

Conclusions

Laura Mina-Raiu, Lara Johannsdottir,
Ivana Načinović Braje, Aída Díaz-Tendero
(Editors)

Good governance is a key factor for national, regional and local development, which many countries aim to achieve and maintain. In a context of changing international equilibrium, transnational crisis and further integration, European democracies require innovative solutions for developing their institutional capacities and resilience. The 11 case studies incorporated in this volume showcase a broad range of national experiences with good governance and resilience in challenging times. Given the wide spread and coverage of various European experiences, the lessons to be learned and good practices to be shared cannot rely on a single, unique framework, as it cannot capture the overall diversity of contextual elements and relevant parameters of good governance and resilience. Therefore, the volume aims at showcasing positive examples that drive the capacity of organizations to manage unexpected circumstances and drawing a series of lessons to be learnt, in a comparative and transnational approach.

The conclusions of the volume are structured in two parts. First, we present four comparison tables that are an overview of the keywords indicated in the chapters, the sector of activity, the industry covered in relevant chapters and the theoretical approaches and/or key concepts relevant for discussion in specific chapters of the book volume. Second, we derive general learnings from the national case studies, focusing on positive examples and best practices of good governance and resilience in challenging circumstances.

Comparative analysis of selected case studies using various criteria

Table 12.1 shows the breadth of discussion about the concepts of governance and/or resilience, but related to the perspective from which these concepts are discussed. Some concepts are relevant in many chapters, while other are relevant for one or few chapters. For instance, business-related concepts, namely business, business crisis, business environment, business process reengineering and business resilience are discussed in chapters 4 and 5, and 7-11. COVID-19 has a relevance for some chapters, such as in relation to the concepts of crisis and pandemic, therefore, synthesized in the same line of table. These concepts have relevance for chapter 3-5, chapter 7, and chapter 9-11. Crisis per se is brought up in relation to business crisis in chapter 7, but also in relation to crisis leadership and crisis management, see chapters 3, 4, 6 and 10. Governance is brought up in the context of corporate

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governance 2 and 7, good governance 4 and 10, and public governance, see chapters 4 and 6, and multi-level governance in chapter 3. A change in the way of work during the COVID-19 pandemic can be seen in concepts such as remote work, telework, and work from home, discussed in chapters 3 and 5, but other chapters also bring up change management and/or changes in the business environment in other contexts, see chapter 1, 7 and 9. The key concepts of the book, i.e., governance and/or resilience has also relevance for the discussion in chapters 2 and 11, and human resource management for chapters 1, 2 and 5. Among concepts only brought up once, but still with relevance to the key concepts, are acceptance (of change), chapter 1, business process reengineering, chapter 10, communication market chapter 11, core business, chapter 1, digitalization, chapter 10, innovation ecosystem, chapter 8, longevity, chapter 7, public process, chapter 4, public transport service, chapter 3, reporting standards, chapter 2, and risk management in chapter 6.

Synthesized keywords from all chapters

Table 12.1

Keywords	Ch 1	Ch 2	Ch 3	Ch 4	Ch 5	Ch 6	Ch 7	Ch 8	Ch 9	Ch 10	Ch 11
Acceptance	x										
Business				x	x		x	x			
Business crises							x				
Business environment					x				x		x
Business process reengineering										x	
Business resilience							x		x		
Change management, changes in bus. env.	x						x		x		
Communication market											x
Controversial industry		x									
Core business	x										
Corporate governance		x					x				
Corporate social responsibility		x									x
COVID-19, crisis, pandemic			x	x	x		x		x	x	x
Crisis, crisis leadership, crisis management			x	x		x				x	
Digitalization										x	
Good governance				x						x	
Human resource management	x	x			x						
Innovation ecosystem								x			
Integration	x		x								
Inward resilience						x					

Keywords	Ch 1	Ch 2	Ch 3	Ch 4	Ch 5	Ch 6	Ch 7	Ch 8	Ch 9	Ch 10	Ch 11
Longevity							x				
Multi-level governance			x								
Multi-stakeholder governance			x								
Organizational decline							x				
Organizational life cycle							x				
Outward resilience						x					
Performance	x										
Policy process				x							
Public governance				x		x					
Public services										x	
Public transport service			x								
Public-private partnership			x	x						x	
Readiness	x										
Remote work, telework, work from home			x		x						
Reporting standards		x									
Resilience				x		x			x	x	x
Resistance	x										
Restructuring							x				
Retail market											x
Risk management						x					
Stakeholder	x		x	x							
Transition, transition management					x			x			

Even if it is not clearly visible in table 12.1 upon further examination of the topics covered in the chapters, a closer correspondence between them can be found in case of relevant keywords.

Table 12.2 show that the discussion about governance and/or resilience has relevance both for the public and the private sector, as well as in the case of public-private partnership. Most of the chapters in this volume focus on the private sector, namely chapters 4 and 5, chapters 7-9, and chapter 11, followed by the focus on public-private partnership, discussed in chapters 1, 3, 4, and 10. Only three chapters offer examples from purely the public sectors that is chapters 2, 6 and 8.

This particular finding may suggest that public governance per se is not sufficient anymore in order to explain the complex process of governing, through which decisions are made, that are intended to impact a wide span of societal outcomes, such as economic, social, environmental and other important outcomes (Wolman,

Levy and Hincapie, 2011). Such a complex process is based on a complex network of relationships, which require the interactions between all the stakeholders involved in the decision-making process, from public institutional actors to private and social actors (Ruano, 2015b).

Overview of sectors covered in relevant chapters of the book volume

Table 12.2

Sectors	Ch 1	Ch 2	Ch 3	Ch 4	Ch 5	Ch 6	Ch 7	Ch 8	Ch 9	Ch 10	Ch 11
Public sector		x				x		x			
Private sector				x	x		x	x	x		x
Public-Private Partnership	x		x	x						x	

Table 12.3 demonstrates breadth of discussion about industry in the book volume, ranging from alcohol and tobacco production, covered in chapter 2, to aviation, transportation and tourism covered in chapters 1, 3 and 4, respectively. Some of the chapters deal with general services, such as chapter 11, which cover communication, or public services/utilities, chapters chapter 6 and 10, or retail in chapter 7 and 11 while others deal with activities that are much more specialized, namely scientific instruments and technology covered in chapter 8, and information and communications technology addressed in chapter 5.

Overview of industry covered in specific chapters of the book volume

Table 12.3

Industry	Ch 1	Ch 2	Ch 3	Ch 4	Ch 5	Ch 6	Ch 7	Ch 8	Ch 9	Ch 10	Ch 11
Alcohol and tobacco production		x									
Aviation	x										
Communication											x
Info. and Communications Technology					x						
Public services / utilities						x				x	
Retail							x		x		x
Scientific instruments								x			
Tech company								x			
Tourism	x			x							
Transportation	x		x								

It is not surprising that tourism and aviation are present in the choice of cases authors have made, since during COVID-19 these sectors were by far the most severely affected. Also, the public services case is a very relevant one, as they address the common good and satisfy citizens essential needs, thus their provision

has always been regulated by special legislation, following several principles such as equity, transparency, efficiency, continuity etc. The continuity principle refers to the fact that basic public services, such as water provision, public transport, health services etc. should be provided on a continuous base, no matter the circumstances. Consequently, employees working in public services are sometimes not even allowed to organize strikes, or they can be on strike, but for a very short time or under the condition that they still provide a certain service capacity. During COVID-19 pandemic public services were very much challenged in terms of good governance and resilience. The pressure was not caused by a decrease in the demand, which was the case of many private companies, but implied a lot of changes in field of working planning and work loads.

The table shows the relevance of good governance for all types of operations and businesses, in various types of industries, as the diversity of the book chapters demonstrates.

Table 12.4 provides an overview of the main theories and/or key concepts discussed in the book. The table demonstrates how broad the theoretical coverage is in context of governance and/or resilience.

Overview of theoretical approaches and/or key concepts relevant for discussion in specific chapters of the book volume

Table 12.4

Theories or concepts	Ch 1	Ch 2	Ch 3	Ch 4	Ch 5	Ch 6	Ch 7	Ch 8	Ch 9	Ch 10	Ch 11
Business restructuring							x			x	
Change management	x						x				
Corporate Social Responsibility		x									
COVID-19			x	x						x	x
Crisis management						x	x				
Good governance				x						x	
Human Resource Management					x						
Multilevel governance			x								
Multi-stakeholders			x	x							
Public-private partnership			x	x						x	
Public governance						x					
Resilience				x		x	x		x	x	x
Transition theory								x			

It is not surprising that the concept of resilience per se is touched on in many chapters, namely chapters 4, 6, 7, and 9-11. Governance is then discussed in the context of good governance in chapters 2, 4 and 10, as well as in the context of public

governance in chapter 6. Issues related to COVID-19 are also evident, see for instance chapters 3, 4, 10, and 11, but also crisis management in chapters 6 and 7. While most of the chapters focus mainly on a particular theory, or key concept, other are discussed from a broader perspective, such as chapter 3, covering COVID-19, multilevel governance, multi-stakeholders and public-private partnership, and chapter 4, addressing COVID-19, good governance, multi-stakeholder and public-private partnership approaches as well as the concept resilience. Other chapters addressing several of the key theories and/or concepts are chapter 7 and chapter 10. Those that have more specific focus are chapters 1, focusing on change management and human resource management, chapters 2, addressing corporate social responsibility, and good governance, chapter 5 building on human resource management, and chapter 8 employing transition theory.

What can be concluded is that even though authors of different book chapters have chosen specific theoretical approaches and/or key concepts relevant for their cases, other approaches or keywords may also have been relevant. For instance, while chapter 1 centers on change initiative it also has to do with how changes are introduced and communicated with the employees, and thus human resource management. Same applies to chapter 2 which focuses on corporate social responsibility, and if CSR is relevant for controversial businesses, but public governance is also relevant for the case discussion.

Lessons to be learned regarding good governance and resilience in challenging times

The cases presented in this volume portray very diverse and unique national experiences in terms of good governance and resilience in crisis times. However, there are some common patterns which can be identified and highlighted as positive example or good practices to learn from. Despite the fact that all the organizations presented in the case studies were not specifically prepared for a pandemic in terms of their daily operations, most of them reacted with agility, following closely the official guidelines, working in cooperation with other public, private or nongovernmental actors and performing a participatory decision-making process.

One of the major effects of the COVID-19 restrictions was related to work planning and work conditions. Depending on the nature of their work, many employees started to work remotely, or experienced hybrid working models, or if these were not possible (operational jobs), people were forced to perform their jobs in very restrictive ways (social distancing, mask wearing, modified work shifts and work loads etc.). Therefore, for organizations that were already very digital before the pandemic the adaptation to the new circumstances was faster and encountered less resistance. On the other hand, no matter the level of digitalization all organizations were pushed to accelerate the digitalization rate. Several existing digital tools that were not very attractive for clients (e-services) or employees (e-learning platforms) became very popular during pandemic.

Moreover, evidence provided within several case studies (chapter 10, chapter 11) seems to support the hypothesis that digitalization enforces resilience, as organizations that had a high level of digitalization tended to be more flexible and more agile during COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, some of them were so agile that they managed to turn the pandemic into a business opportunity (see Apa Nova București that opened a face masks factory to cover the needs of the Veolia worldwide).

In the particular context of COVID-19 when so many weaknesses and vulnerabilities in both public and private sectors emerged and required mutual support, PPPs proved to be an effective instrument for stakeholders' cooperation, aimed at supporting agility and robustness in addressing the crisis, as shown in chapters 3,4, 10 and 11.

Two chapters in this volume are dedicated to organizations coming from industries that were not severely affected by the pandemics, on the contrary (water services, communications and retail sector). Because these organizations had a systematic pre-existent societal engagement strategy, they managed to develop partnerships and a good perspective on the social environment, and as such they could act with agility during the crisis and target relevant issues with the help of validated social partners. Therefore, another lesson to be learned is that long-term, sustained CSR activities provide a good foundation for agile and swift reaction during the crisis.

When shocks and stressors from the external environment occur, organizations look for ways to return to the initial state of equilibrium and preserve its main functions (Cai et al., 2012, Wojtowicz, 2020), or in other words to be resilient. Due to such disruptions, organizations mostly behave in two manners – they either bounce back with defensive approach or bounce forward by taking a progressive approach and trying to become even more successful than before the shock (Zhang et al., 2018). COVID-19 caused an unanticipated and unprecedented crisis for most organizations and was a true test of organizational resilience.

Cases presented in this book confirm that there is no universal strategy that could lead to resilience as each crisis is unique and requires tailored response. For example, cases presented in chapter 4 (Benidorm Tourism Foundation) and 6 (the city of Sisak) indicate that a multistakeholder approach based on joint efforts of private and public sector organizations is necessary in cases of major crises as was the recent COVID-19 crisis. Furthermore, case 6 proves that in cases of massive shocks and another unique crisis – earthquake, immediate actions of local and state authorities were a necessity for the recovery of other private and public organizations.

This volume shows that COVID-19 forced organizations to be agile more than ever before, as some of them entered into completely new businesses (e.g. see case 10, Apa Nova Bucuresti). Presented cases show that in attempts to overcome the crisis organizations also strengthened and digitalized its internal procedures, improved organization design, and innovated human resources practices (see cases 10 and 11). Private sector reacted to the crisis relatively promptly, as can be seen from case 11 (Romanian retail and communications companies). Privately owned companies managed to adapt its operations to the new situation within days, although

many of them were supported by public policies. Nevertheless, managing risks and protecting the well-being of employees was a common concern among most cases (e.g. see case 10 or case 11), just as resilience and agility were a prerequisite to thrive in a crisis.

Several cases in this book deal with multi-level governance. Multi-level governance implies a pragmatic concern with finding solutions to shared problems through specific forms of regulation, decision-making processes and common resources within public governance. Representatives of all the levels of government must be included for decision-making in multilevel governance and as chapter 3 shows, no level of government acting alone can solve most policy problems, when a State is organised according to a certain level of decentralization. In other words, decentralized organisational structures oblige to multilevel governance.

Multi-stakeholders do not refer only to multi-level governance, but also to different stakeholders according to their nature, i.e. private/public. Public actors interact with private ones in Public-Private Partnerships for both decision-making and public policy implementation, in a big and complex multi-stakeholders game. Public entities (including State Owned Enterprises – SOEs) and private operators act together with other stakeholders such as trade unions, consumer and user associations among others (as shown in chapters 3 and 10) following a model of transversal management, always under public guardianship.

This last condition is perhaps the most outstanding lesson to be learnt from multi-stakeholder interaction: the necessary and compulsory direction of the public sector (State), in the understanding that public sector (State) responds to the demands of citizenry as a whole, as opposed to private stakeholders that represent private interests. Furthermore, this public leadership needs to be strong since government relationships with the private sector are not self-administering (Baxter and Casady, 2020), specifically in challenging times such as the SARs-Cov-2 pandemic.

Benefits from Public-private partnerships are the introduction of new management and human resources like taking top-down decisions based on a bottom-up understanding of the processes; constant support for change; and changing employees' mentalities (Guitard, 2020), among many others that were shown in chapter 10. And furthermore Public-Private Partnerships contracts constitute a tool for policy-makers bringing efficiency and attenuation of the pressure on the public accounts, since part of the financing comes from private investments (as shown in chapters 3, 4 and 10). Finally, what public governance means today, as shown in the chapters, is a multi-level and multi-stakeholder governance directed by the State to guarantee common goods (such as water, transport, tourism) that includes Public-Private Partnerships.