

## Challenges of public governance: From technological innovation to digital government

—Based on the reform of "run once at most" in Zhejiang Province

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**Abstract:** At the end of 2016, the reform of "run once at most" was put forward for the first time in Zhejiang. This reform is a positive attempt of the local government to carry out self innovation, comprehensively deepen the "reform of government functions", and promote the construction of digital government. After more than three years, "run once at most" reform has achieved a lot of results, which have played an important role in promoting the sorting and classification of government functions, the participation of the people in governance, and the construction of digital government. Although there are still many problems in the reform of "run once at most", such as the ideological defects of the government and the fragmentation of technical information, the road ahead of the reform is still bright. We can see that the future of "run once at most" reform is the efficient administration of digital government under the technological innovation.

### 1. The past and present of "run once at most" reform

Generally speaking, the reform of "run once at most" is the upgrading of Zhejiang provincial government from "version 1.0" to "version 3.0".

The establishment of "one-stop" service hall in Zhejiang Province in 1999 marks the beginning of the reform of administrative examination and approval system. In July 2003, when Xi Jinping took office in Zhejiang Province, he proposed that we should strive to build a service-oriented government, a government ruled by law and a limited government, and put forward the "88 strategy" at the conference. Since then, under the guidance of the "88 strategy", Zhejiang takes many different kinds of measures to promote the construction of "Internet plus government services". From 1999 to 2012, Zhejiang Province has carried out three rounds of administrative examination and approval system reform, reduced a large number of "false" administrative licensing and non administrative licensing examination and approval matters, comprehensively established administrative service center, one-stop service hall, and "government supermarket" to improve the efficiency of examination and approval. In recent years, the administrative examination and approval reform in Zhejiang Province can be called the government reform version 1.0. It has reduced the examination and approval items, simplified the examination and approval process, and began to provide "one-stop" examination and approval service. Although Zhejiang Province has achieved remarkable results after these years of reform, it is undeniable that there are still many problems, such as many examination and approval items, low efficiency of the government, and the administrative license is not open and opaque.

In order to further clarify the boundaries of government power, re-classify the government functions, and solve the problems of low government efficiency, Zhejiang Province proposed the deepening reform plan of "four lists and one network" in 2013 to build a "one network" of government services—— Zhejiang government service network, and "four lists"—— the list of government power, negative list of enterprise investment, government department special fund management list, government responsibility list, and take this as a link, continue to deepen the province's unified "Internet plus government" structure, and build a five level linkage Zhejiang

government service network. "Four lists and one network" is the further development of administrative examination and approval reform, which can also be called government reform version 2.0. In this reform, Zhejiang Province relies on the "four lists" to clarify the ownership of power and clarify the boundary of power; relying on "one network" to speed up the approval process and improve the efficiency of examination and approval. They complement each other to solve the related problems in the reform of administrative examination and approval.

At the end of 2016, on the basis of the above-mentioned "four lists and one network", the economic work meeting of Zhejiang provincial Party committee publicly proposed the reform of "run once at most", and the reform certificate of Zhejiang provincial government entered version 3.0. The implementation of the reform of "run once at most" is a further promotion of the reform of "four lists and one network". It has completed the requirements of "visualization and quantifiable of government approval system and efficiency reform, and deepened the government's own reform through pressure transmission". After a short period of one year, there have been 665 items of "run once at most" in Zhejiang Province, 755 items at the level of districts and cities, and 656 items in counties (cities and districts), respectively accounting for 95.68%, 95.33% and 93.85% of the total events at the same level. The construction of "run once at most" in Zhejiang Province has been quite large and has been gradually promoted to the whole country.

## **2. What has the reform of "run once at most" changed**

### **2.1 Multi forces force forces force government functions to be re classified**

At present, the Chinese government is in the background of comprehensively deepening the "reform of government functions", which means streamlining administration delegating powers, and optimizing service, which requires the government to make its own revolution. Its essence lies in the word "release", which refers to the power and benefit of the Department, and changes the complicated power distribution of the department all the year round. The reform of "run once at most" is a model under the "reform of government functions". It not only requires the government to "cut its own flesh", it can be said that it is a strengthened version of the "reform of government functions".

First of all, the implementation of the reform of "run once at most" lies in the strong promotion of the higher authorities, which is the common driving body of government reform and the first forced subject of "run once at most" reform. Then, "run once at most" will shift the focus from government to society, introduce the social forces into the supervision, and become the second forced subject. Finally, the reform of "run once at most" makes great use of the power of technological innovation, establishes an open and transparent e-government platform, reduces the possibility of unfair law enforcement, and makes government affairs fully open to improve the efficiency of examination and approval, which becomes the third forced subject.

The co-existence of multiple forced subjects makes the pressure of government increase sharply, and the efficiency and determination of government reform are also improved. The effect of "run once at most" is so remarkable that it can not be separated from the backward force of multiple subjects. Under the backward pressure of multiple subjects, the reform of "run once at most" has brought about great changes in government functions. In short, the key words are as follows: ① Simplify. Simplify policies and decentralize power, reduce what can be reduced and simplify what can be simplified. ② Together. Merger matters, organizational restructuring, integration and exchange of relevant information, and establishment of a complete sharing platform. ③ Put it. We should decentralize power, implement the theory of limited government, and delegate sufficient power to the society and relevant organizations, so that they can do their own things and reduce the tedious approval procedures. ④ Boundary. Define the functional boundaries, clearly analyze the scope of functions, re-integrate and classify the government functions.

## **2.2 From "government center" to "social center", people's sense of gain and satisfaction have been significantly improved**

For a long time, the Chinese government has always been bureaucratic, and the actual situation is often not taken into account when formulating policies,

Focusing on the requirements of the higher level government, the lower level government deliberately makes some indicators to meet the evaluation requirements of the higher level government, without considering the actual needs of the society. The implementation of the reform of "run once at most" breaks the original "government center" and gradually turns it into a "social center". Taking people's satisfaction as the standard and consideration, the government simplifies the process of handling affairs and improves the efficiency of work, so that everyone can "run less" or even "do not run errands", so as to enhance the satisfaction and sense of gain of the people. In this reform, Zhejiang provincial government adopted "one window acceptance and integrated service" offline work mode, the implementation of "agency system", "commitment system" and other measures, to guarantee the psychological expectations of the people, better practice the purpose of serving the people wholeheartedly. "Run once at most" reform not only promotes the construction of service-oriented government, but also introduces the performance evaluation of people's satisfaction. Starting from the service window, we should promote the reform of administrative law enforcement and government organizational structure. Remove the government's original bureaucratic style, so that the government can treat the people, enterprises and even the market more humbly, and speed up the pace of building a service-oriented government.

## **2.3 Relying on technological change to build digital government**

Since the 1.0 version of Zhejiang provincial government reform, "Internet plus government services" has been a technical support for promoting the construction of service-oriented government. In recent years, with the development of Internet, big data and cloud computing, digital government is ready to emerge in the reform of "run once at most". Technological innovation has made the government of Zhejiang Province solve the problem of divide and rule among different departments to a certain extent. Data sharing breaks the original government barriers and changes the phenomenon of "information isolated island" of public data. Since the reform, Zhejiang has published two batch of provincial public data sharing lists, promulgated the Interim Measures for the administration of electronic documents of Zhejiang government service network, Zhejiang provincial public data and e-government management measures, Zhejiang province deepened the Internet plus "Government services" and other normative documents provide a series of policy support for solving data barriers ". In addition to coordinating the work flow of various departments and realizing data sharing, Zhejiang also established more standardized and strict procedures and standards for handling matters according to the new technology of "Internet plus government services", reducing the power recovery and abuse of power of government departments, and further consolidating the achievements of some government reforms.

Moreover, Zhejiang Province is not only limited to the participation of government bodies, but also plays the advantages of market subjects into social governance. Relying on Alibaba's "Alibaba cloud" technology advantages, Zhejiang provincial government has built a "central kitchen" for government data. The "central kitchen" can be called the backstage government. It can not only analyze and test the social and economic operation, credit, market supervision and safety production, but also provide support for the government's accurate decision-making and efficient governance, help Zhejiang province further deepen the construction of digital government.

## **3. Problems and challenges of the reform of "running once at most"**

### **3.1 The reform is a "battle to crack down", and the government's original shortcomings are still a big obstacle**

Since the reform of "run once at most" in Zhejiang Province has been carried out for three years, many achievements have been made and many problems and challenges have been exposed. As for

government organizations, the original logic and organizational form have a long history. It is certainly not a matter of a day to make changes. The obstacles of accumulated disadvantages to the reform must be considered and solved

First, the concept of "people-centered" has not been fully understood, and the government centered logic is still prominent. The most different point between the reform of "run once at most" and the previous reform is that it emphasizes "taking the people as the center" and takes the people's satisfaction as one of the important assessment indicators. However, it is often difficult to meet the policy requirements in the actual reform. The government often starts from itself and solves problems according to the upper level's will, without considering the actual needs of the people. For example, "run once at most" requires reducing the number of errands that the people handle matters, so that people can enjoy convenient and efficient government services. However, most of the time, the "run once at most" proposed by the government reform is a logical one rather than a practical one. Although the government has already provided one-time service, due to the incompleteness of the people's information, the government's information can not be fully understood. The publicity is not timely and the people don't know where to go to deal with it. As a result, the phenomenon of running everywhere still exists, and the sense of people's gain is greatly reduced.

Second, policies and measures were introduced too quickly, and the organization failed to do a good job in response and protection. For the regions with advanced technology and high quality personnel, government organizations can generally respond quickly and introduce policies into practice. However, in some areas, the reform objectives and methods have been raised, but it is difficult to keep up with the personnel quality and organizational ability. This phenomenon is mainly manifested in the front-line posts of window service. The front-line posts are tired and demanding, and they are government employees who directly deal with the people. However, due to a series of reasons such as the nature of the work, the salary of front-line posts is not high, it is difficult to leave excellent staff, which is also difficult to guarantee the implementation effect of the policy measures. The policy itself is very ideal, but because of the grass-roots implementation, the people are not satisfied, so the reform effect is not significant.

### **3.2 Reform needs to go out, breaking the external system has become a major challenge**

If good methods are to be carried out, good reforms will naturally go out. However, due to the different situations of different cities, the effectiveness and methods of reform are not the same. In one city, the policy of benefiting the people has become a hindrance to another. The regulation of external system has become a severe challenge to the implementation of the reform, which is manifested in the following aspects:

First, the local government is not closely linked, and the phenomenon of information isolated island still exists. After the policy of "running once at most" was launched in Zhejiang Province, there was a strong response in Zhejiang Province, and all cities began to make preparations in succession. In recent years, we can see that although many cities have achieved a lot of remarkable results in their internal affairs, once cross city matters are involved, it is difficult for relevant departments to provide appropriate solutions. It is still a problem to be solved that "it can be done in the nearest place, in the same city and in other places ". At the same time, due to the segmentation of various systems and cities, and the proliferation of systems, it is difficult to realize information sharing. The network service platform is still "independent", and there are still "old and big difficulties" in cross platform business processing, which seriously reduces the administrative efficiency. At present, Zhejiang provincial government has begun to focus on this aspect of the problem, but it can be imagined that with the "run once at most" reform, how to realize information sharing among provinces will become a new problem.

Second, the avant-garde nature of local policies conflicts with the lag of laws and regulations, and the matching of laws and regulations is still a big problem. The reform of "run once at most" takes matters as the carrier, which greatly limits the administrative power of the government, removes a large number of original administrative powers of the government, fully embodies its "simple" characteristics and brings convenience to the people. However, at the legal level, the

decentralization of administrative power and the attempt of new policies have met with difficulties. As far as administrative measures are concerned, many of them are the power of higher level government stipulated by rules and regulations, which are decentralized because they are more conducive to the administration of lower level governments. In this way, the ownership of power is transferred from the higher level government to the lower level government. However, the supporting laws and regulations have not been changed, and the exercise of power lacks legal protection. For the new measures, the conflicts are more acute and concentrated. A series of innovative practices represented by "electronic license" in Zhejiang Province can only be effective locally because they do not conform to the provisions of written law. Once citizens and enterprises need to handle cross-border business, they still need traditional licenses, which adds a lot of trouble.

#### **4. Findings and value of the reform of "running once at most"**

Through the analysis, we find that Zhejiang Province has played a significant role in forcing the re-classification of government functions, improving people's sense of gain and satisfaction, and building a digital government since the implementation of the reform "run once at most" four years ago. At the same time, it has encountered the original disadvantages of the government, external institutional constraints and other challenges and problems.

Based on those challenges and problems, we can try to put forward suggestions for the future of the reform. First of all, we need to closely follow the "reform of government functions" to consolidate the reform achievements, which includes two key points: combining streamlining administration with delegating powers ; having laws to abide by and administrating according to law. Secondly, it is necessary to build a government informationization based on technological innovation, so as to promote information sharing and solve the problem of "information isolated island"; and increasing the publicity and use scope of "Internet + government affairs".

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