

SUMMARY

The present thesis aimed primarily at identifying the extent to which public utility services are measured and evaluated in terms of performance and what improvements could be made to these evaluation models, if they exist.

To achieve the fundamental objectives as well as the derived ones, within the thesis, through fundamental research, I analysed the concepts of performance and performance management in the state of knowledge.

Starting from the historical evolution of these concepts, from simple analysis of economic performance to advanced models, incorporating multiple dimensions of analysis to establish overall performance, I comprehensively presented the theoretical concepts underlying the measurement and evaluation of performance. Subsequently, fundamental research focused on analysing how the concept of performance differs at the level of public administration and public utility services, the latter being somewhere between the public and private sectors in the author's conception. In this regard, I analysed performance at the level of the two dimensions public/private, concluding by highlighting international best practices identified worldwide in evaluating the performance of public services.

Because the public service system is quite extensive, to allow for a better-focused detailed analysis, it was considered appropriate that within the thesis, the public utility service for analysis to be local public passenger transport. Thus, at the transport service level, we analysed the main regulations underlying performance and how performance is measured and evaluated, both in Romania and France, predominantly maintaining a comparative approach between the two states at the thesis level.

In the empirical research, I started with a national-level approach, focused on distinct operators, followed by a sectoral analysis by macro-regions of development, and concluded by extending comparative research among the world's major cities, based on publicly available indicators at the city level. At the same time, in applying specific research techniques, questionnaires administered to public service users, both in Paris and Bucharest, I highlighted a series of often distinct viewpoints between the two cities, debated within the thesis.

Within the thesis, I attempted to provide a comprehensive view of the main elements directly impacting the overall performance of local public transport services, presenting and analysing a series of influencing factors and the main practical issues: from the treatment of

price subsidies to the intelligent development of the service and its SMART performance indicators (ISO 37101).

In concluding the empirical research, I applied the STEER analysis to the two capitals: Bucharest and Paris, to capture the main elements specific to each criterion that have a direct, quantifiable impact on the performance of local public transport services.

In the last part of the thesis, in response to the lack of identifying a coherent model that would add value at the higher managerial level, which in the case of public utility services is the Municipality and the Authorities delegated by it to manage the service, I developed a new way of defining the concept of "integrated performance". By defining this new adimensional concept of performance, aggregating indicators, from analytical to synthetic, both at the level of public utility service and at the level of the public utility service system, I continued by developing a model for its application, tested at the level of three representative cities in Romania.

In addition to the main model for measuring and evaluating integrated performance, personal contribution is also manifested through complementary concepts, such as: developing a system for continuously supplementing the model with performance indicators based on a decision system derived from the fuzzy sets model and a purely theoretical concept such as the performance temple.

Integrated performance, as defined in the author's conception, aims to analyse the specific performance levels of the 21st century and the current strategic trends of development in the European Union, addressing aspects such as: cost-effectiveness, level of digitization, degree of decarbonization, service quality, and citizen satisfaction level.

Perhaps even more than developing the concept and its implementation model in practice, research also defines the need for these systems to be addressed at a higher managerial level to add value at the Metropolitan level, being an instrument available to Local Authorities and which must be imposed by them.

The thesis leaves room for future developments by applying the model at the level of all public utility services, by developing the necessary, specific indicators for a broader integration of performance at the Municipal level.