
QUALITY AND PERSPECTIVES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE ADMINISTRATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PROCESS OF DECENTRALIZATION IN GREECE

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Abstract: The study aims to determine the progress of the central and municipal administrations and their attitudes towards the process of decentralization in Greece; their competences and attitudes regarding decentralization; the degree of completion of decentralization; and the enhancement of the qualification of the central and municipal administrations. The study is based on a questionnaire which included questions regarding the opinion and the attitudes of the administration towards the process decentralization in Greece. The survey was conducted with 95 civil servants. The results outline certain difficulties in the decentralization process as well as ways to overcome them.

Keywords: local government, central government, decentralization, local self-government, administration, attitudes, competences.

JEL: H71, H72.

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A key argument in favour of the decentralization reform is that it can improve the public services through a better allocation of the available financial resource according to the local needs. The prospects for development of the administration in the process of decentralization determined by the empirical study are important for making coherent decisions on the implementation of regional policies both in the EU and the EU enlargement zone.

Moreover, the study was instigated by some specific factors, such as:

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First, despite the large number of publications on the effects of decentralization on government spending, economic growth and macroeconomic stability, only a few studies evaluated the effects of decentralization on the quality of public service rendering.

Second, an approach is needed for a more focused and detailed analysis of administration efficiency in terms of specific decentralization characteristics.

Third, most of the research on this topic evaluate the effects of decentralization on the final results of the provided public services. This means that they analyze dependent variables such as mortality rate, education level, student achievement, etc. while the actual results are considered variables that may depend on certain demographic, social, and political factors. Therefore, we needed to analyze the relationship between decentralization and provision of services in a different way, to wit by analyzing intermediate outcomes (e.g. level of development) or competencies rather the end results of services as dependent variables.

Fourth, this study was also motivated by the possibility to focus on several variables that are an important components of the analyses of this problem in previous studies. Most of the researches (Buzov, H., 1992), (Georgiev, L., 2008), (Kanev, D., 2006) focus on typical socio-economic characteristics, such as incomes, growth, demographic traits, etc. This is why this study addresses key aspects that have often been neglected in other studies on decentralization and aims to explore in greater detail its implications, which are important for the social development.

This article addresses some decentralization-related problems faced by central and local governments in order to analyze them in detail and propose working models for their practical solution. In order to determine the characteristics and levels of decentralization in three different types of countries (candidates for accession to the EU, new EU member countries, and countries from the EU-15 group) we have to identify the various structures and stakeholders in this process and the level of achievement of the main strategic goal of EU membership - cohesion. The development of the decentralization process based on the principles of the European Charter of Local Self-Government (ECLSG) in Greece creates conditions for sustainable development of the administrative capacity of the different levels of government and self-government.

Therefore, the main **goal** of this study is to assess the quality and the prospects for development of the administration in the context of decentralization in Greece. The study is based on a survey in the municipal administration of Komotini, which has the characteristics of a local self-government benchmark. This study assesses the quality of the administration in a specific (mixed) region in terms of the level of decentralization achieved in Greece. In order to determine the exact level of decentralization, we analyzed the opinion of administration staff from various hierarchical levels regarding its quality in

terms of communication between citizens and administrators, as well as the prospects and the necessary measures related to administration's skills in this process. The survey is important, because it assesses the achieved level of decentralization in countries such as Greece (member of the EU-15), which has achieved a good level of decentralization at local and regional levels of self-government. However, the results of the survey indicate that Greece should definitely improve its indicators for implementing the principles of decentralization at the different levels of government.

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The survey was conducted with 95 respondents from the Republic of Greece, of whom 57 men, 35 women and 3 respondents who did not indicate their gender. Most of them (85 respondents) work in a local administration (municipality), 7 are employees of a regional administration (province) and 3 are civil servants from the central administration (central government). Four respondents have primary education, twenty-one have general secondary education, thirty-two have a special secondary education, twenty-seven are Bachelors, and ten have a Master's or higher educational degrees. Thirty-nine of the respondents are on managerial positions, eighteen are experts, and thirty are on technical positions. Eight of the respondents did not indicate their positions. All respondents in the sample (from Greece) are between thirty and fifty-nine years old.

Table 1
Sample distribution by gender and age group

| | | Sex | | Total |
|------------|-------------------|------|--------|-------|
| | | Male | Female | |
| Age group: | between 30 and 39 | 10 | 14 | 24 |
| | between 40 and 49 | 31 | 12 | 43 |
| | between 50 and 59 | 15 | 7 | 22 |
| Total | | 56 | 33 | 89 |

Table 2
Sample distribution by gender and education level

| | | Sex | | Total |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------|--------|-------|
| | | Male | Female | |
| Last level of education completed: | Primary | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| | Secondary General | 13 | 7 | 20 |
| | Secondary Special | 22 | 8 | 30 |
| | Higher, Bachelor | 13 | 14 | 27 |
| | Higher, Master and subsequent | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| Total | | 56 | 35 | 91 |

Table 3

Sample distribution by gender and position

| | | Sex | | Total |
|----------------|------------|------|--------|-------|
| | | Male | Female | |
| Position held: | Managerial | 30 | 6 | 36 |
| | Expert | 9 | 9 | 18 |
| | Technical | 14 | 16 | 30 |
| Total | | 53 | 31 | 84 |

Table 4

Business contacts between administration staff and citizens

| How often in your daily work do you have to communicate or establish contacts with citizens? | | | | |
|--|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Valid percentage | Cumulative percentage |
| Daily | 50 | 52.6 | 53.2 | 53.2 |
| Often | 22 | 23.2 | 23.4 | 76.6 |
| Rarely | 20 | 21.1 | 21.3 | 97.9 |
| Never | 2 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 94 | 98.9 | 100.0 | |
| No answer | 1 | 1.1 | | |
| Total | 95 | 100.0 | | |

Only two respondents (2.1% of the sample) never communicate with citizens. Most of the respondents (75.80%) communicate or establish contacts with citizens every day or often.

Table 5

Quality of service

| In your opinion, what is the quality of the services provided by the administration you are a member of? | | | | |
|--|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Valid percentage | Cumulative percentage |
| Very high | 6 | 6.3 | 6.4 | 6.4 |
| High | 35 | 36.8 | 37.2 | 43.6 |
| Neither high nor low | 34 | 35.8 | 36.2 | 79.8 |
| Low | 18 | 18.9 | 19.1 | 98.9 |
| Very low | 1 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 94 | 98.9 | 100.0 | |
| No answer | 1 | 1.1 | | |
| Total | 95 | 100.0 | | |

The results show that, according to the members of the administrations, the quality of the services rendered by their administration is rather good, with 43.10% of the respondents holding the opinion that the quality is very high or rather high.

Table 6
Level of interaction among different administrations

| In your opinion, what is the quality of interaction among different administrations in recent years? | | | | |
|--|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Valid percentage | Cumulative percentage |
| Very high | 3 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.2 |
| High | 17 | 17.9 | 18.1 | 21.3 |
| Neither high nor low | 48 | 50.5 | 51.1 | 72.3 |
| Low | 25 | 26.3 | 26.6 | 98.9 |
| Very low | 1 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 94 | 98.9 | 100.0 | |
| No answer | 1 | 1.1 | | |
| Total | 95 | 100.0 | | |

The responses show a balanced assessment of the interaction between institutions, with half of the respondents holding the opinion that the quality is neither high nor low.

Table 7
General assessment of the process of decentralization

| How would you assess the overall process of decentralization? | | | | |
|---|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Valid percentage | Cumulative percentage |
| Very high | 2 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.1 |
| High | 13 | 13.7 | 13.8 | 16.0 |
| Neither high nor low | 47 | 49.5 | 50.0 | 66.0 |
| Low | 24 | 25.3 | 25.5 | 91.5 |
| Very low | 8 | 8.4 | 8.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 94 | 98.9 | 100.0 | |
| No answer | 1 | 1.1 | | |
| Total | 95 | 100.0 | | |

Half of the respondents gave a neutral assessment of the decentralization process - neither high nor low. On the other hand, the percentage of the

respondents with low and very low assessment is 33.70%, while only 15.80% have positive assessment of the decentralization process.

In order to verify whether there is a significant difference between men and women when assessing the decentralization process, an Independent Samples t Test was carried out.

Table 8
Significant difference between men and women in terms of their assessment of the decentralization process

| | Sex | N | Mean | SD | t | p |
|---|--------|----|------|------|------|------|
| How would you assess the overall process of decentralization? | Male | 56 | 3.27 | .863 | 0.20 | 0.84 |
| | Female | 35 | 3.23 | .942 | | |

The results show that there is no significant difference between men and women in terms of their assessment of the decentralization process. Note that the mean values for men and women are very close (almost identical) and are located just above the middle of the scale, i. e. their assessment is neither high nor low, with a slight shift to the negative spectrum of the scale.

The relationship between the respondents' age and their overall assessment of the decentralization process was analyzed by means of a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). However, the sample does not include two important age groups (respondents aged between eighteen and twenty-nine years and above 60 years).

Table 9
Dependence of the overall assessment of decentralization on age

| Age group | N | Mean | SD | F | p |
|----------------|----|------|------|------|-----|
| 30 to 39 years | 24 | 3.21 | .833 | 0.22 | 0.8 |
| 40 to 49 years | 43 | 3.35 | .752 | | |
| 50 to 59 years | 24 | 3.29 | .955 | | |
| Total | 91 | 3.30 | .823 | | |

The result shows that there are no significant differences between the age groups and there is no dependence on the overall assessment of the decentralization process by age.

Since only four of the respondents are with primary education, this group is not included in the one-way ANOVA of education dependence of the overall assessment of decentralization.

Table 10

Dependence of the overall assessment of decentralization on education

| Education level | N | Mean | SD | F | p |
|-------------------|----|------|-------|------|------|
| Primary | 21 | 3.24 | 1.179 | 0.38 | 0.76 |
| Secondary General | 31 | 3.16 | .779 | | |
| Secondary Special | 27 | 3.19 | .736 | | |
| Higher, Bachelor | 10 | 3.50 | .972 | | |
| Total | 89 | 3.22 | .889 | | |

Age does not affect the overall assessment of decentralization and the differences between the age groups are insignificant.

There are significant differences between the different types of positions regarding the overall assessment of decentralization.

Table 11

Dependence of the overall assessment of decentralization on the position held

| Position | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | F | p | Post Hoc |
|------------|----|------|----------------|------|------|----------|
| Managerial | 37 | 3.32 | .915 | 4.83 | 0.01 | 2—1—3 |
| Expert | 17 | 2.65 | .786 | | | |
| Technical | 28 | 3.43 | .836 | | | |
| Total | 82 | 3.22 | .903 | | | |

The respondents on expert-level positions gave markedly higher assessments for the decentralization process than the respondents on managerial and technical positions. The assessment of respondents on managerial positions is slightly higher than the assessment of the technical staff but the difference is statistically insignificant.

One of the factors that define the success of the decentralization process is its completeness.

Table 12

Completeness of the decentralization process

| | Frequency | Percentage | Valid percentage | Cumulative percentage |
|----------------------|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Completed in full | 11 | 12.2 | 12.4 | 12.4 |
| Partially completed | 57 | 63.3 | 64.0 | 76.4 |
| Partially incomplete | 21 | 23.3 | 23.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | 89 | 98.9 | 100.0 | |
| No answer | 1 | 1.1 | | |
| Total | 90 | 100.0 | | |

The predominant opinion is that the decentralization process is only partially completed. Those who believe that the decentralization process is incomplete are almost twice as many as those who consider the process completed in full.

In order to verify the role of the completion of decentralization process as a predictor of the assessment of the decentralization process, a linear regression analysis was carried out.

Table 13

| R ² =20,1% | Non-standardized coefficients | | Standardized coefficients | t | Sig. |
|--|-------------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| Predictor | 1.805 | .315 | | 5.723 | .000 |
| Based on your personal experience, what is the level of completeness of the process? | .672 | .144 | .448 | 4.674 | .000 |
| Dependent variable: How would you assess the overall process of decentralization? | | | | | |

The level of completeness of the decentralization process is a strong, positive predictor for the overall assessment (20.1%) of the decentralization process. This result shows that the more complete the decentralization process is, the more positive is its overall assessment. Once it was established that the level of completeness of the decentralization process is a factor for its overall assessment, we wanted to check the degree of validity of this predictor depending on the position held. The results showed that the completeness of the decentralization process has the greatest predictive power and is of highest significance (42.2%, which is a very high coefficient) for the respondents on expert positions with an overall assessment of decentralization ($\beta = 0.65$, $p = 0$). According to the respondents on technical positions, the completeness of the process is far less significant for their overall assessment of the process – 17.6% ($\beta = 0.42$, $p = 0.03$). The least significance of the completeness of the process of decentralization for its overall assessment was reported by the respondents on managerial positions – 14.3% ($\beta = 0.38$, $p = 0.02$).

The next set of questions in the questionnaire refers to the assessment of characteristics that represent various aspects of the decentralization process. The respondents were asked to state their opinion on twelve statements by ranking them on a scale from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree). The results of the analysis show that the respondents from the Hellenic Republic appreciate most the characteristics related to local self-government:

1. Local governments have the necessary conditions to develop their capacity and potential – (M=2.25, SD=0.97).

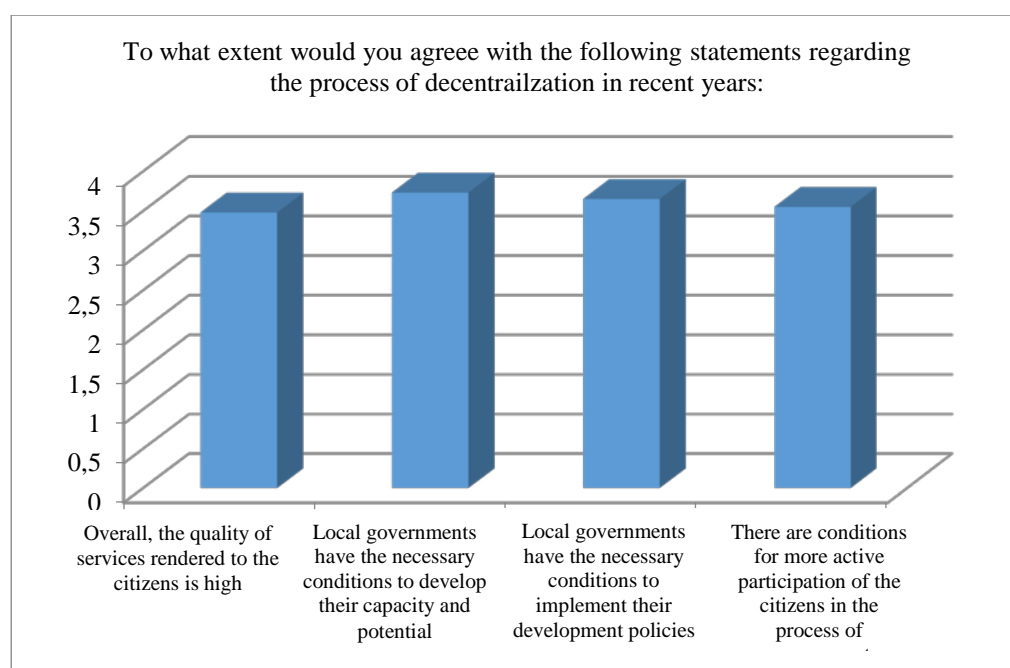
2. Local governments have the necessary conditions to implement their development policies – (M=2.30, SD=1.02).

Other highly-ranked characteristics are:

3. There are conditions for more active participation of the citizens in the process of government – (M=2.43, SD=1.07).

4. Overall, the quality of services rendered to the citizens is high – (M=2.45, SD=0.89).

The results from the t Test and the comparative analysis show that there are no significant deviations among the top-ranking characteristics of decentralization.



Note: The scale was reversed for better presentation, i.e. higher ranks denote stronger agreement. The chart presents the average values.

Figure 1. Top-ranking statements regarding different aspects of decentralization

Unlike the results from a comparable survey conducted in the Republic of Turkey, the Greek respondents do not show dependence between the characteristics of local self-government and the European Charter for Local Self-Government and the correlations are insignificant both for „Local gov-

ernments have the necessary conditions to implement their development policies' ($r=0.07$ $p=0.17$) and „Local governments have the necessary conditions to develop their capacity and potential' ($r=0.17$ $p=0.09$).

The lowest-ranking statements on this scale are:

- The European Charter for Local Self-Government is applied successfully ($M=3.14$, $SD=0.96$).
- We have implemented a flexible and efficient model of self-government ($M=3.11$, $SD=1.16$).
- There are efficient regulations that support the process of decentralization ($M=2.91$, $SD=1.02$).

The overall assessment of all statements related to the characteristics of the decentralization process is 2.64, a value between 'Somewhat agree' and 'Neither agree nor disagree' on the rating scale.

The respondents ranked the successful implementation of the decentralization process in five sectors: Education, Social Services, Culture, Security, and Public Administration.

Table 14

Ranked responses regarding the success of the decentralization process in the five sectors

| Regardless of your answers to the previous questions, how would you assess the process of decentralization in the following sectors: | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------------|---------|----------|-----------------------|
| | Education | Social Services | Culture | Security | Public Administration |
| Fully successful | 6.3% | 7.4% | 14.7% | 7.4% | 8.4% |
| Somewhat successful | 31.6% | 29.5% | 27.4% | 31.9% | 43.2% |
| Neither successful nor unsuccessful | 22.1% | 50.5% | 25.3% | 30.9% | 32.6% |
| Somewhat unsuccessful | 33.7% | 10.5% | 28.4% | 24.5% | 12.8% |
| Totally unsuccessful | 5.3% | 1.1% | 3.2% | 5.3% | 2.1% |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

The predominant opinion is that the process of decentralization in the five sectors is successful. An exception is the assessment of the decentralization process in the sector of Education, which is slightly negative with 37.9% of the respondents assessing it as 'Fully Successful' or 'Somewhat Successful' vs. 39% of the respondents who evaluate the process of decentralization

in this sector as ‘Somewhat unsuccessful’ or ‘Totally unsuccessful’. The highest assessment of the decentralization process is for the Public Administration sector, with 51.6% of the respondents assessing it as ‘Fully Successful’ or ‘Somewhat Successful’ vs. only 14.9%, who believe that the decentralization process in this sector is ‘Somewhat unsuccessful’ or ‘Totally unsuccessful’.

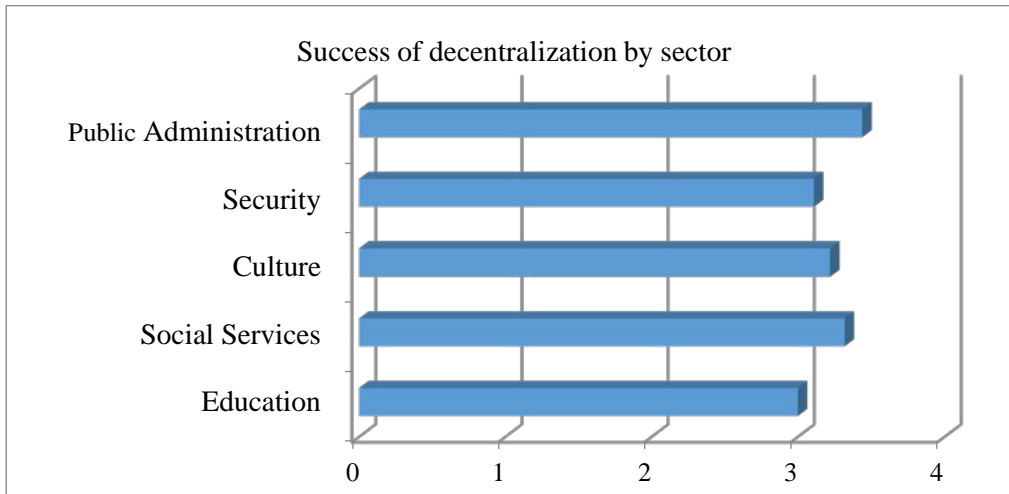
In order to establish the statistically significant differences in the assessments of the decentralization process by sector, a t-test for comparing pairs was carried out. The results show that decentralization is given the lowest assessment in the sector of Education, where the difference is significant compared to all other sectors and is insignificant only compared to the Security sector. On the other hand, we have to point out that the average assessment for the Education sector is 3, which is in the middle of the scale, i.e. ‘Neither successful nor unsuccessful’. The decentralization process in the Public Administration sector was assessed as the most successful.

| Sector | | t | p |
|----------------------------|--|------|-------|
| Education (M=3 SD=1.06) | vs. Social Services (M=2.68 SD=0.81) | 3.21 | 0.002 |
| Education (M=3 SD=1.06) | vs. Culture (M=2.78 SD=1.11) | 2.27 | 0.02 |
| Education (M=3 SD=1.06) | vs. Security (M=2.88 SD=1.03) | 1.04 | 0.3 |
| Education (M=3 SD=1.06) | vs. Public Administration (M=2.56 SD=0.9) | 4.18 | 0 |

Decentralization was given the highest assessment in the Public Administration sector, where the difference is significant compared to all other sectors except the Social Services sector.

| Sector | | t | p |
|--|---|-------|-------|
| Public Administration (M=2.56 SD=0.9) | vs. Social Services (M=2.68 SD=0.81) | -1,22 | 0,22 |
| Public Administration (M=2.56 SD=0.9) | vs. Culture (M=2.78 SD=1.11) | -2,05 | 0,04 |
| Public Administration (M=2.56 SD=0.9) | vs. Security (M=2.88 SD=1.03) | -3,21 | 0,002 |
| Public Administration (M=2.56 SD=0.9) | vs. Education (M=3 SD=1.06) | 4,18 | 0 |

The overall average assessment of the process of decentralization by sector is 2.78. This value ranks the process between ‘Somewhat successful’ and ‘Neither successful nor unsuccessful’ on the ranking scale.



Note: The scale was reversed for better presentation, i.e. higher ranks denote stronger agreement. The chart presents the average values.

Figure 2. Success of decentralization by sector

In evaluating the staff capacity, positive assessments slightly prevail over the negative ones, with a total of 35.8% of the Greek respondents assessing it as ‘Very high’ and ‘Somewhat high’ and 26.4% - as ‘Very low’ or ‘Somewhat low’. The highest percentage of the respondents (37.9%) assessed staff capacity as ‘Neither high nor low’.

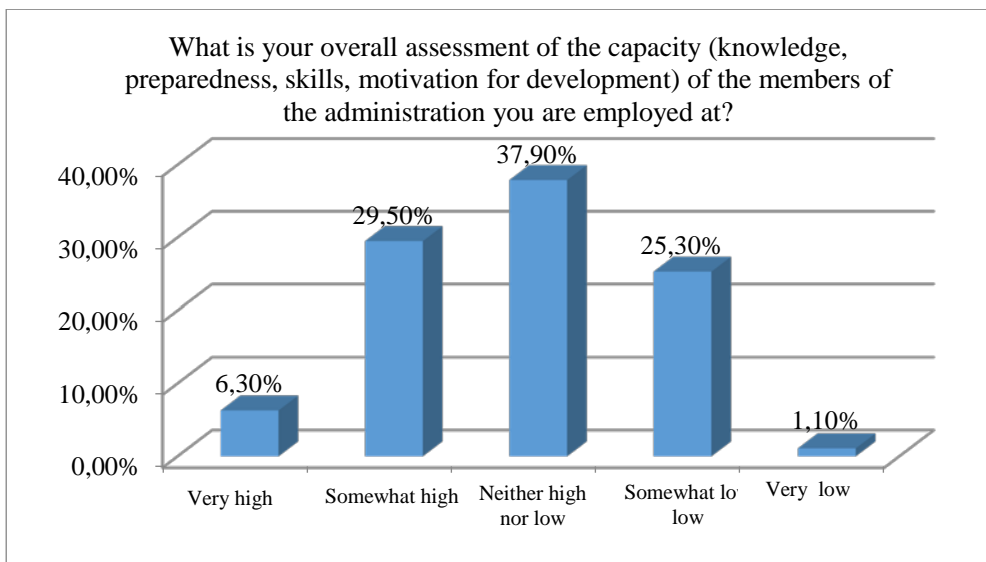


Figure 3. Staff capacity assessment

Another important methodological aspect regarding qualification as an important factor for decentralization is the need for further training. The respondents were asked to assess the importance of further training in nine areas. The results are presented graphically below.

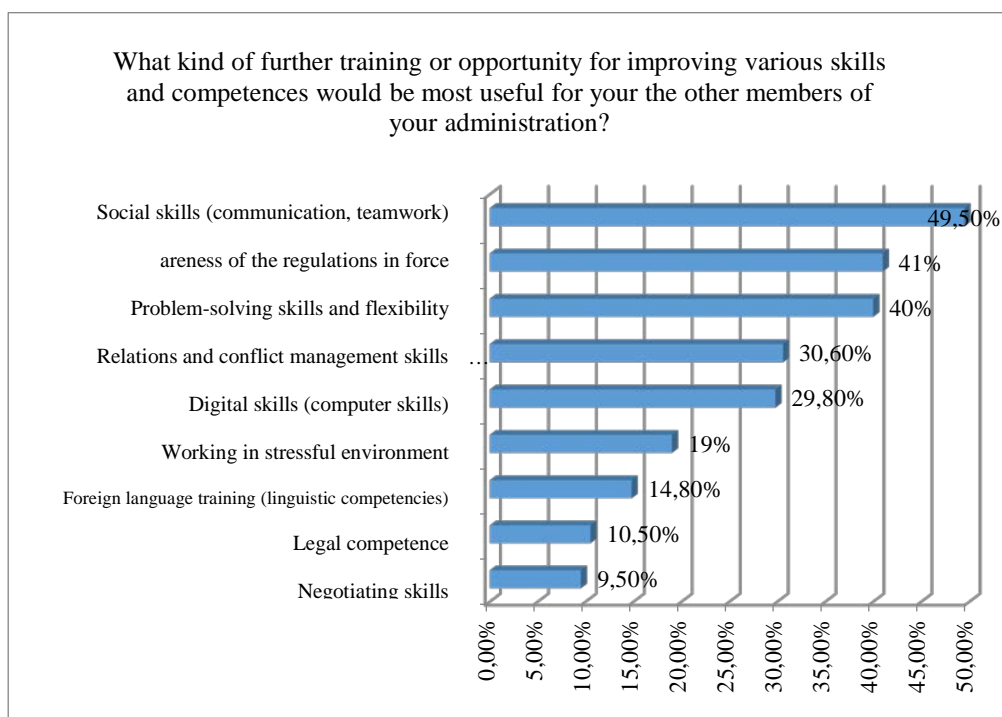


Figure 4. Assessment of the need for additional training of staff members

According to the respondents, their colleagues would benefit most from further training for development of their social skills and least – from training for negotiating skills.

The next question the respondents were asked to answer was regarding the need for development and improvement of their personal qualifications and skills.

Table 15

Assessment of the need for additional personal qualification

| Regardless of your answers to the previous questions, how would you assess your need for development of the following skills and competences? | Sample percentage |
|--|--------------------------|
| Foreign language training (linguistic competencies) | 24.4% |
| Social skills (communication, teamwork) | 35.8% |
| Working in stressful environment | 20% |
| Problem-solving skills and flexibility | 26.4% |
| Negotiating skills | 16.8% |
| Relations and conflict management skills | 22.1% |
| Awareness of the regulations in force | 31.6% |
| Digital skills (computer skills) | 28.5% |
| Legal competence | 16.9% |

According to the respondents, they would benefit most from further training for development of their social skills, followed by improvement of their awareness of the regulations in force and least – for development of their legal competence and negotiating skills.

Next the respondents were asked to assess the degree of their personal competence and development in the areas described above. They had to rate them on a scale from 1 ('Very High') to 5 ('Very Low'). For better presentation the scale in the figure is reversed, i.e. 1 corresponds to 'Very Low' and 5 – to 'Very High'. From the calculation of the mean values, it follows that the participants in the study have evaluated their competence and development at the highest level in terms of problem solving skills and flexibility. The results of the analysis show that they rated highest their problem-solving skills and flexibility (M=3.51 SD=1.07) and this explains why these skills were not given priority for further training. The next highest-ranking competences are their ability to work in a stressful environment (M=3.46 SD=1.09) and their inter-personal relations and conflict management skills (M=3.41 SD=1.02). Note that although the respondents assessed the above competences as their best fields, the average assessment values are generally slightly above the mid-range of the scale. The lowest-ranking competence is their Legal competence (M =2.95 SD=1.09). Interestingly, although this is the area in which personal competence is rated as the lowest, the respondents believe that neither they nor their colleagues need any further training in this field. This probably because the competence in this area is not considered important for the job. The average personal competence rating for the entire sample in all spheres is 3.34 - very close to the middle of the scale.

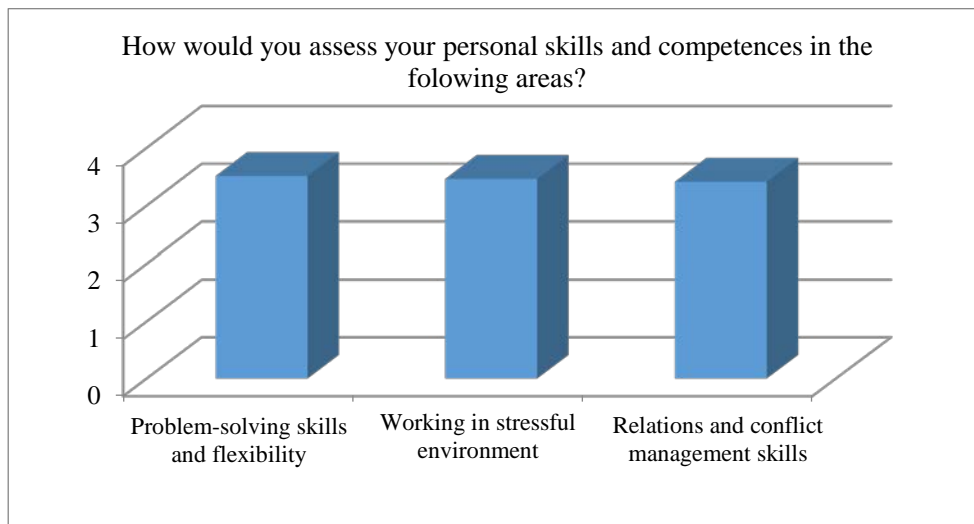


Figure 5. *Fields with highest-ranking personal skills and competences*

One of the most important goals of this study was to identify some of the factors that determine the success of the decentralization process. Comparable studies conducted by the author in Turkey and Bulgaria showed that enforcement of efficient regulations accelerates the decentralization process and improves the transparency of the activities of local, regional and national authorities as well as the dialogue and collaboration between central and local authorities, which are factors that determine the success of the decentralization process. This hypothesis was tested with the respondents from the Hellenic Republic using a regression analysis, in which the predictor is a measure composed of the above statements.

| R ² =13,7% | Non-standardized coefficients | | Standardized coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|-------------------------------|------------|---------------------------|------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| Predictor | 2.12 | 0.306 | | 6.94 | .000 |
| Efficient regulations in force to support the process of decentralization + Transparent activities of local and central governments + Active dialogue and collaboration between local and central governments | 0.405 | 0.106 | .371 | 3.81 | .000 |
| Dependent variable: How would you assess the overall process of decentralization? | | | | | |

The results show that all three factors (efficient regulations in force to support the process of decentralization, transparent activities of local and central governments, and active dialogue and collaboration between local and central governments) are very important for success of the process of decentralization.

* * *

Despite the limitations of the representative sample of state and municipal administration officials from Komotini, the results of the analyses are significant and valid. The general conclusion that could be made is that the process of decentralization is incomplete and no major reforms have been implemented for local resource allocation. Another finding regarding the decentralization process is that it is not implemented with the same success in the different sectors.

Decentralization should not be seen only as a process of transferring powers, responsibilities and resources from the central government to the local governments in a given country. To a large extent, it is a process that occurs simultaneously in various field of government, the most important of which is probably the sustainability and transparency in local community governance that ensures the involvement of local communities in doing and implementation of local public policies.

Strengthening the administrative capacity is rightly considered by the European Union as a key factor for the development of Greece. The established higher level of satisfaction of its population by the public structures motivates the process of improving the existing organization of the administration.

Based on the study the author formulated the following recommendations for improving the efficiency of the central and the local administrations:

- More training and qualification courses are needed to improve the efficiency of the central and the local administrations by developing the personal competences of their staff;
- Local governments should increase their capacity and scope of responsibilities to develop and implement municipal policies;
- Regional governments should increase their capacity and scope of responsibilities to develop and implement regional policies in compliance with the national and local interests.
- Resource and power allocation efficiency and transparency should be improved based on active dialogue between the central and the local governments.

Finally, we have to point out that this study is part of a larger study that attempts to give a clear assessment of the decentralization process in Bul-

garia, Greece and Turkey based on the opinion of state and municipal administration members and to identify the difficulties related to certain policies as well as to give recommendations for better governance and facilitate the implementation of the Decentralization Strategy in the new 2016-2025 period by analyzing the achievements and shortcomings from the previous period.

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