study of social capability (demonstrating whether population's needs are achieved and satisfied), as well as flexibility of administrative structures, when lower levels of the hierarchy are provided with sufficient powers to act promptly on the basis of local conditions.

Assessment of the quality of public administration may not be absolute. The process of assessment will always be accompanied by more or less available indicators which, one way or another, will characterize the performance of executive bodies in territorial breakdown (country, region, municipal unit). In any case, analysis will be based on comparative regional context. The "consolidated" approach, however, implies a risk to face the issue of uneven development of state institutions — both territorial and sectoral. Even within one country the situation with the governance quality can vary considerably from industry to industry and from senior governance levels to local. It is important to remember that the overall negative context may hide good and noteworthy governance precedents. A decent alternative to formalized assessments of the quality of public administration is a deep analysis of practical experience, although it has constraints in terms of formulating recommendations and creating forecasts since the relevance of a positive government precedent in a new environment depends on a number of factors difficult to control.

Quality of governance in World Bank assessments: examples of dichotomous development of countries in the post-Soviet period

To illustrate, we consider what changes occurred in the conjunction "accounting for population's opinion and accountability of government bodies/ government effectiveness" for the entire period of the World Bank measurements, chronologically coinciding with the post-socialist transformations. The greatest success in building a modern state was achieved in the Baltic countries; certain positive developments were possible in Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine and to some extent in Tajikistan. In these countries, during the period from the first to the last measurement of indicators, positive changes took place in both development directions (*Tab. 1*).

In Kyrgyzstan, there was improvement in communication between authorities and the civil society, while government effectiveness declined. The reverse situation is observed in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan: during the analyzed period, these states managed to achieve greater efficiency of government performance; however, there was no major progress
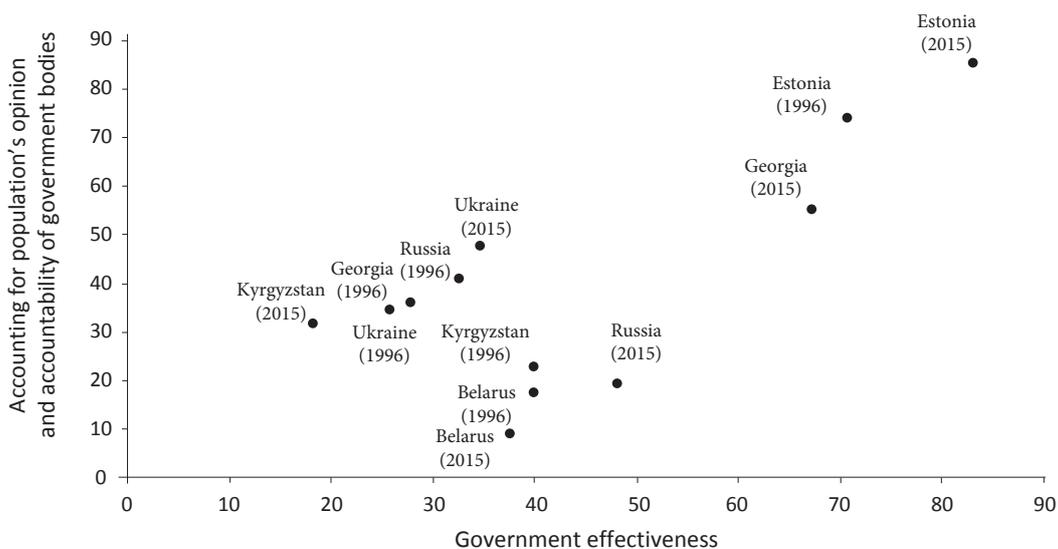
Table 1. Typological matrix: "accounting for population's opinion and accountability of government bodies/ government effectiveness"

		Government performance efficiency	
		Growth	Decline
Accounting for population's opinion and accountability of government bodies	Growth	Armenia, Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Tajikistan, Ukraine	Kyrgyzstan
	Decline	Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan	Belarus, Moldova
Source: compiled from data from the World Bank.			

in constructing feedback with the society and accountability of the authorities in these countries. The most unfavorable changes occurred in Belarus and Moldova, both their ratings declines (*Fig.*).

Accounting for population's opinion and accountability of government bodies/ government effectiveness in post-Soviet countries (1996 and 2015)

Source: compiled from data from the World Bank.

During the post-Soviet period (1996–2015), former socialist republics demonstrated contradictory results in the development of state institutions. However, in some countries (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Georgia) the evolution of state institutions (government effectiveness, rule of law, accounting for population's opinion) continues in all spheres of development, or, conversely, a decline in most aspects is observed (for example, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova); in other countries, the development is dichotomized. A particularly paradoxical situation is observed in Belarus where during this period there was an increase in the indicator of corruption control, political stability accompanied by declined parameters of the rule of law and government efficiency (*Tab. 2*).

The case of Belarus demonstrates that it is possible to achieve relative success in fighting corruption without increased confidence of different

Table 2. Typological matrix: "rule of law/government efficiency"

		Rule of law	
		Increase	Decline
Corruption control	Increase	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Tajikistan, Ukraine	Belarus
	Decline	–	Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
Source: compiled from data from the World Bank.			

actors in the established legislative standards and their implementation; however, this belief itself helps "cleanse" the state government. In general, however, harmonization of the development of state and political institutions is required, success in moving towards one of the vectors is not enough.

Appendix 2

Formal indicators of professionalization of government officials in Russia

Even on the basis of a simple set of formal indicators, one can conclude that the movement towards modern efficient state institutions in constituent entities of the Russian Federation is uneven. The maximum we can take from statistics is the qualifications of government officials – or rather, the intensity and breadth of vocational professional education. Thus, in 2014, according to Rosstat, 23% of Russian government officials were trained in programs of vocational professional education. The share of individuals who received professional training does not exceed 2% of the total number of the trainees. However, there is a noticeable variation in the values of the share of the trained federal districts. The maximum value is recorded in the Crimean Federal district (44% of

trained government officials); the minimum value is recorded in the North Caucasian Federal district, where only 18% of officials received vocational education in the form of professional training or qualification. However, other macro-regions have similar values of the analyzed index, ranging from 20 to 25% (*Tab. 3*).

There is also a differentiation in the values of the shares of those trained by constituent entity: from the maximum in Sevastopol (54%), Republic of Crimea (43%), Moscow (32%), Republic of Buryatia (28%), Republic of Mari El (27%) and the Tver Oblast (27%) to the minimum in the Saratov Oblast(17%), Krasnodar Krai (17%), the Kemerovo Oblast (16%), Republic of Dagestan (15%) and Ingushetia (14%) (*Tab. 4*).

Table 3. Training of government employees of the Russian Federation in programs
of vocational professional education by federal districts in 2014

Federal District	Received vocational professional education, people	Including		Total number of trainees, in % of the total number of government employees in a particular constituent entity
		Those who were professionally re-trained	Those who improved their qualifications	
Russian Federation	176245	3048	173137	22.9
Central	48416	649	47750	25.2
Northwestern	21129	401	20726	23.7
Southern	13618	316	13298	20.2
North-Caucasian	8134	231	7894	17.7
Volga	31375	470	30890	22.1
Ural	14996	281	14710	24.0
Far Eastern	12117	245	11869	23.2
Crimean	3326	21	3305	44.5
Source: Rosstat, 2015.				

Table 4. The most successful and lagging regions in terms of training of workers of the state civil service
of the Russian Federation according to programs of additional professional education in 2014, in %

10 regions with maximum indicator values	%	10 regions with minimum indicator values	%
City of Sevastopol	54.4	Karachay-Cherkess Republic	18.4
Republic of Crimea	43.2	Republic of Adygea	18.3
City of Moscow	32.4	Perm Krai	18.3
Republic of Buryatia	27.5	Altai Krai	17.7
Republic of Mari El	27.1	Chechen Republic	17.4
Tver Oblast	26.9	Saratov Oblast	17.2
Republic of Mordovia	26.2	Krasnodar Krai	16.8
Sakha Republic	26.2	Kemerovo Oblast	16
Chuvash Republic	26.1	Republic of Dagestan	14.6
Lipetsk Oblast	25.8	Republic of Ingushetia	13.9
National average: 22.9. Average of the Vologda Oblast: 22.1			
Source: Rosstat, 2015.			

The data are interesting, but do little for understanding the differences (there is high probability that these differences are present) in the quality of public institutions. In fact, high quality information about the prevalence of corruption, including in separate sectors, degree of implementation of principles of meritocracy and personnel recruitment in assessing their personal merits, etc. is required.

References

1. Berlin I. *Filosofiya svobody. Evropa* [The philosophy of freedom. Vol.2: Europe].Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2001. 448 p. (In Russian).

2. Ionin L.G. (Ed.). Weber M. *Khozyaistvo i obshchestvo: ocherki ponimayushchei sotsiologii* [Economy and society]. In 4 volumes. Translated from German. Moscow: Izd. dom Vysshei shkoly ekonomiki, 2016. (In Russian).

3. Voroshilov N.V. Effektivnost' munitsipal'nogo upravleniya: sushchnost' i podkhody k otsenke [Effectiveness of municipal administration: the essence and approaches to its evaluation]. *Problemy razvitiya territorii* [Problems of territory's development], 2015, no. 3, pp. 143-159.

4. Gaidar E.T. *Gibel' imperii. Uroki dlya sovremennoi Rossii* [The collapse of the empire. Lessons for modern Russia]. Moscow: Corpus, 2013. 592 p. (In Russian).

5. Ilyin V.A., Povarova A.I. *Problemy effektivnosti gosudarstvennogo upravleniya. Tendentsii rynochnykh transformatsii. Krizis byudzhetnoi sistemy. Rol' chastnogo kapitala. Strategiya−2020: problemy realizatsii* [Issues of public administration efficiency. Trends of market transformations. The crisis of the budget system. The role of private capital. Strategy−2020: problems of implementation]. 188 s. (In Russian).

6. Kachestvo i uspeshnost' gosudarstvennykh politik i upravleniya. Seriya "Politicheskaya aksiologiya" [Quality and efficiency of public policies and administration. Series "Political axiology"]. Moscow: Nauchnyi ekspert, 2012. 496 p.

7. Klistorin V.V. Federativnye otnosheniya, regional'naya politika i problema deformatsii ekonomicheskogo prostranstva Rossii [The Russian federative relations, regional policy, and deformed economic space]. *Region: ekonomika i sotsiologiya* [Region: economics and sociology], 2013, no. 3 (79), pp. 79-95.

8. Simon G., Smithburg D., Thompson V. *Menedzhment v organizatsiyakh* [Public administration]. Moscow: RAGS "Ekonomika", 1995. 342 p. (In Russian).

9. Foucault M. Rozhdenie biopolitiki. Tsikl lektsii [The birth of biopolitics. Series of lectures]. *Informatsionno-analiticheskii portal "Gumanitarnye tekhnologii"* [Information-analytical portal "Humanitarian technology"]. Available at: http://gtmarket.ru/laboratory/doc/6709. (In Russian).

10. Fukuyama F. *Sil'noe gosudarstvo: Upravlenie i mirovoi poryadok v XXI veke* [State-building: governance and world order in the 21st century]. Moscow: Ast: ACT Moskva: Khranitel'. 2006. 542 p. (In Russian).

11. *Effektivnost' gosudarstvennogo upravleniya v otsenkakh naseleniya. Monitoring sotsial'no-ekonomicheskogo polozheniya munitsipal'nykh raionov Vologodskoi oblasti v 2000−2013 gg.* [Public administration efficiency in population's estimates. Monitoring of the socio-economic state of municipal districts of the Vologda Oblast in 2000−2013]. Vologda: ISERT RAN, 2014. (In Russian).

12. A Conversation with Francis Fukuyama. John B. Hurford Memorial Lecture: Council on foreign relations. Available at: https://www.cfr.org/event/conversation-francis-fukuyama

13. Bluntschli J.K. *The Theory of the State. Kitchener,* 2000. 491 p.

14. Dahlberg S., Holmberg S., Rothstein B., Khomenko A., Svensson R. *Kachestvo pravitel'stva Osnovnoi Nabor dannykh* [Administration quality. Basic data set]. *Universitet Geteborga: Kachestvo pravitel'stvennogo Instituta* [University of Gothenburg: the quality of government institute], 2016. Available at: http://www.qog.pol.gu.se doi:10.18157/QoGBasJan16

15. Evans P. *Embedded autonomy: states and industrial transformation*. Princeton University Press, 1995. 325 p.

16. Jensen M., Meckling W. Theory of the Firm. Managerial Behavior, Agency Costs and Ownership Structure. *Journal of Financial Economics*, 1976, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 305-360.

17. Kaufmann D., Kraay A., Mastruzzi M. Governance Matters III: Governance Indicators for 1996−2002. *The World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3106*, 2004.

18. Varraich A. Sorruption: an umbrella concept. *QoG Working Paper Series 2014:05*.

19. Fukuyama F. The Strange Absence of the State in Political Science. *The American Interest*, 2012. Available at: https://www.the-american-interest.com/2012/10/02/the-strange-absence-of-the-state-in-political-science/

20. Fukuyama F. Democracy and corruption. *The American interest*, 2012. Available at: https://www.the-american-interest.com/2012/10/05/democracy-and-corruption/

21. Fukuyama F. What Is Governance? CGD Working Paper 314. Washington, DC? 2013. *Center for Global Development*. Available at: http://www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/1426906

22. Rothstein B., Teorell J. What is Quality of Government? A Theory of Impartial Political Institutions. *QOG Working paper series*, 2005:6.

23. Weber M. Politics as a Vocation. *The Vocation Lectures*. Indianapolis: Hackett Company, 2004. 32 p.

24. *What is Good Governance? United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific*. Available at: http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/good-governance.pdf

25. Woolcock M., Pritchett L. *Solutions When the Solution is the Problem: Arraying the Disarray in Development*. Washington, DC: Center for Global Development Paper 10, 2002.

26. Wilson W. The Study of Administration. *Political Science Quarterly*, 1887, *no.* 2(2), pp. 197-222. Available at: http://www.commentary.com/admin_thoughts_1887.pdf

27. *World Bank. 1997. World Development Report 1997: The State in a Changing World*. New York: Oxford University Press. Available at: https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/5980

28. Zakaria F. The Rise of Illiberal Democracy. *Foreign Affairs*, 1997, pp. 22-43.

Information about the Author

Konstantin Nikolaevich Kalashnikov – Ph.D. in Economics, Research Associate at the Department for Living Standards and Lifestyle Studies, Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences (56A, Gorky Street, Vologda, 160014, Russian Federation; e-mail: konstantino-84@mail.ru)