

PREFACE

The Public Rating Report can be described as a journey among stereotypes and age-old problems that Italian Municipalities are troubled by: an enjoyable journey, nonetheless focused on detecting data and informing citizens, since it aims to improve Public Administrations rather than simply describing their situation.

One of the most significant merits of this Report is the capability to match the point of view of the experts and the one of citizens, thanks to a language which is simple, but also very precise considering the scientific processing of data and information the Report is based on. It is an innovative approach which starts from a well-known fact, too often ignored, not only in Italy: so far, nobody has a complete picture of the “Public Administration” universe and its challenges; therefore, today it is necessary to spend time, energy and resources to make a diagnosis, before trying to find a therapy.

That is exactly what the Public Rating, which this Report is based on, aims at: it does not consider only balance sheet data of Municipalities as International Rating Agencies do, but also qualitative data, in particular the data on governance, personnel management, services provided, transparency and integrity in contract management, and environmental policies. The Public Rating offers a complete analysis of Municipalities

and, differently from other kinds of analysis, it is not focused exclusively on too partial areas as the financial or the environment ones or the citizens' satisfaction.

Another innovation of Public Rating evaluation model is the consideration given to the stakeholders' point of view: they are mainly citizens and companies, which are not only the final users, but also the "financial backers" of the Public Administration, because of the taxes they pay. Considering the general situation where public resources have fallen to a bare minimum, PAs are requested to be accountable for how much public money they are spending and, above all, how it is used and on what. Transparency is not enough: Municipalities must be responsible for how they operate: without accountability, it will not be possible to re-establish the confidence in the institutions and fight the anti-political atmosphere.

This Report helps to achieve that shift in gears by providing stakeholders with a practical instrument to really know their Municipality, understand how it works and, most importantly, be able to control it thanks to the monitoring of the prevention of corruption, which has been established by recent regulations to support the ANAC in its fight against corruption. In other words, Public Rating is an instrument of constructive and positive participation through which citizens can pass from unproductive criticizing bureaucracy towards making constructive proposals and sharing in public decisions.

This Report is a useful instrument also for Public Administrations: by ranking sample Municipalities it is possible to define a benchmark, the highest ranking Municipality should be taken as a model. The final goal is to create an incentive/disincentive system, which provides incentives for the compliant Municipalities and disincentives for the ones in default. This is the only way to avoid linear cuts in the spending review, intermittently invoked in our Country, and make meritocracy its center.

In this way the Report helps to create a healthy competition, using reputation as a motivator, among Municipalities by comparing their level of transparency, performance and prevention of corruption, and highlighting the points on which each Administration must intervene in order to improve themselves, also thinking about the Report for the following year.

Lastly, the great passion for the “public” which shines through the pages of this Report is against the current trend: the creators of the Public Rating model, before being expert evaluators of the public system, are fervent supporters of it. If the public system did not exist – they repeat - there would be no social inclusion and no economic development: therefore, citizens must request the public system to work and spend their money properly, giving back credibility to the word “public”, whose original meaning is to pursue the common interests.

Giovanni Bazoli