

# **The Emerald Handbook of Public Administration in Latin America**

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# **The Emerald Handbook of Public Administration in Latin America**

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## Preface

This *Handbook* is the culmination of many – too many – years of work attempting to bring together a collection of studies of public administration in Latin America. The project began approximately a decade ago and was motivated by the belief that there was inadequate knowledge about public administration in Latin America. There was a great deal of legalistic discussion on the ways administration *should* function, but much less about how public administration in these countries functioned in practice. A number of scholars had been publishing interesting material, but these needed to be brought together and made more accessible to a wider public, especially for an English-speaking readership. The project was started by Carlos Alba and Guy Peters; when additional energy was needed to complete the project, Conrado Ramos joined the editorial team.

The concept behind this *Handbook* was to have some chapters that covered the administrative systems of individual countries, as well as some that covered important topics in public administration across the region. We could not cover all Latin American countries with individual chapters, so attempted to include chapters that provided information about the largest systems, as well as those with distinctive features. Those choices were, of course, also constrained by the availability of authors interested in participating in the project. Likewise, the comparative chapters were intended to cover several important aspects of public administration in these countries; however, there is a big emphasis on issues of accountability, reflecting the history of corruption and clientelism in Latin American administrations.

In addition to those of us with chapters included in this volume, several other people and organizations have helped make this project a reality. We received funding from the Ministry of Public Administration in Spain for an initial conference. The United Nations Development Fund supplied additional resources for cooperation among authors. In addition, the Latin American Studies Center at the University of Pittsburgh provided additional resources.

This book has benefited greatly from the excellent editing and management by Morgan Fairless at the London School of Economics. We would also like to acknowledge the patience and professionalism displayed by Hazel Goodes and her colleagues at Emerald Publishing. They have endured endless delays in the completion of the manuscript with grace and have continued to support the

project regardless. They, like us, are thankful that the project is now complete. We hope the readers of this *Handbook* are equally as happy.

B. Guy Peters  
Conrado Ramos  
Carlos Alba