

Harmonization in public sector accounting: successes and disappointments

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As in business accounting, international harmonization issues have also raised in public sector accounting, especially in the last two decades. In the European context, the financial crisis context, particularly after 2009, has emphasized the need for harmonized public sector accounts, in order to get more reliable data for the purpose of monitoring the fiscal stability required for the Euro currency.

Accordingly, many countries across the world have recently embarked in public sector accounting reforms, introducing some forms of accrual-based accounting, including International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSASs), to complement traditional cash accounting and reporting systems. Within the European context, IPSAS-based European Public Sector Accounting Standards (EPSASs) are being considered, also to attend particular reporting needs.

Taking into consideration the above mentioned, in this special issue we invite authors to submit papers addressing all sorts of harmonization efforts or endeavours in the context of public sector accounting, including those that, although not specifically targeting IPSAS, have somehow involving complementing cash-based budgetary with accrual-based financial accounting and reporting. Among these experiences we will value discussions about the reforms processes and how they are affected by institutional logics: which actors have been involved and at what level of commitment, which actions have been taken, which criticalities entities have been faced, etc. Discussions about less successful experiences towards harmonization are also very welcome.

Papers must be submitted in English and both quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches are acceptable.

Possible questions to be addressed in the papers, but not limited to these, are:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages for countries embarking on a reform process of public sector accounting, especially introducing accrual-based regimes and IPSAS?

- What have been the motivations for countries to move towards international/European standards?
- How have the reform processes been conducted – Who have been the main actors and stakeholders? Which problems have emerged? What have been the most and less successful issues?
- In a standard-setting process, what could be the differences between IPSAS and EPSAS? What would be important to consider in the IPSAS/EPSAS development and governance processes?
- What are the consequences of adopting such standards in: the quality and usefulness of financial information; decision-making; public sector financial management; performance and countries' financial sustainability?
- Especially in the EU context, what are the expected implications to the fiscal discipline of Member-states and to the European convergence (linking to National Accounts)?
- How will the accounting and reporting systems resulting from this international harmonization process, including the potential to produce Whole of Government Accounts, enhance transparency, and hence improve accountability both for investors in financial markets and above all for citizens?

Five-six papers after a double-blind review process will be accepted for this special issue, which should be published by middle 2018. Authors interested should submit their papers by **December 30, 2017**, to *Tékhne – Review of Applied Management Studies* (<https://www.evise.com/profile/#/TEKHNE/login>) according to the journal guidelines.

Please be aware that presentation at the CIGAR Conference (Porto, June 2017) does not guarantee acceptance of the paper for publication. On the other hand, the participation in the Conference is not a precondition for submitting a manuscript to this special issue, as other papers might also be accepted.