

## DECENTRALIZATION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND SLOVAK REPUBLIC

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**Abstract:** This article was originated as a support for the IG507024 grant "Comparison of self-government and state administration in the process of transformation of public administration in the conditions of Czechia and Slovakia" by the Internal Grant Agency of the University of Economics in Prague. The article is concentrated on development of public administration at the local level in the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic after 1989.

**Key words:** public administration, state administration, self-government, decentralization, disintegration, county, district, municipality

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The conversion of competencies in public administration, especially from state administration to self-government, is a typical process in the reformation of public administration not only in Central Europe. Taking Slovakia as an example, the approaches to the reformation will be shown from the view of urban structure, legislative and institutional background and impacts on administration system. In order to make a comparison, we will use the cultural and historic proximity of the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic. The aim is to point out common strengths and weaknesses of the particular operation models in public administration on a local level that is identical with the NUTS IV and V units. Despite of the common history, there are some fundamental differences in public management such as – a three-level system of the municipalities in the Czechia at the competence decentralization, disintegrated public administration in Slovakia, system of electing mayors etc. .

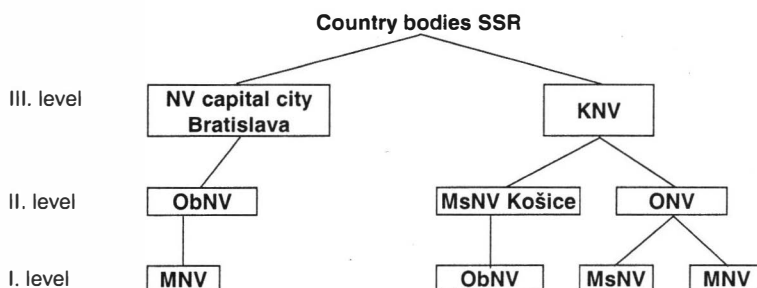
The way public administration and self-government are organized, has a remarkable impact on the country residential structure, which on the other side primarily impacts and determines it at first place. We are yet witnessing how many "reformers" don't accept this fact sufficiently, which naturally leads to animosity. Besides numerous influential

groups enter this process, they are very hard to identify in such fragmentally organized system.

## 2. COUNTIES AND DISTRICTS (1990-1996)

The changes after November 17<sup>th</sup>, 1989 affected the organization of public administration inevitably as well, which was until that moment solely connected with the organization of local state administration. In the area of Slovakia there were four "Regional Committees" – Bratislava as a capital, Western Slovakia, Central Slovakia and Eastern Slovakia (Figure 1). There was no reason to talk about self-government. Everything was managed mostly by a bureaucratic party mechanism. A significant change came with ratifying of the Law Nr. 369/1990 about general establishment (in the tenor of later amends), based on which the municipalities gained competencies and became a basic territorial unit.

The situation in state administration was handled by the Law Nr. 472/1990 about the organization of local state administration (in the tenor of later amends), based on which the first level of local committees was replaced by self-governing public and city authorities as well as the second level by the county authorities as newly constituted bodies of public administration. As a result of the application of this law, the system of 38 counties and 121 district authorities was established on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1991 (Figure 1).



**Figure 1** Levels and types – NV SSR Source: Kol. (1977): Encyklopédia Slovenska, IV. Veda Bratislava

All persons involved were from the very beginning of this process aware of the fact, that this was only a temporary solution. Such established model was just a base for transformation from centrally organized public administration that insisted on enforcing priorities of only one political party to the democratic model based on a dual principle of managing public administration – self-government and state administration as two partners on both local and regional level. The next steps were supposed to establish a second level of self-government and more transparent organization of state administration.

According to the Constitution of the Slovak Republic and the Law Nr. 369/1990, a basic territorial unit is a municipality that has gained its real self-government and the right to manage their internal affairs after a 50-year interruption of a continuous



development. It has also become an executor of several roles of local state administration in delegated power. Time has confirmed the viability of the self-governing cities and towns despite of many initial complications (delayed legislation, application of a new model of financing, etc.).

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1989 there were 2,669 municipalities<sup>1</sup>. After a liberalization of the political situation, the strong wave of founding independent municipalities prevailed and so their number grew up to 2,891 on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2002<sup>2</sup>, which is a growth of 222 municipalities. There were 136 cities and 4 military areas. Districts of Bratislava and Košice were not included.

The self-governing bodies of the municipality have always been: local representatives and a mayor, in cities there are city representatives and a chief magistrate. The representatives as well as the mayor are elected in direct and secret elections by the inhabitants of the municipality or the. This is different to the Czech Republic, where the mayor is elected by the representatives only.

The representation founds the municipal council either voluntarily or obligatory. The municipal council serves as an advisory body to the mayor (or chief magistrate). The representatives may temporarily raise advisory, initiative and control commissions.

Other self-governing body of the municipality is a chief controller that is in charge of the municipal budget. He is proposed by the mayor and appointed by the representatives.

The spread of the powers of the municipality was determined by the Law Nr. 369/1990 about general establishment and the Law Nr. 518/1990. The field of action consisted of: water system (water-supply, canalization), building industry (building companies founded by the municipality), transport (local transportation, bridges building and repairs), retail (restaurants, accommodation, travel and information agencies), culture (cinemas, libraries, ceremonial halls, museums, galleries, historical monuments and cultural facilities), environmental protection (public parks, cleaning of roads and winter maintenance, garbage removal), housing management (building, heating, recreational facilities), social care, health care, physical education, etc.

Municipalities and cities have come many times into conflicts with local and central bodies of state administration. This was caused by unclear competencies between state administration and self-government, mostly till 1996.

The bodies of local state administration – county and district authorities – were built on a multi-segment principle, i.e. they were managed by several ministries, which made administration unclear and ineffective. They worked in the areas of health care, culture, social care, transport, youth and physical education, traveling, regional politics, energetic industry, private enterprises etc. They were places for gathering all data. They fulfilled tasks in the area of statistics, civil defense and other. On the second level they were establishing allowance organizations.

On the other hand, the specialized local state administration was built explicitly on a single-segment principle. County (38) and district (121) environmental offices were constituted as well as wide-area (6) and local (33) woods and forests offices, county scholar offices (36), county (38) and district (105) employment offices, social security offices, financial controlling offices, tax authorities (107), fire departments, land and

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<sup>1</sup> Berčík, P. Lovecký, P. 2003. Územné zmeny obcí v SR od roku 1990. Sekcia verejnej správy MV SR Bratislava, s. 38.

<sup>2</sup> Berčík, P. Lovecký, P. 2003. Územné zmeny obcí v SR od roku 1990. Sekcia verejnej správy MV SR Bratislava, s. 39.

cadastral offices. These facts imply that the specialized state administration did not have the same area division, which was caused by not having any conception in legislative modifications and strong enforcement of not coordinated policy of particular central bodies of state administration.

135 city and 168 local committees were replaced by 121 district authorities that were in charge of state administration.

A negative side of this land and authority division was a high number of employees, which caused often interferences with non-governmental and international organizations. According to the data from the Ministry of Home Affairs there were 8,681 employees in the general state administration and 15,132 in the specialized one. This gives us a total number of 23,813 employees in 547 offices excluding 111 tax offices. Out of these 23,813 employees 54.9 % have been working in executive positions, 28.3 % in internal administration and 16.8 % in county and district authorities.

### **3. THE WAY TO A NEW LAND AND AUTHORITY ORGANIZATION OF SLOVAKIA**

The way to a new structure and organization of the state was, as usually in Slovakia, not easy. A lot of people realized the necessity of a change but everyone was looking at this problem through an angle of their own party. This caused that the temporary period had to be continuously prolonged and mostly politicians were wasting their effort in never-ending discussions. Employees in state administration have been changing according to an actual political status of the coalition and opposition in the Parliament. This had definitely a negative impact on the level of public administration at a time of its overloading, which was a result a transformation of the whole society.

During 1990s several expert commissions were appointed and introduced various options for land and authorities division of Slovakia. During the development of these proposals two groups were formed were enforcing their own solutions regardless of abilities and needs. Particular tasks were often solved without any conception. At this moment, although late, there is one proposal to be judged positively – "Proposal of criteria for land and authorities division of the Slovak Republic", which was introduced in June 1995 during government negotiations under the number 202-95/02497 by the Minister of Interior, Ľudovít Hudek. The aim of the proposed criteria was first of all to establish wider land and authorities territories and altogether also correction of land districts, where the bodies of local state administration had their field of action. The criteria were watching newly established territories to be self-sufficient in terms of economic, social and cultural activities.

The economics and society are influenced by several different factors such as administration, economics, politics, history, geography, engineering and many others. Thus the list of all criteria below must be complete and must cover all important aspects of influence of these factors upon the structure of the country. Particular criteria are divided into three parts:

Criteria of public administration – which are the basic and primary aim of land and authorities division in order to reach the optimal layering of particular bodies of state administration and self government: simplicity and transparency, more-levels,

functionality, effectiveness, relative stability, feasibility, relative accessibility of centers, center facilities, the opinion of inhabitants.

Criteria of economical and social regional division comprise another area by which new bordered and relatively closed land and/or authority's territories are built, owning even executive bodies of public administration and identity: functional homogeneity, socio-economical balance, historical and cultural-historical identity.

Common criteria comprise the last group, which has much wider field of action in the evaluation and proposing procedures – and thus it needs to be separate: political-strategic, nodality of regions and urbanization, size of centers, size of territories.

#### **4. THE CHANGE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ORGANIZATION IN 1996**

By acceptance of the Law Nr. 221/1996 about land and authority division the field for new laws about state administration organization was opened. The Law Nr. 222/1996 about local state administration organization has specified the structure and competencies of state administration bodies into two-level hierarchy model. Instead of 121 district offices, 38 counties and a lot of specialized state administration on the levels of district, county and region, there were 79 new counties and 8 territorial offices introduced and then became centers of integrated local and regional state administration. Employment and tax offices were not included in this integration. One methodology was applied for management in different segments and levels of state administration. The particular county (3 categories according to the number of inhabitants) and territorial offices have been divided into departments.

County and territorial offices were ensuring the execution of state administration. For instance, in the area of education offices there were founders of schools and educational facilities, in case some other law was claiming something else. County offices were founding and expelling nursery and primary schools. In the competency of territorial offices there were high schools, secondary grammar schools, craft schools and other educational facilities. Despite the pursuit to integrate state administration into the system that would be transparent for the citizens, the education was a symbol that not everything worked as it had been predicted. High medical schools, high agricultural schools and craft schools remained to be managed by the ministries of their segment. In reality it meant that the chief of education department was not only in contact with authorities of Ministry of Education and Ministry of Interior, but also with particular ministries according to the scope of the school. He was in inferior place towards more bodies of state administration that were having specific requirements. Besides that there were frequent negotiations about particular situations of various schools took place at the Ministry of Finance.

The Law Nr. 221/1996 about land and authority division consists of two parts. In the first part the difficulties of land division are being solved, where according to the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, the land of the country is united and the administration is being executed by land and administrative authorities whose territories are the same. It is stated that the field of action and bodies of the territory are proclaimed to be solved in a different law that had been prepared but never realized. According to

the Law Nr. 169/1949, the military areas are neither a part of municipality nor a territory. This was also a cause for a withdrawal of the first version of the land and authorities division map of Slovakia. There was a military area Malacky, county Senica, territory Trnava, but in the law there was no such area – only area Malacky, county Malacky and territory Bratislava.

The second part is devoted to administrative division. Territories are established as well as their counties (Figure 3). There is also a list of previously mentioned 8 territories and 79 counties in the law. The government has released proclamations for the cities that became a seat of a county or a territory.

The system of 8 territories continues in the idea of 6 smaller territories and 2 – 3 cities directly reporting to the body of representatives in the years 1949 – 1960. There is continuity of this system also in the years 1923 – 1928, where 6 local territories existed as well as in the years 1939 – 1945. All territorial seats have had their historical experience in being a seat of the administration – mostly Bratislava and Košice; the least experience has Žilina which was a seat in the years 1949 – 1960 only. These cities were logically also provided with the best social and administrative infrastructure.

When appointing the seats of counties, the existing network of 121 district authorities of the general local state administration was considered and the municipalities with the smallest number of inhabitants were eliminated. Also the size of district in the years 1923 – 1995 was considered. In fact the system of district from the years 1923 – 1928 (81), 1928 – 1938 (79), 1949 – 1960 (98) and also for example 77 "centralized municipalities" in the years 1965 – 1989 were taken into account.

## **5. MODERNIZATION OF STATE ADMINISTRATION AFTER 1998**

The appointed integrated model of the state administration management would not be complete without an adequate regional self-governing level. In spite of the fact that all basic deficiencies in the state administration management have been solved, the process of establishing new territories after the year 1998 and the transformation of competencies is called modernization. This term has later been well accepted as a name for this stage of the state administration organization development.

The next significant stage of the state administration reformation is connected with the accession of the government led by Mikuláš Dzurinda, which had the modernization of state administration – continuation and completion of the whole process of the state administration reformation as one of their key program objectives. As a verification of their words was an appointing of Viktor Nižňanský to the position of the governmental attorney for the state administration reformation. Even though he was in a very difficult position with regard to the character of the government (that led also to his voluntary leaving), could serve very well. But this situation was preceded by the origination of two important documents: "The strategy of the state administration reformation" and later "The concept of decentralization and modernization of state administration".

According to these materials the land self-government was supposed to act as a body governed by public law in the area of self-management based on the Constitution as well as in the area of transferred powers. It was supposed to be independent of state administration.

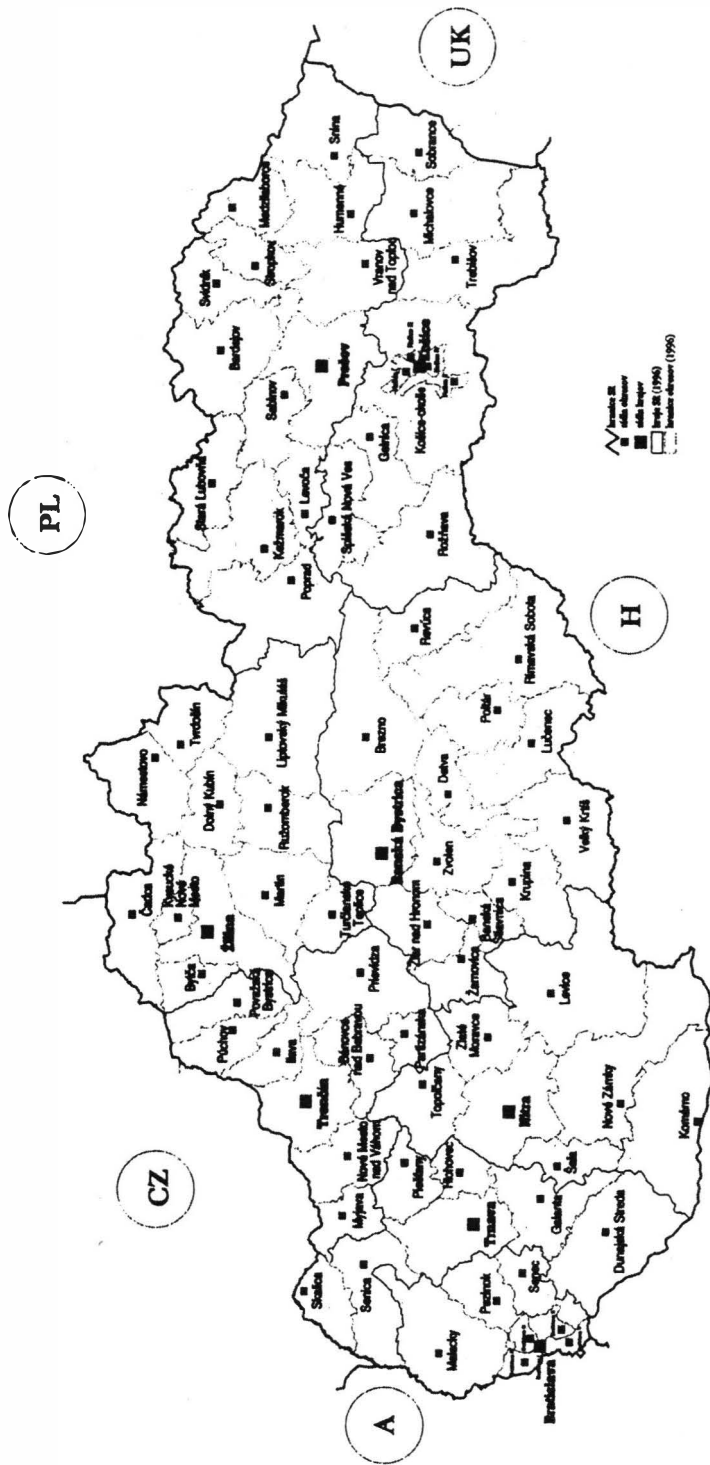


Figure 3 Land and authorities organization. Source: Berčík, P. 1998. Financing of the local self-government in Slovakia. EF UMB



The strengthening of the state, functioning of democracy, self-governing principles and local coordination, restriction of the return of totalitarian and authoritative regimes, lowering bribery, catching up with European trends, increase in effectiveness, economic strength and foreign cooperation were supposed to be the main benefits. Some of the biggest risks are: the complexity of managing, threats for public concerns, fiscal externality, difference in the standard of services and the demanding of control. The aim was to transfer all competencies to the land self-government that are not in the exquisite jurisdiction of the state and also to transfer all possible competencies, for which the self-government execution would be responsible. Among the exquisite competencies of the state administration we could find: civil defense, foreign affairs policy, creating legislation, fiscal, monetary and tax policy, the state assets management, jurisdiction and courts, issuing state documents, state control including inspections and audits of the land self-government and services. All other competencies were supposed to be transferred to the self-government. For example a coordination activities on the local and regional level, industrial functions and services, primary and secondary education, building and urban planning, local transportation, II. and III. category roads maintenance, cultural and sports facilities. A part of competencies should have been divided on the basis of comparative analysis with the EU countries. It is necessary to add, that the majority of objectives has been fulfilled for the last five years.

From these facts we can see, that during such significant movement of competencies, it is inevitable to "professionalize" self-governments and transfer many employees from the state administration to the self-governments. But this process is the most doubtful. The reason is that every self-government needs to see demands and compare them with their own abilities.

The questions about of financial securing not only the flow of the reforms but also the following functioning of the system are always the major and most doubtful parts of every reform. The Slovak government has therefore considered:

- ♦ changes in tax system, tax competencies, changes in the budget structure, in budgeting rules, changes of criteria for redistribution of share taxes, changes in the principle of subsidies system and state funds, new system of financial redistribution
- ♦ strengthening of the financial independence of the self-government
- ♦ introducing control mechanisms (from the state side) on condition of observation of the independent decision-making of the self-government
- ♦ inability of creating superior-inferior relationships between the Slovak Parliament, territories and local self-government since all levels have their own elected representatives, their competencies and programs
- ♦ the need of introducing the debt rate for territories authorities followed by "forced managing" in case of not fulfilling tasks declared by the law
- ♦ distinction of common and investment expenditures
- ♦ the volume of public finance, which should be a part of self-governing budgets, was estimated to be 56 billion SKK in the areas of health and social care, education, culture, transport, safety and a share of state funds transformation.

The above mentioned concepts came into reality already during the first governmental term of Mikuláš Dzurinda, when the law about 8 new territories was introduced. Then the first elections of representatives and chairmen followed in December 2000.

The discussion of the effectiveness of the dual state administration model is still being continued. The second government of Mikuláš Dzurinda has approved (by their

decree Nr. 370 on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2003) a project of the state administration decentralization and then the Concept of local state administration arrangement (by governmental decree Nr. 371 from the same day). These materials have become their factual shape in the Law on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2003 about territorial and district authorities and about change and completion of some laws. By this event the segmentation tendencies appearing from the parliamentary elections in 1998 have been fulfilled.

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004 the network of 79 county authorities were disestablished and partially replaced by 50 district authorities and a network of specialized local state administration in the area of environment, urban planning and building, agriculture, forest industry and hunting, fishing, land adjustment, transport and road maintenance, social and health care, education, youth and sports. All central bodies of the state administration, mostly ministries, coordinate their own network of offices. In the field of action of independent territorial and county authorities, in the segment field of action of the Ministry of Interior, except general internal administration, trading, civil defense and managing the state in crisis situations, according to the §4, article 2 also the state administration in areas of defense and safety of the country, industrial mobilization, state assets management and extrajudicial

That meant that after eight years, Slovakia has returned to the disintegration of local state administration, which was similar to the status before the year 1996.

## **6. THE STATE ADMINISTRATION REFORMATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

The procedure of the state administration reformation in the Czech Republic was different. Until mid 1990s Slovakia was significantly leading in this procedure; this culminated into the already mentioned reformation of land and administrative organization in 1996. In the Czech Republic a system of similar disintegrated state administration existed until the ČSSD (Social Democrats) party took over the governmental dominance. Territorial committees were disestablished and particular bodies of the central state administration were creating their own networks of offices on a regional or local level. 77 county authorities have been acting up to the Law Nr. 425/1990. The Czech Republic has also gone through a period of creating several concepts of land and authorities division, but the opinion of specialist was taken into account in much stronger way, especially in placing the local centers.

The regional level in the public administration organization was legitimized by the Law Nr. 347/1997 about creating territorial self-governing authorities. 13 cities have been given a role of the seat of territorial offices and Prague has got a specific placement as a territory itself. There was enough time set for implementing this law into reality since the effect date of this law was set for January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2000. Slovakia reserved for their new arrangement literally only a few days. But due to a legislative delay of related laws that came into effect on January 1st, 2001, the first elections into territorial representative bodies were held in November 2000. The territorial authorities were constituted as integrated bodies of public administration and in the conditions of the Czechia (opposite to Slovakia); the new combined model on the regional level was approved after long discussions. But this model was also combined with a dual model on local level having

the network of county offices, which were by natural flow of time losing their reasonable positions and became an example of ineffective doubling of competencies.

The situation has then led to the January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003 when the most stable item – the county office – was disestablished and this did not get along without a lot of discussions and criticizing opinions. The representatives of the reformation ideas stood in front of the problem how to divide particular competencies. Transferring them to the territorial offices would contradict the basic principle of all public administration reformation – the principle of subsidiarity and natural tendency of strengthening local self-government. On the other hand the improper urban structure similar to Slovakia, with about 6260 municipalities and average of 1,700 inhabitants, did not allow transfer of competencies to all municipalities.

But there was one success that still has not and will not come in Slovakia without government having strong support in Parliament – this is called a municipal reform.

By approving the Law Nr. 314/2002 the three levels of municipalities have arisen in the Czech Republic and they have been given competencies of cancelled county offices. But it is necessary to mention that no municipality has lost their original competencies accepted in early 1990s. The basic level is comprised of all municipalities. Then there are 388 second level municipalities called municipalities with commissioned office and 205 third level municipalities called municipalities with broadened field of action. The third type has been given to most competencies of the county offices and their offices should be enough for a common citizen.

By this step the second stage of public administration reformation was finished in the Czech Republic and this model has become adequate and transparent in the meaning of the organizational structure. As one could suppose, the main problem that is still remaining is a clarification of relations between state administration and self-governments, while both bodies of the public administration have sometimes the same responsibility and competency. That comes together with settling financial means for the transferred competency of the state administration, which is very hard to specify exactly! This is the greatest barrier from internal point of view. The external view proves advantages for the citizen and strengthening urban structure.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

In the present time we can witness a conceptual and long-term stable fulfillment of the public administration reformation in the conditions of the Czech Republic. In the meanwhile Slovakia still has not reached the final model, on which the needed majority would participate. The public administration is still influenced by politics not only on a central level but also on a regional and local level. On the other hand, the main requirement of a proper functioning in the Czech Republic is to solve the problem of a fiscal decentralization, which has already partially happened in Slovakia. Only on these conditions we can expect independent fulfilling of the program of particular local authorities and interest groups.

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## Decentralizácia verejnej správy na lokálnej úrovni v Českej a Slovenskej republike

### Resume

Reforma verejnej správy v roku 1996 bola predovšetkým o územno-správnom usporiadaní a integrácii dezintegrovannej štátnej správy. Integrovaná štátna správa mala svoju najslabšiu časť v dvojitej podriadenosti odborov jednotlivých krajských a okresných úradov jednak voči prednostovi úradu najmä organizačne a pracovno-právne, ale na druhej strane podriadenosť aj voči predstavenému príslušného ústredného úradu štátnej správy (obyčajne ministerstvu).

V tomto období nedošlo k naplneniu reformných krokov na úrovni samosprávy, ktorá mala začať preberať postupne spoluzodpovednosť za činnosť v štáte prostredníctvom originálnych a prenesených kompetencií v procese decentralizácie aj na regionálnej úrovni. Ťažiskom verejnej správy tak bola predovšetkým štátna správa, ktorá sa všeobecne jednoduchšie riadila vzhľadom na silne presadzovaný hierarchický princíp a podriadenosť nižších zložiek vyšším.

Náprava nastala až v roku 2001, kedy prebehli prvé voľby do vyšších územných celkov a obsadili sa tak miesta poslancov a predsedov samosprávnych krajov. Slovensko sa tým stalo krajinou s duálnym integrovaným modelom riadenia verejnej správy. Postupne sa dobudovávali a dobudovávajú jednotlivé sídla krajských samospráv a začali presadzovať prirodzene záujmy svojich regiónov. Predpoklad úspešnosti tkvie však v existencii kompetencií, ktoré ešte neboli plne prenesené. Nastal prirodzený tlak na proces decentralizácie, čoho výsledkom bolo, že väčšina kompetencií (najmä zriaďovateľských), predovšetkým okresných úradov, bola prenesená priamo na obce často bez ohľadu na ich hierarchické postavenie v systéme osídlenia s idealistickým predpokladom, že obce budú v záujme väčšej efektivity vytvárať medzi sebou spoločné obecné úrady, čo umožňovala už prvá verzia zákona o obecnom zriadení z roku 1990, ktorá sa ale minula účinku. Pod nekompromisným tlakom financií vzniklo niekoľko desiatok spoločných úradovní, ale nie je ojedinelé, že vznikali a vznikajú nesystémovo, čo sa prejavuje aj v tom, že sú obce, ktoré patria do dvoch a viacerých územných obvodov zmluvne vytvorených spoločných obecných úradov podľa jednotlivých prenesených kompetencií. Negatívne to pociťuje predovšetkým zdezorientovaný občan, ktorému sa tak správa vecí verejných paradoxne, napriek všetkých proklamovaných tézam reformy a modernizácie, skomplikovala.

Decentralizačný tlak logicky vyústil v zrušenie okresných úradov k 1. januáru 2004. Zároveň došlo k reorganizácii štátnej správy tak, že Národnou radou SR bola prijatá séria zákonov o orgánoch štátnej správy v dikiách jednotlivých rezortov, ktoré mali prostredníctvom svojich politicky nominovaných ministrov jednoznačne tendenciu presadzovať mocensky svoj vplyv od centrálnej úrovne až po tú najnižšiu ako je len možné. Tomu napomáha i zákon o štátnej službe s ďalším takmer bezmocným Úradom pre štátnu službu. Slovensko sa tak vrátilo pred rok 1996 k dezintegrovanej a rezortne riadenej špecializovanej štátnej správe na úrovni kraja, obvodu a v nejednom prípade i detašovaného pracoviska a integrovanej samospráve v systéme duálneho modelu verejnej správy. Občanovi ťažko pochopiteľná zmena v konfrontácii s realitou existencie rozdrobenej štruktúry úradov po rôznych budovách poväčšine v bývalých sídlach okresných úradov len s novým názvom obvod, prípadne detašované pracovisko. Vďaka tomu vláda politicky vymenováva niekoľkonásobne viac predstavených jednotlivých úradov štátnej správy a neexistuje kontinuita v odbornom riadení úradov, ktoré v mnohých prípadoch majú významnú rozhodovaciu právomoc.

Výrazný prechod kompetencií po roku 2000 presunul ťažisko vykonávania verejnej správy na samosprávu, ktorá sa, vzhľadom na tvrdé finančné limity zo strany štátu, neraz musela postaviť k vykonávaniu prenesených kompetencií až za hranicu ich financovateľnosti a dotovať ich z vlastných príjmov z originálnej pôsobnosti. Často dochádzalo a dochádza k rušeniu prevádzok (predovšetkým školských zariadení) pod tvrdým diktátom ekonomických parametrov a reality demografickej štruktúry. Samospráva tak supluje neschopnosť štátu za posledných niekoľko rokov výrazne zasiahnuť do štruktúry poskytovania verejných služieb, čo je aj dôkazom toho, ako silno bola štátna správa pod vplyvom jednotlivých politických subjektov a záujmových skupín, ktoré umelo udržiavali svoju popularitu na úkor efektívnejšieho riadenia verejných financií. Z tohto pohľadu možno hodnotiť decentralizáciu ako nevyhnutný a správny krok.