

# Preface

## **ABOUT THE SUBJECT**

The New Public Management paradigm has enabled public entities to make major changes at the organizational level, encouraging organizations to adopt new approaches and management practices followed by private sector entities, introducing new concepts associated with management, in particular, performance, economy, efficiency and effectiveness, both at the accounting level, namely through organizational best practices and accountability.

Accounting information allows, on the one hand, public managers to obtain better information to support decision-making, greater transparency and accountability. On the other hand, accounting information also allows citizens greater knowledge of how public resources are being managed and used by public managers. Accounting is an instrument that enables citizens to assess the performance of public managers and can be used to communicate the economic effects associated with policymaking (Ingram & Copeland, 1981).

In this context, we consider that the study has implications at two levels: (i) from the point of view of public managers, to the extent that the mayors have become aware that accounting information and others factors, such as social and economic influence their re-election on the one hand, introduce measures that contribute to a better fulfillment of the needs of the electorate citizens, on the other hand, to develop a model for predicting electoral results; (ii) from the point of view of citizens, as knowledge of public management practices can help citizens to better understand their environment and to involve them more closely in local civil society, with a view to obtaining greater satisfaction and quality of life.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

The editors expect this book to be useful for academics, researchers, policy makers, public managers and citizens who are involved in or are responsible for the transparency and public accountability.

In light of the assumptions of agency theory and public choice theory, the main goal of this book is to assess whether accounting information and others factors have an impact on electoral results, with impact on re-election, on local government.

This book shall contribute to the existing gap in the literature on the influence of accounting information in elections results and to serve as a basis for new empirical studies whose objective is to evaluate the relationship between accounting information and electoral results.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK**

This book is organized into seven chapters.

The first two chapters are focused on the financial information and its impact on local elections:

**Chapter 1:** The Impact of Financial Information on Voting Behavior

**Chapter 2:** Financial Indicators as Determinants of the Mayoral Election – Evidence From Italian Local Governments

In the context of Portugal, the third chapter addresses the determinants of re-election, with emphasis on public finance, and assess if the Law Term Limits has brought any change:

**Chapter 3:** Does It Pay Off to Mayors to Accurately Manage Finance on Municipalities? The Case of Portugal

The fourth chapter aims to assesses the financial sustainability of local governments in the context of Portugal and if accounting information enables public governance with greater transparency and accountability, in particularly, Portuguese local governments financial sustainability:

**Chapter 4:** Sustainability Assessment of Portuguese Local Governments (2009 to 2017): Accounting Information and Public Governance

## **Preface**

The fifth chapter evaluates the dimensions of political factors and the constituent elements of financial condition sustainability in the context of the recent Great Recession, in particular, in Spain:

**Chapter 5:** Analysis of the Association Between Political Change in Local Government and Municipal Financial Condition in Spain During the Great Recession

The sixth chapter is an analysis of what types of information the citizen wants and how, and what communication tools and forms the citizen wants to receive information:

**Chapter 6:** Popular Financial Reporting – A New Information Tool for Local Public Groups

The seventh chapter reviews and discusses the case of investments in infrastructural assets and local government, in particular, in New Zealand:

**Chapter 7:** The Case of Accounting Information for Infrastructural Assets Reporting – Local Government Borrowings and Investment Choices in the Context of Moral Hazard and Local Government Politics

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## **REFERENCES**

Ingram, R., & Copeland, R. (1981). Municipal Accounting Information and Voting Behavior. *The Accounting Review*, 56(4), 830–843.