Network on Public Employment and Management

PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND MANAGEMENT MEETING: DRAFT AGENDA

24-25 April 2017
OECD Conference Centre, Paris, France

This document presents the revised draft agenda of the Public Employment and Management meeting which will take place in Paris on 24 and 25 April 2017.

This document is available in pdf only.

Mr. Daniel GERSON - Email: daniel.gerson@oecd.org - Tel: +33 1 45 24 81 97
Ms. Cristina MENDES - Email: cristina.mendes@oecd.org - Tel: +33 1 45 24 79 19

JT03412897

Complete document available on OLIS in its original format
This document, as well as any data and map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.
Civil servants’ capability and capacity underpins the quality of public governance. The skills and competencies of the public workforce that are brought to bear on increasingly complex policy challenges, in increasingly diverse and pluralistic societies, are fundamental to the quality of government’s response, but are not often the focus of study. This year the Public Employment and Management Working Party meets to discuss recent work of the OECD on mapping the changing skills needed for a high performing civil service and how best to ensure that employees with these skills are recruited, retained, developed and engaged. This work carries through into the second day of the meeting which will be a joint PGC symposium on skills and leadership for a high performing civil service.

**Proposed PEM Agenda**

**Monday 24 April 2017 – PEM Meeting**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9:15-9:45</th>
<th>Opening remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Hon. Olga Gerovasili</strong>, Minister of Administrative Reconstruction, Greece</td>
<td>o Keynote address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Luiz de Mello</strong>, Deputy Director, GOV</td>
<td>o Official launch of Engaging Public Employees for a High Performing Civil Service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9:45-10:45</th>
<th>Session 1: Skills for a high performing civil service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This session will open the PEM meeting with a discussion of the forthcoming OECD report on civil service skills to which many PEM delegates have provided valuable contributions. The session will also help to frame the need for a new OECD recommendation on supporting a high-capacity civil service.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Delegates will be invited to comment on the draft report, “Mapping Skills Needs for a High-Performing Civil Service” [GOV/PGC(2017)8] which will be published over the summer 2017. Delegates will have until May 15 to provide written comments.*

| • Presentation from the OECD Secretariat |
| • Lead discussants: |
| o **Joanne Caddy**, OECD Centre for Skills |
| o **Basilios Peftouloglou Gattas**, Chile |
| o **Lucy Fallon-Byrne**, Ireland |
| o **Angelo Roberto Cerroni**, Italy |
| o **Jean-Marc Chneider**, France |
Open discussion:
- What emerging challenges do civil servants face in your country? What are the skills needed? How are they changing?
- What are the challenges in attracting, developing and nurturing employees with these skill sets?

10:45-13:00 Session 2: Towards principles for civil service capability

The skills report highlights the importance of a professional, strategic and innovative civil service. This session will provide an opportunity for PEM delegates to work in smaller breakout groups to share views and experience on the essential principles that underpin civil service capacity to help construct the framework of the recommendation. The groups will reconvene in plenary to share the results of their discussions and identify interested countries to play an active role in continuing this work.

Delegates are invited to consult the discussion note on an OECD recommendation [GOV/PGC/PEM(2017)1] and will be invited to participate in small group breakout sessions to begin structuring the recommendation.

- Presentation from the secretariat on an eventual OECD recommendation on PEM issues

Coffee Break at 11:00

- Breakout discussions (delegates will be assigned to ensure even distribution. Please contact the secretariat if delegates have a specific preference):
  - Breakout 1: Competencies and capabilities: What should civil servants be able to do? What are the skills and competencies that should be prioritised in a high-performing civil service today, and into the future? What leadership and management skills are needed?
    - Chairs: Philippe Vermeulen, Belgium; and Carl Trottier, Canada
  - Breakout 2: HR and management systems: What kinds of HR and Management systems work to attract, recruit, develop and retain skilled civil servants? What are the underlying reasons these systems work? What needs to be done to ensure they continue to work into the future?
    - Chairs: Lucy Fallon-Byrne, Ireland; and Łukasz Świetlikowski, Poland
  - Breakout 3: Employment terms and conditions: What kind of employment terms and conditions (e.g. job security, pay, ethics obligations, etc.) are needed to promote and protect a high capacity civil service? How should decisions related to employment contracting be made?
    - Chairs: Herma Kuperus, Netherlands; and Graeme Head, New South Wales, Australia

- Report back and next steps

Lunch at 13:00


The 2017 edition of the Government at a Glance will include indicators from the three surveys coordinated by the PEM in 2016: on Strategic HRM, compensation, and composition of the central government workforce. The PEM meeting will be a first chance for PEM delegates to review the data and discuss the findings before they are finalised for publication in July.

Delegates are invited to review relevant chapters of the draft Government at a Glance publication [GOV/PGC(2017)11] and suggest opportunities for further analysis of the data collected.

- Chapter 3: Public Employment and Compensation.

- Presentation from the Secretariat and questions of clarification from delegates regarding the data
Open discussion
- Does the data reflect changes to the state of the art? Which of the indicators are useful to countries and in which areas should new ones be developed?
- Given the exponential advances in the availability of data for HRM, what opportunities and challenges to countries face in developing more data-driven HRM?

15:15-16:00 Session 4: Leaders and leadership in the civil service

The data collected in 2016 enables multiple perspectives on Senior Civil Service management. This session will be an opportunity to reflect on recent conversations related to leadership in the OECD, Europe and within specific country contexts. Opportunities for further work in the important area will be fleshed out.

Delegates will be invited to reflect on the discussion paper and help the OECD to identify future work priorities in this area.

- Presentation from Herma Kuperus, Netherlands, on top managers in Europe
- Update from the OECD Secretariat
- Lead discussants:
  - Iris Nehemia, Israel
  - Merle Nurmoja, Estonia
- Open discussion:
  - What steps has your country taken to boost the capacity and capability of senior managers? What are the key questions the OECD could help to answer through comparative research?

Coffee Break at 16:00

16:15-17:00 Session 5: Digital Transformation and the Future of Work in the Public Sector

Digitalisation is transforming the public sector and the way it works, placing new pressures on civil servants to keep up with the fast pace of technology. This suggests the need to civil servants with digital skills, capable of deciding when and how to digitalise services and processes to take advantage of opportunities and carefully manage associated risks. Additionally, digitalisation and data provide opportunities to manage people in new ways and to leverage employee data for HR insights. This can include data related to the composition of the workforce, career patterns, and data from employee engagement surveys. This session will begin an exploration of some of these themes with a view to better understanding the fast-approaching future of work in the public sector and what civil services can do to prepare.

- Presentation from the secretariat on the digital transformation in the public sector
- Lead discussant:
  - Philippe Vermeulen, Belgium
- Small group discussions: implications for public employment
  - How has the work of public employees already changed? What are the challenges and opportunities? What does data-driven leadership look like?
The 2016 survey on the composition of the workforce presents new opportunities to look at indicators of diversity and inclusion, which is a central theme of the 2017-18 PGC programme of work and budget. This will be an opportunity to reflect on ongoing challenges in this area and steps the OECD can take to support countries striving to develop a more representative workforce in their civil services.

Delegates will be invited to reflect on diversity and inclusion data that has been collected and to participate in the development of a tool kit [GOV/PGC(2017)12] and data collection to implement the recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life.

- Update from the secretariat on the composition of the civil service and the toolkit for implementing the Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life.

- Lead discussants:
  - Carl Trottier, Canada
  - Robert Cloarec, Sweden
  - Graeme Head, New South Wales, Australia

- Open discussion:
  - What role can public employment systems play in addressing governmental diversity and inclusion objectives? How can the OECD support countries to be role model employers in this regard?

Cocktail
### Welcome coffee will be served from 9.00

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items 1 and 2</th>
<th>Welcome and introductory remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30-9:40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Adoption of the Agenda [GOV/PGC/A(2017)2]
- Approval of the Summary Record of the 54th Session of the Public Governance Committee [GOV/PGC/M(2016)2]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item 3</th>
<th>SYMPOSIUM: Skills and Leadership for a high performing civil service [GOV/PGC(2017)7] and [GOV/PGC(2017)8]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:40-17:20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 9:40-11:20     | **Plenary Session 1**: Setting a skills and leadership agenda for public sector performance |
|                |                                                                                                    |

| 11:30-13:00    | **Plenary Session 2**: A civil service that is fit for purpose and ready to put the right skills to use |
|                |                                                                                                    |

| 14:30-15:45    | **Breakout Session 1**: How to develop skills and enablers to foster innovation in public sector institutions? |
|                |                                                                                                    |

| 14:30-15:45    | **Breakout Session 2**: What are the civil service skills needed to implement national open government agendas? |
|                |                                                                                                    |

| 14:30-15:45    | **Breakout Session 3**: How can the civil service invest in professional skills? |
|                |                                                                                                    |

| 16:00-17:15    | **Plenary Session 3**: How can civil service leaders lead the necessary changes? |
|                |                                                                                                    |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17:15-18:00</td>
<td>Cocktail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Item 1. Welcome by the Chair and adoption of the agenda

1. The Chair Ms. Pia Marconi will invite the Committee to adopt the agenda and to approve the Summary Record of the November 2016 meeting.

Committee action:
Delegates to the Public Governance Committee are invited to:

- **ADOPT** the agenda [GOV/PGC/A(2017)2] and **APPROVE** the Summary Record of the November 2016 meeting [GOV/PGC/M(2016)2], taking into account the decisions and follow up adopted immediately after the Committee [GOV/PGC/M(2016)2/ANN1].

Note: Committee Delegates will be reminded on the steps adopted for improving the management of Committee discussions (e.g. traffic lights, Golden Rules, etc.).

Item 2. Introductory remarks

2. Mr. Rolf Alter will offer some introductory remarks highlighting the relevance of today’s symposium in the context of building capability for designing and implementing reforms in countries and offering strategic and targeted policy advice. In the area of public employment and strategic HR management, the OECD has built a wealth of information and comparative insights, and has the capacity to offer high level policy advice, as well as support for building capacity and downstream implementation assistance when it is helpful for countries. The Committee will also have an opportunity to discuss public sector productivity as a follow up of 2016’s MCM Mandate, as well as to review Government at a Glance, one of the flagship products of the governance policy communities.

Item 3. Symposium: Skills and leadership for a high performing civil service

3. The capacity of the public sector to perform fundamentally depends on the skills and capabilities of its workforce, and the values and leadership that guide them. Today’s social, technological and fiscal context, including slow growth, rising inequalities and discontent about globalisation, are creating new challenges for the civil service, and suggest the need to reconsider the skills and leadership required to design and implement public services that deliver inclusive growth.

4. Although much has been written about the changing skills needed to ensure productivity and prosperity in national economies, until now little work has been done on the skills needed in the public sector, despite multiple drivers for change. For example, demand for new skills is driven by the increasingly interdependent and multidimensional problems that civil services must address, within societies which are increasingly pluralistic and divided in views and expectations. This suggests the need for multidisciplinary skills and systems-level perspectives, which integrate multiple communities’ perspectives in meaningful ways. Additionally, the systems and tools of governance are increasingly digital, open and networked.

5. This symposium will build on the recent work of the Committee’s Working Party for Public Employment and Management, and offer the PGC an opportunity to set a skills and leadership agenda for the civil service, and to identify the requirements that are necessary to implement a skills strategy. In particular, the symposium will help to identify underlying good practices of effective civil service employment and management that can help to build a high performing civil service. These discussions should also help to identify the key factors serving to improve public sector effectiveness and efficiency, as the symposium discussions will be followed by a focus on public sector productivity. As foreseen by the PGC Programme of Work and Budget for 2017-18, these discussions should also help to identify new principles on civil service capacity and capability, as part of a reflection on the core competencies and features of a modern civil service.
Plenary Session 1: Setting a skills and leadership agenda for public sector performance

6. This first session will consider the context for setting a skills and leadership agenda for public sector performance. The session will help to frame the topic taking into account global trends, including an erosion of trust in public institutions, rising discontent among an increasingly vocal share of the citizenry and increasing pressure to implement open and digital government. In this context, the leaders of public sector transformation need to identify and reinforce the right workforce and leadership skills and capabilities. This requires instilling behaviours and mind-sets that will help adopt a fresh approach towards system change and leverage new and innovative tools to address complex problems of a VUCA world (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous).

Questions for discussion

- How are global trends such as shifts in public expectations, the call for open government and digital transformation changing the roles and expectations of civil servants?
- How can governments define and acquire the right civil service skills and leadership to support a strategic and agile public sector that is responsive to citizen needs in an age of discontent?
- How can countries ensure that their civil service is equipped with the right mix of skills to develop innovative policy, engage with citizens, commission services and manage through networks?

Plenary Session 2: A civil service that is fit for purpose and ready to put the right skills to use

7. A highly skilled public sector workforce will only translate into high performance if people with those skill-sets find a home in organisations which are ready to put those skills to use. In the private sector, the level of skills used within firms is an important indicator of productivity and getting the skills match right is a central challenge for national skills systems. This is often a very acute challenge in public sector organisations with a large size and central management, and yet with very specific and diverse tasks.

8. Greater openness, policy complexity and technological transformation call for new strategies to attract and harness the right skills in the civil service, and at leadership levels. This implies new approaches to workforce management and organisational design that emphasise values-based leadership, forward looking talent management and strategic agility. This session will explore the implications of changing skills needs on the mechanisms that manage civil service capacity as a core element public sector reforms drawing on recent OECD reports on mapping skill needs and rethinking public sector engagement.

Questions for discussion

- What mechanisms and governance structures exist to place civil service capacity as a core element of the strategy to deliver public sector reforms? How can this help maintain trust in public institutions and improve the dialogue between senior civil servants and politicians?
- How can strategic government objectives be used to drive the priorities and goals for the civil service? How can these be aligned to develop citizen-centred, innovative and responsive public services?
- How can countries achieve a shared vision of the role and requirements for public sector leaders? How can civil service leadership draw on core public sector values to support policy making and lead implementation?
- How can governments balance the need for flexibility, discretion and openness in the civil service with the requirements of rules-based, professional organisations?
BREAKOUT SESSIONS

**Breakout Session 1: How to develop skills and enablers to foster innovation in public sector institutions?**

9. To meet today’s public policy challenges – continued fiscal pressures, rising public expectations, more complex public policy issues – there is a crucial need to increase the level of innovation in the public sector. Some countries have made progress by bringing in external experts to set up new projects and inject new thinking into the public service. However, this is insufficient to deliver a systemic change in the culture of public sector institutions. To achieve the levels of innovation needed requires not just bringing in “new blood” but also ensuring that existing public servants have the skills and capabilities to support and deliver innovative practices in government. This session will consider both the skills needed by public servants but also the enabling environment to help those skills flourish, particularly the important role public sector leaders and managers must play in supporting their staff to be innovative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions for discussion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How can governments invest in civil service capacity to develop innovation in public institutions? What are the skills needed to enhance public sector innovation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How can civil service leaders create the conditions and human resource management environment to foster innovation in public institutions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How can we mainstream innovation beyond a small cadre of innovation specialists across the wider body of public officials? What strategies can be used to develop corporate innovation capabilities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What are the capabilities needed by public sector managers to enable innovative projects and approaches? How to go beyond the “fear of failure” and mind-sets of “it’s too difficult”?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Breakout Session 2: What are the civil service skills needed to implement national open government agendas?**

10. When governments work with citizens, they are making the policy process more accessible, responsive and inclusive. Establishing rights for active citizenship or opening government data is an important step but it’s not enough to implement national open government agendas. These require skills that traditionally haven’t been valued enough in the public service. These include for example professional communication skills that go beyond traditional awareness raising. Successful open government agendas also require capacity and leadership to manage risks associated with open government processes, like delayed decision-making. Capability to use technology to minimise this type of risks and to avoid consultation fatigue is critical. Finally, building skills to evaluate the quality of open policy making processes and their impacts is also a challenge for many governments. This discussion will take place in the context of ongoing OECD discussions to support the Governance of Open Government Strategies.
Questions for discussion

- How can the civil service and its leadership take into account the range of voices and facilitate broad engagement with citizens? What are the new tools and skills needed to enable open government?

- How can the civil service invest in a range of “soft skills” to foster greater engagement, meeting the growing demands for openness from citizens, stakeholders, the media and social media?

- What are the opportunities and challenges brought by the digital age and social media in this context, particularly for leadership positions?

Background documents:


- Towards the development of indicators on the Governance of Open Government GOV/PGC(2017)6

Breakout Session 3: How can the civil service invest in professional skills?

11. Getting the balance right between generalist civil servant skills and specialist skills in key mission-critical areas is an ongoing challenge for the civil service in many OECD countries. For example, digital transformation processes can face obstacles if governments don’t have the necessary skills to go digital. Fast moving technology, complexity of projects involving interaction of different IT systems, can hamper governments’ ability to lead transformation in the way they operate and interact with citizens and businesses.

12. Similar challenges are often identified in other areas where public sectors compete for skills with private sector employers, in areas such as Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) professions, digital government or in corporate management areas like financial management, commercial/procurement skills and human resource management. Some countries have been focusing on the development and professions in these areas, to provide development opportunities and career paths for specialists in these fields. Implementing the Digital Agenda represents for many countries a significant skills challenge. The capacity of governments to compete with the private sector in attracting the best and the brightest needs to be strengthened, but attention needs to be paid to the risks of fragmentation that this may imply for the civil service.

Questions for discussion

- How is the digital transformation impacting work in the civil service? What are the corresponding needs in terms of capacity for commissioning, leading procurement and public private partnerships and for going digital?

- How can governments attract and retain cutting edge professionals with the competencies needed to lead transformation and deliver value? How can the civil service invest in professional human capital and further develop skills and capacities?

- What are the needs and opportunities to develop dedicated professions in the civil service? What are the risks for fragmentation of the civil service versus the need for professionalisation?
Plenary Session 3: How can civil service leaders lead the necessary changes?

13. In every public sector transformation, administrative and political leadership is required to articulate a vision and deliver implementation. Ministers need to see that their senior civil servants are responsive to their needs and ambitions, and senior civil servants need the capacity to make evidence-based assessments of these ambitions to guide policy implementation and offer strategic advice. This requires senior civil servants with the skills to provide evidence-based policy advice and to translate political vision into administrative action. Senior civil servants are expected to be politically responsive, have a deep understanding of the citizens they serve, and be effective managers capable of steering healthy and high-performing public sector organisations.

14. This session will explore how OECD countries attract, develop and retain highly skilled senior civil servants and how these leaders can lead transformation. It will also present delegates with opportunities to discuss how to advance this public governance agenda and to comment on proposed options for the OECD to support such initiatives such as principles on Civil Service Capacity to build a high-performing civil service.

Questions for discussion

- How can civil service leaders lead, attract, and motivate public sector agents for change? What are the pathways, e.g. setting a skills agenda and framework conditions, to build civil service effectiveness and support civil service transformation?
- How can governments improve civil service capacity to overcome cross-departmental silos to deliver inclusive growth? How can the civil service leadership promote multidisciplinarity, diversity and gender balance at all levels as part of its skills strategy?
- What kind of information and support do leaders need to conduct and implement change? How can the OECD help build concrete frameworks to enable national administrations in implementing civil service reforms?
- What are the underlying good practices of effective civil service employment and management that can help meet current challenges and deliver public value? How could principles on Civil Service Capacity serve to build a high-performing civil service?