




●The Citizen's Defender

On 1st October 1998 the institution of "Citizen's Defender" was created in **Greece**. It is made up of an Ombudsman appointed for five years, a staff of 70 and a secretariat. Their task is to protect citizens' rights, fight maladministration and oversee the implementation of the rule of law in public services, local government and public enterprises. 


●The Values Commission

The **Norwegian** government has established a Values Commission to look into values and ethics. The commission will not deliver any fixed conclusions or decisions during its three years of work. Rather, it will serve to launch a national discussion aimed at promoting positive community values and wider democratic participation, to help people and organisations communicate about values and ethics, and to gather information on people's opinions, choices and priorities concerning values. 

●Evaluating the public sector

Established in 1981, **Sweden's** Expert Group on Public Finance (ESO) commissions studies on budgetary and economic policy-making. Although it was created as an *ad hoc* group, its work continues to be useful and topical. It covers local and regional as well as central government activities, and has focused special attention on questions concerning the productivity and efficiency of the public sector. ESO is an independent committee of up to 15 members appointed by the Minister of Finance. ESO's recent reports are listed in *Focus On-Line* (<http://www.oecd.org/puma/focus/compnd/se.htm>). 


●Studying government management

In an effort to gain knowledge on how to improve public sector effectiveness, the consulting company Pricewaterhouse Coopers has created an Endowment for the Business of Government. It offers competitive grants for research, conferences and sabbaticals to stimulate research of government at the **United States** federal, state and local as well as international levels. 


The Focus Hot File, which presents public management initiatives undertaken in OECD countries, appears every month on PUMA's Web site. Upcoming issues will be available on: February 6, March 6 and April 10.

<http://www.oecd.org/puma/focus/hot.htm>


●Committee on citizen's choice

In September 1998, the **Danish** Ministry of Finance set up a committee on citizen's choice in public services. The committee's tasks are to map the extent of citizen's choice in public services offered by local authorities, identify barriers to increasing citizen's choice, suggest ways to increase citizen's choice at municipal level, and develop possibilities for offering citizens comparative quality evaluations of local institutions and services. 


●Analysing compliance

The **Dutch** Ministry of Justice, in collaboration with the Sanders Institute, has developed a list of factors determining the compliance of individuals and organisations with the law, known as the Table of Eleven (T11). The eleven factors are grouped under three headings: spontaneous compliance dimensions, control dimensions and sanction dimensions. T11 has proven particularly useful in two ways: as a checklist in the preparation of legislation, and as a classification principle in the analysis of enforcement and compliance bottlenecks. 


●Guidelines on governance

In April 1998 the **Finnish** government passed a resolution on "High-Quality Services, Good Governance and a Responsible Civic Society". The resolution provides public management guidelines for the new, decentralised state sector, to help it ensure the equitable provision of high-quality public services and meet the challenges of globalisation, citizen demands and decreasing economic resources. The resolution and background material have been published and are available in English and Finnish from the Finnish Ministry of Finance (see <http://www.oecd.org/puma/focus/pubs.htm>). 


●Managing Commonwealth property

In **Australia**, Commonwealth Property Principles were adopted in 1996 that govern decisions on investment, divestment and retention of Commonwealth-owned property. Applying the Principles to domestic assets resulted in the planned divestment of A\$800 million worth of property. The remaining properties and property services are managed on a commercial basis, with user charging, commercial leases, outsourced property management services and a rate of return. This process is now being extended to overseas assets. The Principles are available on the Internet at <http://www.dofa.gov.au/dpg/cpp/>. 

●Performance agreements

To promote private investment and results-oriented management in state-owned petrochemical companies, **Mexico** is introducing performance agreements. The first agreement of this type was signed between the Ministries of Energy, Finance and Administrative Development and Petrochemical Morelos in September 1998. The Board of Directors, which includes representatives of the various ministries, has been substantially strengthened and given control over many budget and policy aspects. The company will be completely independent in its cash management function, in exchange for meeting economic, financial and operational targets. 

●One-stop shop for businesses

To reduce administrative burdens on businesses, **Italy** has introduced "one-stop shops". These units, which are run by local governments, provide information and advice, as well as all permits, authorisations and licenses needed for the start-up of a new industrial plant or the expansion, renovation or restructuring of an existing one. Nearly 40 different procedures involving several agencies are being replaced by a single procedure, and other mechanisms are being put in place to streamline and speed up the authorisation process. 

***Be sure to consult PUMA's website,
now updated weekly.***

<http://www.oecd.org/puma>

Public Service Commissioner Annual Report 1997-98, Incorporating the Merit Protection and Review Agency Annual Report 1997-98

Public Service and Merit Protection Commission, Australia
October 1998

150 pages (ISBN 0-642-54317-8; ISSN 1032-0350)

This Annual Report covers the financial year ending 30 June 1998. Achievements include developing and promoting an efficient and flexible employment framework; articulating and speaking out for the values, ethos and common purpose of public service; developing and promoting standards of fair and equitable behaviour and ethical and accountable behaviour; working in partnership with agencies on leadership and career development, on strategic approaches to people management, on human resource aspects of structural change, and on improved communication and liaison; and reviewing and reporting on practices and performance in the Australian public service. Available in English only from:

Information Management, Marketing and
Parliamentary Team

Public Service and Merit Protection Commission
Edmund Barton Building

Barton, ACT 2600 Australia

Tel:+61-2-62.72.35.13

Fax:+61-2-62.72.35.42

E-mail: hotline@psmpc.gov.au

<http://www.psmc.gov.au>

La Finanza Pubblica del G7

Ministero del Tesoro, del Bilancio e
della Programmazione Economica, Italy
253 pages

In April 1998, the Italian Ministry of the Treasury, the Budget and Economic Planning organised a meeting in Rome of Senior Budget Officials of the G7 countries: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, United States. Three themes were addressed: the relationship between fiscal policy and the economy, the reform of the welfare system, and the Treaty of Maastricht and the Stability and Growth Pact. This report contains speeches from the meeting and questionnaire responses on each of the three themes. Available in Italian and English from:

Dipartimento della Ragioneria Generale
dello Stato (RGS)

Via XX Settembre, 97

I-00187 Roma, Italy

Tel:+39-6-47.61.42.30 or

39-6-47.61.42.10

**Mesure de la performance dans le service public :
exemples étrangers pour les pouvoirs publics belges.
Conclusions**

Services fédéraux des Affaires scientifiques, techniques
et culturelles, Belgium, 1998

61 pages

This comparative study explores performance management in the public service in four countries: Canada, Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden. It examines the background and main initiatives of performance measurement, as well as the major actors involved. Various aspects of performance measurement systems are studied, such as their creation, the choice of indicators used, auditing, quality, and the use of performance information. The study also looks at the Belgian federal government in the light of several observations drawn from the international comparison.

Available in French only from:

Services fédéraux des Affaires scientifiques,
techniques et culturelles (SSTC)

Rue de la Science 8

B-1000 Brussels

Belgium

Tel:+32-2-238.34.88

**The Results Act:
Assessment of the Governmentwide
Performance Plan for Fiscal Year 1999**

United States General Accounting Office, September 1998
37 pages, GAO/AIMD/GGD-98-159

In 1993, Congress enacted the Government Performance and Results Act to address the growing public demand that government become more effective and less costly. This report was prepared in response to a request from Congress for a separate review of the federal government performance plan. The specific objectives were to assess whether the plan complies with the Act's statutory requirements and congressional intent, and to assess the plan in the context of guidance developed for agency performance plans and the expectations of Congress. Available in English only from:

United States General Accounting Office

P.O. Box 37050

Washington, D.C. 20013, USA

Tel:+1-202-512.60.00

Fax:+1-202-512.60.61

E-mail: info@www.gao.gov

<http://www.gao.gov>

[See related item below.]

**For up-to-date information on
PUMA publications, see:
<http://www.oecd.org/puma/pubs>**

Quality Strategy for Public Services

Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities and
Ministry of Finance, Finland

22 pages, ISBN 951-755-139-8

This report contains recommendations and principles to help the Finnish public sector ensure that the services citizens and businesses need are produced efficiently and in a customer-centered manner. The strategy was drafted by representatives of central and local governments, business, academia and professional and non-governmental organisations. Available in English or Finnish from:

Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities

Toinen Linja 14

SF-00530 Helsinki, Finland

Tel:+358-9-771.2199 Fax:+358-9-771.2331

<http://www.kuntaliitto.fi/julkaisut>

**Managing for Results:
An Agenda to Improve the Usefulness of Agencies'
Annual Performance Plans**

United States General Accounting Office, September 1998
48 pages, GAO/GGD/AIMD-98-228

The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 is the centerpiece of a statutory framework put in place by Congress to strengthen federal decisionmaking and accountability and to improve federal effectiveness and efficiency by promoting a new focus on results, service quality, and customer satisfaction. With the annual performance plans for fiscal year 1999, agencies have for the first time made a systematic attempt to establish performance goals and related measures for a given year. This report was prepared in response to a request from Congress for summary information on the reviews of individual agency performance plans. The specific objectives were to summarise observations on the agencies' performance plans, and to identify opportunities to improve the usefulness of future performance plans for decision-makers. Available in English only from:

United States General Accounting Office

P.O. Box 37050

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Good governance for social and economic development

A December workshop organised by PUMA focused on public management in support of social and economic objectives. This was part of an OECD programme of policy dialogue between the Organisation and non-Member economies. The meeting brought together more than 70 government officials and experts both from OECD Member countries and non-Member economies including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, South Africa and Thailand. Below is a summary of the statement by the Chairs: Mr. Magnus Petursson, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Iceland, and Mr. Claudio Orrego Larrain, Executive Secretary, Inter-ministerial Committee for the Modernisation of Public Management, Chile. The full text can be found on PUMA's Web site at: <http://www.oecd.org/gvrnance/emef>.

citizens? Reassessing these different relationships can lead to reductions in the size of government.

Globalisation has also become a driver of reforms. It reduces the scope for governments to compensate for structural weaknesses through national macroeconomic policies. It also puts pressure on governments to improve governance in order to overcome economic, political, social, and management challenges.

Focus on citizens

Citizens have become another driving force of reform. Their expectations bring important pressure to bear in favour of change and improvement, and this in turn enhances democratic quality. Reform policies and strategies cannot be implemented efficiently if they are not supported by the public.

This focus on citizens has led to the decentralisation and devolution of responsibilities. It is thought that if decisions are made as close to the users as possible, government efficiency and effectiveness will improve. ■

Ensuring development

Systems of governance affect the performance of the state and, through this, the performance of countries in meeting their major economic and social goals. Governments create the conditions for the functioning of markets, the operation of private firms, the strength of civil society, and the welfare of communities and individuals. Good governance is an important contributor to the sustainability and strength of democracies.

Social progress and economic growth depend on the quality of regulations, because these set frameworks for social and economic activity. Governments need to build capacity to ensure effective regulatory management that would help to remove cumbersome and counter-productive regulations and unnecessary restrictions in society.

Apart from the concern for greater efficiency and effectiveness, other factors or values have become objectives of reform. These include transparency, accountability, equity and participation. These democratic values support government efficiency. They also add vital dimensions to public management reforms.

Drivers of reform

Fiscal deficits have in most countries been one of the driving forces of reform. However, after reducing fiscal pressures many countries saw benefit from public management reforms directed towards several goals that are not exclusively related to fiscal crisis, such as service

quality, accountability, citizen involvement and the role of government.

It is now also recognised that the size of the state should no longer be the starting point for public sector reforms, but considered within the wider context of the role of government. What should be the role of government in society and the economy? How are vital societal roles distributed? How does the central government relate to other levels of government, semi-public institutions, the private sector, and

Public Sector Reforms

The nature of reforms was also discussed at the meeting. Here are some points that emerged:

- **Results-oriented management should be given special attention, because it helps organisations to develop capacities and deliver services at desired cost and quality.**
- **Competent civil servants and effective systems to manage them are needed to support social and economic development.**
- **Changing the organisational culture and attitudes should be given priority.**

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