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Government performance indicators in a strategic approach

József Kárpáti

When state intends to keep an active role in economy and everyday interactions in society - as it tends to be a trend among states after the crisis, called the "Neo-Weberian" type of state, one of it's greatest challenges is to report on it's own activity and confirm it's decisions, according future plans, current redistribution etc. since the society expects a clarification in exchange for the active state role.

Both economic phenomena and others beyond need to be measured and interpreted somehow. Numerous countries and international organizations started creating strategic level indicator sets to monitor the activity with more or less success.

This paper summarizes the current status of these approaches and introduces a possible complex strategic level of indicators in Hungary to assess four sides of the story: state organization, fiscal, economic and social phenomena.

Keywords: Neo-Weberian state, strategic indicators, government performance

1. Introduction

When the state intends to keep an active role in economy and everyday interactions in society - as it tends to be a trend among states after (or during) the crisis, called the "Neo-Weberian" type of state, one of it's greatest challenges is to report on it's own activity and confirm it's decisions, according future plans, current redistribution etc. since the society expects a clarification in exchange for the active state role. On the other hand, the inferences drawn from the operational indicators of the state give important feedback for the improvement of the further adjustment of redistribution, state-owned services, procuration etc.

Briefly: how the state is operated, is an important issue from economic, social and also from a management point of view. The economic phenomena, and other layers beyond need to be measured and interpreted somehow, but the assessment of deeper layers is very difficult. According to the high ratio of government expenditures to GDP in general, it’s a very legit requirement to force governments to report on results and even secondary achievements of this expenditure.

Numerous countries and international organizations started creating strategic and operative level indicator sets to monitor the activity with more or less success. These results are sometimes sobering, sometimes fuzzy since none of the experiments have been able to give a complete overview of state operations, so far.

All this experience points to that direction, that the performance of a “good” government should be examined in a very complex way. In my opinion this achievement can be reached by the creation of a complex set of indicators, where composite indicators and complex indicator-sets also have their own place.

This paper tries to summarize the current status of several approaches in a very brief way, and introduces a possible complex strategic level of indicators in Hungary to assess four sides of the story: state organization, fiscal, economic and social phenomena. My proposal in this article is an ambitious

try to show an almost-ready, applicable model. Since fiscal data and indicators are used most commonly, this paper does not lay the main stress on this area, but on all the rest.

It is certainly clear, that it's a very complex and challenging activity trying to describe state operation and performance in an interpretable way, so this article is rather trying to raise questions and initiate further discussion, instead of introducing a completely finished and ready-to-use table of indicators. However, this could be the very next action.

2. Good governance and good government – the two leading approaches so far

At the time of the mid-twentieth century two major directions have emerged from the weberian roots of public administration management. The opposite to the more or less strict and sometimes misinterpreted bureaucratic weberian administration was the liberal approach to state duties, so to say a market-oriented approach of public services and management (Báger and Vigvári, 2007; Hood and Pollitt, 1995; Osborne and Gaebler, 1993; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2003 & 2004). The liberal approach reached its peak in the so called New Public Management wave, which had a huge impact on the ideas about state operation, but this approach was not successful enough to become a new, single paradigm in public management (Dunn and Miller, 2007; Gow and Dufour, 2000). However, with the leadership of the World Bank a new phrase emerged from these practices, and that was called "good governance". In the interpretation of the World Bank, good governance is a status what is a deficiency. Good governance is what would be required in the transforming developing countries (e.g. World Bank, 2008). Since the World Bank was usually not focusing on the public management conditions of a state and its services in its early decades, but rather just placed development aid and credit in the developing countries, during the nineteen-eighties it was an interesting but obvious evolution of its activity to foster macro-economic growth through public reforms in these countries more and more often. The World Bank was seriously criticized later, because of the one-eyed liberal approach it was using but they went quite far with some fierce replies (Kaufmann et al., 2007), as well, where the debate was about the limited role of the state to a "night-watch" role, giving a lot of opportunity to institutional pools of private enterprises and the co-ordination role of private organizations.

Not regarding these criticisms, it must be admitted that serious work was done and they issued the metric result of these activities, called the World Governance Index (WGI) project. They measure the status of 212 states with six composite indicators. The indicators summarize the results of 31 international organizations, NGO's and 33 databases of public opinion poll companies. We have to state, that the indicators contain the mixture of numerous "soft" factors, which are not necessarily interpretable very much.

These composite indicators are the following:

1. Voice and Accountability: the extent to which a country's citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a free media.
2. Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism: the likelihood that the government will be destabilized by unconstitutional or violent means, including terrorism.
3. Government Effectiveness: the quality of public services, the capacity of the civil service and its independence from political pressures; and the quality of policy formulation.

4. Regulatory Quality: the ability of the government to provide sound policies and regulations that enable and promote private sector development.
5. Rule of Law: in and abide by the rules of society, including the quality of contract enforcement and property rights, the police, and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence.
6. Control of Corruption: the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as "capture" of the state by elites and private interests.

In opposition to good governance, the sense of the good government paradigm is the linkage of the normative content of democracy with the demand of quality governance. It's based on the central role, accountability and responsibility of the state (Gazsó et al., 2008). This is presented for the citizens in the form of "good and reasonable life conditions" (Gazsó et al., 2008). These good and reasonable life conditions must be assured by a specific actor. Due to this, its activity will become assessable. In fact, this means that the actor's effectiveness and efficiency can be accounted and the actor can be made responsible for the achievement. By nature, such a role can only be fulfilled by the state, and not the market.

The neo-weberian approach states that the state is neither dead, nor incompetent. Even further, it's participation is required in more and more areas of life as never before (Drechsler, 2005; Lynn, 2008). This theory requires a top-down approach where we look at governance as a whole, and we define strong fundamental rules on its operation. Based on these rules we define interpretable measurement points and data sources which underline the expectations defined on systematic level. With other words: we deduct an institutional framework from the pre-defined goals of the state operation, together with its indicators, information.

The importance of going further in our examinations then the performance of economy when judging state operations became also highly reflected in the EU member states and forums as well, like the Atkinson Report in Great Britain, for example (Atkinson et al., 2005).

In August 2009, the European Commission released its policy paper "GDP and beyond: Measuring progress in a changing world" which is available in 22 languages. The Communication outlines an EU roadmap with five key actions to be undertaken now and in the near term. The communication states, that "The need to improve data and indicators to complement GDP has been increasingly recognized and is the focus of a number of international initiatives. These initiatives also reflect renewed societal and political priorities. In November 2007, the European Commission (together with the European Parliament, the Club of Rome, the WWF and the OECD) organized the Beyond GDP conference. The conference revealed strong support from policy-makers, economic, social and environmental experts and civil society for developing indicators that complement GDP and aim to provide more comprehensive information to support policy decisions (COM/2009/0433 final)."

The five key actions support the Commission's aims to develop indicators relevant to the challenges of today — ones that provide an improved basis for public discussion and policy-making. These key actions are: complementing GDP with highly aggregated environmental and social indicators, near real-time information for decision-making, more accurate reporting on distribution and inequalities, developing a European Sustainable Development Scoreboard and extending National Accounts to environmental and social issues.

3. An approach from the United States – The Calvert-Henderson Quality of Life Indicators

The Calvert-Henderson Quality of Life Indicators, first published in 2000 in book format, are the result of an extensive six-year study by a multi-disciplinary group of practitioners and scholars from government agencies, for-profit firms, and nonprofit organizations who see the need for more practical and sophisticated metrics of societal conditions (Calvert-Henderson, 2011). The set of indicators was invoked to life by the criticism on the pure regular macroeconomic statistical data by professionals (which in fact also went under a serious evolution during the nineteen-nineties by incorporating new areas such as green economy, environmental accounts etc.) which is really similar to the worries drafted at the GDP and beyond conference. The Quality of Life Indicators are not the result of a government decision, but they are coming from a bottom-up approach, widely used in the Unites States of America. The set covers education, employment, energy, environment, health, human rights, income, infrastructure, national security, public safety, re-creation and shelter areas with composite indicators. Since quality of life is often interpreted as the final outcome of government performance, the Calvert-Henderson approach can be seen as the outer layer of the justification of good government.

4. Institutional approach – a very brief example

In this approach we are facing a reversed bottom-up idea. In this context, good governance is interpreted through the right and feasible operation of the public administration services.

As it can be seen in the British example on Figure 1, they are starting out from a perspective, where institutions and public services receive expectations, benchmarks, and the fulfillment of these expectations in their daily operation creates the synthesis of good governance.

Figure 1: Good Governance model of British Public Administration

Source: GOOD GOVERNANCE STANDARD FOR PUBLIC SERVICES (2004)

5. Fundamental questions raised by the experiences

First of all we have to clear, whether we think about the state and its functions in a liberal or rather a neo-weberian way. I believe that today we have to focus on a state where its role is not only the creation of the possibility to live in a violence-free world, where state gives open possibilities for economy and it only assures the legal framework. This would be way too easy. We have to think about a more active state.

The second question is, whether we aggregate information from institutional data. Should we examine their operation by certain indicators and institutional goals and then sum up on a state level, or should we rather define fundamental goals for the state first, and then distribute these expectations to the institutional system of the state, deriving their own driving goals and activities from the state level expectations? Let's call this a strategic approach.

The third question raises concerning the type of indicators. Shall we concentrate on the creation of composite indicators or we should use complex indicator sets instead? If we examine the institutional operation on a unified way, we will receive well aggregated composite indicators, but the higher we step, the more general and hardly interpretable indicators we receive. If we use a general set of strategic goals and we go top-down defining the criteria for the different areas of state activity from the strategic level, we will receive a very broad set of complex indicators, where aggregation to a "final answer" will be harder.

It's also important to decide at the beginning, who the target audience of the information will be. For the government, it would be more reasonable to design a broad set of indicators, since they could serve as a map for the monitoring of the entire public domain, but some key elements have to be defined for the public opinion. A lot of research opportunity can be opened sectorally, as well on this way. If we use a smaller set of composite indicators, they will not be detailed enough to give a real picture of the governance phenomena, however, they could serve as benchmarks for the public opinion. I believe that both directions have their own advantage.

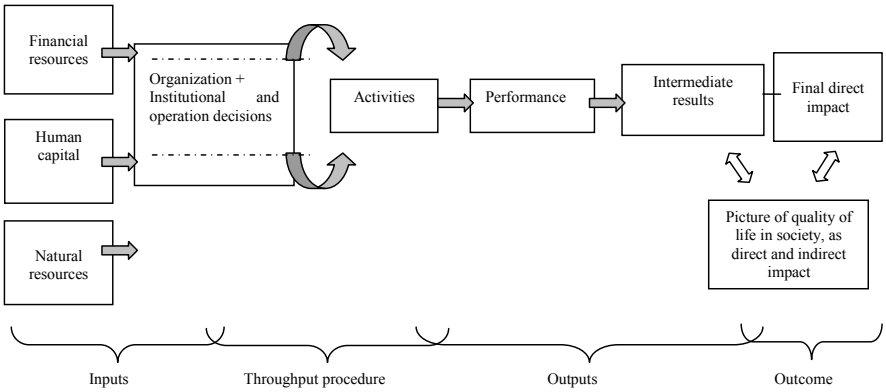
6. Introduction of the proposed indicator framework

My model introduces four dimensions of the phenomena. The first is a process-based approach, the second is a classifications by state functions, the third separates the different levels state operation, and the fourth – being a little strange – tries to give such an approach, whether the role of the specific indicators is rather important for planning decisions or for the sake of accountability and control. The presentation of my current research in this area is giving a description of the first two dimensions of the model, the rest requires further work.

The first step is the design of process-oriented approach as shown on Figure 2., where I was using a synthesis of the results of Van Dooren et al. (2006), Boyne and Law (2004) and Pollitt-Bouckaert (2004).

It is visible, that the first challenge is the uncertain line between the input-throughput-output-outcome stages' definitions. Starting out from the resources, it's worth mentioning that the existing organization itself is also a resource, while it also belongs to throughput procedure with the management decisions and the activities.

Figure 2: The process based decomposition of the state sector operation



Source: Author's edition based on ideas of Van Dooren et al. (2006), Boyne and Law (2004) and Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004).

At the same time, activities are also the outputs in the case of certain state services, so the trimming is not easy again. I have to stress that picture forming in the society is not just a following of the impact of outputs and direct outcomes, but this picture also affects intermediate results with its feedback. That's why the arrows point in both directions in this case. This decomposition will be the first dimension in the framework.

To create the second dimension, first I took the actual COFOG classification of the United Nations (COFOG, UN, 2007) available at the UN Statistics Division homepage for example, as this is the most widely used nomenclature for state operated services. This dimension will contain the functional breakdown of the framework, but COFOG needed some add-ons in my interpretation. The outcome of this exercise is Table 1, summarizing the functions of the state.

Table 1: Decomposition of state functions and services

	Possessions and services primarily for individual benefits	**Possessions and services primarily for collective benefits**
In kind	1. Education 2. Healthcare 3. Social protection 4. Support of recreation, culture and religious activities 5. Other services in kind	8. Public administration authority services 9. Military defense 10. Public order, public safety, jurisdiction 11. Basic research 12. Infrastructure of the country 13. General economic control, macro-economic supportive decisions 14. Environmental protection and energy policy 15. Other services, fostering civil awareness and action 16. Regulatory function (legislation) and institutions of representative democracy
In monetary terms	6. Social allowances 7. Further benefits in monetary terms for individuals (e.g. preferential income tax rules)	17. Foreign support and aid (received and sent) 18. Transfers in monetary terms used for special purposes

Source: Author's own work, based on COFOG classification (UN, 2007)

It's obvious that at this moment we are not necessarily able to link existing indicators to each chapter, and there are lots of "soft" factors, too, but they are also playing an important role in the context.

The model explained so far describes the aggregated level. These two dimensions can be added together in a matrix-table, where we introduce a third element: we make a distinction between financial and non-financial indicators here. It's worth to stress that this new distinction is not to be mashed up with the classification of functions and services mentioned in Table 1, since those serve the distinction within the given dimension, while from now I *introduce the classification of the indicators themselves as financial and non-financials*, which are applicable in the certain dimensions. (It's easy to accept that services in kind also have financial and non-financial indicators, while services in monetary terms behave the same way.)

The composition of the matrix-table is easy to follow if we introduce a systematic numbering of the cells. Since the table itself would exceed a few pages, I describe only the strategic level and the further method of the composition of the table with the example of state function nr. 1. (Education) from the second dimension.

The columns of the matrix-table represent the first dimension, the so called process decomposition (inputs-throughput-outputs-outcome) as described in Figure 2, supplemented with a strategic level column for the table (marked with the letter "X"). The clue of the three-digit number is the following: the first two characters represent the serial number of the second dimension from Table 1. the values may range from 01 to 18, plus the double zero, which represents the strategic level for each domain.

The indicators inside the matrix-table receive further two-digit serial numbers which are not presented in the table, since this is only the description of the matrix without the given indicators.

This systematic classification is the fundament of the "state function and service indicator map", where all necessary aspects can be incorporated in the examination. As a first step, the strategic level national indicators (Group A.001-D.002) and the strategic indicators of the specific functions and service (marked X.011 to X.182). The presentation of the method can be seen in Table 2.

Obviously not all the areas will be filled with indicators at every process step. This requires further adjustment with professionals and politicians within the different function and service areas.

Unfortunately, many attempts already have proven, that sometimes government actions and the impact caused in the world don't necessarily have a demonstrable correlation, so a linkage must be assumed with reasonable caution in some cases. Some rather fresh evaluations have proven for example, that the correlation between the financial support of public education and the pupil's PISA test results does not seem to be as strong as it was expected in advance, as stated by OECD (2006) or Donath and Milos (2009). Such evidences tell us to be very cautious when assigning indicators to outcome evaluation.

The strategic level of the indicator framework is applicable to monitor the fulfillment of government goals and for the dissemination of general information on government performance. In addition to the presented levels, the information can be grouped by the fourth dimension – whether the information serves planning or evaluation purposes.

Table 2: Proposed state function and service indicator map

	X. Strategic evaluation of functions	A. INPUTS	B. THROUGH-PUTS	C. OUTPUTS	D. OUTCOME
0. National strategic and evaluation indicators	./. n.a.	A.001. Financial input indicators of national strategic importance	B.001. Financial throughput indicators of national strategic importance	C.001. Financial output indicators of national strategic importance	D.001. Financial indicators of outcomes with national strategic importance
	./. n.a.	A.002. Non-financial input indicators of national strategic importance	B.002. Non-financial throughput indicators of national strategic importance	C.002. Non-financial output indicators of national strategic importance	D.002. Non-financial indicators of outcomes with national strategic importance
Possessions and services primarily for individual benefits					
1. Education	X.011. Strategic financial indicators of education	A.011. Financial indicators of education inputs	B.011. Financial indicators of education throughput	C.011. Financial indicators of education outputs	D.011. Financial indicators of education outcomes
	X.012. Strategic non-financial indicators of education	A.012. Non-financial indicators of education inputs	B.012. Non-financial indicators of education throughput	C.012. Non-financial indicators of education outputs	D.012. Financial indicators of education outcomes

Source: Author's own work

(The matrix-table continues with the same logic to the further functions and services de-scribed in Table 1. until the function group 18. The last lines have the codes ending with 181 and 182 for the Transfers in monetary terms used for special purposes.)

7. How to proceed with the work – an alternative for the presentation of indicators

The given framework of two dimensions has one weakness for sure, and this is the lack of grouping by such focusing points, that are more interpretable for the society and international organizations.

For this sake, we have to introduce an even deeper stratification. So to say, if we consider the process breakdown as starting point, we can define an alternative inner structure for the strategic indicators on a process basis, which helps society and organizations in evaluating the general performance of the state, and its government in a more understandable way.

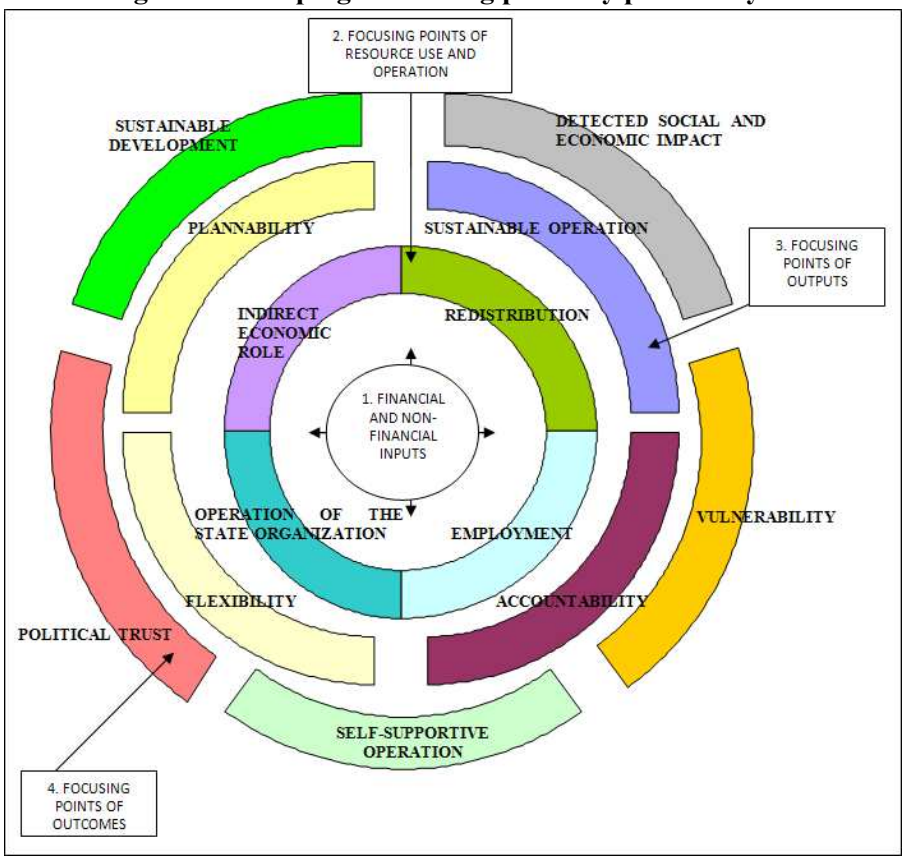
András Vigvári has introduced a little similar stratification in his article on local government sector (2003), which I re-structured for the basis of my own work with several transformations and additions. The "inputs" layer has no further focusing points, since it contains very factual and interpretable information. But for the "resource usage and operation" layer, "outputs" layer and "outcome" layer we can define them as follows:

1. Inputs: only financial and non-financial stratification without further focusing points
2. Throughput – resource usage and operation:
   a) Redistribution indicators
   b) Indirect economic role of the state
   c) Employment
   d) State organization operation indicators
3. Focusing points of assessment of outputs:
   a) Sustainable operation
   b) Flexible operation, use of opportunities
   c) Improved planning procedures
   d) Accountability of state
4. Focusing points of outcomes:
   a) Sustainable development
   b) Self-supportive operation
   c) Vulnerability threats
   d) Linkable social and economic impacts of state operation
   e) Judgment of political trust in government

With the use of this stratification, the opportunity of international benchmarking also opens up, since the topics covered with the focusing points are reflected in several international organizations' attempts to measure government performance, such as the Sustainable Development Indicators, the ESSPROS, the UN World Development Indicators (United Nations, 2007), OECD's Government at a Glance reports, the satellite accounts of national accounts, the already mentioned Calvert-Henderson Quality of Life Indicators and the Worldwide Governance Indicators (World Bank).

A graphical interpretation of this stratification can be seen on Figure 3.

Figure 3: Grouping of focusing points by process layers



Source: Author's own work

8. A first proposal for the use of indicators in this framework

This chapter contains a possible list of first-round indicators that can be already used in the defined framework. The grouping follows the proposal of Table 3. All indicators certainly require further examination and fine tuning of meta information. A majority of data are available in the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO), free of charge. The rest is usually indicated.

„0. NATIONAL STRATEGIC EVALUATION INDICATORS"

A. Inputs

Further focusing points: none

A.001. Financial input indicators of national strategic importance

1. Government revenues of subject year (bill.Ft)
- breakdown: tax revenues, social security and pension fund deposits, other revenues etc.
2. Government revenues ratio compared to GDP (in %)
3. Gross fixed assets of government sector and / or its change compared to year n-1
4. Accessible international and EU funds for specific purposes in the subject year or other time period

A.002. Non-financial input indicators of national strategic importance

5. Size of labor force working in public sector and/or their change in time compared to year n-1
6. Share of public sector labor force with a secondary degree, college/university degree
7. Ratio of labor force in public sector with at least one mid-level foreign language exam
8. Ratio of labor force with at least one high level foreign language exam
9. Number or ratio of labor force in public sector with at least two different college/university diplomas or PhD or equal degree
10. Selected labor force data of the entire population aged 15-64 years (further examination required)
11. Selected indicators of natural resources (further examination required)

B. Resource usage and operation (Throughputs)

Further focusing points: Redistribution, Indirect economic role of the state, Employment, State organization operation indicators

B.001. Financial throughput indicators of national strategic importance

Redistribution

12. Ratio of budget assigned to central government, public administration and local units of public administration organizations compared to GDP
13. Social security expenditures compared to GDP
14. Pension fund and similar expenditures compared to GDP
15. Redistributed revenues of other form compared to GDP

B.002. Non-financial throughput indicators of national strategic importance

Indirect economic role of the state

16. Composite indicators of budgeting practice (source: OECD Government at a Glance 2009)
17. Number of newly founded enterprises and number of dissolved enterprises or the balance of the two in the given period of time (source: HCSO)
18. Energy use and exposure indicators (source: Energiaközpont's energy statistics and energy balance)[1]

Employment

19. Number of employed in the economy (persons) in the specific time period and / or the change of their number compared to the similar period of previous year (%)
20. Unemployment rate (%) in the specific time period and / or the change compared to the similar period of previous year (%)
21. Employees of active age, from age 50 and over in the public sector and their ratio compared to the same age group in the entire society

[1] This activity was transferred to Magyar Energia Hivatal (Hungarian Energy Office) from 01.01.2012.

State organization operation indicators
22. Composite indicators of public sector management practice (source: OECD Government at a Glance 2009)
23. political regulatory ability and violence-free operation (source: Worldwide Governance Indicators)

C. Outputs

Further internal focusing points: Sustainable operation, Flexible operation and use of opportunities, Improved planning procedures, Accountability of state

C.001. Financial output indicators of national strategic importance

Sustainable operation
24. Growth of GDP, growth intensity of GDP (%)
25. GPD per capita on purchasing power parities, average EU-27 (28) (source: Eurostat)
26. Main data of foreign trade balance
27. Real consumption expenditures of households
28. Ratio of gross savings of households compared to GDP
29. Balance of social security and pension systems of the given year, the change of their balance compared to historic data

Flexible operation and use of opportunities
30. Coverage indicators of financial support from EU funds and other foreign sources (*requires further examination!*)

Improved planning procedures
31. Difference between the expenditure gross sum of the annual state budget and the budget statement act of the subject year (Ft or %)
32. Difference between the revenue gross sum of the annual state budget and the budget statement act of the subject year (Ft or %)

C.002. Non-financial output indicators of national strategic importance

Accountability of state
33. Satisfaction index of public authority services (needs further work)
34. Education indicators (needs further work)
35. Corruption level (source: Worldwide Governance Indicators or ÁSZ (Board of Auditors) survey)
36. Government efficiency (source: Worldwide Governance Indicators)
37. Rule of Law (source: Worldwide Governance Indicators)

D. Outcome

Further internal focusing points: Sustainable development, Self-supportive operation, Vulnerability threats, Linkable social and economic impacts of state operation, Judgment of political trust in government

D.001. Financial indicators of outcomes with national strategic importance

Sustainable development
38. The change of consumer price index in time (%)
39. Ratio of public debt compared to GDP (%)
40. Ratio of government sector deficit compared to GDP (%)
41. Revenues of foreign assets in Hungary (on Euro and / or Forint basis) (%) (source: MNB / Hungarian National Bank)
42. Re-investment ratio of foreign assets revenues in Hungary (source: MNB / Hungarian National Bank)

Self-supportive operation
43. The liabilities of the total national debt compared to the state revenues (%)
44. Change of real capital assets compared to capital (%)
45. The revenues raised from own resources compared to GDP (%)

Vulnerability
46. Ratio of inter-state transfers compared to total revenues (%)
47. Ratio of foreign government debt compared to net state debt (%)
48. The exchange ratio between government debt accounted in foreign currencies related to net government debt (%)
49. Balance of Payments (BoP) deficit in the ratio of GDP percentage
50. Total external government debt in the ratio of GDP

D.002. Non-financial indicators of outcomes with national strategic importance
Linkable social and economic impacts of state operation
51. Professionals leaving central institutions of public administration within three years time from appointment *(data source needs to be discovered)*
52. Consumer Trust Index (source: GFK – Corvinus Egyetem)
53. Consumer Expectations Index (source: GFK – Corvinus Egyetem)
54. Consumption Willingness Index (source: GFK – Corvinus Egyetem)
55. The position (and its change) of Hungary in one of the relevant international competitivness rankings (IMD / World Economic Forum)
56. Activity ratio of persons aged 15-64
57. Poverty ratio (ARPR at-risk-of-powerty statistics)
58. Poverty ratio aged 0-15 years (ARPR)
59. Expected years of healthy life at birth
60. Average age expected at birth men / women
61. Old aged' dependency ratio now and its forecast to the year 2050
62. Further literacy indicator(s) – (research required)

Judgment of political trust in government
63. Voice and Accountability (Worldwide Governance Indicators)
64. Participation data and comparison of parliamentary elections
65. Use and preparedness of E-government services (source: OECD Government at a Glance 2009)
66. Popularity index of politicians (source: Szonda-Ipsos)
67. Trust in economic policy of SME's (source: K&H Bank and GFK survey)

9. Closing findings

The introduced indicator framework and indicators are a first set, ready for debate. The current status of the work gives space for further fine tuning of the system and the incorporation of more indicators. However, we have to note that my article was studying the strategic level, already forming 67 indicators for this stage. But we don't have to be scared about the number of indicators, since the most of them are already available. What we have to do is create a well understandable framework that incorporates the knowledge we already have, from very distant databases.

This could result in a very cost effective and wide ranging set or map of indicators, which could be used as benchmarks for a government strategy and for the assessment of the government's achievements.

There is still one element or layer required, what I was not discussing in the context of this article. And this is the strategy setting by the state itself. Since never mind how good indicators we have, if we are not able to define the basis what we want to compare with or we are not able to define where we are heading at. This is the second direction where my research is going for, currently.

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