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Organisation de Coopération et de Développement Économiques
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

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English - Or. English

**PUBLIC GOVERNANCE AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE
PUBLIC GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

Working Party of Senior Budget Officials

ANNOTATED AGENDA AND REGISTRATION FORM

29th ANNUAL MEETING OF SENIOR BUDGET OFFICIALS

**Vienna, Austria
2-3 June 2008**

The meeting is hosted by the Austrian Ministry of Finance.

Chairman: Mr. Ian Watt, Permanent Secretary, Department of Finance, Australia.

For further information, please contact Mr. Jón BLÖNDAL at OECD Headquarters in Paris
Telephone: + 33 1 45 24 76 59; E-mail: jon.blondal@oecd.org

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**29th Annual Meeting of Senior Budget Officials
Vienna, Austria, 2-3 June 2008**

ANNOTATED AGENDA & REGISTRATION FORM

Sunday, 1 June 2008

19:00 *Welcome Reception*

Monday, 2 June 2008

9:30-9:45 Opening by Chairman, OECD Secretariat and Host Budget Director

9:45-10:15 **Keynote Address by Austrian Vice-Chancellor and Minister of Finance**

10:15-10:30 Delegates' Introductions and Family Photo

10:30-11:00 *Coffee Break*

11:00-13:00 **Developing Fiscal Space: Overcoming Rigidities in the Structure of Expenditures**

Fiscal space is defined as room in a government's budget that allows it to provide resources for a desired purpose without jeopardizing the sustainability of its financial position. Fiscal space must exist or be created if extra resources are to be made available for worthwhile government spending.

This session will discuss the specific pressures that limit fiscal space at present, including rigidities in government expenditure programs due to standing (entitlement) legislation and demographic changes. It will also outline various approaches to reprioritizing expenditure by curbing unproductive spending and at the same time protecting - and reinforcing - productive spending.

The session will be led by **Mr. Allen SCHICK** of the Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C.

13:00-14:30 *Luncheon*

14:30-16:00 **Budgeting for PPP's: Considering Affordability over the Longer Term**

There is a growing trend in many countries for partnering with private and not-for-profit providers for the provision of infrastructure. This includes PPP's (public-private partnerships) and outsourcing (contracting out).

This session will focus on the implications of their use for budgeting and long term fiscal sustainability. What are the various instruments that are used to engage private actors in the financing and provision of infrastructure services? What level of scrutiny and budgetary accountability is applied to PPP's and how does this compare with the processes and incentives used to test the affordability of capital projects under traditional public provision and financing? Are there approaches that can be considered which can provide greater consideration of the longer term consequences of PPP's?

The session will be led by **Mr. Paul POSNER** of the George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia, United States.

16:00-16:30 *Coffee Break*

16:30-18:00 **Peer Review: Budgeting in Greece**

Peer reviews are a key tool for analyzing innovations in budgeting and public expenditure practices and for making them visible in the international arena. Following a common methodology and conceptual framework, reviews promote the sharing of experience among countries and the formulation and diffusion of relevant policy recommendations.

The Secretariat will present its draft report. Two Member countries – acting as lead examiners – will begin the review. Following the reaction from the Greek Delegation, the floor will be opened for questions and comments by all Delegates.

19:00 *Classical Concert and Gala Dinner.*

Tuesday, 3 June 2008

9:30-11:00 **Tax Expenditures in OECD countries**

Tax expenditures are losses to the budget from granting certain deductions, exemptions, or credits to specific categories of taxpayers. In some cases, tax expenditures may be an alternative to direct government spending on policy programs.

Tax expenditures are an important form of government expenditure and are growing in importance in many countries. Furthermore, as more and more countries have moved or are considering moving towards fiscal rules that make use of expenditure ceilings, tax expenditures may create a way to avoid fiscal constraints in this environment.

This session is designed to discuss tax expenditure classification and reporting and how the review and control of tax expenditures can best be integrated into the (expenditure) budget process.

The session will be led by **Mr. Joseph MINARIK**, Senior Vice President and Director of Research, Committee for Economic Development, a think-tank based in Washington D.C.

11:00-11:30 *Coffee Break*

11:30-13:00 **Peer Review: Budgeting in Australia**

This session will follow the same outline as described earlier.

The Secretariat will present its draft report. Two Member countries – acting as lead examiners – will begin the review. Following the reaction from the Australian Delegation, the floor will be opened for questions and comments by all Delegates.

13:00-14:30 *Luncheon*

14:30-15:15 **Budgeting in Russia – Summary**

Budgeting in Russia was peer reviewed by the SBO Regional Network for Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe during its April 2008 meeting in Bucharest.

The Secretariat will provide an overview of the Russian budgeting system and the conclusions of the peer review exercise.

15:15-16:00 **Report by OECD Secretariat**

This session is designed to update Delegates on current and proposed SBO activities, including an update on global relations with non-Member countries. In particular, the Secretariat will update Delegates on developments with the *OECD Database on Budget Procedures and Practices*.

The session is also designed for Delegates to identify emerging priority areas for future work, the nature of their interest in the subject and their willingness to participate in particular studies.

16:00-16:15 Closing by Chairman and OECD Secretariat.

GENERAL MEETING INFORMATION

Meeting location

The meeting will take place at the *Vienna Hilton Hotel*, which is located at *Am Stadtpark 3*. Please visit the hotel's website (below) for location details.

Accommodations

The Austrian authorities have negotiated special rates at two Vienna hotels for Delegates – the *Vienna Hilton Hotel* and the *Hotel Astoria*. Please contact the hotels directly to make reservations. For booking the Hilton, please use the attached Hilton Reservation Form. For booking the Hotel Astoria, please mention the OECD/Austrian Ministry of Finance meeting to receive the special rates.

Vienna Hilton Hotel

http://www1.hilton.com/en_US/hi/hotel/VIEHITW-Hilton-Vienna/index.do

Am Stadtpark 3
1030 Vienna

Tel: 43-1-717000
Fax: 43-1-7130691
info.vienna@hilton.com

Single or double room: EUR 195,- per room per night

Hotel Astoria

<http://www.austria-trend.at/asw/>

Kärntner Strasse 32-34
1010 Vienna

Tel.: +43 (1) 515 77
Fax: +43 (1) 515 77-582
astoria@austria-trend.at

Single/double room: EUR 169,-/199,- per room per night

Since the European Football Championship 2008 is taking place just at the same time, Delegates are urged to book their flights and accommodations as soon as possible.

Registration form

All Delegates need to complete the attached registration form and return it to the Secretariat ahead of the meeting. Entry passes can only be issued to registered Delegates and a passport or national identity card needs to be presented in order to receive an entry pass.

Hospitality

The Austrian authorities invite all Delegates to a *Welcome Reception* on the eve of the meeting (Sunday, 1 June). It will take place at the Vienna Hilton Hotel from 7 p.m.

The Austrian authorities invite all Delegates to a *Classical Concert* followed by a *Gala Dinner* at the conclusion of the first day of the meeting (Monday, 2 June.) It will take place at the *Café Gloriette* in the Park of the Schönbrunn Castle. Buses will leave at 7.00 p.m. from the Vienna Hilton Hotel.

Spouses are welcome to join Delegates at the above social events.

Please confirm your attendance to these events by completing the “Social Activities” and “Accommodation” boxes on the registration form.

All Delegates are also invited to luncheons on both days of the meeting. These will take place at the Vienna Hilton Hotel.

Entry formalities

Delegates are advised to confirm any necessary visa requirements for entry to Austria.

Documentation

Background documents will be available for all substantive sessions of the meeting. The documents will be distributed electronically to all registered Delegates prior to the meeting.

Simultaneous translation

Simultaneous translation between English and French, the OECD’s two official languages, will be available throughout the meeting.

SUGGESTIONS FOR POWER POINT PRESENTATIONS

1. **Keep it simple.** The less clutter on a slide, the easier it is for the audience to see and, when accompanied by a more complete verbal explanation, understand the slide. This applies to both slides with text and slides that use charts, graphs and tables. Page numbers are very helpful because of the need to refer to slides during and after the presentation, but identifying logos and even dates are best reserved for the first, and perhaps last, slide.
2. **The bigger the type, the better.** If you want the audience to read the slide, always try to use the biggest typeface possible for the slide in question. For example, if you wish to make 3 main points with an explanation for each point, use 4 slides, not one: the first slide should have as a heading what the 3 points refer to with each point listed below. Each of the subsequent 3 slides should have the individual point as the heading with whatever explanation is required listed below. Footnotes and other references in smaller type at the bottom of a slide are frequently impossible to read on either the slide as presented or in the printed version. If the footnote or reference is that important, use readable type on the slide or include a slide at the end with footnotes and/or references in readable type.
3. **Do not read your presentation.** Reading a presentation word for word -- either from very detailed slides or from a prepared written speech -- is monotonous and puts the audience to sleep. Of course, the less comfortable you are in the language in which you are presenting, the more you may have to rely on a written text, but avoid reading from it word for word as much as possible.
4. **Bullets are better than complete sentences.** Use bullets to highlight the most important items in your presentation and as a memory tool for you to emphasize these points as you speak. If you feel you must use bullets that are complete sentences instead of just words or phrases, don't read the sentences word by word; use them as memory tools for you to emphasize verbally the points you want to make. If you want to include a specific quote word for word and read it to draw emphasis to it, put it on a separate slide and tell why you are doing this.
5. **Charts, graphs, and tables can help if they are easy to understand.** Remember that the goal of using a chart, graph, or table as opposed to just including the point in words is to help the audience better understand a point -- not to demonstrate to the audience how adept you (or your assistant) are in utilizing the latest technology. Colour can help if the audience can see the different colours (avoid yellow), but don't overuse it or it diminishes its effectiveness. Moreover, because copies of presentations are frequently made in black and white, use dotted and dashed lines and areas in addition to colour so that the differences are visible in the black and white copies too. Laser pointers can also help you refer to specific points on a chart, graph, or table as you talk.
6. **Handout copies of your slides before your presentation.** This allows the audience to make notes on the handouts of the points that are most important. Although this also means that many in the audience will be going from page to page on the handouts as you go from slide to slide, so what? The goal is to get the information across to the audience, not to have them watching you personally every minute of the presentation.
7. **Speak slowly.** The faster you go, the more difficult it is for the audience to understand your points, particularly with simultaneous translations. Rehearse your presentation; the more you do so, the more comfortable you will be in presenting it.
8. **The most common mistake presenters make is to present too much detail.** Presenters frequently have worked hard for a very long time to perform the research and analyses that supports their presentations, and thus there is a natural tendency to make a long, detailed presentation to demonstrate their hard work. But long, detailed presentations frequently don't do a good job of getting the message to the audience. Rather they make it less likely that the audience will recognize the key points of the presentation. In addition, other problems such as cluttered slides and speaking too fast can arise because the speaker is trying to cover too much ground. It is better to strip your message down to the essential points with only such supporting detail as is necessary to make your case persuasively. Your work (and you!) look better the more straight forward and clearer your message.

**29th Annual Meeting of Senior Budget Officials
Vienna, Austria, 2-3 June 2008**

~~~ REGISTRATION FORM ~~~

Please return the completed form to: helene.leconte-lucas@oecd.org

Fax: +33 1 44 30 63 34

Ms. Mr.

NAME (in block letters please)

First Name

JOB TITLE

ORGANISATION

MAILING ADDRESS

COUNTRY

TELEPHONE

FACSIMILE

E-MAIL ADDRESS

Social Activities

Hilton Hotel

___ person(s) will participate in the welcome reception on Sunday 1 June

Schönbrunn Castle

___ person(s) will attend the concert on 2 June

___ person(s) will participate in the gala dinner on 2 June

Accommodation

Hotel reservation made at the:

HILTON _____
ASTORIA _____
Other _____