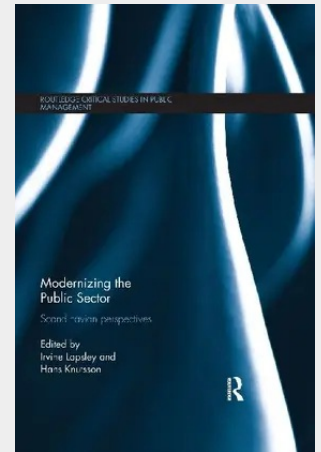


Modernizing the Public Sector

Scandinavian Perspectives

As policymakers and scholars evaluate possible ways forward in the reform and renewal of public services by governments caught up in a recessionary environment, this book aims to offer something different – a comprehensive analysis of the development of the 'Scandinavian' way of modernizing public-sector management. No book has yet provided an inside view of the development and character of New Public Management (NPM) in Scandinavia. Although there is a general perception that there is a clear-cut 'Scandinavian' model of public policy and management, this book offers a more nuanced interpretation, illuminating subtle distinctions in political, social and economic context which are significant in identifying receptive contexts for the adoption of modernization policies. Organized into three main themes in the modernization of the welfare state – management, governance and marketization – the contents revolve around unique empirical accounts, revealing distinctive Scandinavian characteristics of reform initiatives. The received wisdom may be a hesitant follower of the UK and the USA. But this book offers an alternative interpretation, revealing an edginess in certain Scandinavian settings, particularly in Sweden, which is a largely unrecognized. Without compromising the welfare state, it may be a bold frontrunner in the development of New Public Management.

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