



CALL for PAPERS

THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISE

MISSION, PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE: LEARNING FROM SUCCESS AND FAILURES

A RESEARCH AGENDA 2012-2014

The CIRIEC Scientific Commission on Public Services/Public Enterprises has decided to launch an international research project on the future of public enterprises. The ambition of the project is to revive the subject of public enterprise as an important field of analysis in the perspective of public economics and of social sciences in general. This project hopes to bring together international scholars from a variety of disciplines such as political science, economics, public administration and sociology who share an interest in public enterprises.

Despite the large-scale privatizations in the last three decades, governments, either at national or local level, still own or partly-own a wide range of organizations providing public services. Privatization policies have left under the control of government a core of public enterprises. Recently, some episodes have also been reversing the previous policy trend. The question arises: how should governments define the missions, the performance criteria, and the governance mechanisms of the public enterprises in a changing environment? For the purpose of this project, we shall refer to “public enterprises”, in the broad meaning of organizations (a) directly producing public services, either through liberalized market arrangements or under franchised monopoly, (b) ultimately owned or de facto controlled by public sector entities, (c) with a public mission, (d) whose ownership in principle can be shifted to the private sector. The theme is intended to be a broad inquiry into the phenomenon.

The project will last three years (2012-2014), and it is open to the participation of scholars interested by the topic who are already or not yet members of CIRIEC. It aims at working towards a renewed interest in public enterprises through promoting and networking high quality independent scientific research. A more developed version of this text presents the context, rationales, concepts, scope of the analysis, methodology, policy implications, organizational arrangements, and milestones of the project (+ first bibliography). It can be downloaded here: http://www.ciriec.ulg.ac.be/en/pages/3_2recherches.htm#ep .

The proposed research approach is focussed on three work-packages, each leading to a set of working papers and reports:

- a) critical reviews of literature on the recent advances in the theory and empirical analysis of public enterprise;
- b) selection of interesting case histories of contemporary successful or less successful public enterprises, focussing on their internalized public missions, performance and governance, and analysing them according to a template;
- c) synthesis and lessons learned, with a focus on policy implications for the future will follow the two previous parts. As the title of the project suggests, the overall orientation of the research is to learn lessons from case histories in order to analyze new scenarios.

The research will result in a special issue of the *Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics* (2014), but also additional agreements are going to be negotiated with editors of other refereed journals, and with an international publisher for the synthesis book. CIRIEC working papers related to the project will be included in REPEC, which would ensure immediate visibility of intermediate outputs to a world-wide audience. There will be possible opportunities of exchange of visiting scholars across participating teams in order to enhance collaborations within the network. A web-site area will be devoted to inform about the progress of the project. The Milan European Economy Workshop June 2013 will be the intermediate step, where the main case histories and thematic papers should be presented. A final conference with policy makers, managers, trade unions, etc. will be organized in 2014.

In order to organize the research to come, we would appreciate to receive **by February 25, 2012**:

- a short abstract (.doc or .docx file of no more than 250 words) on either the theory or the cases studies to come.
- a brief author bio (8 lines maximum)
- and contact information.

Direct all proposals to Barbara Sak at CIRIEC (ciriec@ulg.ac.be).

Answers of acceptance into the project will be sent to proposers in March 2012.

Steering Committee of the research

Gabriel Obermann (President of CIRIEC's Scientific Commission, WU Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria)
Philippe Bance (University of Rouen, France)
Luc Bernier (ENAP à Québec, Canada)
Massimo Florio (University of Milano, Italy)