Medium Term Plan for the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN)
(1 July 2014 – 31 December 2015)

Enhancing Institutional Capacity and Ensuring an Efficient Public Administration for Sustainability, Social Cohesion, Economic Growth and Labour Market

FOREWORD

This Medium Term Plan (MTP) is drafted according to the provisions of The Eupan Handbook and is a brief strategic document presenting the priorities of the EUPAN as an intergovernmental and informal network. It outlines the main strategic issues and common themes for the network, focusing on a horizontal approach of the main priorities and on increasing cooperation among WG's for an 18-month time frame. This MTP is drafted jointly by the Trio Presidencies: Italy, Latvia and Luxembourg that will have to implement it. The 18 month Medium Term Plan will inform the programme of activities for the upcoming Presidencies of Italy, Latvia and Luxembourg. The individual Presidencies are responsible for developing their own content (activities and topics). For this reason, the programme of activities is indicative and may be subject to some changes.

INTRODUCTION

The recent financial crisis threatened growth and cohesion goals and imposed and still requires several countries – yet at a different extent – to take major action to reduce and contain public spending. In order to achieve these objectives, measures were adopted to rationalize and contain the procurement of goods and services, reduce the perimeter of Public Administration and the organisational arrangement of administrations as well as rationalize the presence of the central Government at local level. As a result of such policies, civil service was required to make a major contribution to achieve the planned public spending containment goals by cutting expenditure and staff. In addition to this, the need to reduce public spending often affects labour protection standards, given the rigidity of labour relations as well as its cost structure.

Against this background, enhancing administrative capacity remains, at a time when Member States are facing pressures on public budgets, a precondition for the success of any action aimed at growth and cohesion, as envisaged in Europe 2020. The challenge of ensuring high-quality public services requires technological and organisational innovation, quality (skills) and motivation of human resources, soundness of performance management systems effective interinstitutional relations and the capability of involving citizens and stakeholders so to boost efficiency in public administration and enhance the quality of public investment.

Furthermore, at the mid-term of this European reform agenda, it will be relevant for public administration to develop a clear vision of its future profile as an innovative, future oriented actor who is able meet the needs and expectations of society in terms of openness,

transparency and trust. Moreover, the state of the art of social dialogue has to be analysed in this general contexts well as how to simplify administrative procedures, to break silos and cut down administrative burdens for citizens and businesses.

Moreover, public administrations are required to be more open, to dialogue with civil society, stakeholders and other institutions and to enact effective integrity systems also in view of restoring trust and preventing corruption. Coupled with the recent technological innovations such as open data and take up of social media this leads to more information and knowledge exchange [1], together with enhanced connectivity, openness and transparency on all levels [2]. Citizens and businesses are therefore expecting better and more individualized public solutions and services, efficient and effective service delivery, burden reduction, transparency and participation [3][4].

An approach, driven by opening up and sharing assets - making data, services and decisions open - enables collaboration and increases bottom-up, participative forms of service design, production and delivery. The kind of public sector organisation that is at the heart of this transformation is Open Government, based on the principles of collaboration, transparency and participation and functioning within an open governance framework [3].

EUPAN can be the relevant European forum where EU member countries can exchange views on the main administrative and policy challenges and on solutions adopted or being developed to meet the need to enhance institutional capacity and ensure efficient public administration in Europe that can boost growth and development thanks to a better use of funding tools and partnership opportunities with the private sector, moving towards the Open Government concept.

HORIZONTAL THEMES

1) Future role of Public Administration: open and efficiency-oriented

Over the last years, the process of administrative modernization aimed at enhancing public service provision, touched upon many aspects concerning transparency and citizen participation in public decision-making, through measures to promote accountability and organizational performance. Among the main actions to support economic development and growth, Public Administrations have been attaching special importance to systemic consultation initiatives, integrity systems and simplification measures, as well as the use of new information and communication technologies that will result in a radical change in the relationship between PAs and citizens and businesses.

a) Innovative and open public administration to build trust and sustain integrity

Open Government is not only a right of citizens and businesses, but also an opportunity for administrations themselves, as the latter have to account not only for "what" they do but also for "how" they do it by ensuring data accessibility on organization and staff, services, payments, as well as performance measurement and assessment. Moreover, PA's commitment to transparency and accessibility will provide a useful tool to better identify areas

in need of reform, rationalize resource allocation, identify areas to implement anti-corruption and simplification measures and promote a competitive exchange between public entities.

1 The theme will be discussed under the Italian Presidency considering how open government policies, including those referred to participation, co-production of services and release of open data, permeated and shaped public administration reforms in the last years.

2 Under the Latvian Presidency, the following issues will be investigated:

2.1. Future role of public administration and CoG, building a common understanding of efficient public administration, inter alia top managers as change agents, and finding new ways of providing information and services to the general public;

2.2. Future labour market, from the perspective of young generation; how to attract and retain the knowledge in public administration and how to transform public administration into an attractive employer.

3 Under the Luxemburgish Presidency, the issue of trust and transparency will be investigated alongside the strategic and innovative capacity of public administration. A general prospective study should draw a broad outline of a future oriented PA for 2020, based on the ongoing modernization policies and the content and results of the quality conference as a privileged moment to take stock of the best practices and initiatives in terms of innovation.

In terms of working methods, these horizontal themes will be dealt during the DG meetings and presented at the plenaries of the joint HR-IPSG meetings. The further breakdown in more specific aspects as innovative service delivery, competency management as a key element to enhance administrative capacity and quality management, digitization and data protection will be addressed within the working groups, either in joint or working group specific sessions.

b) Working together: a pre-condition for seamless, efficient and transparent public services in a cost-effective way

The organizational structure of PAs reflects a specialization with a multiplicity of ministries, agencies, services, etc. This is both due to the complexity of areas covered and the principle of separation of powers, the basis of democracy. This specialization results in functional islands/silos which do not interoperate and are optimized to achieve local and not global optimum. What is perceived as a "local optimum" could be negative from a global perspective. Moreover, horizontal flows of information among the silos are rare and accidental. The impact of this must not be minimized and goes beyond the difficulty in putting in place end-to-end public services to a lack of global understanding of multi-dimensional problems (e.g. sustainable development, criminality) and consequent lack of coordinated actions to solve such multi-dimensional problems.

What should be pursued is a "whole-of-government" approach. Public administrations should reengineer - or even draft and put in place from scratch non-existing - *interfaces* to ameliorate the consequences of this fragmentation. There are two types of such *interfaces*: a) external interfaces to society (citizens, businesses, etc.); that is how PA receives needs/info and provides services/info to/from its clientele, b) the internal communication interfaces among the different administrative sub-systems; that is how the sub-systems (e.g. ministries) communicate and coordinate their actions both for problem identification and for the delivery of solutions/services. Interoperability, in all its dimensions including organizational, financial

and human aspects, is a necessary condition for the two types of *interfaces* mentioned above. The Commission will deliver presentation on "Breaking the Silos – the Commission Toolbox".

2) Evaluation of the role of the EUPAN network in the 2020 perspective

The need is felt across Europe to discuss the different aspects – structural and organisational - of the overall PA agenda at a high level in a comprehensive manner.

EUPAN is a unique network dealing with many different aspects concerning Public Administration modernization. During the French Presidency (2008) a Task Force on the Future of EUPAN was organized. The Final Report identified four areas of improvements in the organization and procedures of the network (horizontal coordination and co-operation within EUPAN, co-operation with other organizations, and dissemination of results – visibility of EUPAN, and sustainability and continuity of EUPAN.). The network adopted a resolution incorporating these actions.

Five years after the resolution, a reflection should be conducted, both at the level of DGs and Working Groups, so to evaluate the results of these actions. This evaluation could either confirm the current approach or lead to further modifications in the functioning of EUPAN. In particular, the reflection should highlight ways of enhancing the role of the network vis-à-vis the growing importance of administrative capacity for effective democracy, sustainable growth and quality public services.

The theme will be launched under the Italian Presidency and discussed during the DGs meeting in Rome. As a result of the debate, a questionnaire will be drafted jointly by the Trio to be submitted to Eupan members. In 2015 the results of the questionnaire will be collected and elaborated. The process will be finalized by Luxemburg that will present the outcome of the whole exercise.

WORKING GROUP ACTIVITIES

HRWG

Enhancing institutional and administrative capacity in the field of Human Resources Management entails safeguarding labour relations vis-à-vis a public spending reduction scenario and keeping public administration an attractive and performing employer.

The proposed themes to be addressed within the EUPAN – HRWG under this MTP include:

1) Competency management as a key element to enhance administrative capacity

- strategic workforce planning;
- competency-based management;
- tools for learning and skills development;
- skills shortage/ skills retention;
- IT skills;
- developing organisational and professional skills; leadership skills;
- lifelong learning;
- diversity management on the public sector;
- mobility as a tool for skill development.

2) An administration for generation X and Y

- needs and expectations of generation X and Y;
- trade-off between cost reduction and safeguarding labour relations;
- job attractiveness;
- intergenerational management;
- new challenges for recruitment, career management training;
- motivation and workers' identity;
- demographic change.

Italy, in particular, will focus on the following activities:

1   "Organization, Learning and Skills" in civil service. The goal of this initiative is mapping the skills used by civil servants in their work as well as the "strategic" competencies, the so-called High Performance Work Organizations (HPWO) which generate continuous learning and lead to greater organization efficiency. The research could also investigate the systems used by EUPAN members to implement mobility schemes in civil service based on competences and skills mapping.
The research is based on the key principles of *Knowledge-based economy*, technological service innovation, organization by processes and the need to foster (individual and meta-individual) self-learning to constantly enhance organizational performance. Against a background of economic crisis and major social and economic changes, enhancing and developing human resources is the key factor to achieve successful change and, consequently, the organization of knowledge in the workplace is the most important strategic factor alongside technological innovation, to make public administration the key for development and not for deceleration.

Latvia, in particular, will focus on:

Next generation HR: How to attract and retain knowledge in public administration? What are the needs of civil servants and how to retain experts in public administration and maintain the expertise? What are the needs and expectations of young generations? What do they expect from the government as an employer? What will it be like next generation HR management? Is there a need to change the HR management practice and approach? Those questions have to be answered today to transform public administration into an attractive employer tomorrow.

Luxembourg, in particular, will focus on the following activities:

1. Analyse and present the trends in terms of needs of personnel and competencies in public administration as an innovative organisation in a context of demographic and cultural change. In detail, a survey will present the statutory evolutions, new strategies in terms of job and competency planning, recruitment and mobility.
2. In the context of life-long learning strategies, the challenge of quality management in the process of training civil servants will be the theme for the meeting of the Directors of Institutes and Schools of Public administration.

IPSG

Enhancing institutional and administrative capacity is relevant both in the general administrative reform processes and in the implementation of cohesion policies, thus requiring the public sector to be an innovative, future-oriented actor.

The proposed themes to be addressed within the EUPAN – IPSG under this MTP include:

1) Innovative service delivery

- leadership as an inspiring role model for innovation;
- new services and innovative ways of knowledge sharing;
- managing diversity and multi culture environments;
- the learning organization and environment.

2) A well-functioning effective public sector

- the profile of an efficient PA;
- modernization policies in Europe;
- the development of quality management systems (QMS) and CAF;
- digitization.

Italy, in particular, will focus on the following activities:

1   *Enhancing institutional and administrative capacity.*

   The topic is particularly important at the European level since 2014 marks the beginning of the new EU programming period 2014-2020 where "Enhancing institutional capacity and ensuring an efficient public administration" is not only one of the 11 thematic objectives but also a cross-cutting theme vis-à-vis cohesion policies. The goal is analysing the contribution of public administration modernization and of administrative capacity building in the implementation of public policies. The topic will be tackled combining an analytical approach, via preliminary discussion notes, with interactive debates during the IPSG meeting, in order to highlight the various perspectives and the different experiences in the MSs. The final sum up will presented at the DG meeting in Rome.

2   *The development of quality management systems (QMS): the CAF for cohesion policies*

Given the importance of self-evaluating organizational performance in relation to national and European policies to enhance administrative capacity of public administrations, the use of the CAF model in this direction will be further explored by the CAF Network.

The following activities will be implemented:

a. A new European study on the use of CAF, more qualitative than the previous ones, focusing on: impact on performance results and organizational culture and effective methods to promote and support its utilisation. The exemplary case of the education sector will be deeply analysed with the support of experts' opinions and opinion leaders on the general use of the model. The goal is gaining insight to draft guidelines/strategies to support Member States involved in CAF dissemination policies.

b. Planning the *6th European CAF Event* in cooperation with the CAF Network and organize it in November 2014 in Rome. A new format for the event will be planned and implemented taking into account the focus on education and at the same time the need to involve the large European and non European CAF community. During the event the results of the study will be presented and a draft of possible guidelines will be discussed.

c. During the DG meeting in December 2014 the results of the survey will be presented and a "CAF policy brief" will be discussed for approval.

Latvia, in particular, will focus on:

Public administration reform is not just a crisis-created necessity, but also a result of the country's sustainable development objectives. This creates a need to develop policy implementation and assessment tools to ensure effective reform objectives. During the Presidency we will focus on the role of the Center of Government (CoG) in the reform process, building a common understanding of efficient public administration, as well as emphasising ICT enablers towards open and collaborative government and interoperability solutions for public services delivery..

This activity includes:

1. Specific case studies in working groups that will help find possible solutions to improve effectiveness of CoG in decision making, reform implementation and evaluation process.
2. Mapping of best practices of ICT tools use in regard of society involvement in decision making processes and improvement of provision of public services, paying attention also to the legal issues.
3. Highlighting achievements and further policies in the field of interoperability in provision of cross border public services.

In close cooperation with Latvian IT Cluster, the conference "CONT_ACT RIGA 2015: *ICT solutions & Public Services (extension of the title and synopsis TBC)*" will be organized and held on 6ᵗʰ May 2015 under the Latvian Presidency. The conference will bring together e-governance experts and decision-makers from the EU, EEA and "Eastern Partnership" States to share their experience about government and ICT industry co-operation and search for opportunities to increase the efficiency of government and public service delivery, by broadening the use of technology.

Luxembourg, in particular, will focus on the following activities:

1. Organize the 8ᵗʰ Quality Conference as a synthesis of the themes and challenges tackled in the present MTP;
2. Analyse the security policies and the stake of data protection in an environment of new forms of service delivery.

IPSG		HRWG	

PRIORITY	TOOL	PRIORITY	TOOL
Enhancing institutional and administrative capacity in administrative reforms and the implementation of cohesion policies (IT)	- Discussion paper	Organization, learning and skills in civil service. Mapping skills and strategic competencies and enhancing mobility (IT)	- Research study
The development of quality management systems: the CAF for cohesion policies (IT)	- European study on the use of CAF - 6th European CAF Event - CAF policy brief	The impact of open government, policies un public administration reforms (IT)	- Qualitative study
Future role of public administration and CoG, building a common understanding of efficient public administration (LV)	- Case studies in working groups - Research	Needs and expectations of young generations (future labour market) (LV)	- Survey
Role of ICT enablers towards open government and interoperability solutions for European public services delivery (LV)	- Mapping of actions implemented by MS - Case studies	Needs of civil servants and how to retain the experts and leaders in public administration (LV)	- Research
New forms of procedure, virtualization and collaborative production of services (LU)	- Survey and best practice	Transformation of public administration to become an attractive employer (LV)	- Case studies in working groups
Security policies and data protection in an environment of new forms of service delivery (LU)	- Study	Trends in terms of needs of personnel and competencies in an innovative public administration: - job and competence planning , recruitment, mobility - statutory evolutions	- Survey and thematic paper

-	DISPA: Quality management in the training process - A challenge for schools and institutes of national public administration. (LU)	- Survey and best practice
Service delivery in a multicultural environment – managing diversity and multi culture environments Ageing, migration and demographic change (LU) – New needs of services, intergenerational management		

[1] Y. Benkler: The wealth of networks: how social production transforms markets and freedom, 2006
[2] H. Margetts, P. Dunleavy: The second wave of digital-era governance: a quasi-paradigm for government on the Web, 2013
[3] A vision for public services. Draft version. EC DG CONNECT, 2013
[4] http://www.innovation.cc/volumes-issues/intro_eva_sorensen_torfing_17v1i1.pd