

# **Theory of Organisations**

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## **Overview: Theory of Organisations**

1. Cadastral development project in Greece
2. Your role in an organisation
3. Theory of organisations
4. Functionalist views (~1920s)
5. Rational decision processes
6. Later views on organisations
7. The Leavitt-Whisler model of organisational change

## **Organisational aspects of project in Greece**

Agency type

- Ministries, e.g. environment, agriculture, taxation
- Public organisations and services, e.g. utility companies
- Private sector companies, e.g. computer facility management
- Professional organisations, e.g. surveyors, notaries

**Organisations involved (1)**

Commission of EU, DG Regional policy	Funding project 75%, supervision
<u>Greek ministries:</u> Environment, Planning, Publ. Works Justice Economics Agriculture Interior, Public administration Foreign affairs Culture	Supervises project Land Registry Offices Public land Forest areas Public administration Owners living abroad Archaeological sites
<u>Public organisations and services:</u> Hellenic Mapping and Cadastral Org.  Hellenic Cadastral 'n Mapping Service Hellenic Military Service Hydrogr..ic Service of Hellenic Navy  Registry offices Universities (Athens, Thessalonika)	Planning and coordination Unit within M.Envir.; work  Permission for aerial phot. Mapping seashore Work Scientific advice

**Organisations involved (2)**

<u>Private sector firms:</u> Ktimatologio S.A. (Hellenic Cadastral) The Hellenic Cadastral Consult Design (engineering) offices Aerial photogrammetry firms Marketing communication firms Telephone support firms	Company; Develops cadastre  Internat.l consulting consort. Collects cadastral data Makes aerial photomaps Communicates .. awareness Answers questions
<u>Professional associations:</u> Technical Chamber of Greece ... ..	Developed proposal, price list ... ..
<p>"The most complex and delicate issues to be resolved included the rivalry between the public and the private sector agencies concerning the role that each would play in the development and operation of the cadastre. ..."</p> <p>P Lolonis (2000) Public and private sector cooperation in developing the Hellenic National Cadastre. Bertinoro III, 14 Dec 2000. Final report, chapter 4.3</p>	

**Your role in an organisation (1)**

*What do you want to change?*

'You'

- are prepared to improve cadastre in a specific country
- conceives cadastre as an administrative entity (not a technical tool)
- have facilitating, rather than directive power

'What' includes

- change of content of information flows
- change of information channel network (new, reorganised)
- change of organizational units, incl. committees (new, reorg.)
- change of rules, norms and competencies

### **Your role in an organisation (2)**

Why change?

- What does your superior /boss want?
- Who (groups in society) benefits? How?
- Is land used more efficiently? more sustainably?

How to achieve change ?

- Does *resources* match *tasks*? (Money, know-kow, reputation,)
- What are the others doing ? (Analyse interaction of org. units)

### **Theory of organisations**

An organisation is

- a named entity, made up of
- a group of individuals, who
  - coordinated by rather permanent relations and procedures
  - as stated in written articles,
  - perform work in specialized units
- to achieve the goal of the organisation

Articles structure relations: hierarchial, matrix, project, ..  
(Quasi-)rational decision process: Subsumption, or rating

### **Functionalist views (~1920s ->)**

Mechanistic:

Taylor, 1911: Scientific management (cf Chaplin: Modern Times)

Simon, 1947: Rational man, administrative man

Human relations:

Mayo, 1933: Hawthorne experiments

McGregor, 1960: Theory X and theory Y

### **Max Weber (1924) on bureaucracy**

"..the exercise of control on the basis of knowledge"  
in church, government, and enterprise

- Decisions by subsumption of cases to rules, in writing
- 'Bureau' (office: authority) with specific competence
- Officials act impersonal, duty /service, have no ownership of means
- Promotion based on technical skills, by superiors

Recently quoted in

Roberts and Hite (2000) From modernization to globalization, .. . Blackwell, UK.  
Randal Collins (1986) Max Weber - A Sceleton Key. Sage Publicationss, London

### **Rational decision processes**

Steps in rational problem solving:

- define problem
- establish criteria of solution
- develop alternatives
- rate alternatives
- select solution, and implement it
- restructure problem conception

### **Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT)**

Observations (Denmark, ~1973)

Project	Person NIS	Property NIS
Planning technique	PERT (2 sq.m.)	Shopping list (A4)
Outcome	Development delayed 2 years	Developed on time

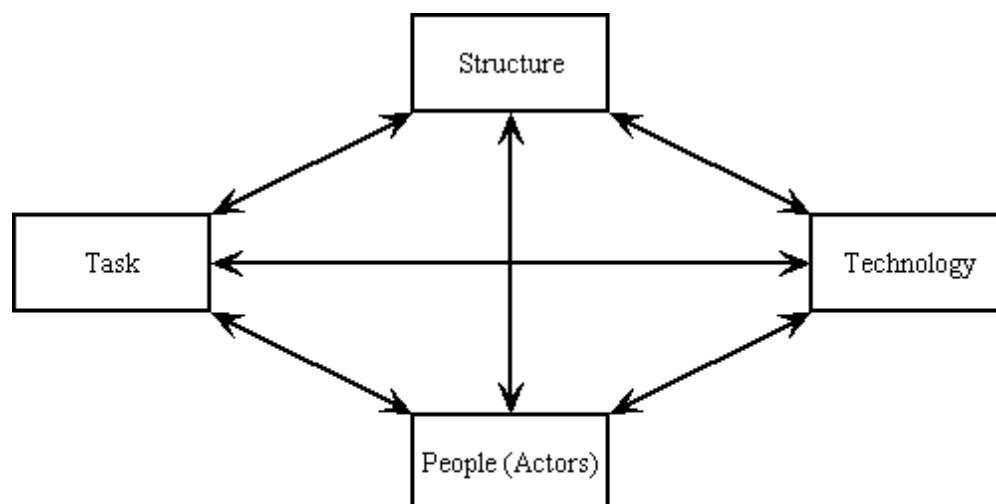
### **Later views on organisations**

- Information theory/Ecology (Roman Jakobson, 1960;..)
- Rationality questioned: Open systems, loose coupling (1970s)
- Meaning questioned: Discourse analysis, e.g. Foucault, 1977; Manning: Symbolic communication, 1988.

Implications for information systems development:

- Soft Systems Methodology, Checkland & Scholes (1990)
- but alternatively:  
Institutional Analysis and Design, E. Ostrom (2002)

**The Leavitt-Whisler model of organisational change**



**Kilde: Leavitt, 1965. Fig 1, side 1145**

**Shifting views on public administration (Koupus, 1989)**

Dominat conception	Before 1970s	After 1970s
Context	Public administration	Business
Source	Germany	USA
Science	Law	Economy
Task	A signed decision according to law	A service or advice
Addressee	Citizien	Client
Quality measure	Decisions in accordance with law	Services according to resource plans
Conception of information	Archive. Paradigms	Data flows. Market in data

**Conclusion: Organisations**

1. Improvement of land management depends on change at several layers of abstraction:
  - Institutional (land tenure)
  - Organisational (government units,etc)
  - Procedural (transfer of unit, subdivision,..)
  - Physical (marks, plates, terrain objects)
2. Cadastral development is an organisational affair (Greece)

**Conclusion: Organisations (2)**

2. Cadastral development is an organisational affair (Greece)
3. You must understand and navigate in an organisation
4. Now you have heard of 'Theory of organisations'
5. The Leavitt-Whisler model: Focus on
  - structure
  - technology
  - personnel, knowledge
  - outcome, 'product'

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