

Focus

Public Management Newsletter

March 2002
Number 23

This newsletter is prepared by the Public Management Service (PUMA)
with guidance from the OECD Public Management Committee.
Web site: <http://www.oecd.org/puma/focus>

Vision, responsiveness, measurement

OECD seminar on e-government

Over 50 experts from governments, the private sector and civil society, as well as representatives from the Business and Industry and Trade Union Advisory Committees (BIAC and TUAC), met in Paris on 11-12 March to discuss why e-government is needed and how to measure progress. This OECD seminar was followed by the second meeting of the Working Group on E-Government, which is responsible for guiding the Project and keeping it relevant to Members' needs.

This seminar is part of the OECD Project on the Impact of E-Government. This project looks at how explicit governance frameworks can be incorporated into e-government initiatives in order to reap the full benefits in terms of more streamlined government and greater efficiency, effectiveness and trust in government.

The seminar, the first in a series of three, provided an opportunity to focus the discussion on the context for e-government initiatives. E-Government has the potential to be a major enabler in the adoption of good governance practices, and it is important to keep in mind the incentives, opportunities and constraints of the public administrations that are being asked to carry out e-government initiatives. Rather than focussing on the technical side of e-government, the seminar looked at the governance dimension: How can governments meet future challenges? How can greater ICT use reinforce good governance practices and help governments respond to the evolving needs of citizens? How will government structures and processes change as new technologies open new ways of working? The focus of the OECD Project is on the longer-term vision (2005-10).

Participants tried to identify the common vision for e-government, how this vision can be translated into working models appropriate to each

country for more responsive e-government, and how to measure the progress of e-government.

Vision, context, responsiveness

After opening remarks by Odile Sallard, Director of the OECD Public Management Service, an expert panel focussed the discussion on the vision and context of e-government. Governments are meant to serve the needs of their societies, and the seminar explored the pressures on governments to respond to the changes that the information society is bringing.

"We have to treat people as citizens and not simply as customers."

Professor Moon-Suk Ahn
Presidential Special Commission
on E-Government, Korea

In particular, presentations and discussion stressed the capacity of e-government to improve the quality of government services and indeed the engagement of citizens with their governments through e-consultation. A crucial factor, however, will be the ability of governments and public administrations to take up this potential and be responsive to new pressures. As Jouni Backman, a member of the Finnish Parliament, put it, public

administrations were 'clinging to old operating models' in the face of the information society. E-Government -- and specifically the greater ability to capture and share information -- will challenge the way we look at traditional concepts of political legitimacy, representation and ministerial accountability.

A key theme discussed was the need to 'put citizens first' in e-government implementation. While the need for this focus is well understood by OECD countries, the seminar identified potential important elements in putting it into practice: the need to address the needs of the whole citizen; the need to facilitate the use of e-channels by disadvantaged groups early in the implementation process; the importance of trust and confidence in e-services.

Measurement and evaluation

Good governance requires proper measurement and evaluation, and e-government is no exception. However, putting appropriate frameworks and indicators in place is a difficult task. Governments increasingly need to be able to answer questions such as how to measure progress in e-government implementation, how to assess the quality and satisfaction with e-services and consultative processes, and what efficiencies have resulted.

The seminar discussed possible approaches, drawing on practical experience in Member countries. Further work in this area will be reported back to future project seminars. The seminars are an important input into the final paper on e-government that will be published in early 2003.

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●“BundOnline 2005” e-government initiative

On 11 December 2001, the **German** Federal Minister of the Interior, Otto Schily, presented the implementation plan of the “BundOnline 2005” e-government initiative in Berlin.

Through this initiative, the Federation will be offering 376 services over the Internet within the next four years. Schily said that the “BundOnline 2005” initiative should lead to savings of about €400 million per year - particularly through application procedures, subsidies and public procurement. With “BundOnline 2005”, citizens and industry will be able to use the services of the federal administration more simply, quickly and cheaply. This initiative should also achieve across-the-board simplification of administrative structures and procedures. As in an industrial enterprise, the services of the federal administration were analysed in detail and a joint Internet strategy set for the entire service portfolio. Tasks were newly structured and centralised and a precise timetable set for the next four years. Funding requirements for implementation are estimated at €1.65 billion. Twenty-five percent of the funding will be needed for the re-organisation of administrations and changes to internal processes, while about ten percent will be spent on staff training. Basic components that can be used in many authorities, such as an electronic payment platform, will be provided centrally. See www.bundonline2005.de/en/bilanz/index4.html.

●Public sector reform and e-government

The **Korean** Government has launched a number of major projects to lay the foundations for e-government. These projects are sub-categorised into four areas: Government to Citizen (G2C), Government to Business (G2B), Government to Government (G2G) and Infrastructure for E-government. For example, under G2C and G2B:

- A government Internet portal provides access to public information grouped around key life events.
- Individuals may electronically submit requests to public agencies dealing with residential, real estate, vehicle, enterprise and tax issues.
- Citizens can update their particulars in a government database covering the following four areas: health, pensions, unemployment, and industrial safety.
- The Government and Business (G&B) project will establish an e-procurement system, offering electronic services such as information on current tenders issued by public agencies, a single register, and e-tendering and e-market-place capabilities via a single window.
- A home tax service for companies is being developed.

Projects under the G2G and Infrastructure for E-Government projects include improvements in data creation, collection, transfer and storage. Efforts are also being made to advance electronic processes in the fields of personnel management, public finance, and an e-signature system in government.

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●Administration on-line

Over the past year, **France** has continued to create new public websites and increase the amount of information and number of electronic procedures available via the Internet. Several prefectures as well as government ministries are also using the Internet for public consultation. To help ensure that all citizens can benefit from these initiatives, over 7,000 public places (local employment agencies, public libraries, information centres, etc.) will provide Internet access by 2003. 2,500 of them will be “digital public spaces” offering an initial, general training free of charge and open to all, in the form of a “passport for the Internet and multimedia”. This operation is already developing rapidly. In addition, all government websites must be accessible to the visually impaired. Most ministries are already carrying out initiatives or specific controls to ensure that their websites are and remain easily readable using specific tools for the visually impaired. See <http://www.service-public.fr>.

●Co-ordinating e-government

In **Denmark**, a joint board of top civil servants has been set up to further the transition from traditional to e-government across the three-tiered Danish government (state, county, and municipal level). The board is responsible for co-ordinating strategic issues related to e-government. In its work and priorities, the board will focus on the following areas:

- Removing barriers and creating the necessary conditions for e-government. The board will ensure that the necessary strategic choices about joint solutions are taken. This includes the legal and technical problems that are common across the public sector.
- Co-ordinating and transmitting knowledge about e-government. The board will promote diffusion of knowledge and implementation practices and develop the necessary tools and methods to promote e-government.
- Assuring progress in e-government. The board will follow development and actively participate in selected, strategically important projects that either contribute to necessary e-government conditions or decisively contribute to promoting e-government in the public sector across all levels of government.

The board is comprised of permanent secretaries from five ministries and the managing directors of the regional and local government associations that represent the interests and co-ordinate and negotiate on behalf of the county and local authorities. In Autumn 2001 the board formulated an overall e-government strategy for 2001-4. To implement its strategy and projects, the board relies on the Ministry of Information Technology and Research and a joint Task Force that comprises 25 government officials from all tiers of government.

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● Controlling regulatory quality

Greece has drafted a law on controlling the quality of regulations. The most important elements of good regulation are being defined, and procedures are being established to control the quality of regulations produced by the central administration and to review the implementation of new regulations. A central unit is being established in the General Secretariat of the Council of the Ministers, as well as a unit in each ministry, to control of the quality of new regulations. For each new regulation produced by the central government, the unit responsible is obliged to make a Quality Control Report, with a special Regulatory Impact Assessment report. This particularly concerns regulations that will have a considerable effect on the economy. Details of the organisation, structure and recruitment of these units will be regulated by Presidential Decrees, and published within three months of publication of the law. Finally, it is proposed to simplify existing regulations, which will be codified as part of the *Politeia* programme (see below).

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The OECD Journal on Budgeting provides insights on leading-edge institutional arrangements, systems and instruments for the effective and efficient allocation and management of resources in the public sector. See <http://www.oecd.org/puma/Budget/>.

● Politeia – a reform programme

Politeia, a national strategy to modernise the Greek public administration, was launched in 2001. Its main objectives are: to adopt modern financial management models; to reduce administrative procedures; to recruit well-trained personnel; to develop new technologies and adopt modern methods of administration and control to ensure transparency and eliminate corruption. *Politeia* incorporates all previous reform programmes. All ministries and regions are required to participate, and have developed operational programmes to promote common actions, thereby avoiding duplication and providing accountable results for each agency. A first assessment of the *Politeia* programme reported that the ministries and regions had established the competent bodies to develop and implement the operational programmes, and had also started to implement priority measures.

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● Reforming federal public services

In April 2000, the Belgian federal government adopted an ambitious overall reform plan called “Copernicus”, which aims to instil a citizen focus in the public administration. Within the framework of Copernicus, a major restructuring of the federal administration is envisaged. The federal central administration will consist of a number of vertical federal services (formerly ministries) and four horizontal services: central co-ordination, personnel and organisation, budget, ICT. Each federal service will have a strategic unit that will propose policies; the management of the service will be in the hands of a board of directors, headed by a chairman, and will translate the strategic choices into projects and services to the public. The cabinet system (in which the minister was surrounded by a large group of collaborators) will be abolished and top management will have greater autonomy and responsibility. To enhance the management capabilities within each federal civil service, special internal staff services will be created for HRM, budget and financial control, ICT and external communication. The transition from traditional ministries to federal public services will take place when the top managers of these federal public services are designated. For more information, see <http://www.p-o.be> and <http://www.copernic-us.be>.

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● Freedom to manage

In late 2001, the United States Administration proposed two pieces of legislation as key components of the President’s “Freedom to Manage” initiative, which aims to eliminate legal barriers to effective management.

- *The Freedom to Manage Act* would permit management reform measures to receive expedited Congressional consideration. The legislation establishes a procedure under which heads of departments and agencies can identify statutory barriers to good management. Congress, in turn, would quickly consider those obstacles and act to remove them.
- *The Managerial Flexibility Act* would reform various personnel, budgeting, and property management laws. It would provide federal managers with increased flexibility in managing personnel; assign departments the responsibility for funding the full government share of the accruing cost of all retirement and retiree health care benefits for federal employees; and give departments greater flexibility in property management and disposal. As barriers to more efficient management are removed, the Administration will expect higher performance. For more information, see <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/pubpress/2001-47.html>.

Getting performance right

A major trend in public management in OECD countries has been a focus on “results”, i.e. paying attention to the actual services being delivered or the impact of those services rather than on inputs and procedures. This involves giving operational managers increased discretion on how to use staff and assets, in exchange for accounting for what they do with them. This change in emphasis can be achieved through, for example, performance contracts, evaluation, individual and group performance incentives and quantitative policy targets in national budget and policy plans.

Reforms are maturing in many countries, mainly in the English- and Scandinavian-speaking parts of the world. These countries have substantial experience with introducing a results focus, and are currently either implementing or contemplating a new generation of result reforms. Other OECD Member Countries, notably those with strong legal traditions such as France and Germany, have only recently embarked on such reforms. In France, reform efforts were boosted in 2001 with the enactment of the new results-focussed budget law. In Germany, most reforms are taking place at local level. In Japan and Korea, reforms are centred more on *ex ante* and *ex post* policy evaluation than on results-focussed management and budgeting as such, but reforms are aiming at increasing an outcome focus in the public sector.

In addition, many non-OECD countries are engaged in results-focussed modernisation of their public sectors on their own initiative or on the encouragement of donors and the international money-lending institutions. In Brazil, for example, the budget is in principle related to the presidential policy plan formulated at outcome level; in South Africa, the budget law provides for a performance focus in parliamentary scrutiny of the budget; Malaysia is implementing a comprehensive performance and evaluation programme for policy formulation and implementation.

As reforms are maturing, and as a result focus is being introduced in new administrative and political settings, implementation challenges enter centre stage. Modernisation designers and reform drivers are encountering challenges, and struggling to overcome them. At a recent OECD *ad hoc* meeting (see box), a number of themes in this area were discussed:

- Many results-focussed management and budgeting approaches assume that parliaments will have a role in evoking accountability for results. In reality, the format and quality of results information is not adapted to the realities of parliamentary life. A better understanding of parliamentary reality is needed among reform designers.
- A number of countries are trying to link expenditure to results targets in order to improve the quality of budgetary decisions and encourage effectiveness and efficiency. Challenges abound: rarely does existing cost recording in

Member countries allow for a linking of results and costs; budgets are typically structured according to institutional boundaries and functional categories rather than results classes; activities can contribute to more than one result class, etc. Solutions to these challenges involve restructuring entities, processes and budgeting and accounting documents according to results classes.

- A special challenge is ensuring institutional take-up. Every management and budgeting regime risks being a merely formal process unrelated to actual activities. The challenge is to install a performance culture. Solutions include consultation on targets and reporting, systematic feedback and clear accountability in the form of sanctions and rewards.
- Related to this issue is the linking of management and budgeting at different levels. In principle, at least five different layers of management and budgeting can be identified: Steering a country, steering government at national level, steering ministries, steering entities internally in ministries (departments, agencies, semi-autonomous organisations), steering units within these entities and steering of individual staff. To address this, documents and processes at the different levels could be evaluated in terms of their coherence and the degree of linkages among them.

Many other challenges and solutions can be identified and, given the centrality of a results focus to the implementation of public policies around the globe, the OECD remains committed to addressing this issue. A report on challenges and solutions in results-focussed management and budgeting will be published in spring 2002.

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Challenges in implementing results-focussed budgeting and management

Results-focussed management and budgeting are at the core of public sector reform in many countries, and implementation challenges are now surfacing. Sixty-six representatives from 29 countries, the IMF and the European Commission met 11-12 February 2002 in Paris to discuss challenges and how to overcome them. A summary paper and selected country reports will be published in the *OECD Journal on Budgeting*. An overview paper, agenda, list of participants and other documents are available at www.oecd.org/puma/budget/. For more information, contact jens.kristensen@oecd.org.

● Modernising personnel policy

By 2004, those leaving the **Finnish** labour market may already surpass those entering it. By 2011, the state administration will lose nearly 60,000 employees - almost half of present personnel - mainly to retirement. To improve competitiveness in a rapidly changing labour market, the government has set the following three major objectives for state personnel policy:

- First, strengthening clear values and ethical standards through training, guidance, and the provision and monitoring of good practices and models.
- Second, securing the competitiveness of the state as an employer. This includes improving the attractiveness of job profiles, work communities and the terms and conditions of employment relationships. A pay system based on the demands of the job and personal performance will be adopted by the end of 2002. Furthermore, career planning, job mobility, induction practices and the transfer of skills to new employees need to be enhanced.
- Third, adopting more professional approaches in management. Management recruitment, assessment, career planning and training need to be developed. A comprehensive management development strategy for the state administration will be drawn up to support the individual operating units. Women will be encouraged to apply for higher managerial and supervisory posts.

The government will evaluate the achievement of the objectives of the new personnel policy in 2004. (See also *Focus* Number 22, From the Bookshelf, page 7.)

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● Management by objectives

A pilot programme of management by objectives has been launched in the **Greek** Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation. The aim is to apply it to all public services in 2002. The main purpose of this programme is to link recruitment, promotion and financing to the collective performance of public organisations, enhancing accountability at individual and collective levels. In the pilot programme, each public service sets goals at departmental level that must be accomplished within a specific period of time. The goals are assigned to certain sections and employees in each department. At the end of the period, each section and employee, as well as the department as a whole, will be evaluated according to the number of goals achieved.

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● Pay and performance management

A new pay and performance management system for the **United Kingdom** Senior Civil Service (SCS), agreed in April 2001, will come into effect April 2002. Its key features are:

- A simplified pay band structure creating a clearer link between job weight and reward.
- A new performance management system incorporating annual performance agreements, a mid-year development review and an end-of-year performance review.
- The introduction of a mixture of both performance-related consolidated base pay awards and non-consolidated bonuses that have to be re-earned each year.

Pay awards will be directly based upon an individual's contribution to his or her department's success, relative to that of his or her peers. Success will be judged each year against Public Service Agreements, Business Plans and a new SCS Competence Framework. The best 25% of performers will move quickly to a market-based target rate, with bonuses linked to delivery of key targets. The pay of the bottom 5% to 10% who contribute least will stand still, or they may see a pay cut in real terms. This group will be targeted for change to develop them or move them out. The new competence framework focuses on the role of the SCS as leaders responsible for delivering results, developing internal and external partnerships and promoting of diversity.

The changes proposed will not add to overall public expenditure. The Senior Salaries Review Body will continue to provide independent advice to the government on SCS remuneration. Its Special Report, including recommended pay ranges for the new system, was published in January 2002. For more information, see <http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/civilservice/scs/index.htm>.

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● Recruiting top managers

Top civil servants in **Belgium** will be selected using a new recruitment method, i.e. assessment centres. The two top management levels (chairman and director general) will be open to external competition. In order to attract external candidates, remuneration of top officials will be market-tested and increased. Successful candidates will be appointed for a six-year renewable term. Top managers will present their strategic and operational plans, and the budget needed to put them into practice, at the start of their mandate. Once the minister agrees to them, these plans will be the basis for managers' actions in the coming years. Their performance will be evaluated against results, leading to the renewal of their mandate or their replacement. It is expected that the new managers will be in place during the first quarter of 2002. For more information, see <http://www.p-o.be> and <http://www.copernic-us.be>.

Building Open Government

An international roundtable on *Building Open Government: Information, Consultation and Public Participation* will be held on 23-24 May 2002 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. This roundtable will look at how to build robust legal, institutional and policy frameworks for access to information, consultation and public participation in policy-making - which in turn contribute to strengthening government-citizen relations and fighting corruption. It will focus on lessons from experience and concrete tools to achieve these goals in practice, drawing on the recent PUMA report *Citizens as Partners: Information, Consultation and Public Participation in Policy-making* (OECD, 2001). A Tools Fair will allow governments and civil society organisations to exhibit their most recent initiatives and products (e.g. training materials, projects, websites, etc.). Attendance is by invitation only. The roundtable is organised by PUMA in co-operation with the Government of Slovenia, the World Bank Institute and the Open Society Institute. It will also contribute to OECD support to the Stability Pact Anti-Corruption Initiative (SPAI) under Pillar V - Civil Society. For more information on PUMA's work on engaging citizens in policymaking, see: www.oecd/puma/citizens or contact joanne.caddy@oecd.org or christian.vergez@oecd.org.

Governance for Sustainable Development: Five OECD Case Studies

This publication presents five governmental experiments aimed at promoting sustainable development in Canada, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. These countries were selected on the basis of their diversity in terms of size and natural conditions. They also display a variety of economic, environmental and social conditions and cultural patterns. The five case studies illustrate specific institutional and decision-making efforts to adapt governance frameworks in order to respond to sustainable development challenges. The country studies are introduced by an analytical section that focuses on the way governments (at all levels) could develop integrated approaches to decision-making, how they could ensure effective participation of civil society, and how they could improve their capacity to design policies that remain sustainable over the longer term. This book is on sale at the OECD Online Bookshop: www.oecd.org/bookshop/.

Survey on Knowledge Management Practices

PUMA recently launched a survey on knowledge management practices for ministries/departments/agencies of central government in 18 OECD Member countries. The survey questionnaire was reviewed internationally by experts in the fields of knowledge management, public management, and quantitative and qualitative surveys, and tested by designated country co-ordinators. It has been sent to director-level staff in approximately 150 ministries/departments/agencies. The results of the survey will be analysed by PUMA during the second half of 2002 and presented at the OECD/PUMA forum on The Learning Government in late 2002 or early 2003.

Wireless Technology in Government

by John Clark, US General Services Administration
November 2001, 64 pages

This report sheds new light on the expanding number of wireless applications being deployed by governments worldwide. Wireless communication has advanced rapidly as worldwide interest in the technology fuels speedy innovation. Increasingly, personal digital assistants (PDAs) and wireless handsets connect to back-office, agency-wide and even corporate information systems. The U.S. Navy, for example, is using mobile devices onboard ships to reduce inspection errors and keep sailors connected. State and local governments have embraced the technology to provide remote connectivity to building inspectors and electrical and water system managers. The report concludes that:

- Wireless applications in areas such as building inspection, education, public safety and access to Internet are beginning to appear.
- Wireless technology is quick to deploy and easy to scale.
- The military, state and local governments and the educational community are among the leaders in deploying wireless technology.
- Wireless technology complements, and in some instances replaces, the robust wired infrastructure in the USA.
- Privacy and security issues are major barriers, but are being addressed.
- Wireless standards are maturing.

The complete report is available online (English only) at: <http://www.gsa.gov/intergov/> under Intergovernmental Advisory Board. A limited number of hard copies are also available by contacting renee.hughes@gsa.gov.

For information on the latest OECD publications on public management, see the OECD Online Bookshop: <http://www.oecd.org/bookshop/>.

Performance Management in the APS: A Strategic Framework

Australian Management Advisory Committee
September 2001

This is the first report of the Committee, a forum of heads of departments (and other agency heads as co-opted) established to advise government on matters relating to the management of the Australian Public Service (APS).

The report provides:

- An outline of performance management in the APS.
- Information on environmental factors shaping performance management systems.
- Key elements of good practice and implementation of performance management in the public sector.
- A checklist for design and review.

Available from: <http://www.psmmpc.gov.au/publications01/performancemanagement.htm>.

Financial Management for Effectiveness and Transparency

Swedish Ministry of Finance, 2001 (11 pages)

This report is a summary of a White Book presented in Swedish in December 2000. Financial management of central government operations includes management of both funding and performance outcomes. In other words, it focuses both on the resources used for a given activity and the performance and outcomes that are the results of the activity. The proposals presented in this memorandum are based on the need for improved co-ordination between management of funding and management by results. Available from:

Ministry of Finance
S-103 33 Stockholm
Tel: +46-8-4051000
<http://finans.regeringen.se/inenglish/pressinfo/publications.htm>

European Ombudsman: Annual Report 2000

April 2001 (ISBN 92-823-1546-0, 257 pages)

This annual report presents the activities of the European Ombudsman during the year 2000. Information is given, for example, on the legal basis of the Ombudsman's work, decisions following an inquiry (including an index), relations with other institutions of the European Union, relations with Ombudsmen and similar bodies, public relations, statistics, personnel, and the Ombudsman's budget. Available from:

Office for Official Publications of the
European Communities
L-2985 Luxembourg
E-mail: euro-ombudsman@europarl.eu.int
<http://www.euro-ombudsman.eu.int>

Downsizing Strategically

International Personnel Management Association
February 2002

This resource guide provides guidance for human resource managers confronted with the challenges of economic downturn. Topics addressed include how to: downsize effectively; develop a strategic plan if downsizing is inevitable; evaluate alternative strategies for downsizing/layoffs; and manage union agreement provisions and civil service regulations. Samples of downsizing initiatives and alternative strategies to downsizing from cities, counties, states and the federal US government are also included. Available from:

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<http://www.ipma-hr.org>

Progress in the Fight against Corruption in Asia and the Pacific

Asian Development Bank, 2001 (ISBN 971-561-363-2, 291p.)

This book assembles the papers presented during the joint ADB-OECD Conference on Combating Corruption in the Asian and Pacific region held in Seoul, Korea, in December 2000. The conference identified priorities for a successful fight against corruption, including promoting good governance through legal, institutional and administrative reforms; strengthening the rule of law; promoting integrity in business operations; and developing proactive strategies to promote citizen participation in anti-corruption efforts. The book provides a review of successful anti-corruption strategies already in place and explores and analyses new approaches. It aims to foster the sharing of information and experience and to strengthen co-ordination and co-operation among key players in the fight against corruption. Available from:

Asian Development Bank (ADB)
P.O.Box 789 0980 Manila, Philippines
<http://www.adb.org>

National Public Service and Administrative Reform, March 2000 – March 2001

Ministère de la Fonction publique et de la Réforme de l'État, France, September 2001 (ISBN 2-11-004935-0, 314 pages)

This annual report presents work undertaken to reform the administration, notably to improve the quality of services to the citizen, administrative simplification, and improved public management and human resource management. Statistical tables underpin the social aspect of reform action and point the way for further development. Available in French from:

La Documentation française
29-31, quai Voltaire F-75344 Paris Cedex 07
Tel: +33-1-40.15.70.00 Fax: +33-1-40.15.72.30

Development Policy and Good Governance: Summary of the 58th Report to the Government

Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy, 2001 (ISBN 90-1202728, 86 pages)

The necessity to promote good governance is not only of relevance for increasing prosperity and reducing poverty. The components of good governance – such as the rule of law, human rights, good quality administration and democracy – are important values to be promoted in their own right. This report explores the relationship between good governance and development policy and is specifically concerned with the possibilities of conducting such policies in a bilateral context. Available from:

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Governing for performance

Joint OECD/German high-level symposium in Berlin

On 13-14 March 2002, over 110 participants met in Berlin to discuss Governing for Performance in the Public Sector. All three levels of German government (Federal, Länder and municipal) and the private sector were represented, as well as 15 other OECD Member countries and international organisations such as the World Bank, the European Commission, the European Institute of Public Administration, NATO, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the International Personnel Management Association. Welcoming speeches were made by Claus Henning Schapper, State Secretary of the German Federal Ministry of the Interior, and Richard Hecklinger, Deputy Secretary-General of the OECD. The symposium was chaired by Odile Sallard, Director of PUMA, and Hans-Bernhard Beus, Director-General of the German Federal Ministry of the Interior.

Performance in the public sector has been an important issue in OECD Member countries over the past two decades. OECD Member countries have initiated a variety of performance-related policies.

This symposium enabled senior managers to discuss practical experience and exchange lessons in governing for performance, by addressing issues such as managing individual performance, incentive systems for performance, linkages between employees and organisational performance, and leadership for higher performance.

The Symposium focussed on individual and organisational-level performance, also taking into account recent experience in local government and the private sector.

Strengthening individual performance

This first session involved presentations from the United States and Germany on enhancing civil service performance.

In the USA, the emphasis is on results and accountability: holding agencies, senior executives and employees accountable for their performance. The current administration is also striving to improve management, expand e-government, make government more market-based, improve financial performance and integrate budget and performance. A Human Capital Scorecard has been developed as a tool for improving performance.

In Germany, the federal government launched the programme "Modern State - Modern Administration" two years ago, with the aim of changing the way

the administrative system works. The guiding model of this programme is "the enabling state", which emphasizes not only "small" government but also "activating" government. Under this programme, the government has many projects for promoting performance, including the introduction of modern management techniques such as output-focussed management and accrual accounting. In the human resources management area, more performance-related elements have been introduced to public service remuneration and career schemes.

The meeting then broke into two workshops to discuss managing individual performance and the role of formal incentive systems in improving performance. These workshops included presentations from the United Kingdom Cabinet Office, the German Federal Ministry of the Interior, the Finnish Customs Service and a German private sector company, T-Systems. Workshop results were reported at the end of the day in a plenary session.

Linking organisational and individual performance

The second day opened with an address by Brigitte Zypries, State Secretary of the German Federal Ministry of the Interior. Two keynote speeches discussed linking performance at organisational and individual levels, and integrating human resources management and performance management in order to strengthen public servants' performance orientation.

Again, the meeting split into two workshops to discuss how to link

employee performance to organisational performance and how to link leadership to performance. During these workshops, participants heard presentations from representatives of the Korean Presidential Commission on Government Innovation, the Senate for Finance of the German city of Bremen, the Canadian Privy Council Office and Lead GmbH, a German private sector company. Results of discussions in the workshops were presented at the final plenary session.

The two days of discussions illustrated that no country saw performance management as a panacea. Rather, it is one element that, together with other reform initiatives, has the potential to improve performance -- if applied prudently and integrated within a broader public management reform agenda. Furthermore, individual performance can only be strengthened if linked to organisational targets and objectives. At the end of the day, organisational performance boils down to the performance of staff and managers.

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