

PARTICULARITIES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF LOCAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN ROMANIAN AND GREEK SPACES

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Abstract

The way the public administration is organized affects the progress of the national community, in general, and of the local communities, in particular. A good management of public affairs from territorial units is not possible without the organizational design of the local administrative mechanism. From such a way, the pages of this paper are devoted to the study in mirror of the organization way of the Romanian and Greek local administrative systems, both territorially and functionally.

By examining the territorial and functional administrative organisation we highlighted the peculiarities encountered and we extracted the similarities and the differences in the two local public administrations taken into consideration.

As a result of the investigations conducted we found that at the basis of both local administrations are found clear regulations that expressly provide the territorial and functional organisational bases; with reference to the territorial organisation, for both administrative systems we have identified a structure with three levels of government, the difference being given by the existence of other specific territorial divisions; regarding the organs through which is realised the management of public affairs, in both administrations we find own authorities for each of the levels of government; the duration of the mandate of the Romanian local administration authorities differs from the one of the Greek administration authorities; most of administrative authorities of the two systems are elected by direct vote and only for some of them the setting occurs through indirect voting or appointment.

Overall, we found that, at least regarding the criteria analyzed, between the two local public administrations there are no consistent differences, the territorial and functional organisational specificities being similar in equal measure.

Keywords: territorial organization, functional organization, administrative-territorial units, local administrative authorities, Romanian local administration, Greek local administration

JEL Classification: H83

1. Introduction

Any scientific approach through which it is aimed at analyzing and knowing the way how the local public administration is organized must take as its starting point the explanation of the meaning and the content of notion that it uses - the organization of local public administration.

From an etymological direction, the word organization comes from the French organiser which is translated as "to combine, to establish for a proper functioning", and from the noun organ which means "part who has a determined function" [Băcanu, 2008, p. 161].

As a management function, the organizing aims at "designing a model of roles and relations that contributes to the achievement of the goal; the roles are assigned, the authority and the responsibility are determined" [Liebler and McConnell, 2012, p. 53].

But the designing an organizational structure is not an easy managerial task, ensure us Y. Olum. This assertion is justified by the cited author by the fact that in achieving the appropriate structures to the concrete situations there are encountered multiple problems including both the definition of the responsibilities to be met, and the finding of those that can achieve them [Olum, 2004, p. 4].

Beyond this shortcoming, T. Christensen, P. Læg Reid, P.G. Roness and K.A. Røvik believe that the organization can be regarded as an instrument to achieve certain objectives seen as important in the society [Christensen et al., 2007, p. 20].

In all administrative systems, for a proper management of the public affairs it is necessary the organization. Public administration is, in organizational terms, an integrated system consisting of bodies and institutions whose functioning is intertwined and interdependent. [Munteanu, 2009, p. 169]

The correct determination of the administrative organization can not be done without the approach of two fundamental criteria, the territorial criterion and the functional criterion.

The territorial organization represents the structuration of the state public administration in relation to the territorial area in which limitations the administrative authorities exercise their jurisdiction.

On the other hand, the functional organization requires the structuration of public administration in categories of authorities by considering the sphere of activity.

In concise terms, one can point that if the territorial organization allows the establishment of administrative authorities in the administrative-territorial units, functional organization allows the structuration of the authorities by their ability to manage the national or local interests [Miulescu, 2010, p. 45].

In this registry, by the scientific approach that we undertake we propose to examine the territorial and functional organizational structures that may be identified by reference to the concrete situation of the local government in Romania and Greece.

In other words, the overall objective of the approach that we develop is to study the organization of the Romanian and Greek local administrative systems, both territorially and functionally, in order to reflect the existing particularities.

Subsumed to the general objective, by this paper we propose the achieving of some specific goals, defined as follows:

- the description of the organization of public administration from the territorial aspect by considering of the Romanian and Greek cases;
- the determination of the organization of the Romanian and Greek local administrative systems from the functional perspective;
- the extraction of the similarities and differences in the organization of Romanian and Greek local governments.

To achieve both the assumed overall objective and the specific objectives, we resort, from a methodological perspective, at the conjugation of the qualitative and quantitative approaches. In terms of qualitative, we use the comparative analysis that allows positioning in mirror of the organization of the Romanian and Greek local governments to highlight and to explain the similarities and the differences found. From a quantitative perspective, in the pages of this approach we will exploit the systematization (the tabulation, the graphical representation) that ensures, through the ordering and display of recorded data in graphical form, the facilitating the presentation and understanding of these.

2. The administrative organization of the Romanian and Greek territories

To ensure an effective governance, any state understands to organize its national territory in administrative-territorial divisions. These components of the national territory does not oppose the state, their organization being the exclusive prerogative of the state which gives them autonomy and over which it exercises its sovereignty.

In **Romania**, the Constitution disposes through art. 3 that "the territory is organized administratively into communes, cities and counties; under the law, some cities are declared municipalities". Then, according to art. 20 para. 1 of the Law on local public administration no. 215/2001, "the communes, cities, municipalities and counties are administrative-territorial units in which it is exercised the local autonomy and in which are organized and functions the local government authorities". The same law provides in art. 20 para. 4 that "in municipalities can be created administrative-territorial subdivisions, whose delimitation and organization are done according to the law". In terms of organization, the capital of the state, the Bucharest Municipality, is organized into six such subdivisions called sectors.

The commune is the administrative-territorial unit that comprises the rural population united by common interests and traditions, including of one or more villages, depending on the economic, social-cultural, geographic and demographic conditions.

The city is the center of the population more developed economically, socio-cultural and urban-household.

The municipality is the urban place with a higher number of inhabitants, a particular importance in the economic, social-political and cultural-scientific life of the country.

The county has in his constitution cities and communes, depending on the geographic, economic and socio-political, ethnic conditions and on the cultural and traditional ties of the population. [Preda, 2006, p. 45]

In **Greece**, the fundamental law establishes the institutional bases for the local government. The dispositions of the art. 102 para. 1 of the Greek Constitution provide that "the administration of local affairs shall be exercised by local government agencies of first and second level. For the administration of local affairs, there is a presumption of competence in favor of local government agencies". The institutional status and the position of the authorities of first and second level are found in the provisions of Law no. 3852/2010 [Krispis, 2016, pp. 8, 9] on the new architecture of local government and decentralized administration. Starting on January 1, 2011, the current administrative division is established on the basis of the Kallikrates Program. The authorities of first and second level have been regrouped into larger geographical units by merging the municipalities, the communities and the prefectural administrations, resulting the division of the country into decentralized administrations, regions (the second level of local government) and municipalities (the first level of local government). [Structure and operation of local and regional democracy, 2012, p. 10]

The municipalities (dímoi) are autonomous territorial legal entities that form the first level of local public administration. These are subdivided into municipal communities (dimotikes koinotites) with a population of over 2,000 inhabitants or local communities (topikes koinotites) with a population of up to 2,000 inhabitants. They are responsible for managing the local affairs.

The regions (periféreies) are autonomous territorial legal entities which form the second level of local public administration. These are responsible for planning and implementing of the regional policies.

Decentralized state administrations (Apokentromeni Diikesi) are extended within the boundaries of one or more regions. These are, primarily, responsible for town and urban planning, environmental policy, forest policy, migration policy, citizenship and energy policy. [Report concerning the monitoring of local and regional democracy in Greece, 2015, p. 16]

A comprehensive image of the administrative-territorial division in Romania and Greece is shown in the following figure (see Figure no. 1):

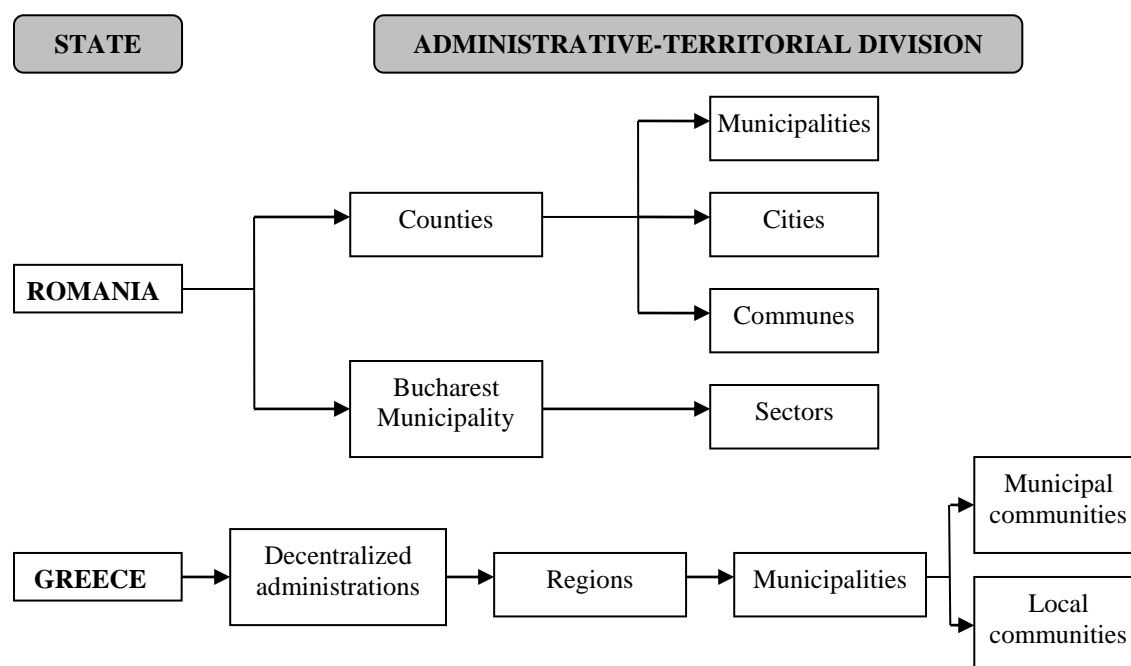


Figure no. 1. The administrative-territorial division in Romania and Greece

Source: author’s elaboration

The number of territorial units in our country is reflected in the following table (see Table no. 1):

Table no. 1. The number of administrative-territorial units in Romania

Territorial units	Number of units
Counties	41
Bucharest Municipality	1
Municipalities	103
Cities	217
Communes	2861

Source: National Institute of Statistics, Tempo-online Base, the last update September 6, 2016, available at <http://statistici.insse.ro/shop/index.jsp?page=tempo3&lang=ro&ind=ADM101A>

Each of Romanian territorial units county consists of municipalities, cities and communes as follows (see Table no. 2):

Table no. 2. The counties and the number of municipalities, cities and communes in Romania

Counties	Number of municipalities	Number of cities	Number of communes
Bihor	4	6	91
Bistrița-Năsăud	1	3	58
Cluj	5	1	75

Counties	Number of municipalities	Number of cities	Number of communes
Maramureș	2	11	63
Satu Mare	2	4	59
Sălaj	1	3	57
Alba	4	7	67
Brașov	4	6	48
Covasna	2	3	40
Harghita	4	5	58
Mureș	4	7	91
Sibiu	2	9	53
Bacău	3	5	85
Botoșani	2	5	71
Iași	2	3	93
Neamț	2	3	78
Suceava	5	11	98
Vaslui	3	2	81
Brăila	1	3	40
Buzău	2	3	82
Constanța	3	9	58
Galați	2	2	61
Tulcea	1	4	46
Vrancea	2	3	68
Argeș	3	4	95
Călărași	2	3	50
Dâmbovița	2	5	82
Giurgiu	1	2	51
Ialomița	3	4	59
Prahova	2	12	90
Teleorman	3	2	92
Ilfov	-	8	32
Bucharest Municipality	1	-	-
Dolj	3	4	104
Gorj	2	7	61
Mehedinți	2	3	61
Olt	2	6	104
Vâlcea	2	9	78
Arad	1	9	68
Caraș-Severin	2	6	69
Hunedoara	7	7	55
Timiș	2	8	89
TOTAL	41+1	103	217

Source: National Institute of Statistics, Tempo-online Base, the last update September 6, 2016, available at <http://statistici.insse.ro/shop/index.jsp?page=tempo3&lang=ro&ind=ADM101A>

Similarly, the following table shows the number of administrative-territorial entities from the Greek space (see Table no. 3):

Table no. 3. **The number of administrative-territorial units in Greece**

Territorial units		Number of units
Decentralized administrations		7
Regions		13
Municipalities	Municipal communities	325
	Local communities	

Source: Report concerning the monitoring of local and regional democracy in Greece, op. cit., p. 14

Each of the Greek decentralised administrations contains regions and municipalities, as follows (see Table no. 4):

Table no. 4. The decentralized administrations, the regions and the number of municipalities in Greece

Decentralized administrations	Regions	Number of municipalities
Macedonia and Thrace	East Macedonia - Thrace	22
	Central Macedonia	38
Western Macedonia and Epirus	West Macedonia	12
	Epirus	19
Thessaly and Central Greece	Thessaly	25
	Central Greece	25
Peloponnese, Western Greece and the Ionian Islands	Ionian Islands	7
	West Greece	19
	Peloponnese	26
Attica	Attica	66
Aegean	North Aegean	8
	South Aegean	34
Crete	Crete	24
TOTAL	7	13
		325

Source: Report concerning the monitoring of local and regional democracy in Greece, op. cit., p. 17

3. The functional organization of the Romanian and Greek local public administration

Once known of the administrative-territorial organization in Romania and Greece, we are now interested in the structure of all the authorities through which the process of local administration in these two spaces is realized.

The **Romanian** local public administration is achieved by two categories of authorities: deliberative (county councils and local councils) and executive (presidents of county councils and mayors). A systematization of Romanian local public administration authorities can be found in the following figure (see Figure no. 2):

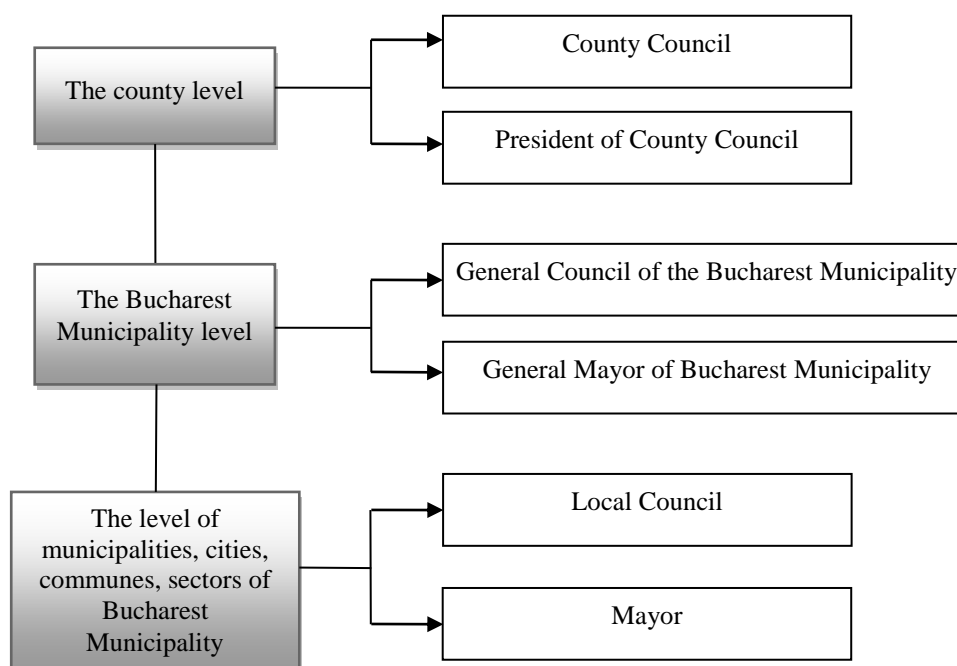


Figure no. 2. The system of local public administration authorities in Romania

Source: author's elaboration

The deliberative authorities of local government are collegial, the number of members of each county council and of local council being established by order of the prefect, depending on the number of inhabitants of the administrative-territorial unit in question, according to population by address reported by the National Statistics Institute on 1 January of the year in course, as follows (see Table no. 5):

Table no. 5. Establishing the deliberative authorities of Romanian local public administration

Administrative-territorial unit	Deliberative authorities	Number of inhabitants from territorial-administrative unit	Number of councilors
County	County Council	until 350.000	31
		between 350.001-500.000	33
		between 500.001-650.000	35
		over 650.000	37
Bucharest Municipality	General Council of the Bucharest Municipality		55
Commune, city, municipality, sectors	Local Council	until 1.500	9
		between 1.501 - 3.000	11
		between 3.001 - 5.000	13
		between 5.001 - 10.000	15
		between 10.001 - 20.000	17
		between 20.001 - 50.000	19
		between 50.001 - 100.000	21
		between 100.001 - 200.000	23
		between 200.001 - 400.000	27
	over 400.000	31	

Source: art. 29 para. 1, 2, 3; art. 88 para. 1 of the Law on local public administration no. 215/2001

The executive authorities of local government are uninominal, at the head of each county being one president of county council and at the head of every municipality, city and common being a mayor.

Referring to the constitution mode of the Romanian local authorities, art. 1 para. 1 and 5 of Law no. 115/2015 for the election of local public administration authorities determines: the local councils, the county councils and the mayors are elected by universal, equal, direct, secret and free suffrage and the presidents of county councils are elected by indirect vote, by the county councils. According to the dispositions of the art. 26 para. 1 of Law no. 215/2001, the mandate of all local public administration authorities in the Romanian space - mayor, local councilor, respectively president of county council and county councilor - has a duration of 4 years.

The County Council is the local government authority, constituted at county level to coordinate the activity of communal, city and municipal councils, in order to realize the public services of county interest. In accordance with the dispositions of the art. 87 para. 1 and 2 of Law no. 215/2001, the county council is composed of county councilors, elected by universal, equal, direct, secret and free suffrage, under the law.

According to the dispositions of the art. 23 para. 2 of Law no. 215/2001, the deliberative authorities of public administration which manage the public affairs in communes, cities and municipalities are the local councils. The dispositions of the art. 28 of Law no. 215/2001 provide these are composed of local councilors elected by universal, equal, direct, secret and free suffrage, under the terms established by law for the election of local public administration authorities.

The local council has initiative and decides, according to the law, in all matters of local interest, except those assigned by law to other local or central public administration authorities.

The president of county council represents the county in relations with the other public authorities, with Romanian and foreign individuals and legal persons, and also in the justice. This responds in front of the county council for the good functioning of the county public administration (art. 102 para. 1 and 2 of Law no. 215/2001).

The executive authorities of the local public administration through which local autonomy is realized in communes, cities and municipalities are the mayors (art. 23 para. 1 of Law no. 215/2001). The mayor ensures the respect for the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens, for the dispositions of the Constitution and also ensures the implementation of laws, of decrees of the President of Romania, of judgments and orders of the Government, of local council decisions; the mayor disposes the necessary measures and provides support for the implementation of the orders and instructions with normative character of the ministers, of the other heads of central public administration authorities, of the prefect and also for the implementation of the county council decisions, under the law (art. 61 para. 2 of Law no. 215/2001).

The **Greek** local public administration is achieved through specific authorities for each of the levels of government: decentralized administrations, regions and municipalities, as follows (see Figure no. 3):

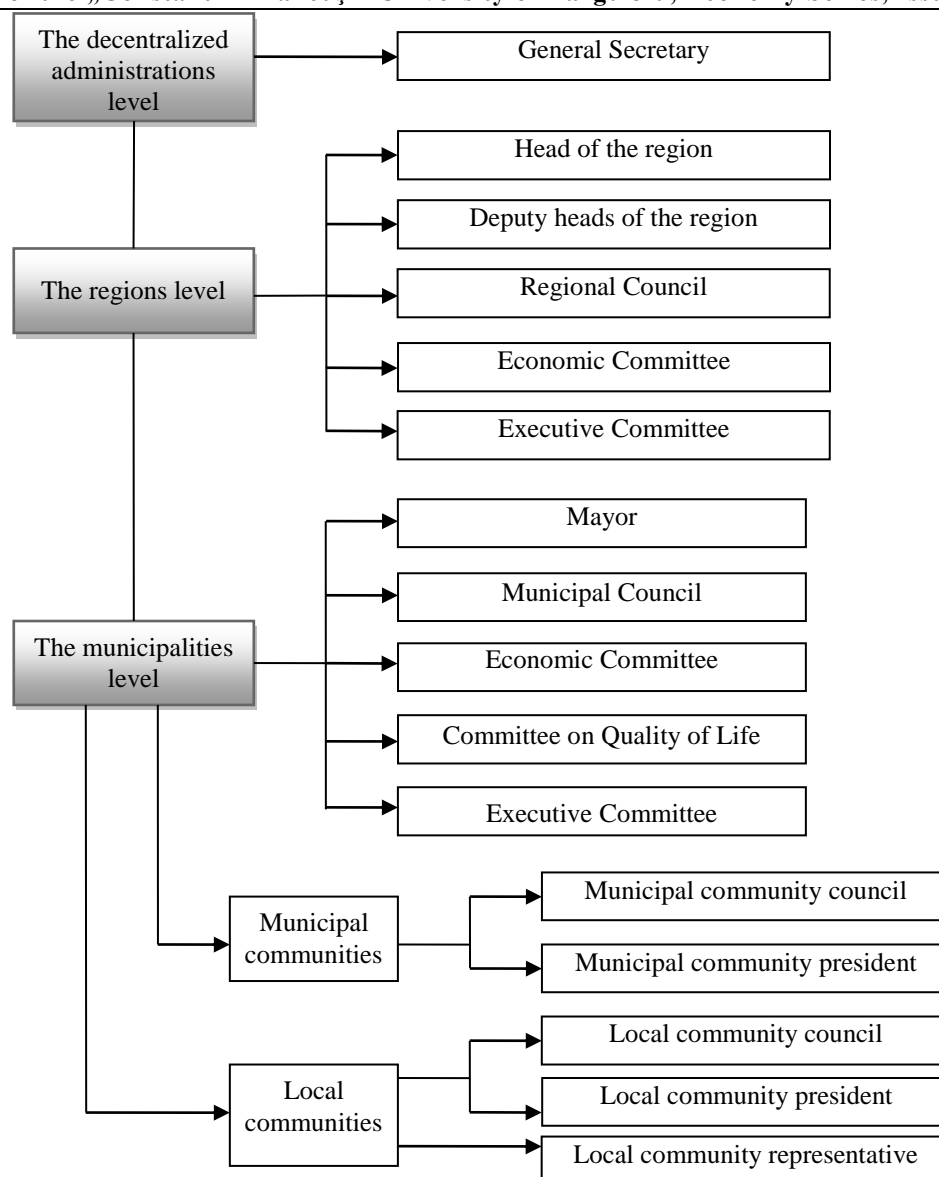


Figure no. 3. The system of local public administration authorities in Greece

Source: author's elaboration

The decentralized administrations are headed by a secretary general, appointed by the government. These have no elected representative organs and exercise decentralized state powers. For all these reasons, it is considered that for their designation should be used formula of "deconcentrated administrations". [Report concerning the monitoring of local and regional democracy in Greece, p. 16]. As a representative of the Government, the secretary general is responsible for carrying out government policy in the field of administrative decentralization [Structure and operation of local and regional democracy, p. 19].

At the regions level, the administrative authorities are the head of the region, the deputy heads of the region, the regional council, economic committee, executive committee.

The head of the region (Peripheriarch) serves the public interest, monitors the implementation of the regional development plan and performs regional tasks based on the transparency and efficiency principles.

The deputy heads of the region, who assist the head of the region, are either elected or appointed by the head of the region. The deputy heads of the region perform sectorial duties attributable to them by decision of the head of the region, except those concerning orders to pay in cash.

The regional council is responsible for all regional issues, except those assigned by law to other regional bodies.

The economic committee realizes the audit and monitors the implementation of the regional budget.

The executive committee is a collective, executive and coordinating regional body which monitors the implementation of regional policy as well as the implementation of the regional development plan [Report concerning the monitoring of local and regional democracy in Greece, p. 18].

The administrative authorities of the municipalities are the mayor, municipal council, economic committee, committee for the quality of life and the executive committee.

The mayor (dimarchos) serves the local interests, leads the local development actions, ensures the unit of local society, implements the decisions of the municipal council and appoints the deputy mayors.

The municipal council is responsible for all municipal affairs, except those assigned to the mayor or to any other municipal body.

The economic committee performs the economical control and the periodical monitoring of the economic function of the municipality; it designs the municipal budget; it makes proposals to the municipal council for the imposition of charges, fees and levies.

The committee for the quality of life is set up in municipalities with a population of over 10,000 inhabitants. This has responsibilities in the fields of urban planning, land-use planning, environment, in determining street market spaces and outdoor trade places. It has responsibilities and takes measures for improving the quality of life in the municipality.

The executive committee is a collective, executive and coordination municipal body with responsibility for the preparation and implementation of the municipal program. It is responsible for monitoring and implementation of municipal decisions. [Report concerning the monitoring of local and regional democracy in Greece, p. 17].

At the first level of Greek local government (municipalities) we also identify other elected administrative authorities, as follows:

- the municipal community council and the municipal community president in the case of the municipal communities;
- the local community council and the local community president in the case of the local communities; if the local communities have a number of inhabitants of less than 300, the administrative authority is the local community representative.

The municipal and local communities authorities can participate with voting right in the municipal council whenever are discussed issues that concern the communities that they represent. These also formulate opinions and suggestions to the municipal council and other municipal authorities to meet the needs of municipal community and, respectively, local. [Structure and operation of local and regional democracy, p. 16]

Similarly to the deliberative authorities of Romanian local government, in the establishing of the councils authorities from Greek administration it is envisaged the number of inhabitants of the administrative-territorial units whose interests they represent. The ratio of the councils dimension and the local population is reflected in the following table (see Table no. 6):

Table no. 6. Establishing the councils from Greek local public administration

Administrative-territorial unit	Councils authorities	Number of inhabitants from territorial-administrative unit	Number of councilors
Region	Regional Council	until 300.000	41
		between 300.001- 800.000	51
		over 800.001	71
		Attica	101
Municipality	Municipal Council	until 2.000	13
		between 2.001 - 5.000	17
		between 5.001 - 10.000	21
		between 10.001 - 30.000	27
		between 30.001 - 60.000	33
		between 60.001 - 100.000	41
		between 100.001 - 150.000	45
Municipal community	Municipal community council	until 10.000	5
		between 10.001 - 50.000	11
		over 50.001	15
Local community	Local community council	until 300	-
		between 301 -2.000	3

Source: Structure and operation of local and regional democracy, op. cit., pp. 15, 16, 18

Regarding the mode of setting up the local authorities, in the Greek space both the authorities from the first level and the second level of the government are elected by universal, direct, secret suffrage every 5 years. [Report concerning the monitoring of local and regional democracy in Greece, p. 17]

4. Conclusions

Against the background of the above, at this time of the approach we intend to highlight, in a synthesizers note, the organizational particularities of the local governments in Romania and Greece. Placing face to face of the territorial and functional specificities of these two administrative systems highlights important differences and similarities.

First, one can point that in the case of both local administration are found clear regulations which expressly provide the territorial and functional organizational bases:

- Romania: the Constitution, the Law on local public administration no. 215/2001, the Law on election of local public administration authorities no. 115/2015;
- Greece: the Constitution, the Law no. 3852/2010 on the new architecture of local government and decentralized administration - Kallikratis Program.

Then, referring to territorial organization, for both administrative systems we identify a structure into three levels of government, as follows:

- Romania: counties, cities/municipalities, commons;
- Greece: decentralized state administrations, regions, municipalities.

However, also in territorial terms it is necessary to retain the particularity of the division of the Romanian capital into units called sectors, as in the Greek administration it must be point out the existence of the municipal and local communities, as categories of municipalities. Furthermore, also in connected with the Greek system of administration it must be highlighted the mode of the establishment of the management body of the decentralized state administrations, whose appointment by the government makes that these administrations to be, actually, deconcentrated.

Regarding the organs through which the management of public affairs is realized, in both administrations we find own authorities for each of the levels of government:

- Romania: for counties - the deliberative authority the county council and the executive authority the mayor; for cities/municipalities, commons - the deliberative authorities the local councils and the executive authorities the mayors;
- Greece: for decentralized state administrations - general secretary; for regions - the head of the region, the deputy heads of the region, the regional council, the economic committee, the executive committee; for municipalities - the mayor, the municipal council, the economic committee, the committee for the quality of life and the executive committee.

The mandate of the Romanian local public administration authorities - county councilor, president of the county council, respectively, local councilor and mayor – has a duration of 4 years, while the Greek local authorities both the first level and those at the second level of government are elected every 5 years.

Regarding the mode of setting up of the bodies from both local public administrations, except the president of the county council from the Romanian space (indirect suffrage) and the governing body of the decentralized state administrations from the Greek space (appointed by the government), all other authorities are elected by universal, equal, direct, secret and free expressed suffrage.

Highlighting the common points and the distinguishing marks encountered in organizing the Romanian and Greek local government is found in the table below (see Table no. 7):

Table no. 7. **Similarities and differences on the organization of the Romanian and Greek local administrations**

Criterion	Similarity	Distinction
Regulations that establish the organizational bases	X	
Territorial structure by the three levels of government	X	
The existence of other specific territorial divisions (sectors; municipal communities, local communities)		X
Own authorities for each of the levels of government	X	
Territorial authorities appointed by the government		X
The duration of the mandate of local public administration authorities		X
Establishing by direct vote of the majority of local public administration authorities	X	
Other ways of establishment for some local authorities (indirect vote, appointment)		X

Source: author's elaboration

From viewing the data in the above table it results with clarity the similarities and differences between the two investigated local public administrations, at least in terms of the criteria considered.

Finally, we can emphasize the fact that although the two analyzed local administrative systems belong to different countries, the organizational particularities, both territorially and functionally, are not significantly different, the common points being also consistent.

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