PUBLIC GOVERNANCE AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE
PUBLIC GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

ANNOTATED AGENDA

Meeting of Senior Officials from Centres of Government on Governance in the Knowledge Society:
Implications for Centres of Government

Lisbon, 20-21 October 2005

This meeting will be held in the Centro Cultural Belém - Praça do Império - Lisbon (tel no. +351 21 361 2697)

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MEETING OF SENIOR OFFICIALS FROM CENTRES OF GOVERNMENT ON GOVERNANCE IN THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY: IMPLICATIONS FOR CENTRES OF GOVERNMENT

20-21 October 2005
Lisbon, Portugal

ANNOTATED AGENDA

OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

1. The meeting of Senior Officials from Centres of Government offers a unique opportunity for participants to meet with their opposite numbers from the OECD member countries.

2. The 2005 meeting, in Lisbon, has three main objectives:

   • To determine what, from the point of view of those responsible for preparing political decision-making, are the direct implications of the knowledge society for, and impact on, the role, organisation and capacity of Centres of Government to support decision-making.

   • To multiply the opportunities for informal exchanges between participants and strengthen ties between the members of this network of colleagues with similar responsibilities in their respective countries.

   • To launch an initial discussion of the issue to be discussed in detail at the 2006 Centres of Government meeting in Austria, indicatively entitled: “Identifying, Anticipating and Managing Risks: challenges for Centres of Government”.

3. Following on the successful innovation in the format of the annual Centres of Government meeting in Istanbul (7-8 October 2004), the meeting will also include three parallel workshops. Their purpose is to provide participants with the opportunity to discuss topics of their choice in smaller groups, followed by a report to plenary.

4. Finally, the meeting will provide an opportunity for a mutual exchange of information between participants and the OECD Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate (GOV): participants will be informed about GOV’s work, and particularly that which has benefited directly from the discussions held by Senior Officials from Centres of Government in the past, and about OECD activities of interest to them; the participants are invited to indicate their priorities for the coming years, in terms of public management and governance.
**ANNOTATED AGENDA**

**Wednesday 19 October 2005**

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| 19.00-20.30 | Welcome cocktail at the Hotel Tivoli Lisboa  
Av. da Liberdade, 185 – Lisbon – Tel: +351 21 319 89 00   Fax: +351 21 319 89 50 |

**Thursday 20 October 2005**

**GOVERNANCE IN THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY: IMPLICATIONS FOR CENTRES OF GOVERNMENT**

**Venue**  
Centro Cultural Belém – Praça do Império – Lisbon  
Tel: +351 21 361 2697  Fax: +351 21 361 2708

<table>
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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>08.30</td>
<td>Departure by bus from the Hotel Tivoli Lisboa</td>
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<td>09.00-09.30</td>
<td>Opening of the meeting by the Secretary of State of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Portugal, Mr. Jorge LACÃO and Mr. Richard E. HECKLINGER, Deputy Secretary-General of the OECD</td>
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| 09.30-10.30 | Session 1: Mobilising knowledge networks for decision-making  

Among the governance challenges posed by the knowledge society, several are of direct relevance to Centres of Government, such as mobilising knowledge networks within and outside government for evidence-based policy-making; improving the quantity, quality and reliability of knowledge sources used in decision-making; and enhancing the transparency and accountability of government actions. Centres of Government play a major role in ensuring co-ordination in the management of knowledge within government (internal) and in tapping knowledge held in society (external).

The focus of this year’s meeting will be on those key areas in which the emerging knowledge society has direct impacts on the capacity of Centres of Government to take decisions and to provide support to decision makers. Here, the Centre plays several key roles in securing and managing policy-relevant knowledge from both internal and external sources, such as: planning and commissioning research; accessing and networking this knowledge; quality control; fostering multidisciplinary teams across government, including at different levels of government; maximising the use of ICTs, tapping external knowledge networks; consulting with external stakeholders; disseminating government-held knowledge. In doing so, they face new challenges: How to obtain knowledge most efficiently (“make or buy”)? How to ensure high quality, multidisciplinary knowledge? How to develop effective mechanisms to mobilise and develop knowledge networks within government while drawing upon the expertise of international organizations, advisory bodies, independent agencies, and key external stakeholders? Which mechanisms are best suited to ensuring the scientific and technical quality of government decisions as well as public trust in them? What is the residual ‘room for manoeuvre’ for political decision-makers in a knowledge-based society once the technical experts have delivered their policy options?
This session will focus on the challenges associated with the role of the Centre in strengthening the “knowledge capacity” of government in the service of decision-makers. It will examine how Centres of Government obtain and use knowledge for decision-making and will review the “knowledge infrastructure” (i.e. mechanisms, e-tools and advisory bodies) currently in place in OECD countries.

10.30-11.00 (approx.) Coffee break

11.00-12.30 Session 2: Securing reliable knowledge during a crisis

Centres of Government must ensure that decision-makers have access to reliable, complete and timely knowledge upon which to base their decisions, whenever it is needed. This requirement becomes even more demanding during national or international crises. Centres of Government rapidly find themselves at the centre of public attention and pressure. They are forced to make immediate recommendations to decision-makers on the basis of incomplete, and often conflicting, knowledge about the circumstances, causes and options for action. The global knowledge society both exacerbates crises (via 24-hour global media; Internet-based pressure groups) and provides a solution to them (e.g. effective international coordination of policy responses).

Among the challenges faced by Centres of Government are: How to ensure adequate knowledge for urgent decision-making during crises? How to anticipate and prepare for emerging policy problems? What are the best practices for scoping future risks? How can future knowledge needs be identified, prioritized and the necessary capacity built?

This session aims to review the ‘knowledge capacity’ of Centres of Government to react effectively to national (e.g. livestock epidemics) and international crises (natural disasters, SARS, terrorism). It will also review how Centres of Government can take steps today to meet their future “knowledge needs” for risk management in terms of the human, budgetary and technical resources required.

12.30-12.40 Conclusions of the morning’s discussions

12.40-14.30 Lunch hosted by the Portuguese authorities at the meeting venue

14.30-16.00 Session 3: Using knowledge of past performance for today’s decisions

Decision-makers need reliable, “real time” information on how policies and programmes are being implemented in order to ensure that timely corrective action can deliver better government performance today and provide the basis for better policy decisions in the future. In the evaluation of government performance, the generation and use of knowledge operates at the boundary of the political-administrative interface. Despite the gathering momentum of the “performance movement”, the extent to which improved government performance has a tangible impact on creating and maintaining public trust remains to be proved.

Given the pervasive nature of knowledge and the increasing decentralization and devolution of key responsibilities to independent agencies and other levels of government, Centres of Government must develop new tools and mechanisms to fulfill their monitoring and “early warning” functions. At the same
time, the growing scope of supranational bodies and multilateral organizations whose decisions are binding on member countries (e.g. EU, WTO) and the use of comparative international indicators (e.g. those published by the OECD or international rating agencies) have placed additional pressures – and knowledge resources – at the door of Centres of Government with regard to their country’s policy performance.

Centres of Government face a number of challenges in monitoring government performance: How to collect, analyse and use information on government performance? How to ensure that policy adjustments are based on adequate knowledge and sound analysis? How to ensure up-to-date information on performance in the context of increasing decentralization while facilitating the flow of information between levels of government? How can different levels of government jointly identify expected results, respective responsibilities and shared accountability? How to meet rising standards of public accountability (to parliaments, to end-users, to taxpayers) for government performance?

This session will examine how Centres of Government collect and use knowledge of government performance in providing advice to political decision-makers. Concrete country examples of how knowledge generated at the subnational and supranational levels is used in national policy-making will serve to illustrate the range of institutional mechanisms, indicators and tools employed by Centres of Government in OECD countries.

16.00-16.30 Coffee break

16.30-18.00 Session 4: Parallel workshops

**WORKSHOPS**

This session consists of 3 parallel workshops, following the precedent set at the 2004 annual Centres of Government meeting in Istanbul. The purpose is to provide participants with the opportunity to discuss topics of their choice in smaller groups, followed by a report to plenary.

- **Workshop 1**: in-depth discussion of a topic related to the main theme (which will emerge in the course of the day’s discussions)
- **Workshop 2**: trust in government: to what degree do better dialogue with citizens and demonstrable results contribute to greater trust? How should they be combined with transparency and accountability?
- **Workshop 3**: a ‘free’ session (e.g. on the daily challenges of managing the Centre of Government and how to strengthen the CoG network)

18.00-18.30 Reports to plenary: highlights from the parallel workshops

18.30-18.40 Conclusions of the day’s discussions

19.00 Walking tour to dinner venue (weather permitting)

19.30–22.00 Official dinner hosted by the Portuguese authorities in the Museu Nacional dos Coches (National Coach Museum) set in the old Royal Riding Arena of the Belém Palace, the present official residence of the President of the Republic.
Friday 21 October 2005

Venue  Centro Cultural Belém – Praça do Império – Lisbon
Tel: +351 21 361 2697  Fax: +351 21 361 2708

DISCUSSION ON A TOPIC OF COMMON INTEREST

08.30  Departure by bus from the Hotel Tivoli Lisboa

09.00-09.45  Opening remarks by Mr. Richard E. Hecklinger, Deputy Secretary-General of the OECD and presentation of OECD and GOV work
Discussion.

09.45-10.45  Session 5: Identifying, Anticipating and Managing Risks: Challenges for Centres of Government

The discussion will contribute to identifying the key questions to be debated at the 2006 Centres of Government meeting hosted by Austria, which will be devoted to risk management and the role of the Centre. The session will focus on three aspects of particular concern to senior officials at the Centre of Government:

Lessons learned: Taking as a ‘baseline’ the 2001 Centres of Government meeting in Reykjavik, which also addressed issues of risk, the first part of this session will assess progress since then. Have existing mechanisms been adapted or have new ones been established? If so, with what resources, powers and tools? What are good practices?

The management of risks related to national and international crises: How can Centres of Government ensure that potential risks are addressed by the competent ministries? What co-ordination mechanisms and structures are needed at the Centre of Government? How does the Centre decide what, and when, to communicate with regard to potential risks? How can Centres of Government best ensure public involvement in risk prevention and management? What are the examples of good practice to be shared and how can international networks of Centres of Government be strengthened in the area of risk management?

Risk management during decision making: The third part of the session will focus on how to best integrate risk assessments when making decisions, for example when choosing reform strategies or embarking upon a new health policy. How do decision-makers take into account financial or other risks (e.g. social, political) which may have significant consequences when making their choice amongst various policy options? How do they balance the incidence of risk with other factors such as the reaction of public opinion or the benefits expected as a result of their decisions? Whose advice do they need when evaluating risks? Does the Centre have the capacity to evaluate such risks? If not, where can help be found? How do Centres of Government communicate their evaluation of risks and their decisions, once made?
These discussions will take into account how governments deal with how risks and the decisions taken to manage them are perceived by the public.

10.45-11.15 (approx.) Coffee break

11.15-12.00 Continuation of the discussion followed by presentations and announcements by members (as necessary).

12.00-12.30 Conclusions of the morning’s discussions and general conclusions of the meeting

12.30-14.00 (approx.) Meeting with Mr. Manuel Pedro CUNHA DA SILVA PEREIRA, Minister of the Presidency - Presidency of the Council of Ministers - on behalf of the Prime Minister of Portugal and closing of the meeting, followed by a lunch hosted by the Portuguese authorities

14.00-16.00 (approx.) Official guided tour of the City of Lisbon organised by the Portuguese authorities.

NOTE: The Portuguese authorities would welcome the presence of participants’ spouses during the official events (welcome cocktail, official dinner, guided tour of the city) and will propose a programme for accompanying spouses.