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“PUBLIC POLICY FOR DEMOCRATIZATION OF THE PROVINCIAL STATE: OPEN GOVERNMENT OR ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT?: PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE MODERNIZATION PLAN IN THE PROVINCE OF RÍO NEGRO”

Susana Lopez

Teaching researcher
UNCo

Silvio Castro

Teaching researcher
UNCo

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Abstract: This work is part of the Public Policies and Open Government research project. New Spaces for Citizen Participation on the threshold of the New Millennium. ``Rio Negro``. 2000 – 2016. The central objective of the proposal is to characterize the experiences associated with the electronic Government paradigm that emerged in the provincial context, especially related to the collective construction of public policies. It is analyzed whether the State modernization process emerged as partly uncoordinated government actions due to the absence of a common strategy or as government responses to a current climate based on the emergence of ICT in the public sphere.

For methodological purposes, the qualitative research strategy was chosen to understand the process of construction and implementation of public policies in the Province of Río Negro. Through these strategies, both the perceptions of the different social actors in the interactions in these spaces and the dynamics of the power relations that they express were investigated.

Keywords: Public Policies- Open Government- Modernization of the State

INTRODUCTION

The State, through the government, constitutes a fundamental actor in this scheme and its analysis leads us to investigate the meanings it gives, from its own representations, to the behaviors carried out by the different actors and the linking of said strategies in relationship with the context – operating forces and tendencies, in which such behaviors developed. This situational framework allows us to analyze the actors that operate in the various fields for the sole purpose of understanding the disputes around the different axes of public policies, the interests, the available power resources and the strategies put into play.

In Latin America, during the 1990s, a

process of reforms to the State began in response to the crisis of the Welfare State, with the objective of reconstruction. The objective of this transformation is to face the new challenges of the 21st century, including consolidating the democratic regime, that is, strengthening the relationship between the State and society, increasing citizen participation in the management of public policies, to achieve more efficiency and higher quality.

The reform of the State had to solve four important problems (BRESSER PEREIRA, 1998): the political-economic one, which not only refers to delimiting its size but also to redefining its regulatory role, the administrative-economic one to recover the administrative and financial capacity for political decisions. “governance”, and the political problem, increase the political capacity of government that guarantees its legitimacy. In Bresser Pereira’s terms, the reform processes towards a social-Liberal State of the 21st century are linked to an administrative reform aimed at a managerial public administration that makes government decisions effective to improve governance. Regarding the formulation and execution of public policies, they must stop being decisions solely of the State, spaces for citizen participation and control of public activities must be opened to make them more efficient and of better quality, which would result in improving governability and legitimacy. policy. These spaces for participation began to be seen during the 90s in the province of Rio Negro, such as the creation of different Local Councils for citizen participation, such as the Health Council and the Security Council.

In recent years, governments and their administrations began to be questioned for their lack of efficiency and transparency in public management, posing a new challenge: to respond for the political trust granted

to manage public affairs. To improve State/Civil Society links, governments and their public institutions must be more transparent and facilitate access to information. In this framework, a new paradigm emerges, the "Open Government", and when we talk about Open Government we find different approaches to its conceptualization, but they all coincide with the following pillars that make it up: a) transparency and openness; b) participation; and c) collaboration. In Oszlak's terms, Open Government envisions a new philosophy of government, a more transparent, participatory and collaborative form of public management between the State and civil society.

For its part, the concept of Electronic Government (or e-government) refers to the application of ICT and its tools to pre-existing administrative procedures and processes, processes are technicalized, bureaucracy is digitalized and, in the best of cases, spaces are opened for more fluid and interactive communication between the public apparatus and society. Ramirez Alujas agrees with Antoni Gutiérrez-Rubi's proposal: "It is about a new culture of communication, a new organizational model and the liberation of creative talent inside and outside the perimeters of the public service. We are not just talking about technology, but about a social and relational technology that drives and stimulates a culture of change in the conception, management and provision of public services" (Ramírez-Alujas, 2010).

Electronic Government (OSZLAK, 2013) is the one that offers greater and better benefits to citizens by providing unified and simple access points to satisfy multiple information and service needs; personalized attention from different users; resolution of procedures, queries, complaints and suggestions "online". It is in this context that the province of Río Negro begins to design

a strategic Electronic Government policy within the framework of the modernization process based on digital innovation, where it raises the importance of addressing administrative problems with information and communications technologies. The mission of the modernization project is the application of technology and innovative instruments, which affect administrative processes, regulations, infrastructure and human resources, with the purpose of providing quality public services to "Rio Negro" citizens.

REFORMS, MODERNIZATION AND E-GOVERNMENT

The idea of reform is not new in terms of public policies focused on improving Public Administration; since the 1950s or 1960s, there have been attempts and reform programs in our country. Oszlak is one of the authors who has theorized for several decades about the reform of the State and the processes of "modernization", these ideas only refer to different processes that throughout the history of our continent have striven for the reform of the administrative apparatus, understood as "...systematic and massive efforts aimed at transforming certain characteristics of the organization and functioning of the State apparatus in order to provide it – as it is traditionally said – with greater efficiency and effectiveness" (Oszlak, 1999: 2).

The concept of Modernization is not new, historically in Argentina, Modernization was linked to the reform of the State based on the announcement of captivating processes that generated attention in different areas, giving rise to new reflections and debates. In this way, understanding the idea of reform is not synonymous with modernization, but there is a timeline that allows the modernization process to be incorporated, however, as a subsequent stage of different reform processes. This line leads, without a doubt, to

the paradigms of Electronic Government and Open Government.

The reformist spirit in this country comes from a long course of decades, of marches and countermarches, also linked to the instability of the political system itself. However, and as Crusella and Martelli state, “although there have been previous experiences since the mid-20th century, the concern of Latin American governments for the modernization of public management has been accentuated since the return of democracy, coinciding with the development of information and communication technologies (ICT), which quickly entered the daily lives of citizens” (Crusella, Materlli and Materllo, 2015: 57).

It was after the democratic recovery, and during its consolidation process, that the reform processes and the ideas of modernization of the state structure gained definitive momentum. Along these lines, Rita Grandinetti concludes:

“The modernization of the State since the 1980s is a topic present in all forums and areas of discussion of any political sign and the various administrations, from Alfonsinism to Kirchnerism, have carried out multiple initiatives, of varying scales and success” (Grandinetti, 2019: 56).

After the first democratic government in Argentina, and with the economic debacle of the late 1980s and early 1990s, “Argentine society was involved in a profound rethinking that was materialized by the National Government that came to power. The National Public Administration was the object of the State Reform Program. This program was largely endorsed and financed by multilateral credit organizations such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean” (Blutman, 2009). As this author states, this first reform program had

the objective of moving towards a modern conception of the management of “public affairs”, fundamentally in what concerns Financial Administration, that is, in general terms, the obtaining and application of State resources (Blutman, 2009); This first reformist idea, as García Delgado suggests, was based on four logics:

“That of the terminal crisis of the welfare state exacerbated by the last authoritarian government; the logic of the emergency, due to the conditions inherited from the previous radical government (hyperinflation, framework of ungovernability, advancement of the transfer of power); that of the growing influence of economic groups and international organizations to point out the welfare state as inefficient and responsible for all evils (Washington Consensus); and finally, the logic of President Menem’s political style, more prone to the concentration of power and decisionism than to consensus.” (García Delgado, :1)

It is undeniable that this idea of public sector reform corresponds to the climate of the time and the advent of the neoliberal paradigm and its idea of a “minimal state.” García Delgado highlights that it is precisely in this context and “because of the need to face the challenges that globalization implies as well as the need to improve the country’s competitiveness and reduce unemployment. The measures aim to deepen structural reforms, maintain the exchange rate and the current monetary policy, reduce the fiscal deficit and make the labor market more flexible. These are policies that aim to reduce spending, increase tax pressure, finish privatizing what is missing at the level of assets still in the hands of the national State (airports, dams, nuclear power plants, national and provincial banks); dissolution and merger of decentralized organizations (DGI-Customs, Ansal, etc.); and the elimination of nearly 15,000 public

employees from central administration organizations and decentralized entities. (García Delgado, :5)”

Starting in the mid-1990s, however, and after more than 6 years of different reforms, Law Number: 24629 aimed at the “administrative reorganization” of the State, and aimed to increase state agility. This second reformist attempt is complemented by the one begun in 1989 and the objectives set in the reform of the financial administration and management control system of which, as we will see later, the provinces and especially Río Negro, was no exception. The process that began in 1996, called Second Generation Reforms, continued with the waves of the new government that took office at the end of 1999 (Blutman, 2009). Although these reforms had a purely discursive purpose and continuity with what was done in subsequent years, the idea began to prevail that modernity in state matters was here to stay, but above all that it was imposed in a sustained manner throughout the world. The new visions of public management and the paradigms linked to agility and efficiency were here to stay.

It was in the year 2000, with the National State Modernization Plan sanctioned by Decree Number: 103/2000, that a more defined conception of the ideas of administrative “modernization” began to be imposed by the State. However, and as Alejandro Estévez suggests, despite the ambition of the plan that included axes linked to results-based management or managerialist orientation, the elimination of overlaps, transparency and anti-corruption policy, its results “would make it one more failure.” the attempts at State Reforms, adding in this sense the consideration of whether these attempts can be recorded at least as a process of Administrative Reform” (Estévez, 2001).

Without a doubt, the idea of guiding administrative management towards the

fulfillment of goals, but also incorporating the rights of citizens, allows us to understand the vision and general idea linked to modernization, no longer as a mere policy of fiscal stabilization and deregulation of the economy but as a way of understanding public administration and the relationship between State and society. “Citizens have the right to be heard and informed in simple language and to receive a response and/or compensation when they file a complaint or claim. If public organizations communicate what citizens can reasonably expect from the service they provide, these rights are enhanced and made effective” (Decree Number: 103/00).

In this new vision, and as Estevez highlights, “the Plan had the objective of establishing a Public Administration at the service of the citizen within a framework of efficiency, effectiveness and quality in the provision of services. It proposed following policies aimed at “returning to the population in more and better services, the efforts made in tax matters, and placing emphasis on being a State attentive to the unprotected and deprived sectors” (Martelli, Eduardo Nicolás An intelligent government: the change of the Public Administration of the Argentine Nation 2016-2019 / Eduardo Nicolás Martelli; Pablo Clusellas; María José Martelo. - 1st ed.- Autonomous City of Buenos Aires: Eduardo Nicolás Martelli, 2019.

But without a doubt, one of the advances that was a product of the reforms begun in 1999/2000 is the idea of implementing a single financial administration system for the entire National Administration. If, on the one hand, the plan aimed to get out of the reformist and fiscal logic, the projects linked to financial administration were the starting point for the ideas of electronic government. Without a doubt, the Financial Administration System, where Río Negro, as we will see later, was no exception, marked the beginning of

an agenda linked to the incorporation of technology into public management. "Within its objectives, it was intended to institute in all National Administration organizations a new single computer product for centralized administration that will integrate, within the scope of each institution, the management of real and financial resources with accounting records. Also present was the reengineering of the current central system (central SIDIF) to progressively decentralize the centralized controls in the Ministry of Finance and replace them with automatic ones in the institutions themselves; the technological update of the computer system. Since the enactment of the Law of Financial Administration and Control Systems of the National Public Sector, on September 30, 1992, a process of modernization of government financial administration began, whose mission was to develop an efficient public administration through correct use of public resources and an offer of services that coincide with the needs of citizens."

Within the framework of the State Modernization Plan sanctioned in 2000, it then marked the beginning of a National Electronic Government Plan. "The essence of the implementation of Electronic Government is to try to highlight three factors that make for the successful development of electronic Government: the promotion of cultural change that implies the incorporation of information and communication technologies (ICTs), the transformation of organizational procedures to adapt to technological change and the integrated work of all state jurisdictions." The central feature of this approach is the comprehensive vision associated with the need for a profound change, since the mere incorporation of ICTs was not going to generate a virtuous process of digitalization or depaperization of public management.

Along these lines, Decree 103/00

proposed "cross-cutting" work with measures that included improving the computer network, the consolidation of the Digital Signature infrastructure, the progressive implementation starting in (year) 2001 of digitalized administrative procedures that eliminate progressively the use of paper as a carrier of information, the design and implementation of a single file tracking system, the widespread use of e-mail in the National Public Administration, the implementation of a new Purchasing and Contracting Regulation, the creation of a National Training System, (with a profound restructuring of the National Institute of Public Administration), a general nomenclator of functions and work positions developed under a competency-based management approach and definition of basic profiles and requirements for the majority of jobs, modernization of contracting procedures and distribution of goods and services (Decree 103/00).

The first impulse towards administrative modernization had a broad and generalized vision, which exceeded the reformist attempts, but which requires not only fiscal, but also management and political efforts, also pointing to a new intra-state technological paradigm:

"Therefore, it is proposed to use the new computer resources in order to facilitate citizen interaction with the State, optimize the organizations' investments in computer technology and promote adequate management of computer resources. It is intended to refer to a "new" technological paradigm associated with the telematic provision of services by public powers, to: a) provide more and better services to citizens, b) provide unified and simple access points to satisfy multiple needs information and services, c) add productivity, quality and value to the services, d) provide attention "tailored" to the requirements of each user,

e) resolve procedures, queries, complaints and suggestions “online”, f) increase citizen participation, g) increase the quality and reduce the cost of transactions within the State, h) reduce the cost State Reforms and Organizational Culture i) increase the transparency of public management” (Blutman: 133, 2009).

Finally, the Modernization Plan was based on the vision that although there had been progress, and an incipient process of incorporating technology in some areas of the state, “its scope was not generalized in a way to fully take advantage of its advantages. The technologies were left out of context and only served to solve very specific problems of each organization. The experiences were not taken advantage of, disseminated or shared” (Decree 103/00). This incorporation of technology was only linked to the credit or financial availability of the organizations, without a comprehensive and extended vision, and not aimed at strengthening the most sensitive or social impact areas based on the effectiveness of administrative management.

The financing of the Plan came from different external financing projects that gave rise to the “State Modernization Project” dependent on the Head of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Nation. These sources of financing forced us to rethink at different times the objectives and scope of the Plan in different stages, and according to changes in government through amendments to the specific agreements signed for the development of the original Plan agreed with multilateral organizations. Based on a second amendment, prepared in 2001, “the name of the Plan was modified, which became known as the “State Modernization Project” (Asinelli: 69). The project, however, led to implementation problems, as Asinelli points out, “although from its beginning in 1999 the PME had secured financing through a loan from the World Bank (BIRF Loan

4423-AR), it registered not only difficulties in the execution of funds, and consequently difficulties in the implementation of activities, but also dissimilar formal objectives that were transformed over time” (Asinelli 2009: 10).

These transformations in their objectives had a direct impact on the development of the programs, but also on the general administration of the project, which suffered the political and financial vicissitudes of the 2001 crises and the changes of governments between 2002 and 2003. These changes had their greatest impact on the components linked to the political-institutional variables, where the results were poorer and the implementation of initiatives was truncated by the changes that occurred both within the National Executive Branch and their reach in the provinces. Among these objectives “the formation of the Federal Council for the Modernization of the State, the elaboration of the Statute of the Council, as well as the possibility of establishing an annual Work Agenda” (Asinelli, 2009: 74) were linked to the “political events that took place in the last months of 2001, which found an outcome in the month of December” (Asinelli, 2009: 74), waiting for the necessary consensus to advance along this line. Almost two decades had to pass to achieve a new consensus that institutionalizes the decision-making spaces for the implementation of modernization policies between the Nation and the Provinces, reflected in different agreements signed between 2016 and 2017.

Although the Project was to have an end date of 2003, during that year the Government began negotiations with the financial organizations to extend it until December 2004. Within the framework of this negotiation, a review of the Project was carried out with the objective to report on the status of the implementation of the State Modernization Plan promoted by Decree

Number: 103/2001, incorporating both the difficulties that have arisen and the actions necessary to redirect them. Based on this report prepared by the State Modernization Project entitled “Map Project of the State Modernization Plan”, Asinelli highlights that “some political recommendations were made there, linked to the institutionalization of the Plan as a state policy.” and to the mitigation of obstacles in its execution”, where the focus was placed on the general vision “of the Plan due to the fiscal bias with which modernization is conceived, a situation that is noticed as soon as the recital of the Decree begins when referencing Law N ° 25,152 of Fiscal Solvency and the figure of the program agreements signed there” (Asinelli, 2009: 102). This author highlights that the incorporation of technology, therefore, was directly linked to “the updating of personnel administration techniques or the modernization of the State procurement system lead to the improvement of the quality and transparency of public management.” (Asinelli, 2013: 100) excluding any other dimension of technology incorporation in government processes. However, and beyond the results and the fiscal approach, the Modernization Plan of the first decade of the 21st Century allowed the idea of Electronic Government to be incorporated into the National State and opened the door to a debate that 10 years later is still ongoing. having validity.

Along these lines, and for the purposes of this article, it is important to highlight the concepts that the Council for Digital Government Strategies dictated in 2014, where it differentiates the idea of “Electronic Government”, understood as “the use by governments of information and communication technologies (ICT), and in particular the Internet, as a tool to achieve better government”, (Council for Digital Government Strategies, 2014) and on which

Decree 103/00 was based, and the idea of “Digital Government”, as the “use of digital technologies as an integral part of governments’ modernization strategies to create public value. It is based on a digital government ecosystem composed of government actors, non-governmental organizations, companies, citizen associations and individuals that support the production of and access to data, services and content through interactions with the government” (Council for Digital Government Strategies: 2014) that had their peak in the vision implemented in Argentina starting in 2016.

FROM THE STATE’S MODERNIZATION PLAN TO THE MINISTRY OF MODERNIZATION

In the first decade of 2000, the National State began to implement public policies to modernize the State in response to society’s demands to provide a quality service, with a Public Administration at the service of the citizen and with flexible organizations oriented to achieving results. These objectives, as we already saw, were linked to different approaches and had their clearest crystallization with Decree 103/2000 and the execution of the State Modernization Project (PME).

Starting in 2005, the Plan underwent transformations that had to do with the change of focus on the general vision. No longer thinking only about the fiscal and financial administration vision and moving towards a more general idea of incorporating technologies in the State. This was crystallized in the Electronic Government Plan, “through Decree Number: 378/05, it responded, among other objectives, to the need to comprehensively promote the intensive use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) within the National State, while homogenizing the disparate advances

that the different APN agencies recorded in this matter. The programs and tools entrusted for its development to the Undersecretariat of Public Management were the Procedures Guide, the General Government Portal and an electronic file monitoring system, among others. For its part, the PME provided assistance for the design and implementation of: "Single State Portal" (Asinelli, 2013: 108). Although it is not the subject of this article, the vision of Electronic Government promoted projects such as the development of the site www.argentina.gov.ar and other tools such as the Procedures Guide included in the portal and with the objective of facilitating citizens information on the procedures that must be carried out before the different management bodies, which had a new review and boost following the change of government in 2015.

Without a doubt, the 2005 Decree also made it possible to revalue projects that were not developed in depth in previous attempts. The promotion of the Digital Signature is part of this line. "This instrument was reinvigorated within the framework of the National Electronic Government Plan, which established the processing of electronic files with the use of the digital signature" (Asinelli, 2013: 105). Although the Digital Signature was created from the sanction of Law Number: 25,506 of 2001, it was from 2003 with different modifications and the sanction of a series of decrees that the administration of the Digital Signature by the ONTI (Office National Information Technology), giving a greater boost to this technology.

To achieve these objectives, they begin to formulate several programs with the aim of achieving quality management in public organizations, the Citizen Commitment Letter (PCCC), the State Modernization Project, the National Public Administration Modernization Plan, being one of the priority objectives of the National Government

in terms of administrative management is to enhance the transparency and receptivity of the State towards citizens, optimize the use of human and material resources that they finance through compliance with their tax obligations. To achieve these objectives, the commitment of public organizations and affected agents to the attention of the public is essential, where the fundamental rights of each citizen are recognized as framed by the national constitution in its article 42.

Through National Decree 229/2000, the "Citizen Commitment Charter" (PCCC) program was created, with the objective of transforming the organizational culture from a bureaucratic style to a managerial public administration with more efficient and transparent organizations. This program is a model for applying quality management and a path towards open government. In the public policy formulation stage, the actions that will be developed in the coming years are planned to improve the quality of services, transparency and citizen participation. The legislation recognizes constitutional rights such as the Right to clear, truthful and complete information about the activities carried out by the Public Administration, the right for the Administration to issue an express resolution regarding their requests, requests or complaints, among others.

In 2001, the National Plan for Modernization of the National Public Administration was approved through National Decree Number: 103/01, a tool to implement its modernization policy with a horizon of 3 years to obtain the first desired results. This regulation referred to the need for public affairs management that upholds ethics and transparency as principles and that articulates in its actions various actors in society: political parties, business and union associations, non-governmental organizations, and academics and above all to the recipient of all the effort:

the people. They invite all powers of the State and municipalities to adhere to this proposal and also commit their efforts to achieve the definitive modernization of the State in all its jurisdictions.

This innovative legislation clearly aims to implement a new paradigm of public management “Open Government” to respond to the challenges that the State must face in the 21st century. Open Government is not a technology in itself, but a strategic vision of how to improve citizen participation in government decisions, strengthening the democratic system itself and modernizing Public Administrations under the principles of transparency and openness. For several decades, talking about open government meant debating access and freedom of information, data protection, the reform of laws on official secrets and the need, in a healthy democracy, to be able to obtain information about the activities of the Government and about its availability to public opinion and the common citizen (Álvaro V. Ramírez-Alujas, 2011). This new Public Management is having a great impact on democratic political systems and their respective administrations, displacing the sociopolitical debate to the currents associated with Electronic Government, which had hegemonized the field of debate in the field of Public Administration during the nineties. It is not a new term, it was used for the first time in the 70s in England, with the aim of reducing bureaucratic opacity. (Álvaro V. Ramírez-Alujas, 2011)

In this new paradigm, new or renewed initiatives such as participation, collaboration and transparency emerge, which constitute three of the core axes of these new modalities and one way to achieve this is to articulate actions with the different social sectors. Late capitalisms suffer from a constant crisis of legitimacy which leads to growing citizen participation initiatives with the aim of

alleviating this lack.

PUBLIC POLICIES FOR PROVINCIAL STATE REFORM: A PATH TOWARDS E-GOVERNMENT

The province of Rio Negro begins to implement political and administrative reforms linked to the reforms of the National State during the 80s/90s. We can mention as background to regulatory reforms and the beginnings of the Modernization plan:

Year 1997 Provincial Law H Number: 3186 on Financial Administration and Internal Control of the Provincial Public Sector.

Year 2000 Start of implementation of the TRAMITEX Files System.

Year 2003 Decree 1127 creates the Financial Administration Committee as the body in charge of coordinating all the systems that make up financial administration.

Year 2005 launch of the Provincial Public Intranet (IPP2) New way of connection and expansion to more locations

Year 2005 Law Number: 3997 accession to National Law 25,506 -Digital Signature

Year 2012 Provincial Law A Number: 4747 Policy guidelines for the incorporation of free software in the provincial Administration

Year 2012 Decree 1066 Creation of the Provincial Information Technology Council.

Year 2015 Constitution of the Digital Signature Registration Authority within the scope of the Ministry of Government

Year 2016 President-Governor Modernization Framework Agreement

The provincial constitutional reform of 1988 was the starting point for the consolidation of the democratic State, including new innovative rights for the time such as the one mentioned in Chapter II Art. 26 “all inhabitants of the Province enjoy the right of free access to public sources of information”, citizen participation mechanisms, such as popular consultation and the creation of the Ombudsman’s Office, articles 167, 168 and 169 of the Provincial Constitution. Among the principles of action of the ombudsman, he places emphasis on accessibility, which means for the inhabitants of the Province, regardless of their territorial location or sociocultural condition, having the guarantees of being able to reach the ombudsman with their complaints and obtain timely responses. The first defender (ombudsman) was appointed on December 29, 1995, being the first precedent in the implementation of Open Government.

The provincial Program of Letter of Commitment to Citizens was created by Law Number: 4126/06. Among its main objectives is to achieve greater receptivity and a better response from the State to the needs and priorities of citizens in relation to the provision of services to their citizens. To achieve these objectives, general principles and criteria were implemented to improve their quality and reaffirm the rights that citizens enjoy vis-à-vis the Provincial Public Administration. The Ministry of Modernization of the Nation has the commitment and responsibility to permanently support the provincial jurisdictions in the planning, management and monitoring processes of said plans, and is committed to providing technical assistance when necessary and providing training opportunities for the provincial teams in charge of development and implementation.

In 2010, the provincial Judiciary adhered to the Citizen Commitment Letter program. Within this framework of reforms, they

created the Citizen Service Offices that provide information, guidance, and referrals on issues related to judicial procedures and ways to access justice. This modernization tool facilitates access to all sources of information; seeks to improve the treatment that citizens receive within the judicial field, the purpose is to facilitate and make all processes more understandable. It is important to highlight that they consider it necessary to implement their own organizational management goals such as: simplification and speed of judicial processes; functional, horizontal and participatory organizational structure; professionalization of Human Resources; training, specialization and updating of Human Resources; Incorporation of information and telecommunications technology; consolidation of a Communication system; development of a new culture of user service and strengthening of the independence of the Judiciary and the administrator of justice.

The implementation of the Citizen Commitment Letter Program meant the public commitment to improve the quality and transparency in the provision of services of the Judicial Branch, it also implied that the Superior Court of Justice of the Province has continued a process of reform and continuous improvement of its services, aimed at satisfying the ever-growing needs, expectations and requirements of its users. To improve the quality of service they are based on the following principles:

**RELIABILITY, CONFIDENTIALITY,
COMPETENCE, RESPONSIVENESS,
ECONOMIC ACCESSIBILITY,
EQUITY AND JUSTICE,
TRANSPARENCY IN MANAGEMENT**

A clear strategy to optimize the State/Society relationship, providing a response to citizen demands and a path towards the implementation of a new public management

“Quality Management”.

During 2016, the Nation and Provinces signed, within the scope of Decree 434/2016 (National Decree Number: 103/01 is repealed), the Modernization Plan, a Framework Cooperation Agreement with the aim of developing links to deepen the implementation of the Modernization Plan. of the State, with the head of the cabinet of ministers being responsible for coordinating the execution of the actions derived from the aforementioned Plan. The process of modernization and administrative reform must be aimed at making the functioning of the National Public Administration more efficient and introducing into the management of public organizations the fulfillment of measurable and quantifiable results. The objective of implementing different State modernization actions throughout the Rio Negro jurisdiction is to achieve a modern, efficient public administration close to the service of citizens.

The interministerial state modernization table coordinated by the technological innovation directorate of the government ministry of the province of Rio Negro, developed a Strategic Plan for Administrative Modernization, “This is the fruit of several months of work with the Provincial Lottery, where “The entire structure and processes of the organization were revealed, allowing us to begin this week to implement the Official Communications module, and to advance in the coming weeks in the implementation of the Electronic File,” the *“Rio Negro”* Secretary of Modernization explained on the digital portal. Secretary of Modernization of the State Silvio Castro. In the same place he mentions the progress in the implementation of Electronic Document Management (EDM) in the different bodies of the provincial Public Administration such as the Ombudsman’s Office, the Civil Registry, CREAR, the

Women’s Council, the Ministry of Security and Justice.

Through Decree Number: 19/2018, the Province approves the Modernization Plan of the provincial State, within the framework of the Federal Commitment for the Modernization of the State signed on April 18, 2017 in the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires. The general objective of the provincial project is to achieve a public administration at the service of the citizen within a framework of efficiency, effectiveness and quality in the provision of services, for which it is necessary to promote and strengthen the use of new information and communications technologies., process reengineering, management monitoring and accountability for results, professionalizing and prioritizing State employees through the recognition of public careers, merit and by strengthening personnel management systems.

Currently, it is the Secretary of Modernization - dependent on the Ministry of Economy -, the area responsible for launching the processes and actions of the different management axes. Continuing with this Innovation process, Law 5273/18 was sanctioned, which determines that all publications legally required by the Provincial Public Sector must be made in the Official Gazette of Río Negro without prejudice to additionally having it on the respective official websites of each department., official social networks and official media, or provide an additional publication when circumstances so determine.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The public policy of the provincial State for the Modernization of the State and Public Management was a strategic Plan in order to implement electronic Government with the aim of responding to the demands of an increasingly empowered citizenry that demands greater transparency and

accountability. account of public actions. Between 1995 and 1999, a financial reform process was first launched, where Law Number: 3186 on Financial Administration and Internal Control of the Provincial Public Sector was promulgated and the Financial Administration and Control System was also implemented at the provincial level. (SAFYC), which supports said standard.

Starting in 2001, a period of reforms began to progressively implement digitalized administrative procedures that would progressively eliminate the use of paper as a carrier of information. Decree 62/18 obliges all organizations to implement the Electronic Document Management system (GDE) from the decree that begins to be used in different organizations of their public administration, which was transferred by the current Secretariat of Modernization. of the Nation through a cooperation and technical assistance agreement in the so-called "Modernization continues to advance in new training in GDE." This practice allowed it to advance in the organization and streamlining of administrative work, significantly reduce the use of paper and provide Rio Negro society with a better quality service. application of the digital signature aimed at paperlessization. These changes in the framework of modernization show a State that begins to provide more access to public information and a citizenry that is actively involved in its use.

The Civil Registry and the Río Negro Lottery are the provincial organizations that have made the most progress in the implementation of the system, which is also in different phases of operation in the General Secretariat of the Interior, in the ministries of Social Development, Economy and Government and the Collection Agency This implementation is part of the Modernization Plan approved from Decree Number: 19/18, as a continuation of the actions of the Interministerial Board that

since 2016 developed a Strategic Plan for the modernization of the State.

The creation of the digital office according to the digital portal of the Provincial Government is an open government initiative that emerges as a new way of understanding the relationship between the public sector and citizens; but it is clearly an advance in the implementation of electronic government, because it is a website that unifies the information on procedures and services provided by the different agencies of the Provincial Public Administration through the systems that the agencies have established, which also includes, the possibility of managing and consulting procedures online, promoting the modernization of the State with the implementation of technology and simplification of processes to provide a more accessible service to the citizen. The portal is coordinated by the Ministry of Government and articulated with the Media Secretariat together with ALTECS.E Telecommunications and systems.

During the period analyzed, in a first stage different regulations were sanctioned that led to the implementation of isolated actions, although the regulations have had an impact, a large part of the problems that were generated were from these disassociated actions, regulatory patches, unfinished and disjointed projects., in the absence of coordinated strategic planning. Since the signing of the cooperation framework agreement called "Federal Commitment for the Modernization of the State" with the national government according to National Decree Number: 434/16, the province began to develop links to implement different Modernization actions in all provincial jurisdictions and advance in coordinated strategic planning. Decree 62/18, which obliges all organizations to implement the GDE, a State that provides access to public information and a citizenry that is actively involved in its use.

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