as the 'scope' of the principle) and on the consequences of their violation by the administration, is in some respects debatable, as is any original construction that aspires to preceptiveness but takes place in a normative vacuum; but it is undoubtedly reasonable (perhaps a little too rigid, but only where it refuses to calibrate the content of the reservation of humanity according to the more or less discretionary tenor of the act, an issue, moreover, pointed out by Auby in the preface), dogmatically founded, coherent and respectful of the essential and more consolidated features of the regime of the administrative act; therefore it may constitute a valuable guide for caselaw, today; and, hopefully, for the legislator, tomorrow. [Reviewed by MICHELE TRIMARCHI].

Eva Menéndez Sebastián, *From Bureaucracy to Artificial Intelligence. The Tension Between Effectiveness and Guarantees*, Cedam, Milan, 2023.

In "From bureaucracy to artificial intelligence. The tension between effectiveness and guarantees", Eva Menéndez Sebastián guides readers through a deep exploration of the evolving role of Artificial Intelligence in the dynamic framework of public governance. She provides an insightful analysis for evaluating when the use of AI can enhance public action while ensuring strict compliance with all necessary guarantees.

The book is divided into three primary chapters. In the opening chapter, the Author establishes a comprehensive framework for the analysis, discussing the transition from the traditional Weberian bureaucratic model to the evolving landscape of new public governance. This transformation is marked by the consolidation of a renewed relationship between public authorities and citizens, mainly guided by the principles of transparency, accountability, and effectiveness. The Author discusses the innovative role of good administration as a potential bridge between administrative citizenship and artificial intelligence. Algorithmic systems have the potential to enhance a more efficient allocation of resources and lower costs, thereby contributing to a better achievement of the general interest.

The second chapter is the focal contribution of the volume, aiming to provide a general analysis of the deployment of AI systems by public administrations, with a primary focus on disentangling the tension between effectiveness and guarantees. This duality is recurrent throughout the chapter, with the objective of finding a balance between risks and benefits, as well as between the compliance with due process rights and the goal of fostering innovation in implementing AI technologies. The Author begins with the following premise: the use of AI does not always necessarily lead to greater efficiency, "at least not if it is not done in the most appropriate way". This premise serves as the cornerstone guiding the entire body of the work. Public administrations need to carefully evaluate when the use of AI is functional to improve public action, and how to ensure compliance with all necessary guarantes. This volume represents a significant step forward in this direction and, by quickly discussing some critical passages of the central chapter, in the following lines I focus on explaining why.

In the first part of the second chapter, the Author delves into the deployment of AI systems in both the material and formal activities of public administration, highlighting the potential benefits of using AI to enhance decision-making processes. AI can boost three primary dimensions: the internal efficiency of the public administration, its decision-making, and the interaction between citizens and administrations. The Author stresses the imperative of aligning the functionalities of AI systems with both material and formal activities, emphasizing the salience of integrating AI with the core principles of good administration, including efficiency, transparency, accountability, and the protection of due process rights.

The Author then outlines several benefits arising from the deployment of AI technologies in public-administration activities. However, the spread of these technologies in the public sector is still facing barriers, including: (i) the lack of adequate resources; (ii) risks associated with the use of AI, such as algorithmic discrimination; (iii) insufficient access to large volumes of high-quality data; (iv) increased global competition and scattered regulation; (v) lack of trust or insufficiently understood impacts, to name just a few. On the other hand, the Author warns against the risks associated with the deployment of AI, such as the lack of adequate transparency, the difficulty to explain and motivate automatic decisions, the possibility of discrimination, or the risk of over-reliance on automation. Even beyond legal concerns, there are considerations of acceptability among citizens and public employees, as well as technical risks – although the volume does not delve into these latter aspects.

Finally, the concluding section of the second chapter underscores the importance of integrating AI systems with the core principles of good

administration while maintaining a critical perspective on the potential risks and implications of AI deployment in the public sector. The author emphasizes the need for a careful analysis and strategic planning of AI implementation, especially considering the extensive range of consequences that should be weighed before the deployment, as well as assessing its long-term implications. The author enriches the analysis with extensive reference to the legislation and the caselaw of the main European countries, as well as the European legal framework.

The volume concludes with a compelling third chapter that delves into the practical deployment of AI systems in public action. In transitioning "from theory to practice", the Author highlights three pivotal domaines where AI may be implemented successfully in the area of subvention procedures: helping the recipients or citizens, facilitating internal management, and contributing to control procedures. The provision of information to user via chatbots, the application of AI for verifying compliance with the requirements to be beneficiaries of a directly awarded subvention, and the use of blockchain technology in justification procedures, are just some examples. The final pages are dedicated to presenting a set of principles crucial for the implementation of AI in the public sector. The Author presents a comprehensive list of essential principles, such as human primacy, performance, equality, equity and non-discrimination, transparency, autonomy, environmental sustainability, proportionality, precaution, and acceptability, among others. These principles serve as a roadmap to guide the adoption, design, and implementation of AI in public action.

Two concluding observations about this volume deserve a mention. First, the Author emphasizes how important it is to raise the level of awareness of citizens and civil servants about the challenge of using AI to perform public functions. The active engagement of society and public employees, facilitated by co-creation and co-development procedures, is a pivotal factor for a successful implementation of AI in the public sector. This continued focus enriches the value and scope of the entire volume. Second, by ranging from a more general analysis to practical examples, the Author outlines a roadmap for guiding public administrations in designing, developing, and validating AI systems. By furnishing theoretical and practical foundations, the Author outlines a meta-process that every public administration should undertake to evaluate appropriateness and enhance the use of AI in the public sector. "So let's get started". [Reviewed by GIULIA G. CUSENZA].