Public Employment and Management 2023

TOWARDS A MORE FLEXIBLE PUBLIC SERVICE



OECD

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Foreword

Public Employment and Management is a regular report bringing together the latest OECD data, insights and analysis on public services. This second edition focuses on the theme of flexibility in the public service. Over the last few years, governments have had the opportunity to take stock of many of the lessons learned in workforce management and workplace design rolled out or scaled up during the COVID-19 pandemic. Greater flexibility across the public service has the potential to be a lasting legacy of the pandemic, and each of the chapters in this edition support flexibility from different angles. For example, employee mobility (Chapter 1) ensures that governments can reallocate the skills and competencies of their public servants to priority areas. Learning and development (Chapter 2) helps public services keep up with social and technological change. Finally, flexible ways of working (Chapter 3), including remote working and adjusted working hours, create opportunities for public servants to work in new ways that better match their needs and expectations.

Chapters 1-3 are based on new data collected from OECD countries through the 2022 Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability. The chapters illustrate important trends in each of the themes above and show how OECD countries are making significant use of tools and policies in that area. Chapter 4 provides a country-specific example by taking a closer look at how flexibility underpinned many of the recommendations of the OECD Review of Public Service Leadership and Capability in the Brazilian Federal Public Service.

A common finding across the report is that embedding flexibility needs to be supported with the right incentives and leadership culture to make it work. More intentional efforts, investments, and evidence are needed in all of these areas. The chapters are complemented by case studies of flexible work practices from Belgium, Korea, Slovenia and the United Kingdom.

Public Employment and Management 2023 was co-ordinated by Dónal Mulligan under the guidance of Daniel Gerson, senior project manager in the Public Management and Budgeting Division of the OECD Public Governance Directorate, which is led by Elsa Pilichowski, Director. Jón Blöndal, Head of Division, provided strategic oversight. Chapter 1 on strategic mobility was drafted by Daniel Gerson. Alana Baker drafted Chapter 2 on building learning cultures in the public service, and the United Kingdom case study. François Villeneuve drafted Chapter 3 on flexible ways of working. Felicitas Neuhaus drafted Chapter 4, on the findings and recommendations of the OECD review of Public Service Leadership and Capability in Brazil, and the Belgian and Slovenian case studies. Seok Ahn drafted the Korean case study. The report was prepared for publication by Meral Gedik with administrative support from Lyora Raab, Deborah Merran and Aleksandra Bogusz. Information for the four country case studies were kindly provided by public servants in Belgium (Koen Beirens), Slovenia (Mojca Reinhardt) and the United Kingdom (the Government Skills and Curriculum Unit team). The OECD Secretariat wishes to thank the Delegates to the Working Party on Public Employment and Management and the Public Governance Committee for their commitment and support to this work.

The report was reviewed by the OECD Working Party on Public Employment and Management (PEM) on 10 March 2023. It was approved by the Public Governance Committee on 13 April 2023 and prepared for publication by the Secretariat.

Table of contents

Foreword 3

Executive summary 9

1 Strategic mobility in the public service 11
- Strategic mobility: Mobility with a purpose 15
- Setting conditions for mobility: Standard employment frameworks 17
- Goals and intent 19
- Mobility mechanisms 23
- Promoting and incentivising mobility 30
- Support tools 33
- Data to monitor and evaluate mobility 36
- Conclusion 38
- Reference 38
- Notes 38

2 Learning cultures in the public service 39
- The necessity for learning in the modern public service workforce 41
- Current strategies for learning and development in the public service 44
- Systems, structures and the division of responsibility for learning and development 45
- Opportunities and incentives for learning and development in a modern public service 51
- Valuing different learning approaches and skills needs 57
- Conclusion 60
- References 61

3 The future of flexible working arrangements 63
- The COVID-19 pandemic as a catalyst for change 67
- Applying lessons learned during COVID to a ‘new normal’ 68
- What next for flexible working arrangements? 74
- Conclusion 79
- References 80

4 OECD public service leadership and capability review of Brazil 83
- Designing the career system for a modern and agile public sector 88
- Strengthening flexibility through the increased use of temporary contracts 90
- Developing a mature performance management system 92
- Assessing the Brazilian public employment and management system against the Public Service Leadership and Capability Recommendation 93
- Guidelines for the creation or merging of new careers in the Brazilian public service 100
- References 102

5 Case studies on flexibility 103
The future of learning and development in the United Kingdom's Public Service: The Government Campus and Curriculum 104
Learning cultures in the public service: E-learning in Korea 108
Promoting mobility in the Belgian civil service 111
'*Is-Muza*': Developing an IT tool to strengthen mobility and people development in the Slovenian public administration 115
Notes 118

FIGURES

Figure 1.1. OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability 15
Figure 1.2. Use of standardised job classification in the public service 18
Figure 1.3. Existence of mobility strategies or policies 20
Figure 1.4. Stated objectives of mobility strategies or policies 22
Figure 1.5. Requirements for internal lateral mobility in the public service 23
Figure 1.6. Use of temporary mobility mechanisms 25
Figure 1.7. Mobility to address fluctuations in demand (surge capacity) 27
Figure 1.8. How skills and staff were mobilised during the COVID crisis and the impact this may have in the future 29
Figure 1.9. Common barriers to mobility 30
Figure 1.10. Incentivising mobility within the public service 32
Figure 1.11. Tools and guidance to aid mobility 34
Figure 1.12. Mobility indicators tracked by OECD countries 37
Figure 2.1. OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability 44
Figure 2.2. Learning and development strategies in central governments, 2022 45
Figure 2.3. Responsibility for learning and development in central governments, 2022 46
Figure 2.4. Employee development as an expected managerial task, 2022 47
Figure 2.5. Data and indicators on learning and development (L&D), 2022 50
Figure 2.6. Incentivising learning and development (L&D), 2022 52
Figure 2.7. The use of various tools for L&D, 2022 54
Figure 2.8. L&D priorities for public servants (non-managerial), 2022 55
Figure 2.9. L&D priorities for public servants (senior managers), 2022 55
Figure 2.10. Methods to identify L&D needs, 2022 56
Figure 2.11. Strategies for reskilling, 2022 57
Figure 2.12. Methods used to foster and enable informal learning, 2022 59
Figure 3.1. OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability 65
Figure 3.2. Trends observed in public administrations regarding flexible ways of work 69
Figure 3.3. Change regarding the measures around flexible working arrangements 69
Figure 3.4. Factors driving flexible work policies in the central/federal administration 70
Figure 3.5. Flexible modalities of work available in central/federal administrations 71
Figure 3.6. Level at which flexible ways of work regulations/policies are determined 72
Figure 3.7. Extent to which employers are required to provide flexible ways of working 73
Figure 3.8. Data collection on flexible ways of working 74
Figure 3.9. Legal provisions to compensate employees for expenses related to remote work 75
Figure 3.10. Charters and codes of conduct articulating expected behaviour regarding remote work 76
Figure 3.11. Elements defined in charters/codes of conduct regarding remote work 76
Figure 3.12. Legal provisions to ensure the right to disconnect 78
Figure 3.13. Plans in public administrations regarding physical office spaces 78
Figure 4.1. Employment in general government, 2007 and 2019 85
Figure 4.2. Compensation of general government employees, 2019 85
Figure 4.3. OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability 86
Figure 4.4. Pilot index: Managing the senior level public service, 2020 95
Figure 5.1. Example of the variety of offerings contained in the GCC 105

TABLES

Table 1.1. Strategic mobility framework 16
Table 5.1. Uptake on internal permanent mobility opportunities 112
Table 5.2. Mobility opportunities promoting permanent mobility among organisations per organisation 112
Table 5.3. Temporary mobility opportunities used 113
Table 5.4. Mobility placements taken as part of Talent Exchange 114
Table 5.5. Announcement types on *Is-Muza* 116

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Executive summary

This second edition of *Public Employment and Management* compiles the latest data and trends in public service workforce management. The first edition established a shared vision for more forward-looking, flexible and fulfilling public services, better able to respond to the policy challenges of the 21st century. The chapters in this second edition delve further into the principle of flexibility by examining three different facets: strategic mobility, learning and development, and flexible ways of working. Each of these areas contributed largely to public service resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, public services across the OECD have the chance to refine and scale up promising new practices across all three areas, and use flexibility not just for crisis situations, but for better performance more broadly. This report is designed to inform such reflection and anchor the principle of flexibility more sustainably across the public service.

The first chapter looks at how governments can embed flexibility in their public services through a more strategic use of mobility – the movement of civil servants from one job to another. One of the most tangible aspects of flexibility involves opportunities for public servants to work in different parts of the public service. Emergency situations like the COVID-19 pandemic showed the importance of mechanisms to quickly identify specific skill sets or capabilities and move them to where they were most needed, when they were most needed. Beyond emergency situations, however, more strategic use of mobility tools can be a cornerstone of greater organisational flexibility. As policy challenges become more complex and require multi-disciplinary approaches to tackle them effectively, greater mobility can be a critical tool to help public administrations align the right skills and expertise as needed. This implies the need to clearly communicate the scope and value of such assignments to employees, and develop ways to overcome common barriers to mobility, such as better integration with career planning. One way to do this is to expect public servants to undertake mobility throughout their career, however in most administrations mobility is not mandatory or explicitly recommended.

The second chapter looks at flexibility through the lens of learning and development. With the scale and speed of change to the work of the public service, a variety of learning tools and formats is essential to keep pace. This calls for a learning culture that enables and incentivises learning and creates an environment in which learning is viewed positively by employees, managers and the organisation more broadly. In a learning culture, development is continual (career-long) and expected – and also aligned with incentives, such as growth opportunities and performance feedback. Importantly for cultivating such a culture, learning is prioritised by leadership – who themselves also actively and habitually take part in learning opportunities. Organisations with strong learning cultures have learning strategies that they support with data and systematic planning. They intentionally create spaces for both formal and informal learning, and promote mobility as a learning opportunity. In fact, data also show that learning is an area that is itself becoming more varied and flexible, and the chapter highlights the shift across much of the public service from narrow, classroom-based training to continuous multi-channel learning more integrated with day-to-day ways of working.

The third chapter takes stock of flexible working practices in the public service and examines likely arrangements going forward. Many public servants will continue to work remotely some of the time, but beyond this hybrid arrangement are a variety of flexible practices that will have a strong impact on the

effectiveness of the public service and its ability to attract talent. Emerging and flexible ways of working go far beyond the binary ‘home or office’ debate. Flexible ways of working encompass a variety of tools for public servants to adjust their working hours and location in line with their preferences and organisational requirements. But trust between managers and their staff, and between administrations and the workforce as a whole, is essential to get the best from these types of arrangements. Navigating different preferences to develop a coherent approach across the public service calls for dialogue and gathering and using data more effectively.

The fourth chapter presents a synthesis of the OECD Review of Public Service Leadership and Capability in the Brazilian Federal Public Service. This Review consisted of an in-depth assessment of Brazil’s public employment and management systems and resulted in a range of specific recommendations that can help embed greater flexibility across career structures and management processes. The Review’s recommendations will resonate strongly with other countries looking to address historical rigidities in their own administrations and make strides towards a more flexible, strategic workforce.

Taken together, these chapters recommend that governments of OECD countries establish greater linkages across flexible work practices so that they become mutually reinforcing. A more strategic approach that balances diverse individual preferences with organisational requirements can help engage and motivate existing employees and bring tangible benefits to organisations. It can also act as a beacon to external candidates eager for a fulfilling and dynamic career. Embedding greater flexibility across OECD public services will require more intentional investments and strategies, continued experimentation, consultation and evaluation informed by more and better data. Now is the time to seize the momentum: a future-ready public service is a flexible public service.

1 Strategic mobility in the public service

Mobility is the movement of public servants between jobs, organisations or even sectors. A healthy level of mobility helps public services achieve strategic objectives by allocating workforce skills and competencies to emerging priorities, while also enabling public servants to build needed skills through varied and exciting careers. This chapter looks at the elements needed to ensure mobility is used effectively, and presents new OECD data on the use of mobility tools and programmes in OECD countries.

Key messages

- **Workforce mobility contributes strongly to public service flexibility.** There are many different types of mobility ranging from short-term exchange programmes to longer-term job postings closely aligned with career development.
- **Mobility is not a goal in itself.** Used strategically, however, it can help attract and retain talent through emphasis on new experiences and ways to learn on-the-job. Mobility can also help diffuse knowledge throughout the public service and improve productivity.
- **Mobility should be closely aligned with strategic organisational objectives.** Too much mobility can disrupt work and destabilise teams, while too little mobility can lead to organisational stagnation. Strategic planning can help establish the 'ideal' level of mobility needed to support organisational objectives.
- **Structural elements support mobility.** For example, common job classification and pay frameworks can help enable mobility. It is also important to develop effective tools and ways to capture and use data to inform mobility policy.
- **Most countries use mobility to help achieve employee development goals.** There is scope to explore how mobility can be used to support other organisational objectives such as innovation.
- **Mobility is not just for times of crisis.** While it can help get staff and skills to where they are most needed in response to sudden needs, outside crisis situations, mobility can be used effectively through integration with strategic workforce planning.
- **Mobility needs to be incentivised.** This includes recognising the value for career development and improving visibility of opportunities. There is also a need to support managers with the right tools in order to mitigate effect of losing staff members, and so that managers themselves promote and engage in mobility opportunities.
- **Gathering and using more data** is important to monitor the success and impact of mobility programmes, and to adjust mobility strategy accordingly.

Mobility of staff is a key elements of public service flexibility – being able to move the right people with the rights skills into the right roles to meet the demands of the moment, and to be well prepared for the demands of the future. Mobility has the potential to enhance public service flexibility in various ways. Crucially, it allows public organisations to adapt as strategic priorities change, ensuring governments remain responsive to emerging policy challenges and changing user needs. The COVID-19 pandemic illustrated how mobility is essential in emergency situations, to allows for the shifting of specific competencies and skills to where they are needed most. The COVID-19 pandemic provided an opportunity to test the public services' mobility regimes in times of crisis, and saw many countries developing new tools and strategies to quickly redeploy employees from their status quo roles into crisis management structures. It saw many organisations redeploying people from client-facing service delivery roles (many of which were closed during the pandemic due to health-related concerns) into digital delivery roles that were safer and thereby experienced a huge surge in demand. This type of mobility helped to ensure the public service was able to respond to fast changing circumstances when it was required the most.

Box 1.1. Scope and definitions

The terms 'public service' and 'public servants' are used throughout this report (as opposed to, for example, 'civil service' or 'public sector').This is because:

- In some countries, the term 'civil servant' refers to a specific legally defined category of public employee, and this category varies from country to country. The term 'public servant' was chosen as a more inclusive alternative, as the focus of analysis is all employees of central governments regardless of their official legal status. In this regard, 'public servants' may be life-long civil servants, or public employees on indeterminate or temporary labour contracts.
- The 'public service', as defined in this report, covers the workforce of a limited set of institutions related to the executive branch of the central government. In some countries, it may extend to subnational levels as well, depending on the legal arrangements for public employment in each country.
- The report is not specific to employees of the broader 'public sector' who are usually covered under alternative employment frameworks, such as doctors, teachers, police, the military, the judiciary, or elected officials, although, depending on the circumstances, many of the insights in the report could also apply to such employees.
- 'Leadership' refers to administrative and institutional leadership. Leadership of elected officials is not within scope.

Mobility is not only essential for emergency situations but also as part of the every-day framework for people management in governments. For example, greater mobility can facilitate multidisciplinary approaches to address complex issues, and permit the pooling of scarce resources and competencies from across government. In this way, lateral job mobility has the potential to break through policy silos, with people, skills, and competencies traveling through the public sector. This type of mobility also allows for the cross-fertilisation of ideas and approaches across public sector organisations and for the transfer of good practices. Mobility can also help promote greater inclusion and diversity of thought in organisations, by encouraging the exchange of knowledge and perspectives in policy design and implementation.

Box 1.2. Types of mobility in the public service

The mobility of public servants can be a valuable asset in achieving greater flexibility and adaptive capacity in public sector organisations. Broadly defined, employee mobility can consist of any of the following dimensions:

- Horizontal: lateral moves within the same job classification system or between classification systems for positions recognised as equivalent.
- Vertical: an ascension in job responsibilities, usually a formal promotion, (but can refer even to a demotion or downward mobility).
- Functional (or 'inter-professional'): marked by a transition to a new field or profession.
- Geographic: moving cities, regions, etc.
- Internal: taking up another post within the same organisation or broader public service.
- External: a transition outside the public service – e.g. to another sector, level of government or international organisation.
- Temporary: where the public servant retains their original position and is expected to return to it after a period of time.
- Permanent: such as a permanent transfer or new position.

This chapter looks primarily at internal horizontal/lateral mobility of both a temporary and permanent nature, but also includes some consideration of other kinds listed here.

Mobility is particularly important in governments where public servants tend to be hired on long-term, open ended contracts and remain in the public service for most of their careers. In this context, external mobility (e.g. between the public service and private firms) tends to be limited, and internal mobility becomes even more important – a central element of a talent management approach to make the best use of the workforce.

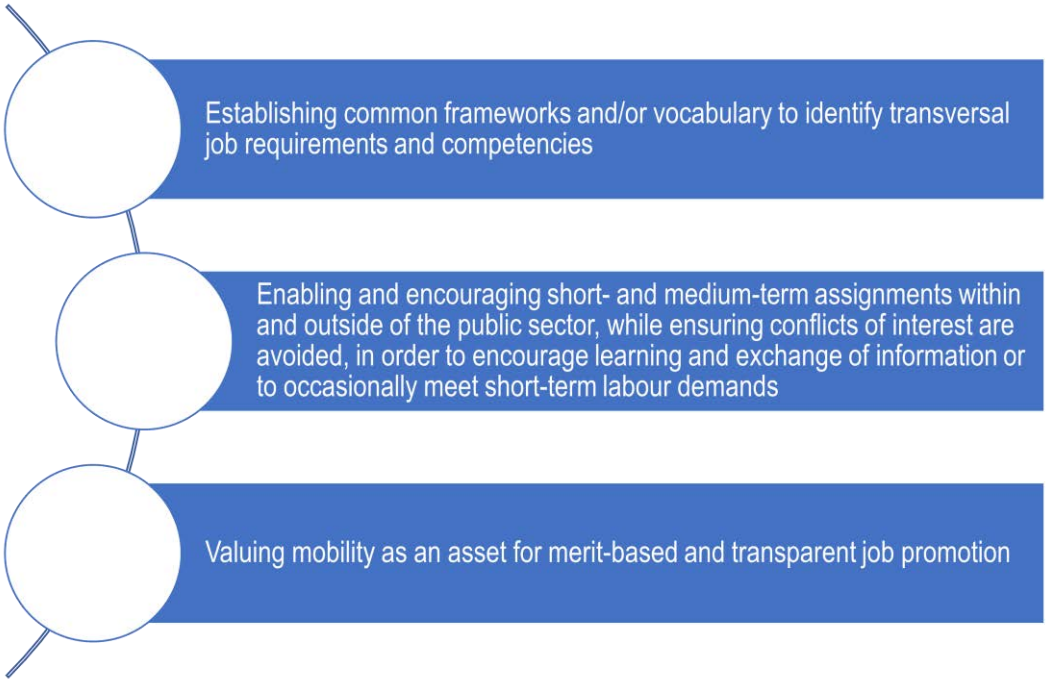
Mobility can help attract and retain public servants. The traditional model of a linear career path within a single organisation, field or profession is no longer as common, nor desired, for many current and potential public servants. Many young job-seekers with key skills claim to want a varied career, and the public service could be ideally positioned to provide it. Indeed no other employer can offer as many interesting opportunities while also offering job security. In this way, getting mobility right can help to attract and retain high performing and high potential employees, by providing them a variety of exciting professional challenges over the course of a varied and eventful career.

Mobility can also develop employees and their skills and capabilities. Mobility allows administrations to build and develop key skillsets in-house, by allowing for more varied and flexible career paths for civil servants. In this way, mobility is a powerful tool for talent management, to develop skilled and effective staff by giving employees career development opportunities that expose them to different areas or government functioning. For example, to advance from policy officer to manager, some public services expect employees to spend time in central agencies, to better understand the internal functioning of government systems.

In all of these ways, mobility acts as a driver of productivity by ensuring alignment between skills supply and demand. Given this, internal mobility becomes an essential tool to ensure that governments can make the best use of the large talent pool they have, and that talent is being given opportunities to develop new skills and keep up with global changes. The 2021 PEM report on the future of the public service, evoked the idea of working from anywhere, for anyone, at any time – a future pool of human resources from which any public service organisation can draw, depending on the project at hand and the needs of the moment.

To harness these various benefits, the OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability calls on countries to set, "the necessary conditions for internal and external workforce mobility and adaptability to match skills with demand, in particular through:

Figure 1.1. OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability



Source: OECD (2019[1]), "Recommendation of the Council on Public Service Leadership and Capability", *OECD Legal Instruments*, OECD/LEGAL/0445, OECD, Paris, https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0445.

This chapter explores how countries are developing more flexible public service through mobility, and addressing the points in the PSLC recommendation.

Strategic mobility: Mobility with a purpose

Mobility is not an end in itself, but should be pursued to achieve specific benefits, which need to be carefully managed. The movement of people will always entail some short-term cost, as someone is usually leaving a job that they know how to do, to take on a new role that they must learn. When not well managed and taken to extremes, mobility becomes excessive employee churn or turnover which has the potential to cause adverse impacts for individuals and organisations. For example, shifting people around too often can cause big disruptions in project implementation and the loss of institutional knowledge and know-how. Moving leadership too quickly can contribute to changing programme or project tactics mid-way, and a lack of ownership and accountability for institutional problems, often seen as belonging to the last manager to hold that post, and not giving new managers time to really see change implemented (cultural change takes time!). Sometimes mobility can even open doors for conflict of interest and undue influence in government activities – particularly when there are high levels of rotation between the public and private sectors and/or between administrative and political roles.

Table 1.1. Strategic mobility framework

	Not enough mobility	Strategic mobility	Too much mobility
Length of time in role	People staying in their positions long after they have mastered their tasks, to the point where they see few opportunities to change the way they do things and fail to bring new approaches, ideas or perspectives to tackle challenges.	People stay in one role long enough to learn about its depth and complexity, to see projects through to completion and to pass on their insights to others before moving on.	People move before they can really learn the role and see the results of their work.
Individual perspective	Employees remain in their jobs because they do not think mobility will be rewarded, are afraid of negative consequences, or do not want to leave their comfort zone. Employees tend to see few opportunities for career development, leading to complacency and/or boredom and low engagement and retention rates of best employees. Lack of transversal skill development.	Employees move to logical next steps in their career (lateral and vertical) – to work on interesting projects and develop their skills and capabilities. Higher levels of engagement due to opportunities to learn new things while also seeing results of efforts. Employees balance the development of transversal skills with deeper knowledge required of specific positions.	People move because they are unhappy, or to get salary increases, or as a result of political instability. Not linked to personal development since they do not stay long enough to learn a new role deeply. Employees tend to feel overwhelmed and stressed, as they rely on generalist skill sets without developing the depth of expertise needed in complex policy areas. Low engagement since employees do not see results of their efforts.
Team perspective	Managers hold onto their best staff for fear of not being able to achieve goals without them. High levels of stability may lead to stagnation and group think – no new energy or ideas.	Mobility is used to generate new energy in teams, moving one member at a time.	Whole teams are moved and reconstituted so there is little continuity or institutional memory (unless team is meant to be temporary) which can reduce rates of project completion.
Organisation perspective	Organisations do not promote or value mobility. Some may even punish mobility – often unintentionally. Reinforces organisational silos, and group think, which results in lower levels of innovation.	Organisations enable mobility to achieve specific and well thought out objectives – addressing complex problems and emergencies, developing staff. This helps increase innovation, productivity, employee engagement, and develop learning cultures	Often the result of instability at the political levels, or bad working cultures and not linked to organisational development objectives.
Employee Supports	No supports since there is no mobility.	Highly supported – employees are well prepared for their new role with appropriate training and regular check-ins	Often not well supported – sink or swim mentality.
Managerial supports	No supports since there is no mobility.	Highly supported – managers are guided through the process and provided the needed tools to onboard new employees and manage any institutional memory problems.	Not well supported – managers avoid using mobility strategically as they see it as disruptive to achieving their objectives.
Use of data	Not tracked.	Tracked using both administrative data and survey data to ensure a balance	Often not tracked.

Well-balanced, strategic mobility therefore relies on adequate oversight and managerial processes in place that encourage mobility while mitigating risks, as illustrated in Table 1.1. This can be achieved through the use of the following tools and policies:

- Common framework conditions - common HR management frameworks across organisations within the civil service can help to ensure that mobility is possible and that participants avoid structural barriers when trying to undertake mobility. These can include common job classifications

and pay schemes so that employees have the right incentives for mobility. It should also include clear conflict of interest regulations and oversight to prevent and mitigate undue influence (such as "cooling off periods", identification of at-risk positions, disclosure of assets and liabilities).

- Goals and intent – mobility is not of value in and of itself, but rather a way of building organisational flexibility and developing talent. Different approaches to mobility may have different objectives, and a strategic approach should be clear on what objectives organisations wish to achieve through mobility practices. This may include specific time frames and/or targets for workforce mobility.
- Mobility mechanisms – achieving strategic goals requires mechanisms that fit them. Most countries have a range of tools and policies that can support different kinds of employee mobility, but deploying them to their full potential remains a common challenge.
- Incentives and mobility culture – the biggest barrier to mobility is often cultural. Rewarding mobility among employees and their managers is key to generating a strategic approach to mobility. Managers should be equipped with tools, knowledge and incentives to effectively support mobility of their staff. For example, performance evaluations and promotion criteria should value mobility.
- Support tools – mobility is, by definition, disruptive to the status quo, but there are tools to minimise negative disruptions. These may include succession planning so that managers can anticipate and better prepare for transferring knowledge and re-arranging work so as to minimise disruptions, and onboarding, shadowing or training.
- Data to monitor and evaluate mobility. Turn-over and retention data are not often collected by public sector organisations, limiting their ability to monitor the extent to which strategic mobility is being carried out. Some countries rather defer to employee surveys to gauge perceptions of mobility opportunities and their value to career development and the organisation, however these are generally the exception rather than the rule.

The following discussion l explores each of these in turn, presenting new data from the survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability.

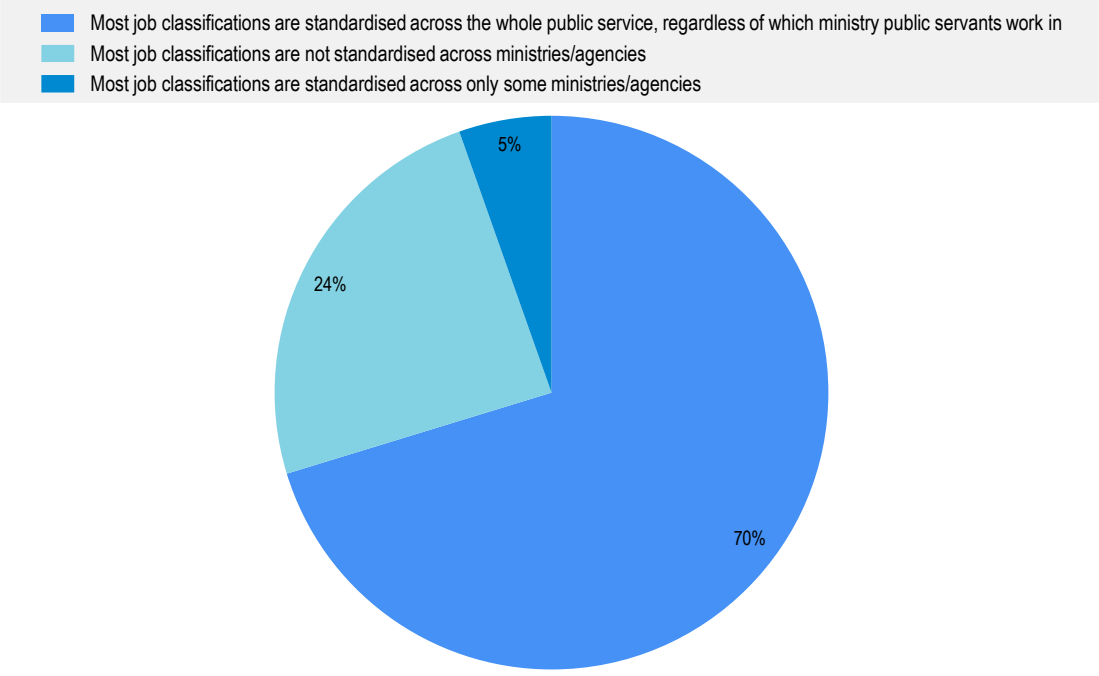
Setting conditions for mobility: Standard employment frameworks

The public service is generally among the largest employers in any given country, and therefore the potential for leveraging strategic mobility is very large. However this potential can sometimes be hindered by structural barriers if, for example, organisations lack common employment frameworks across the administration/public sector. In the large majority of countries, public servants are contractually employed by their individual ministry or agency. In only 20% of OECD countries public servants work for the public service as a whole. These include Switzerland, Costa Rica, Israel, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Slovenia. In some countries there is a mix, as in Spain where civil servants employed in a "general corps" are employed centrally while those which make up the "special corps" with specific function (for instance, Labour or Finance Inspectors, State Engineers, Architects, Traffic Technicians, Diplomats…) are employed directly by a ministry or agency. In Canada, civil servants who work in the core ministries and agencies are employed by one single employer, while those in more specialised agencies are employed directly by them. In the case of both countries, they remain civil servants regardless.

In theory having one employer could remove administrative barriers to mobility, since mobility across ministries would not imply a legal change of employer. In Spain, for example, both the general and special corps are made up of state civil servants, with the same regime of rights and duties, however their status may affect mobility among ministries since some corps may have positions reserved only for them in the corresponding ministries. In New Zealand and Korea, only the senior civil servants are hired and employed centrally, in part because these countries expect senior civil servants to be more mobile and ready to serve where and when needed.

Figure 1.2. Use of standardised job classification in the public service

Percentage of OECD countries which responded to the survey



Note: N=37. Data for the United States not available. Original question: "To which extent are job classifications standardised across the central/federal public service?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 4 on Mobility.

StatLink https://stat.link/7nd0se

A second, and likely more important framework condition for mobility is having common job classification systems, so that public servants in a certain function can understand what an equivalent job would be in another ministry or agency. The large majority of OECD countries have this in place. Portugal, for example, recently undertook a significant reform that merged thousands of individual "careers", each with their own salary and job classification and many of which were specific to agencies and ministries, into three transversal careers. In Italy, classifications are standardised through law and collective agreements. Only nine countries do not have a common job classification system.

Box 1.3. Portugal's reform of the career system

In 2006, a survey performed by a "Career and Remuneration System Review Commission" concluded that the Portuguese Public Administration contained:

- At least 653 general careers.
- About 119 special careers or/and special corps.
- Around 407 isolated job categories

The reform envisioned the abolishment of more than 1 000 general and special careers as well as isolated job categories. The current career regime is characterised by a significantly lower number of careers and with a more comprehensive functional content. It qualifies careers as general and special, systematising them according to the degree of functional complexity required for integration in each one, in these terms:

- **General careers**: Those whose functions characterise positions that the majority of public bodies and services need for the development of the respective activities.
- **Special careers**: Those whose functions characterise positions that only one or some public services need for the development of the respective activities. Special careers can only be created when, all of the following are true:
  - The respective functional content cannot be included in the contents of general careers.
  - The respective public employees are subject to more demanding functional duties than those imposed on public employees of general careers; and
  - The respective public employees need to have undertaken a specific training course of a duration no less than six months or hold a certain academic degree or professional certificate to enter the career.

In the Portuguese public administration, there are three general careers. These are:

- Professional staff ("Técnico Superior")
- Administrative Staff ("Assistente Técnico")
- Auxiliary Staff ("Assistente Operacional").

Overall, this reform of the career system represented a huge milestone. It strengthened versatility of the system and improved mobility for public servants.

Source: Information provided by the Portuguese Directorate-General for Administration and Public Employment (DGAEP).

When it comes to employment terms and conditions (e.g. compensation, term length, job security, rights and obligations), almost all OECD countries ensure an even higher level of standardisation. This is important as it helps to ensure that portability of employment terms and conditions, and should help to reduce the internal competition for labour. However on this point, without standardised job classifications, wages can still vary from ministry to ministry.

Goals and intent

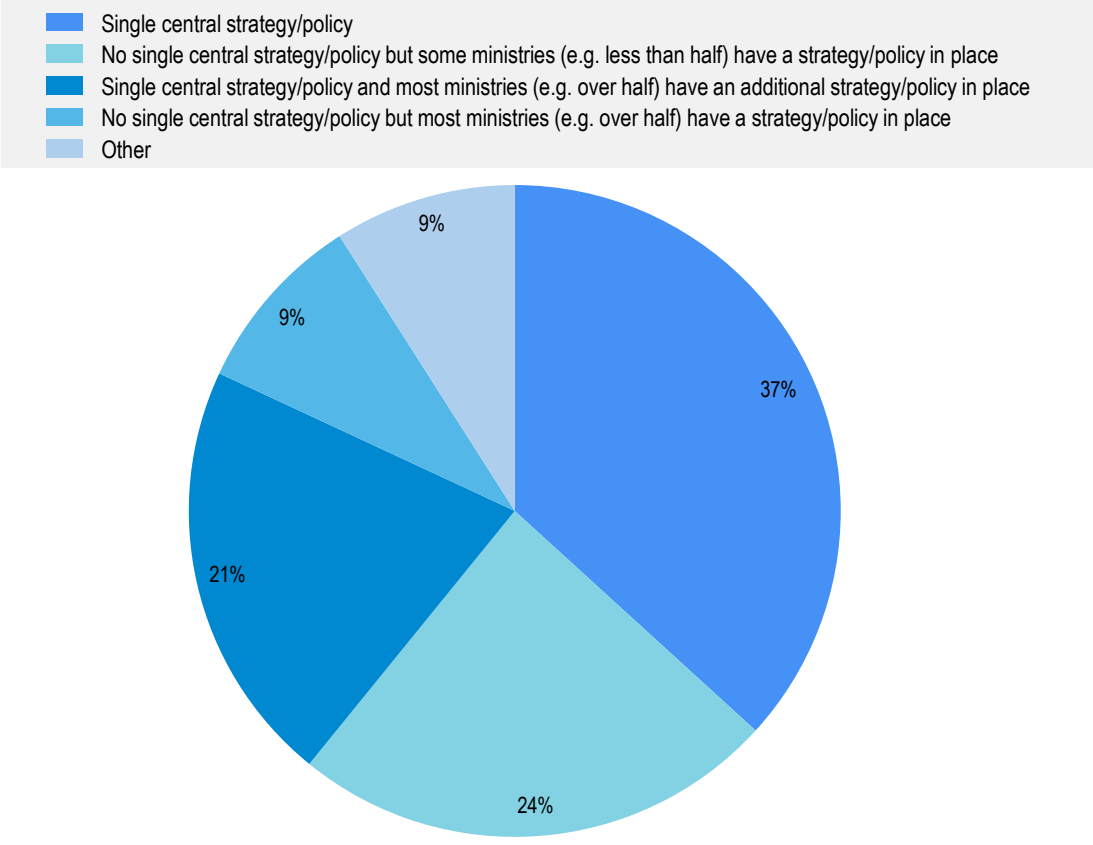
With the basic structural framework to facilitate mobility (common job descriptions and terms and conditions) most public services in OECD countries also have some kind of mobility policy or guidelines in place – although these often take the shape of enabling legislation rather than a fully fleshed out strategy with specific goals and objectives. In fact, only a minority of OECD countries actively promote mobility as

a stated objective or priority of the public service (11 countries promote internal mobility and 7 countries promote external mobility). These findings suggest great opportunity for OECD countries to think through the benefits of mobility and how best to harness them in their public services.

Australia is an exception, where the Public Service has developed a very thorough mobility framework that includes an articulated set of objectives (to address surges in demand, to solve complex problems, and to develop employees), with aligned initiatives, guidance for employees, managers, executives and HR practitioners, a surge reservice, and associated targets and metrics. In Canada, various policies around people management and executive leadership contain elements that enable mobility and target towards specific ends, whether for leadership development, emergency response or even short-term exchanges (e.g. seconding private sector employees into the public service). Ireland has a central mobility policy in place for generalist grades from junior to management levels, as well as a central policy with regard to Assistant Secretary level positions. When a post becomes vacant at Assistant Secretary level, it must be considered to be filled via mobility in the first instance. In Korea, various laws including the State Public Officials Act and the Decree on the Appointment of Public Officials provide the principles and criteria for horizontal mobility (i.e. job transfer) and vertical mobility (promotion).

Figure 1.3. Existence of mobility strategies or policies

Percentage of OECD countries which responded to the survey



Note: N=34. Data for the United States, Germany, Denmark, and Hungary not available. Original question: "Is there specific strategy/policy that sets out the expectations/objectives regarding mobility in the public service?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 4 on Mobility.

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Box 1.4. Approaches to mobility strategies and policies

Australia's Public Service Mobility Framework helps employees, managers, executives and HR practitioners use mobility as a strategic workforce tool. The Framework outlined three sets of interrelated objectives (to address surges in demand, to solve complex problems, and to develop employees), each supported through specific initiatives. The Framework operationalises this through separate guidance documents for employees, managers, executives and HR practitioners. It also includes a surge reservice (see Box 1.6 for more information), and associated targets and metrics through employee census data, employment databases and other sources.

Canada enables mobility in a variety of ways. The Policy on People Management gives ministry heads the ability to authorise temporary assignments in and out of the core public administration and provides them with exchange mechanisms to meet the needs of their organisation. The Policy also supports transfer of knowledge and expertise, professional development, and builds a better understanding and improved networks between the core public administration as other business sectors (both public and private). In addition, all of the executive management group understand that they may be deployed (i.e. laterally move) to another executive level position within the core public administration as a condition of employment. The Directive on Performance and Talent Management for Executives sets out the requirements for talent assessments and defines talent results, including those mapped for mobility. At the Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) levels, the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer (OCHRO) leads an annual ADM talent management exercise that enhances the development and retention of motivated leaders. In partnership with ministry heads, OCHRO supports succession planning for ADM-level vacancies.

In **Ireland**, there is a central mobility policy in place for generalist grades from Clerical Officer to Principal Officer levels. There is also a central policy in place with regard to Assistant Secretary level positions. When a post becomes vacant at Assistant Secretary level, it must be considered to be filled via mobility in the first instance. Posts are advertised to all those at Assistant Secretary level across Government Departments/Offices. Both central policies come within the remit of the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform

Korea manages mobility through various laws at the central level which provide the principles and criteria for horizontal mobility (i.e. job transfer) and vertical mobility (promotion). On the ministerial level, ministries and agencies have their own policy regarding mobility, such as regulations on personnel management.

New Zealand sets out strategic intent in the Public Service Act (2021) around the mobility of Senior Public Service Leaders through the leadership strategy. Related leadership development services such as brokering, have been set up as a mechanism to support internal lateral mobility for both system need and development. Senior Leader Movement Standards exist that enable this and provide minimum expectations. There is not a central "strategy" for the mobility of all public servants, however the intention of an agile and adaptive public service is well established and during the COVID-19 pandemic there has been much work in progress: A centralised platform was established to enable deployment, but specific expectations have not yet been set.

In **Poland**, mobility is introduced as a recommendation in the Ordinance of the Head of Civil Service concerning the standards of human resources management in the civil service. Following this, directors general are recommended to build an organisational culture that promotes employees' mobility, and to define clear rules for organising internal recruitment competitions.

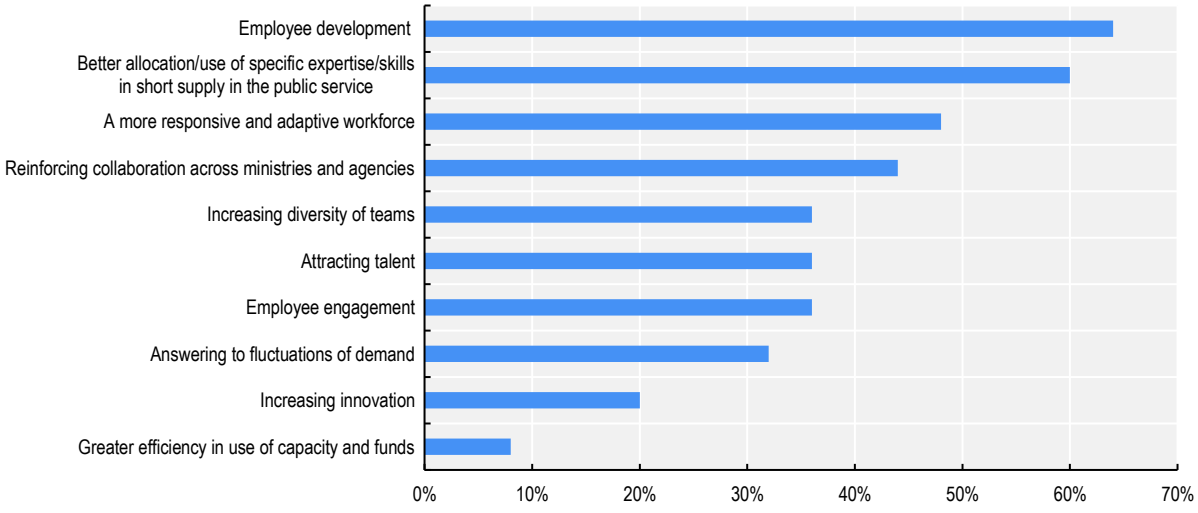
Portugal's mobility scheme is grounded on public interest and aims to increase the efficiency of public services through the rational use and enhancement of public administration human resources. Mobility

is thus an organisational tool that aims, in a flexible and agile way, to meet the services needs within the scope of people management, also contributing to a better adjustment of the human resources deployment inside public administration at each moment. Additionally, the Strategy for Innovation and Modernisation of the State and Public Administration 2020-2023 encourages the establishment of jobs in regions with lower population density. To meet this, the Government program includes incentives for public servants to work in inland territories, with a goal to promote their development, as well as remote work modalities and the sharing of experiences and ideas between workers from different contexts and origins in a co-working environment.

The most common stated objectives of the mobility strategies and policies in place in OECD countries relate to employee development, and to the better allocation and use of specific expertise/skills in short supply in the public service. This shows that OECD countries are taking both an employee and organisational approach to mobility. Developing a more responsive and adaptive workforce, and reinforcing collaboration across ministries and agencies are also significant objectives of mobility strategies and policies. The least common objectives related to efficiency and, surprisingly, increasing innovation. This last point raises the questions as to whether mobility policies and strategies are missing an opportunity to leverage this tool in the context of public sector innovation – by bringing more diversity to the public policy and service design process, and sharing scarce innovation related skill sets.

Figure 1.4. Stated objectives of mobility strategies or policies

Percent of OECD countries with a mobility strategy or policy



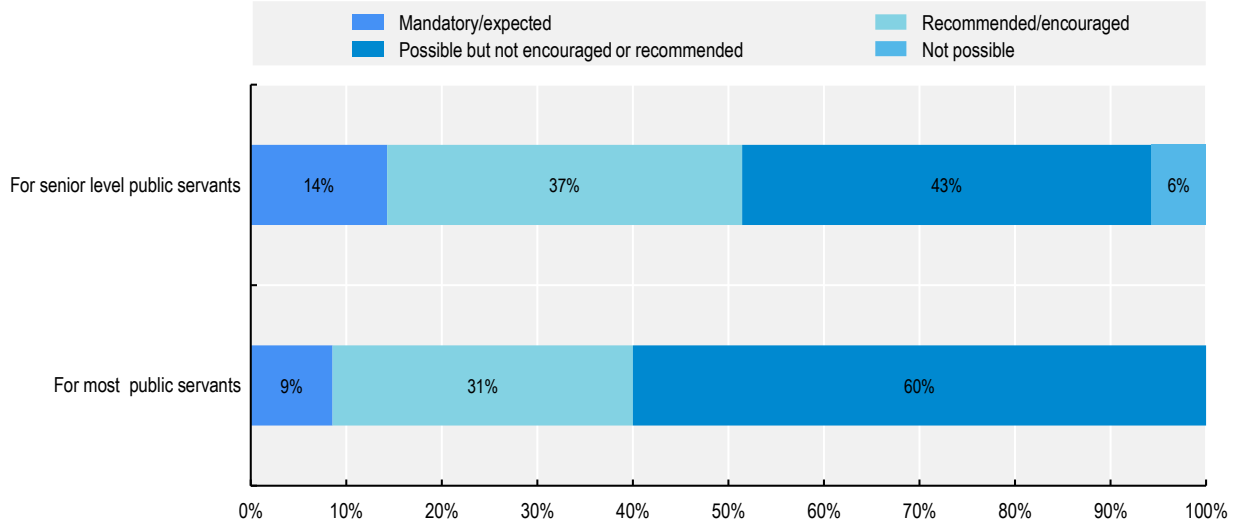
Note: N=25. Original question: "Do the stated objectives of the [mobility] strategy/policy include [the following]".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 4 on Mobility.

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Another way to approach this question of goals and intent is the degree that internal lateral mobility (moving jobs within the public service at the same level of hierarchy) is expected in different positions. In most OECD countries, mobility is possible but not mandatory nor even recommended for most public servants. The picture changes for senior level public servants, where mobility is seen as more important, although only 5 OECD countries make such mobility mandatory or expected at senior levels – this includes the Netherlands, Spain, Japan, Costa Rica and Canada. In 13 additional countries, mobility is recommended for this group. Mobility is mandatory for most public servants in only 3 OECD countries (Costa Rica, Japan, and Austria, where mobility in the form of job rotation is used for onboarding of most new civil servants), and is recommended in 10 more.

Figure 1.5. Requirements for internal lateral mobility in the public service

Percentage of OECD countries which responded to the survey



Note: N=35. Data for the United States, Germany and Denmark not available. Original question: "Is internal lateral mobility* in the public service… [select the following]?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 4 on Mobility.

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One aspect of the policy framework that does not often figure is the specific amount of mobility desired. Many countries have objectives to increase or reduce the amount of mobility in their public service, however there are few countries with specific targets or with an assessment of the ideal amount. In fact, the average length of tenure[1] in a position is only tracked by 17 OECD countries and appears to vary considerably. In Germany it appears that employee move positions after 2-5 years. In Canada, average length of tenure is around 5 years. In Australia it's about 13 years. In Israel it's about 11 years. In Mexico it's 13.5 years. In New Zealand, more than half of Public Service staff have been in their current role for three years or less, with nearly three in ten are in their role for less than a year. Around three in ten public servants have been in the same role for more than five years.

Mobility mechanisms

Implementing a strategic approach to mobility requires a range of well-designed and complementary mobility mechanisms for public servants. The survey identifies a number of different kinds of mobility mechanisms. The first group are those used to offer temporary mobility opportunities to staff, ranging from micro assignments whereby a public servant works with another unit part time while maintaining their primary role for the rest of the time, to longer-term secondments, exchanges and rotation programmes. The second group of mechanisms are those that ensure mobility throughout one's career through career planning and internal staffing regimes. Another set of mechanisms looks at mobility to manage surges in demand, whether foreseen or in reaction to emergency situations.

Temporary mobility mechanisms

The large majority of OECD countries regularly use micro-assignments (working for another team/unit part time), short term assignments (less than a year full time) and longer term secondments. However only a minority of countries make use of exchange (15) or rotation programmes (10). The countries that appear to have access to the widest range of mobility mechanisms[2] include Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Iceland, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Türkiye and the United Kingdom.

Box 1.5. Rotation programmes and exchange programmes

Belgium's Talent Exchange is a mobility programme for Belgian public servants from all levels of government, mostly used by federal entities. Talent Exchange allows participating organisations to exchange talent for specific initiatives or projects with a duration of between 6 and 12 months, thereby giving public servants new challenges aligned with their skills and competencies. In 2021, 199 exchanges were published.

In **Canada**, there are a variety of rotation programmes which may be offered by departments or functional communities. One example of a centrally managed rotation programme is the Mosaic Leadership Development Programme. The targeted population is employees a level below the Executive ranks belonging to the four Employment Equity groups (women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities and members of racialised groups) and/or the 2SLGBTQI+ community. The approximate size of the first cohort is 40. Experience-building assignments within the ministry or others within the public service is a required part of the programme.

The **Nordic** Exchange Programme (NORUT) provides civil servants with the opportunity to learn how things are done in another Nordic country. The annual scholarship amount is distributed between the countries by a group consisting of a contact person from each country. Two important conditions for the exchange are that the applicant is allowed to keep his salary during the exchange and the applicant must apply for exchange in another Nordic country. The typical length of an exchange period is 1-2 months, but periods of up to 6 months occur. The Nordic Council of Ministers contributes a stipend of DKK 14 000 for each month of service. In addition, the Council of Ministers reimburses the costs of travel to and from the place of employment. The approximate size of the programme for Iceland is up to 10 candidates per year.

Japan conducts exchange between the public and private sectors, and between levels of government, although these programmes are not necessarily two-way exchanges. 35 national public servants were dispatched to the private sector in 2021, while 308 private sector personnel were newly appointed to the government. In addition, 1,788 employees transferred from the national government to local governments, and 3,031 local government employees were accepted by the national government (as of 1 October 2020).

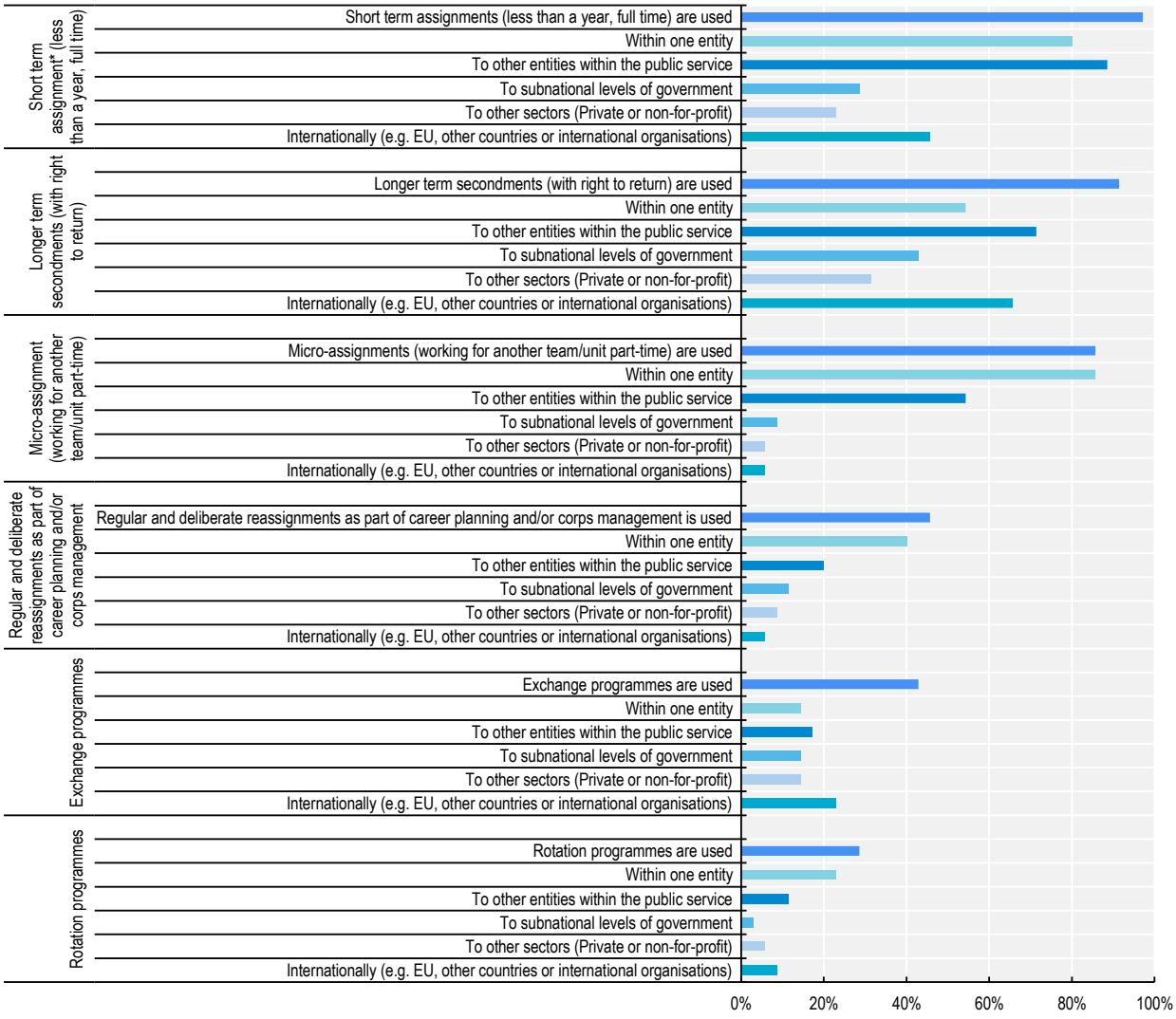
The **European Union's** (EU) Public Administration Cooperation Exchange (PACE) initiative is a unique opportunity for civil servants of EU Member States' national administrations to experience the working methods and culture of other EU public administrations in selected areas. Participating Member States will be paired to host administrations according to their expertise, interests and capacity, in order to share good practices and gain necessary knowledge to implement specific reforms in the home Member State. The programme is organised by the European Commission's DG REFORM and is currently in a pilot phase under the 2023 Technical Support Instrument, with 18 Member States and over 300 civil servants participating.

Slovenia's Partnership for Change programme is carried out by the Ministry of Public Administration and the American Chamber of Commerce Slovenia, which is a programme for the exchanges between the public and private sector. Every year the employees in both the public and private sector are offered the opportunity of a maximum five-day exchange. It is available for everyone and is voluntary based. Upon the call from the Ministry of Public Administration at the beginning of the year, the candidates submit a letter of motivation stating what they do, and where and why they wish to complete an exchange. Once validated, the representative from the American Chamber of Commerce in Slovenia contacts private companies, the project manager from the Ministry contacts the public institutions and if suitable for each party, the employee and the organisation are connected.

Different mobility mechanisms tend to be used for different purposes. For example, when looking at mobility within an institution, micro-assignments are the most used, followed by short term assignment. When rotation programmes are used, they tend to also be focused within entities, rather than across them. Conversely, mobility between entities tends to require longer-term mechanisms, with far more countries using short and longer-term secondments rather than micro-assignments.

Figure 1.6. Use of temporary mobility mechanisms

Percentage of OECD countries which responded to the survey



Note: N=35. Data for the United States, Germany and Lithuania and not available. Original question: "Which types of modalities are used for mobility in central administrations?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 4 on Mobility.

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Fewer OECD countries use mechanisms to generate mobility outside the public service. One interesting finding is that when mobility is used outside the public service, it tends to be focused internationally. 23 OECD countries use longer-term secondments to send public servants to work in other countries or in international organisations, 16 countries enable short term international assignments, and eight countries have specific international exchange programmes. This is greater than those countries who use similar tools for subnational mobility: (15 use long-term secondments, 10 short-term assignments and 5 specific exchange programmes). Countries that report having the widest range of mechanisms to support international mobility of public servants on hand include Austria, France, Iceland, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom, and Spain.

Mobility throughout the career path

In addition to temporary mobility, many administrations promote permanent changes to one's job as their careers advance. This kind of mobility is likely more important to achieving the benefits listed in the introduction to this chapter – especially those related to attraction and retention – where employees seek variation throughout their career. This kind of mobility is also rather difficult to assess via this survey. One indicator of this, where possible, is the average length of tenure, discussed above. The survey also asked which countries report undertaking regular and deliberate reassignments as part of career planning and/or corps management. 14 countries do this within one entity, while only 7 of those countries look at reassignments across entities within the public service – Australia, Costa Rica, Spain, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands and New Zealand.

Another mechanisms to support this kind of internal mobility is to limit recruitment for some positions to internal candidates only. Traditionally public employment systems have been categorised as career or position based. On the one hand, career based systems tend to focus on big intakes of new civil servants early in their careers and then rely on internal mobility to move them into the right jobs throughout their careers. Spain's corps system provides a particular example of this. To get a job in the public service, applicants pass through two stages. First, citizens can participate in public calls and examinations to enter a specific corps of public servants. Once they join the corps, they can participate in recruitment processes for specific vacancies available to that corps, which are publicly published by the different ministries. The job posting describes the profiles of the concrete vacancies and more specific requirements for applicants (might be experience in a concrete field, degrees, languages, digital competences, seniority…).

On the other hand, position-based systems emphasise open recruitment directly to a specific position. These are found in their most pure form in Nordic countries. Indeed, Only seven OECD countries do not hold positions for internal applicants in any situation – these are Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Iceland, Estonia and Switzerland.

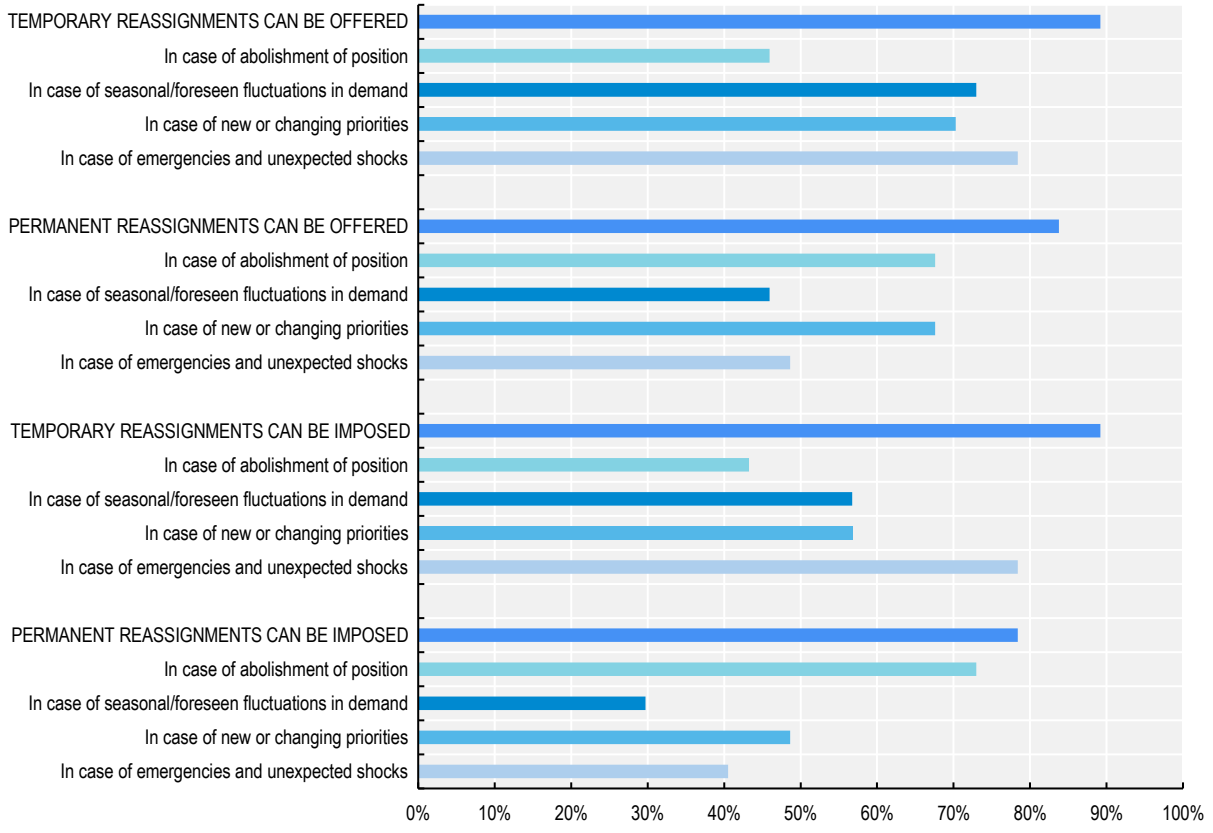
Most OECD countries, however, find themselves in a hybrid situation, where some job openings are reserved for internal applicants. In some countries, this is the norm, with some exceptions. In Italy, all public competitions are preceded by intra- and/or inter-ministerial competitions. Similarly, in the Netherlands, vacancies are in most cases initially open only to internal candidates from the recruiting department; if no suitable candidate is found, the hiring manager decides whether to open the vacancy to candidates from other departments and external candidates. In other countries the norm is to have open competitions with some exceptions made for internal candidates. In Australia, agencies have the option to post temporary job roles to internal applicants only, through various professional job boards and newsletters. In Ireland, some promotion competition processes are open only to internal candidates. There is a sequencing arrangement by grade, which defines how each position should be filled (whether through open, inter-department or internal competition). In New Zealand, some roles are advertised internally to public servants without appearing on the external market. Public Service agencies may do this via an internal email notice, an intranet page, a centrally administered deployment newsletter or through Public Service Careers which is an internal job board that only authenticated public servants can see.

Mobility to address fluctuations in demand ("Surge capacity")

Demand can fluctuate in the public service – driven sometimes by seasonal changes, shifting government priorities, or unexpected emergencies. In some of these cases, most public services have the ability to impose mobility on staff. In case of emergencies and unexpected shocks, 28 OECD countries can impose temporary reassignments, and 14 countries have the power to make these reassignments permanent. In case of new or changing priorities, a smaller overall number of countries can impose reassignments (20) although more can offer them (25 for temporary, 23 for permanent). In case of foreseen (e.g. seasonal) fluctuations in demand, 18 countries can impose temporary reallocations, and 9 permanent, while 24 can offer temporary reallocations. It's only in cases where positions are made redundant due to e.g. organisational restructuring or digitalisation, that a majority (26) of OECD countries can impose permanent reassignments.

Figure 1.7. Mobility to address fluctuations in demand (surge capacity)

Percentage of OECD countries which responded to the survey



Note: N=37. Data for the United States not available. Original question: "Which levers can be used by the public service to reallocate staff (if it varies by position, please answer based on the majority of positions)?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 4 on Mobility.

StatLink https://stat.link/m3x2es

Countries with the most access to these kinds of reassignments include Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Poland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. However, even in these countries mobility is likely seldom imposed. In Australia for example, public servants can be directed to undertake work in a variety of situations, on a temporary or permanent basis, but there are mechanisms for staff to appeal the reassignment of duties, and although the legislative framework allows for reassignment without consultation, in practice the vast majority of these movements only happen with the employee's agreement, following prior consultation. Luxembourg makes a similar statement, that it is possible but rarely done. In various other countries, if mobility is imposed, there are generally limitations – sometimes these are geographic (e.g. in Portugal jobs have to be offered in the same municipality of residence or in an adjoining municipality) and often they apply to the specific level/grade/function of the impacted individual. There is usually a high burden of justification on behalf of the government to prove that the reassignment is a matter of high importance.

When it comes to foreseen fluctuations and expected surges in demand for staff, such as seasonal demands, OECD countries have a number of mechanisms at their disposal. The most common tool is temporary recruitment, used by 31 OECD countries. 26 countries also have mobility tools to redirect civil servants to the needed areas, while only 20 countries address this through outsourcing in some situations.

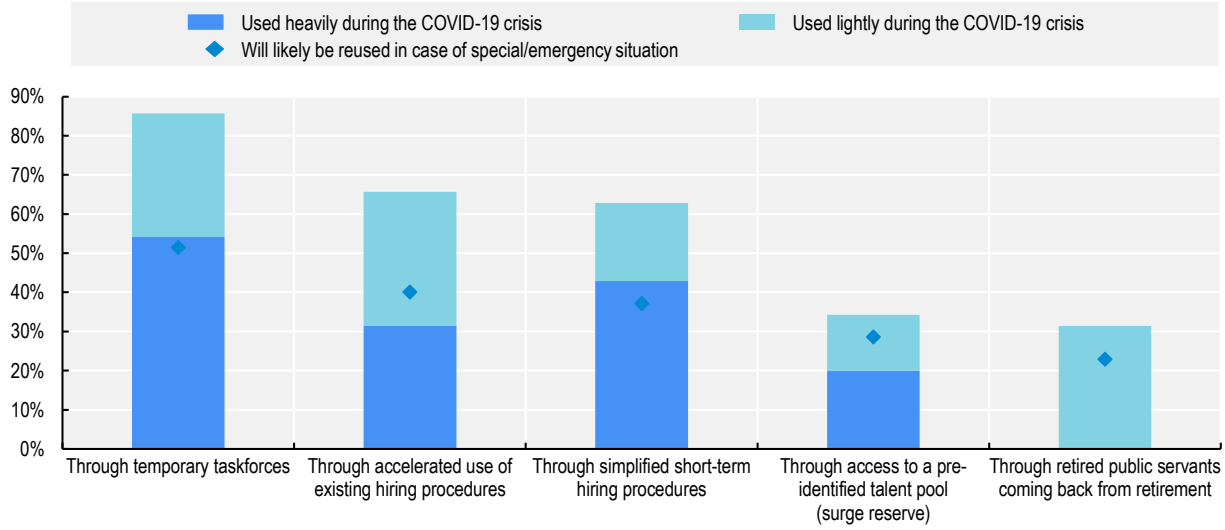
Some interesting lessons from countries in surge capacity include avoiding "surge fatigue" amongst personnel. Organisations should avoid using the same personnel repeatedly to address fluctuations in demand.

Mobility and COVID-19

The COVID crisis provided a very recent and pertinent example of how OECD countries use mobility mechanisms in times of crisis. It will, in many cases, have created the blueprint for future crises of this kind, and also exposed various shortcomings in countries' mobility toolkits that could be better developed for future such scenarios. The most commonly used tool were temporary task forces, established for the co-ordination of emergency response and service delivery across administrations. 19 OECD countries made heave use of this tool, while an additional 11 used this tool lightly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Simplified short-term hiring procedures (often online) were also put in place in a majority of OECD countries, with 15 countries making heavy use of this option, and an additional 7 using these lightly. Furthermore, 22 OECD countries accelerated hiring procedures, with 11 making heavy use of this. Conversely, only 11 OECD countries mobilised skills and staff through access to a pre-identified talent pools or surge reserves, with 6 countries making heavy use of this tool. 10 countries made light use of civil servants coming back from retirement.

Figure 1.8. How skills and staff were mobilised during the COVID crisis and the impact this may have in the future

Percentage of OECD countries which responded to the survey



Note: N=35. Data for the United States, Canada and Denmark not available. Original question: "How were skills and staff mobilised to address the COVID-19 crisis and what impacts will this have looking forward?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 4 on Mobility.

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While many of these efforts made use of pre-existing legal framework, many of the responding countries had to use them in new ways to ensure an adequate deployment of necessary skills for business continuity. For example, in New Zealand, a centralised workforce mobility brokering hub was established to identify, co-ordinate and respond quickly to surge capacity needs across the system. This prototype worked efficiently based on a network of agency leads. This model strengthened business continuity capability for the future, and is likely to be used again. In Portugal, from the outset of the pandemic, an exceptional HR regime for Health was put in place that included the simplification of hiring processes, staff mobility, and the hiring of retired doctors, without age limits. Additionally, Portugal created a transversal mobility programme to reassign workers from central administration to the social security entities in order to deliver the exceptional social security support measures required.

Box 1.6. Australia's public service surge reserve

The Australian Public Service (APS) Surge Reserve is able to mobilise large numbers of staff in case of emergencies. These have been used, for example, to address the COVID crisis, severe weather events, and bushfires. The reserve doesn't require specific technical skills, but rather people from across the public service who are flexible and adaptable, are quick learners, and cope well with change.

APS employees register their interest in being "reservists", and when needed, can then move to other agencies (at their current job level) for short periods of intense need. While on assignment, employees retain all of their entitlements of their home department, including salary and leave.

Source: Information provided by the Australian Public Service.

Looking to the future, the experience of the COVID crisis will likely result in greater internal mobility in 16 countries, and greater external mobility in 13. The same experience was expected to reduce mobility in only 2 countries internally and 1 externally. The majority of countries in both cases felt it would not have a significant impact or were unwilling to make any predictions about the impact. Of the countries who predicted the increase, some pointed towards positive experiences related to previously under-used mobility tools as likely to drive a higher use of these tools in the future. Others pointed out that the increased use of remote-, tele-, and hybrid-working will likely also result in increased mobility as people begin to become more comfortable working in flexible working environments. Others pointed to the increased need for horizontal collaboration during and beyond the pandemic as one of the main drivers of mobility in the future.

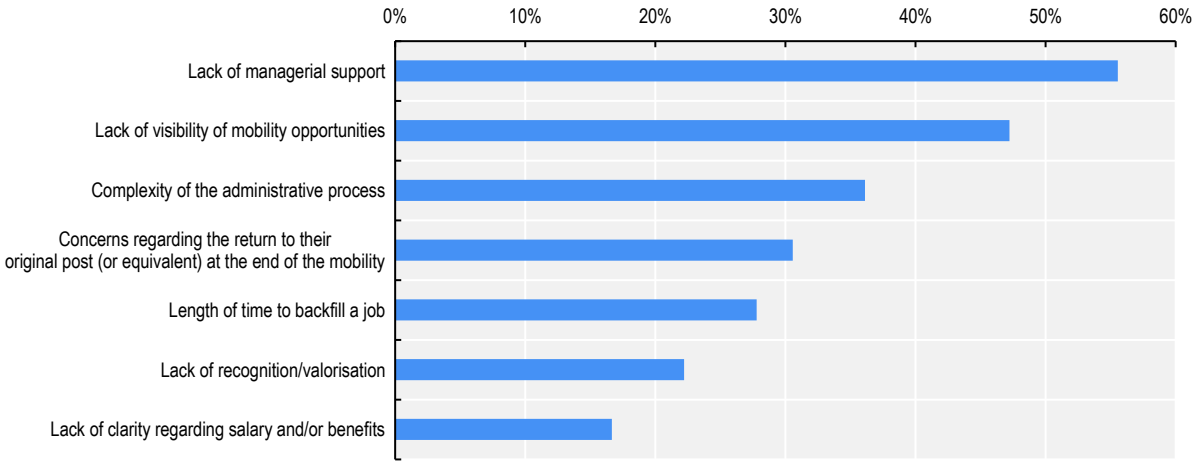
In addition, most OECD countries agreed that many of the procedures put in place during the pandemic would remain and improve the mobility toolkit of the future. 19 countries would reuse the temporary taskforces that were set up during the COVID-19 pandemic, while 15 countries would reactivate the accelerated use of hiring and the simplified short-term hiring solutions. 11 countries also agreed that a pre-existing talent pools could be maintained and even expanded.

Promoting and incentivising mobility

When it comes to effectively managing mobility it's not enough to have the right policies and mechanisms in place – public services also need to ensure the organisational environment is conducive to their use. That means tracking the rates of use of mobility mechanisms, ensuring the right incentives are in place for those who want to use them, and identifying and removing barriers to their use.

Figure 1.9. Common barriers to mobility

Percentage of OECD countries which responded to the survey



Note: N=36. Data for the United States and Denmark not available. Original question: "Which of the following barriers to mobility exist in your public service?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 4 on Mobility.

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Barriers to the use of mobility mechanisms can be cultural or structural. Cultural barriers generally result from misaligned incentive structures. The single most common barrier mentioned by OECD countries is a lack of managerial support. This generally stems from the fact that managers are the first losers when it comes to mobility, as they are expected to send off someone who has likely been working in their team for a while, at the height of their ability and productivity. Furthermore, it is often visible high performers who are picked up for mobility assignments, particularly when they are assignments related to high-priority projects or leadership development. These kinds of situations can create perverse incentives for managers to limit the visibility of their best staff, or resist their mobility opportunities. Changing this culture requires a sustained effort and a structured and predictable mobility system. For example, if manager know that most employees move on regular intervals, they understand how to manage that employee for their time and will support them to prepare for their next role. Managers should also be compensated for mobility by receiving what they give up – to ensure that when a staff member leaves, they are replaced with a new staff member of a similar calibre. This kind of practice would best be organised centrally, so that the burden is not placed entirely on the individual manager. Various tools can be used to also help minimise the inevitable disruptions caused (see next section).

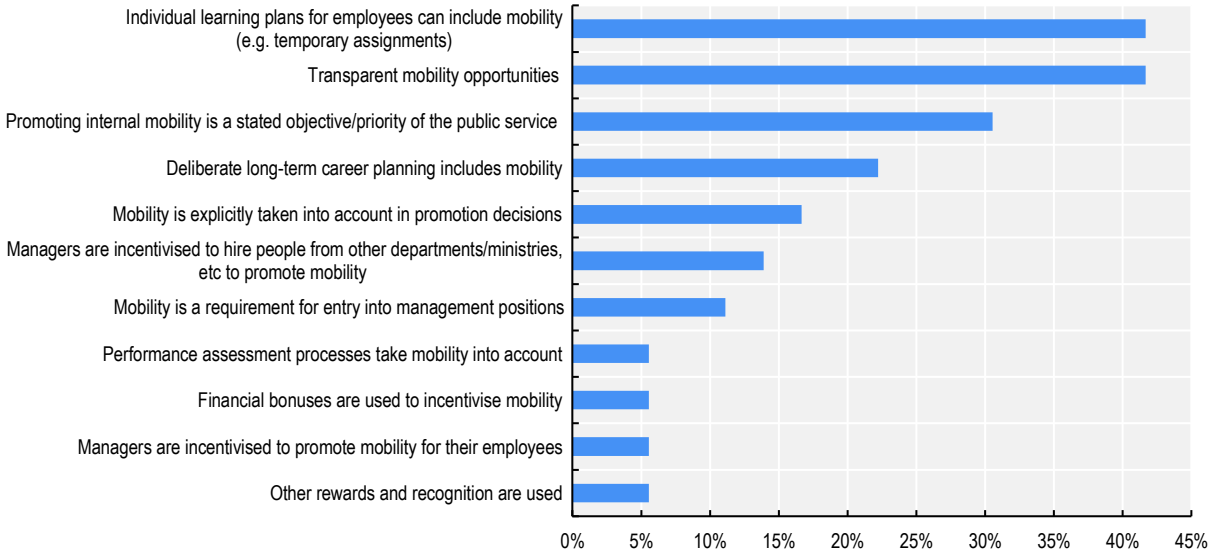
Another cultural barrier is a lack of recognition or valorisation of an employee's mobility experience. In some public services, experience gained in other organisations is seen as a valuable asset, necessary for career advancement. In others, it is less valued than experience gained within. If employees perceive the latter, they will be less motivated to undertake mobility assignments as they would see it as reducing their opportunities for advancement. As with any culture change, overcoming these kinds of embedded cultural assumptions require time and commitment down the leadership chain. Leaders can begin to change the culture by setting mobility criteria and then following through on its implementation. Leaders can lead by example by undertaking mobility opportunities themselves, talking openly about the value they had through mobility in their own careers, and in hiring key roles in their management team from a wider pool than would normally be considered.

Other barriers are structural. The second most common barrier is a lack of visibility of mobility opportunities for staff. Some countries try to address this through the development of online tools that enable a central posting of these opportunities. Administrative complexity is another structural barrier that is often identified. This may be due, for example, to different systems and structured (email, IT access) in the host organisation, or security protocols. These barriers tend to be easier to solve if/when the country chooses to address them with technology and resources to redesign systems with mobility in mind.

In order to get past these and other barriers, some OECD countries tend to proactively promote mobility and take steps to address barriers. The first step may be to openly communicate about the importance of mobility in the administration and to promote it as a stated objective and priority of the public service. This is only done in 11 OECD countries for internal mobility, and in 7 countries for external mobility, suggesting that increasing mobility is not a high priority at this time, despite the recent COVID experience and the range of potential benefits.

Figure 1.10. Incentivising mobility within the public service

Percentage of OECD countries which responded to the survey



Note: N=36. Data for the United States and Denmark not available. Original question: "How is internal lateral mobility promoted and/or facilitated?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 4 on Mobility.

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One of the most commonly used tools to promote internal mobility is the use of individual learning plans for employees which can include mobility options. Individual learning plans are often developed as part of the annual performance cycle. They enable managers and employees to agree on a set of developmental objectives and tools to achieve those. Including mobility in this context can be a way of building a learning culture that also embraces mobility from the manager and employee's perspective. In Türkiye, for example, the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye Human Resource Office (HRO) has established a learning platform called 'Distance Learning Gate' to offer free and accessible training content for public employees. The platform includes more than 36 000 training materials for public employees in a self-paced format. In that sense, employees can arrange their learning plans without being dependent on their institutions' training assignments and participate in learning activities anytime.

The other most common tool is the provision of transparent mobility opportunities, often posted on an internal job board or intranet site. In Portugal, all existing mobility opportunities in the central, local and regional Portuguese public administration must be published on a centralised webpage. In New Zealand, a centralised brokering service is now used to enable surge capability and development needs (for senior leaders via a senior leader development broker and career boards), and a priority newsletter also exists enabling redeployment. In Lithuania, promoting the mobility of civil servants is one of the objectives of a broader reform of the civil service. In Luxembourg, all mobility opportunities for the central public administration are announced centrally at GovJobs. In Canada, the 'GC Jobs' portal provides applicants and managers with a single portal to access all public service job opportunities. There is also an internal GC Career Marketplace that enables and supports employees to take charge of their career and skills development through job shadowing, job swap, micro-mission and other experiential learning opportunities. Australia makes use of Professional and network-based job boards and mobility bulletins to provide transparency to mobility opportunities for interested staff.

Other tools and approaches to promoting mobility may be under-utilised in OECD countries and could provide opportunities to enhance the strategic use of mobility. These include embedding mobility into deliberate long-term career planning, taking it into account in performance management and/or promotion decisions and incentivising managers to promote mobility and hire a certain percentage of people from other departments and/or through mobility schemes. These are only done deliberately in a small handful of OECD countries. Korea is the country that makes the most use of the various tools outlined in the chart below, and provides a useful example of how these can be woven together into a comprehensive framework for the promotion of mobility across its public service.

Box 1.7. Promoting mobility in Korea

The Korean government provides a wide range of incentives for civil servants assigned under regular personnel exchange programmes (i.e. programmes between central government ministries, between central and local ministries, between ministries and public agencies or universities). The Ministry of Personnel Management (MPM) establishes personnel exchange plans and guidelines to operate such programmes in a systematic and organised manner and evaluates each ministry and agency's level of mobility by conducting a personnel management innovation diagnosis. Ministries and agencies with excellent results are provided with certain incentives such as privileges for education and training. Civil servants assigned via personnel exchange programmes are provided with the following incentives:

Promotion: In order to be promoted to the Senior Civil Service, candidates are required to have work experience at different ministries and agencies before they can take the required examinations. In addition, experience in personnel exchange programmes can help for promotion to middle management levels, and can accelerate career trajectories.

Performance evaluation: when determining civil servant's work performance rating and performance-based annual salary and bonuses, personnel exchange experience gives civil servants a higher grade, thus personnel exchange experience gives preferential performance-based compensation.

Assignment: after returning from exchange programmes, civil servants can be assigned to positions they want to be in, and they can always return to their original positions after completion of an exchange programme, regardless of job openings.

Compensation: Exchange allowances are provided to those under personnel exchange programmes. If civil servants have to move to a different location to do a personnel exchange, the government reimburses their housing expense or covers the costs of longer commutes.

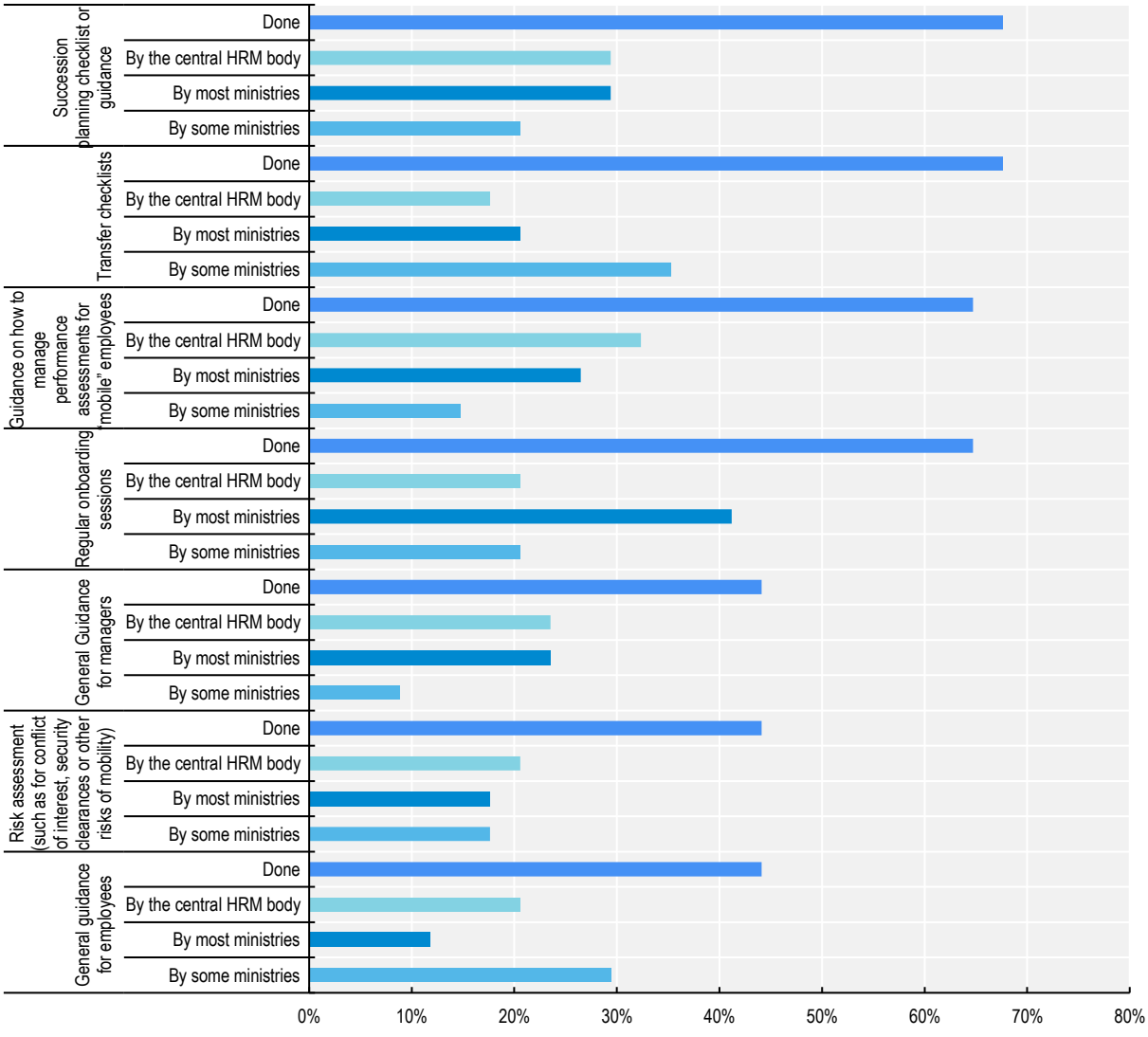
Source: Information provided by the Korean Ministry of Personnel Management.

Support tools

Support tools can help to ensure a mobility policy or strategy is executed effectively, with an aim to minimise the inevitable disruptions caused by removing an employee from their job and moving to another. For example, most OECD countries provide general guidance for employees and managers (24 and 23 respectively) on mobility procedures and tools, as well as regular on-boarding sessions are provided by 23 OECD countries, as a way to ensure that newly arrived employees receive the right kind of orientation to their new working environment. Most OECD countries also do risk assessments to ensure they identify and mitigate risks associated with mobility, such as conflicts of interest, or security clearances. A smaller handful of countries use tools such as succession planning checklists or guidance, transfer checklists, or offer specific guidance on how to handle performance assessments for mobility employees (16 in each case).

Figure 1.11. Tools and guidance to aid mobility

Percentage of OECD countries which responded to the survey



Note: N=34. Data for the United States, Germany, Denmark and Poland not available. Original question: "Are any of the following tools and guidance offered to aid in mobility?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 4 on Mobility.

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Box 1.8. Tools to support mobility

In **Australia**, general guidance for HR practitioners and executives is made available by the central HRM Body (the Australian Public Service Commission), as are various toolkits and secondment MoU templates.

Austria provides detailed information, guidebooks, field reports and other documents for the various internship opportunities with the European Union, in the administrations of other EU countries and in the Austrian federal states are centrally available.

In **Belgium**, most ministries offer career coaching and on a central level a career centre is in place offering career coaching and programmes of reskilling for a select group of civil servants.

The Government of **Canada** maintains platforms that enable at-level mobility and provides general guidance for managers and employees. In addition, tools and guidance are provided by certain functional communities.

In **Spain**, due to the fact of the so common and continuous mobility of staff among ministries, informal transfer of the knowledge and informal trainings among seniors and juniors in the different teams/units/departments is part of the culture of the organisation. On the other hand, many units have internal manuals and/or archives with models and description of procedures which are of great help for juniors or newly arrived colleagues into the units.

In **Ireland**, staff are encouraged to engage with learning and development supports when changing role via mobility, e.g. courses, mentoring, coaching. Additionally, a Central Mobility Team is in place to assist with mobility queries from HR, staff and managers, while the Senior Public Service Team, based in the Dept of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform, supports the Assistant Secretary Mobility process.

In **Israel**, Civil Service Commission directives from 2021 establish guidelines for career management tools for both senior staff and other employees.

In **Italy**, the Department for public administration has established general criteria for giving support to each administration to manage its personnel surplus. Moreover, resources for training to be addressed to civil servants that are going to be transferred has to be foreseen, to let them retrained

In **Latvia**, the State Chancellery has created a roadmap for the new managers in public service. It covers different topics that can help new manager in their new positions.

In **Portugal**, the Public Employment Pool Web Portal (BEP in Portuguese) fundamental objectives are to become an information base that makes it possible to simplify and make more transparent the various processes of recruitment and redeployment of human resources in the public administration, and to facilitate mobility mechanisms. It aims to be an instrument that ensures the link between supply and demand for public employment, regardless of the respective modality of legal employment relationship, using the Internet, as part of the objectives of the information society and those of an efficient and transparent management of human resources in public administration.

In **Türkiye**, the *Career Gate* platform developed in 2020, is used by all ministries and their subsidiaries to carry out recruitment. Career Gate is also used to promote mobility opportunities for public servants, including vertical, external, and temporary mobility.

It is also useful to note that most of these tools are decentralised, developed and used by individual ministries and agencies, rather than by the central HR units. Only 11 countries provide guidance to managers centrally, while 10 countries do so to general employees. Similarly, only 7 OECD countries offer onboarding services, succession planning tools and transfer checklists at the central level. Risk assessments are managed centrally in 6 countries, while the same is true for guidance on performance assessment in 8 countries. This is somewhat surprising, given that the cross-ministry nature of mobility would suggest a greater role for central authorities in these areas. Countries that appear to be using most of these tools in a centralised way include Australia, France, Italy and Korea. Other countries that are using most of the tools, but in a more decentralised way include Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Ireland, Mexico, the Netherlands, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and the United Kingdom.

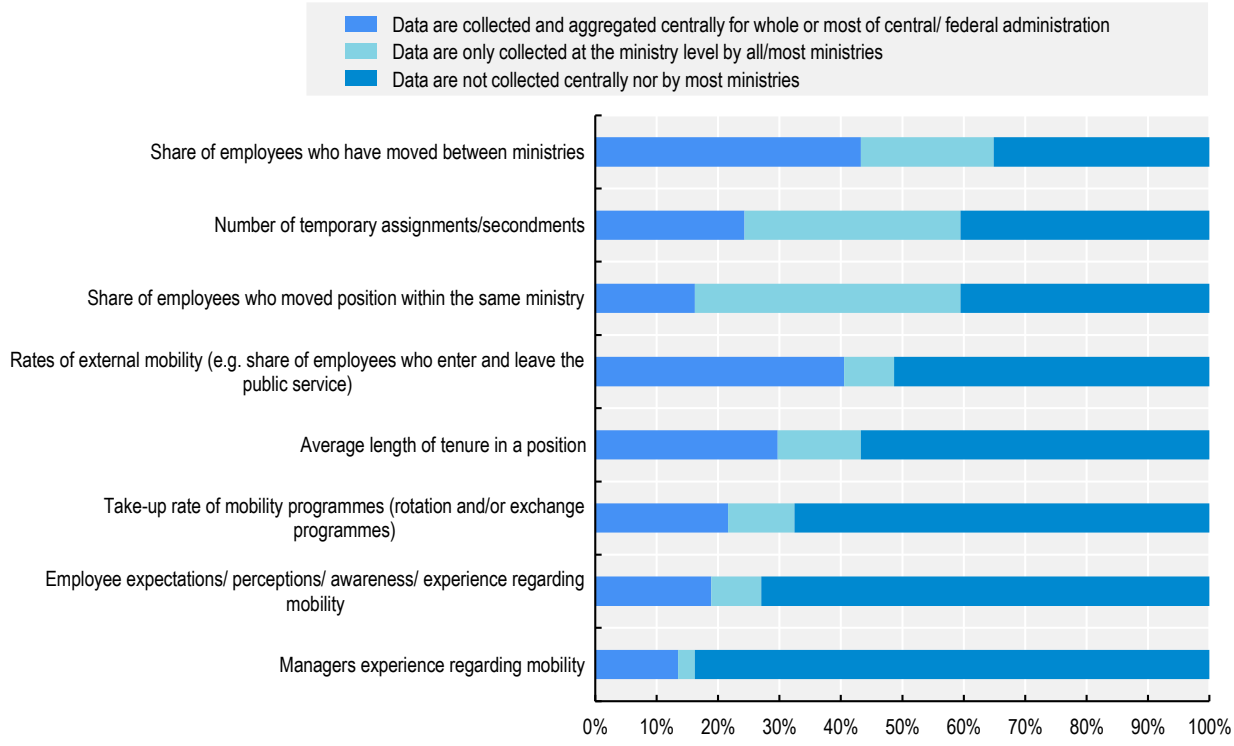
Data to monitor and evaluate mobility

Monitoring and evaluating mobility is important to ensure it is being managed in a beneficial way for organisations, managers and employees. Public sector organisations should monitor with key indicators that could include turnover or retention rates; average tenure or length of service in position; participation in secondment schemes; and promotions. In Türkiye, for example, a project called 'Career Map' has been developed by the Presidency Human Resource Office to track workforce mobility between the public and private sectors by job titles, observing career plateaus and career breaks. However, in most OECD member countries the wide variety of mobility options available coupled with the added difficulties of collecting such data across institutions means that accurate quantitative mobility indicators are relatively rare.

A majority of OECD countries track the share of employees who have moved jobs - between ministries (65% of countries) and within the same ministry (59% of countries). About the same share also track the number of temporary assignments and secondments. About half the countries also track movement in and out of the public service as a whole. It's worth noting that fewer countries aggregate this data centrally – only 16 countries track movement across ministries centrally, 15 track movement in and out of the public service, 9 countries track the use of temporary secondments centrally, and only 6 countries aggregate data about movement internal to ministries and agencies. Indicators such as the take-up rate of specific mobility programmes are tracked by only 12 countries, while 16 track average length of tenure.

Figure 1.12. Mobility indicators tracked by OECD countries

Percentage of OECD countries which responded to the survey



Note: N=37. Data for the United States not available. Original question: "Which indicators do you track regarding mobility?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 4 on Mobility.

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In addition, several public administrations supplement administrative data with information collected through employee surveys. 10 countries look at the experience and perceptions of employees regarding mobility through employee surveys, while only 6 countries do so specifically for managers. This can include questions related to mobility, such as on intent to leave current position and opportunities for development. These questions can also serve to assess staff and managerial openness around mobility, to identify possible bottlenecks and/or unaddressed risks. Taken together, perception data and indicators from administrative data may provide a more comprehensive picture of the extent to which the workforce is strategically mobile.

All in all – the use of data and indictors for mobility is not evenly spread across countries. Some (around 14 OECD countries) collect all or almost all of these indicators, while some (around 10) do not collect any at all. Those countries that collect data centrally also tend to collect the most data. Countries that appear to track the broadest range of indicators centrally include Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Ireland, Israel, Korea, and Mexico. Countries that collect most of this data but in a more decentralised way (data collected and held by individual ministries) include Germany, Spain, France, Greece, the United Kingdom and Türkiye.

Conclusion

The data in this chapter point to mobility as a potentially under-used tool that can be used by public services to boost flexibility. But this depends to a large degree on the joined-up and strategic nature of mobility. Ad-hoc initiatives may appeal to some public servants, but a more structured approach emphasising career development and aligning with learning opportunities can help identify much-needed skills and ensure that they are able to be used where most relevant. The data in this report highlight several key messages:

First, there are different mobility mechanisms available to governments, whether lateral, vertical, internal or external. 'Mobility' can refer to a week-long exchange in a different part of the public sector to a more comprehensive (and permanent) move to a different Ministry or even part of the country. Used strategically, structured opportunities to move across the public service to learn and apply new skills can be a magnet for talent – particularly at a time when the public service is in competition for in-demand skills.

Second, going beyond public health emergencies such as the pandemic, the ability to identify skills and re-allocate talent is an essential tool for governments. To get the most out of mobility, however, strategic mobility relies on public sector organisations being able to establish the right conditions, clarify the intent, incentivise mobility, and prevent adverse effects such as loss of institutional knowledge, disruptions or potential conflict of interest.

Finally, countries need more data and evidence to assess its impacts, identify the good practices and promote the right types of mobility. Without mobility, governments risk losing the flexibility needed to address complex and multidisciplinary challenges, promote innovation and respond effectively in times of crisis.

Reference

OECD (2019), *OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability*, OECD, Paris, https://www.oecd.org/gov/pem/recommendation-on-public-service-leadership-and-capability.htm (accessed on 2 February 2022). [1]

Notes

[1] Comparisons should be treated with caution as the authors do not know which methodologies are used in each country.

[2] While these countries report the existence of these mechanisms, the survey is unable to assess the level of their use and/or the quality of their design.

2 Learning cultures in the public service

This chapter discusses the concept of learning cultures in public sector organisations. It explores how such cultures are created and maintained, and their outcomes on the overall skillset and adaptability of the public service and its leadership. To explore the subject, this chapter discusses current research in the area, and presents a selection of data and comparative indicators on learning and development practices in OECD countries. The data are derived from part of the OECD survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability in 2022.

Key messages

- **A learning culture underpins the success of learning strategies within public administrations.** Learning should be a "part of the job"; expected, continuous throughout the career, viewed positively, and modelled by leadership. Whether a public service has a learning culture can be a huge deciding factor in overall skill and competency development.
- **Learning and development is increasingly important** to maintain a skilled and flexible public service in the face of crises, complexity and constraints faced by modern governments. A well thought out strategy and plan for learning and development is essential and should be incorporated into broader workforce planning systems. Successful strategies take time, effort and investment.
- **Support for learning and development from management** can be a difference-maker in its success within the organisation. The prioritisation of it by top leadership can lead to substantially increased results. Further, **responsibility for employee development can be shared between a public servant and their manager**. It is increasingly part of a manager's job to develop their teams and departments.
- **Incentive structures for learning and development need to align with the learning needs** of the organisation and the employee. For example, learning can be considered in performance evaluations, growth plans, and promotion decisions.
- **Competencies and behaviours are increasingly essential in the public service**, especially at the top levels of management. Teaching these in ways that ensures their use on the job is important for administrations.
- **Data is vital** to measure and monitor outcomes, successes and inclusive practices. Though sometimes challenging, collecting, analysing and using data on learning and development is a hugely influential factor in developing and maintaining successful learning and development strategies.
- **Technology can be used to enhance learning outcomes and accessibility**; not only through online courses but also through gamified learning, mobile apps and the use of AI.
- **Informal learning is a powerful phenomenon** that can be harnessed in learning and development strategies. Informal learning – like learning-by-doing and observing others – makes up a substantial portion of adult learning. Incorporating it into learning systems and strategies can yield very promising results, especially for teaching behaviours, competencies and attitudes.

The necessity for learning in the modern public service workforce

Learning cultures inside the public service

Today's modern public service faces complex and emerging policy problems, seemingly continual crises, and a new technology-driven global environment. As circumstances change, learning becomes essential for flexibility in the public service because learning itself is at the heart of innovation, adaptation, and workforce resilience. The role of a public servant has evolved substantially, requiring new skills and competencies that necessitate lifelong learning and capability enhancement across the course of a career. As such, learning has become a "part of the job" in the public service. Successful, future-focused and crisis-ready administrations are made up of public servants with vast skillsets and have the ability to continually develop staff to meet the needs of modern governance. Such administrations inevitably have strong learning cultures, wherein learning is not only an expectation but a natural, habitual aspect of the organisational experience and design.

A learning culture fosters, enables and incentivises learning, and creates an environment in which it is viewed positively by employees, managers and the organisation more broadly. With the establishment of a learning culture, continual development shifts from being viewed as burdensome, optional or unexciting to being associated with growth and career progression, and is both needed and expected – and ideally also welcomed.

There is also a shift from learning being solely delivered formally and through traditional course-based means in punctuated moments (often only in the beginning of a career) to being factored into the day-to-day ways of working, with a multitude of opportunities for learning. A learning culture places the responsibility for learning and development on not only employees, but also on managers, teams, systems and structures, and the workplace as a whole. It aids in fostering an environment in which employees maintain and update their skills, and continually develop new ones, leading to a wider and more diverse skill base within a workforce, which can contribute to greater workforce resilience and flexibility.

Enabling learning in – and for – the workplace

Creating learning systems and strategies – and embedding learning cultures into organisations – requires a deep understanding of how adults learn in – and learn *for* – their workplaces and their professional selves. The actual impact of learning at work depends largely on an organisation's recognition of employees' learning efforts and individual competencies (Desjardins, 2017[1]). Adults make conscious decisions about whether to formally engage in learning, and also how and when to learn (Kantar Public and Learning and Work Institute, 2018[2]). They are "not very inclined to learn something of which they cannot see the point on the basis of their own life situation" (Illeris, 2003[3]).

Beyond formal settings, learning comes in many forms that can have different outcomes and goals, and varying utility for individual types of learners. It can be active and intentional through formal courses, for instance. It can also happen more collaboratively, such as through non class-based formats such as workshops or discussions, or informally, such as through learning-by-doing or observing others (OECD, 2021[4]). A one-size-fits all approach, across people and situations, is seldom the best solution; determining what *is* can be more complicated, yet the most impactful on outcomes.

Leadership plays a substantial role in creating learning cultures. Organisations who reported that their senior managers truly value and support employee learning and development as a priority also report significantly higher ratings on many other aspects of a learning culture, such as whether line managers support their team's development and the extent to which employees participate and engage in learning opportunities (Elizabeth Crowley and Laura Overton, 2021[5]).

An employee's direct manager may teach a lot without realising – simply by doing their job and interacting with their team. This learning may be amplified through feedback, reflection or coaching. Further, leaders who model their own learning behaviour and who give value to learning in an organisation are more likely to create organisations with strong learning cultures (Elizabeth Crowley and Laura Overton, 2021[5]). Social learning theory, when applied to the workplace, develops the idea that observing, modelling and imitating the behaviours, attitudes and emotional reactions of others – particularly those closest to us or in immediate positions of leadership – is a primary driver of how humans learn (Bandura, 1977[6]).

Learning most often happens without us realising it – or at least, somewhat involuntarily. While some very tangible skills and knowledge can be learned, if desired, through traditional means – lectures, studying, and acquiring information – other large swaths of learning take place through far less identifiable means; through experience, through watching others, interactions, experiments, and so on. Learning in the workplace is "a messy object, existing in different states" (Fenwick, 2010[7]), and happens in a variety of ways for each individual; there is no one way – or one right way – to learn at work.

The most effective organisational learning and development systems incorporate and foster many types of learning. Learning exists at the crossroads of the individual (and their own abilities) and their surroundings – their organisation, team or society. The design and delivery of systems and support for learning is as important as content in terms of whether employees attain new knowledge, retain it, and then use it in real situations (OECD, 2005[8]).

Because of this, workplace learning intersects with organisational structures and workforce planning policy, particularly in the areas of incentive structures and the design of day-to-day work. Since learning happens naturally, though often unintentionally, organisations can recognise this phenomenon and harness it's potential, creating situations wherein natural learning can happen with intent, and also be recognised and rewarded. This can be used as part of an overall development system in a workplace, for instance through feedback, structured reflection and well thought out team design.

The changing skill and competency needs of a modern public service

A public service that places greater value on competencies, behaviours and socioemotional skills is likely to be better equipped to tackle modern problems and crises that call on the resilience and resourcefulness of public servants. An increased need for not only technical skills but also high-level cognitive and complex social-interaction competencies is leading to new learning and training needs. These competencies contribute to aspects of effective leadership, crisis and change management, innovation and more.

The urgency and pertinence of creating and maintaining a public sector workforce that has the skills and competencies to be future-ready in the modern world of complex policy problems demands strategic and prioritised learning and development systems inside administrations. Such training systems for improving employee skills and capacities are complex and require sufficient resources and strategic planning supported by evidence. Competency frameworks, workforce planning and a view of the workforce as a set of capabilities rather than roles (and thereby enabling greater flexibility and resiliency to adapt to changing circumstances and priorities) can help guide what skills are needed most. In turn, these can inform training and learning decisions.

Box 2.1. Can complex workplace behavioural competencies be taught?

Behavioural competencies – actions or abilities stemming from social, emotional, situational, and cognitive intelligence, sometimes rather (mistakenly) referred to as "soft" skills – are arguably the most critical capabilities for organisations to acquire and develop. They are also difficult to really "put a finger on", as they are often manifestations or reflections of the character, personality, and self-development of a person. They are therefore a challenge to teach and learn, especially compared to other more tangibly identifiable skills.

Whether these competencies can be taught, and to what extent, is important to the design of public service and organisational learning and development strategies and systems. Research on the topic helps to answer this question, and to systematise methodologies designed to teach these competencies (Bonesso et al., 2020[9]), finding that:

- Combining formal teaching with experiential learning has a larger effect than either of their own. Emotional and social competencies can likely only be effectively intentionally developed when experiential learning and making use of learned skills (i.e. through simulations, collaborative assignments, or learning games) takes place alongside formal attempts at teaching. Opportunities to reflect on, and perhaps revise, beliefs and ways of working can also be built into learning programmes, and can have a larger impact on a learner's development.
- Demonstrating the behavioural competencies you want to develop in others is often the best way to teach them. Much in the same way parents and teachers model behaviour for children, in an organisational setting employees learn from the demonstrated capabilities of their managers and colleagues, and can be supported in developing and modelling similar attributes.
- Investing in and focusing on building managers' behavioural competencies pays off. Developing such competencies in the management group is especially important for sustaining high performance, fostering the ability to withstand and lead through crises, and leaders' ability to in turn develop their own teams. These skills are often the result of managers own sustained efforts in self development, but can also be aided and instilled by specific training programmes.
- Sign post the intent to develop behavioural competencies. Explicitly teaching behavioural competencies can serve to signal their importance. So, while teaching them can be difficult, the existence of such learning programmes can instil a desire in an individual to develop and grow themselves, and undertake the – often very personal – process of learning such skills. Learners of competencies need to want to learn and grow to some degree, and be self-aware enough to desire and identify growth.
- Take a long-term and whole-of-person approach to developing behavioural competencies in staff. Acquiring these competencies influences more than just job performance; it can also lead to increased stress tolerance, self-satisfaction and well-being, alongside career advancement, higher confidence and a more entrepreneurial/innovative mind set.

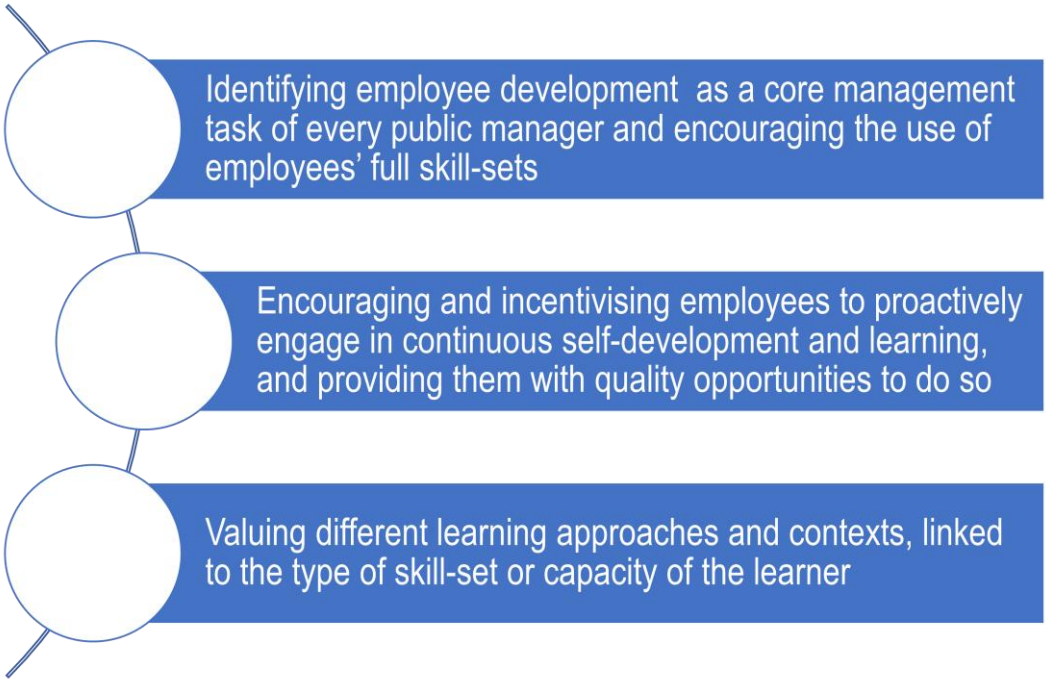
Designing and implementing effective systems in governments requires understanding not only what skills are needed, but also how to instil them and how to attain the participation of target learners. Succeeding at this is a much-discussed topic, though one that is rarely studied – despite research demonstrating that training and workplace learning and development have a direct effect on organisational performance and strategic goals (Kroll and Moynihan, 2015[10]). This chapter contributes data on the topic not otherwise available to decision-makers from OECD member country central administrations.

Current strategies for learning and development in the public service

The following sections of the chapter discuss how learning and development systems are being designed and implemented inside OECD countries' public services. They do so with a specific focus on learning *cultures* – overall and systemic organisational attitudes and actions that orbit around and creates space for continual development. Learning cultures have several elements – for instance, leadership, incentives, depth of opportunity and evidence-based strategy – that combine to create what is otherwise a less tangible concept. What follows outlines many of these, using data from an OECD survey conducted by the Public Employment and Management work stream, which undertakes work guided by the OECD Recommendation of the Council of Public Service Leadership and Capability (OECD, 2019[11]). Principle 8 of the recommendation, elaborated on in Figure 2.1, below, highlights the impact of learning cultures on skill and competency development, within the public sector context.

Figure 2.1. OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability

Principle 8: "Developing the necessary skills and competencies by creating a learning culture and environment in the public service, in particular through"



Source: OECD (2019[11]), "Recommendation of the Council on Public Service Leadership and Capability", *OECD Legal Instruments*, OECD/LEGAL/0445, OECD, Paris, https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0445.

This section first explores the structure of learning systems, as well as who has responsibility for learning and development in teams and central administrations. It then discusses ways to incentivise employees to undertake learning and elements of quality and strategic development offerings, followed by information on the individual learning and development needs of employees.

Systems, structures and the division of responsibility for learning and development

Organisational learning strategies

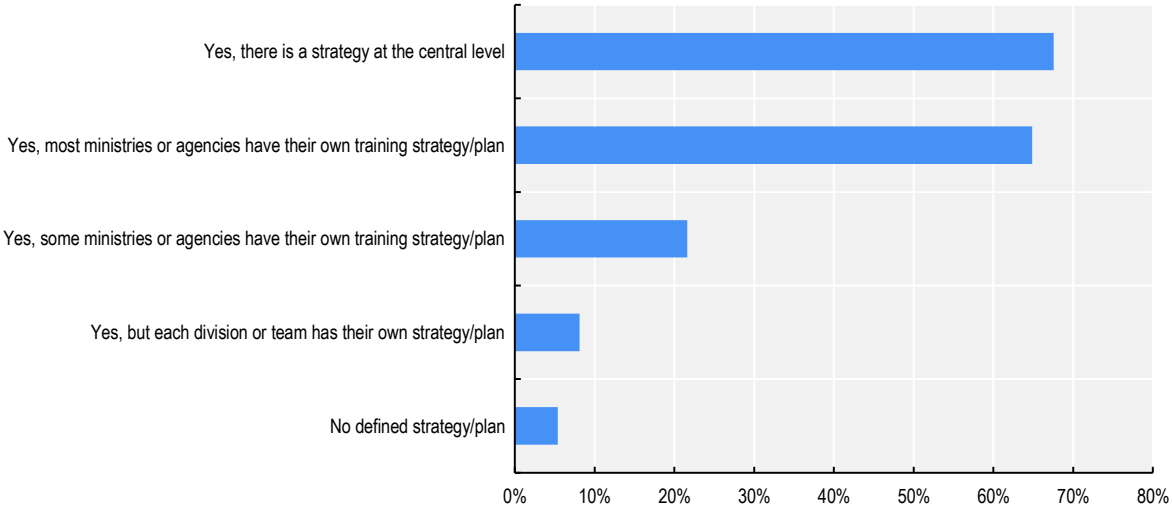
How central administrations implement and co-ordinate training across ministries and agencies contributes to the overall learning culture. Organisational learning strategies and tools can be centrally organised, distributed throughout ministries, left up to individual managers, outsourced, and a range or combination of other options. OECD countries that have learning and development strategies organise and implement them in a variety of ways. Figure 2.2 below, shows that only 5% of survey respondent countries report that there is no L&D strategy in their administration, while 68% say there is a strategy at the central level and 65% say that most ministries or agencies have their own strategy.

Ministry-based plans are sometimes due to a more decentralised government model, such as in Norway, where each individual organisation is free to work towards agreed national plans in ways that suit them, including by accessing available training programmes executive through the Norwegian Agency for Public and Financial Management. In Figure 2.3, we can see that around half of countries have a centralised national School of Government or similar, or a central agency that executes training and development offerings, while in nearly 80% of cases, ministries and agencies are delivering or arranging their own.

Combinations of answers are possible, as in many cases countries' learning strategies are made up of several combined systems. For instance, in Spain, the National Institute of Public Administration runs training for employees across the civil service, and individual ministries also run their own specialised training programmes linked to the needed competencies in each area. Another example is from the United Kingdom, which has launched the Government Campus Curriculum, an administration-wide strategy that aims to bring all training, throughout all ministries, under one umbrella and available to all. It also takes advantage of specialised ministerial training by making it more broadly available rather than centralising it, and losing the expertise behind its creation and delivery (for more in this initiative in the United Kingdom, see the additional case study in this report).

Figure 2.2. Learning and development strategies in central governments, 2022

Percentage of countries that responded to the survey question

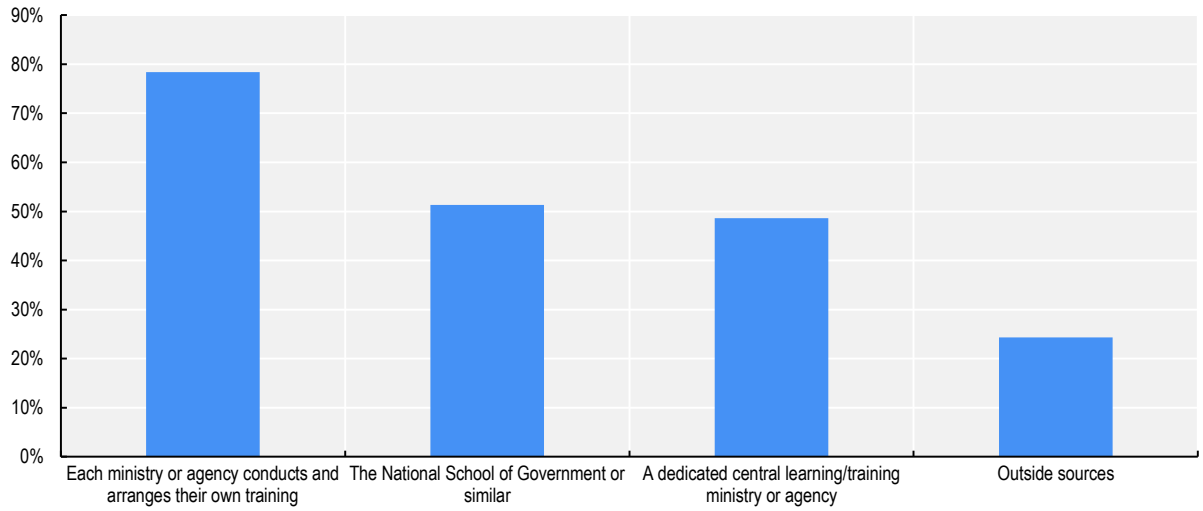


Note: N=37. Data for the United States not available. More than one answer was possible. Original Question: "Is there a learning and development strategy/plan for central/federal public servants?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 5 on Learning and Development.

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Figure 2.3. Responsibility for learning and development in central governments, 2022

Percentage of countries that responded to the survey question



Note: N=37. Data for the United States not available. More than one answer was possible. Original question: "Who is in charge of carrying out training and learning across the central/federal administration?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 5 on Learning and Development.

StatLink https://stat.link/by3tuk

Many strategies can be effective, but planning, organisation and co-ordination are key for effective and fit-for-purpose systems. Many countries that do well at workforce learning and development have well thought out and universal systems that cover the entire administration workforce, foster communication and best practices across departments and agencies, and provide equal opportunities for growth and development to all staff (though, tailored to the needs of individuals and roles). Networks, working groups and communities of practice across administrations and departments can contribute to the overall culture, and ways of thinking and working can spread beyond departmental borders. Creating equal opportunities and rewards for learning organisation-wide also prevents the formation of silos of talented and motivated staff in only some areas of government. Having a government-wide culture of learning also serves to support initiatives that contribute to skill building, workforce resilience and flexibility, such as through opportunities for mobility between different departments and roles.

Effective systems require financial planning and strategy to implement. Especially with the shift to digital learning technologies and e-learning platforms, a tangible investment in learning development is required for administrations to succeed. Therefore, it is important to allocate a required budget and to be able to measure and monitor the results of this expenditure.

The manager's role in a learning culture

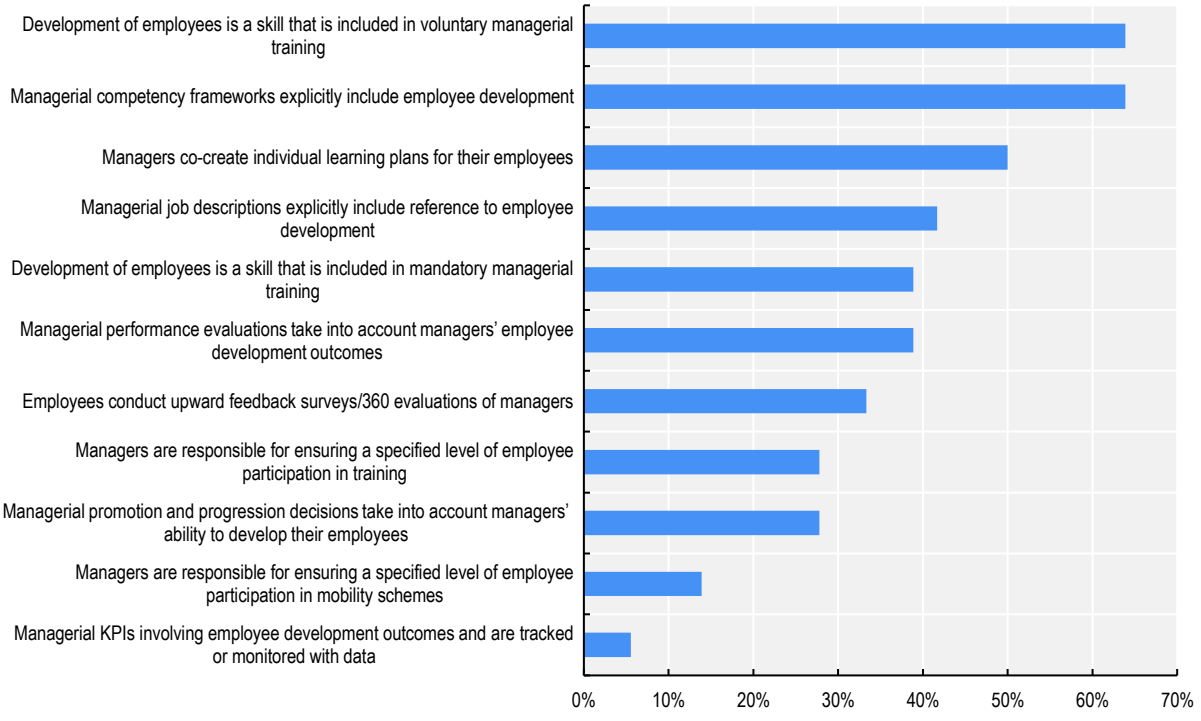
Managers play an essential role in establishing and maintaining a learning culture. The sense that developing employees is "part of the job" for managers cyclically contributes to and is reinforced by a learning culture. Specific behaviours and competencies can be sought and developed in managers that define and foster the understanding of their role as facilitators of learning, and their effectiveness in the task. This aspect of the role of a public sector manager is perhaps a shift from traditional systems; from the manager as the smartest and most knowledgeable, to the manager supporting and enabling excellence, autonomy and development in their employees. It suggests moving away from immediate

managers being only “bosses” with a focus on organising and distributing the work, to being “coaches” who work with their staff to build their skills and competencies. Managers also play an extremely significant role in their employees’ learning and growth simply by proximity; people learn a large amount of professional skills and habits from observing and working alongside their managers – making every manager a mentor of their team, whether they realise it or not.

In OECD countries, employee and team development is emerging as a defined and expected managerial task. Figure 2.4 below shows ways that this is fostered, encouraged, or reinforced. Almost two-thirds of OECD countries report providing voluntary training for managers on how to develop their staff and the inclusion of employee development in managerial competency frameworks, and around half expect managers to co-create learning plans with their employees. However, other measures scored much lower. Very few countries take a manager’s ability and success at developing employees into consideration for promotion decisions, hold managers responsible for ensuring employees participate in training, or use indicators to measure or track employee development outcomes.

Figure 2.4. Employee development as an expected managerial task, 2022

Percentage of countries that responded to the survey question



Note: N=36. Data for the United States and Iceland not available. Original question: “Is employee development reinforced as an expected managerial task through any of the following?”.
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 5 on Learning and Development.

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Countries are approaching managerial responsibility for employee development in different ways. In the United Kingdom, a managerial competency framework includes “developing others”, while in Portugal, a manager’s statute mentions HR development, and some managers are measured against this in performance appraisals. In Spain, managers must undertake yearly questionnaires outlining the training

needs of their staff or departments, and in France managers are required to discuss professional development and training with staff as part of yearly professional assessments. Managers and senior leaders contribute immensely to the overall culture inside an organisation, and must learn to create space for employees to try new things and undergo the process of developing themselves.

Continual improvement and progress in the modern public service relies on learning as well as freedom and support to innovate, experiment and try new things. Managers who model learning behaviour and innovative practices can also "pass it down" to their teams, and then can further support and reward this behaviour when it is demonstrated. Experimentation, especially in innovative policy-making settings, can contribute substantively to individual and administration-wide learning (Dutz et al., 2014[12]) and is a key indicator of a healthy learning culture. Innovation and experimentation are essential components of progress, problem solving and a forward-looking public service. In order to create an organisational culture of learning and development and instil innovative and experimental thinking and skillsets in the workforce, employees should feel enabled and supported to try new things and take some risks – even in the (often likely) event that those things do not "work" in the traditional sense of the word.

Experimentation leads to learning – in fact, that is its entire purpose. Experiments expand our understanding by trying new things, and in that context, they seldom "fail"; even if things do not "work", learning has taken place. Managers can encourage this type of learning by clearly removing the expectations of "success" and the risks around "failure". Often, existing traditional structures inside administrations work against fostering innovation and experimentation. A tendency to maintain the status quo or follow direction may be frequently found within governments, especially in administrations with top-down managerial structures or abundant regulation that dictates ways of working. Further, fear of failure (or of negative performance reviews stemming from it) results in masking some of the best learning opportunities. Finding ways around this is a key challenge for developing learning cultures in the public service.

Data-informed design of learning and development systems

Collecting data and evidence is essential for any informed strategy or plan, and learning and development systems are no exception. Data collection and analysis allows organisations to better understand if training systems are working; if they are reaching the right people, teaching the right things, and fostering the culture they hope to achieve. Across the OECD, there is variation on whether data on learning systems are being collected, and if so, what type of data.

Around 90% of countries do track – in some way, either centrally or in ministries – training uptake, employee satisfaction, completion of and time spent in training, and feedback on instructors. In Australia, Canada, Korea and United Kingdom, numerous types of data are collected both centrally – through national training schools or centres – and on a ministerial or agency level, to some degree.

However, fewer countries track the outcomes and results derived from training systems, or how new skills are used on the job. Australia further collects information on learning effectiveness, by running staff opinion surveys. Korea has ambitious data collection aims stemming from the intensive focus on advanced e-learning systems, which can by extension collect a variety of useful data.

Many organisations are beginning to collect more data through e-learning systems, as they build up such systems into substantive parts of overall learning strategies. For example, Ireland has a platform called OneLearning (see Box 2.2), which enables the central administration to collect certain information on its use, and Canada's national school and most ministries collect and aggregate online training data.

Box 2.2. OneLearning in the Irish civil service

OneLearning, the Learning and Development Centre for the Civil Service, is based in the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (DPER). OneLearning was established in 2017 under 'The Civil Service Renewal Plan October 2014' (Action 9). This was formal recognition of the importance of learning and development's role in supporting all civil servants to continue to develop essential skills for their current and future roles in a culture of continuously improving the quality of service to the citizen.

OneLearning has centralised the administration of learning and development (L&D) courses common to 44 Civil Service Bodies (CSBs), providing standardised high quality training to approximately 42 500 Civil Servants nationwide. This has a significant positive impact on the Civil Service. The implementation of the Civil Service wide Learning Management System (LMS) has made the administration of L&D more effective across Government, greatly enhancing the ability of CSBs to provide high quality learning and development to staff and making training more accessible to all.

Prior to the establishment of OneLearning, 44 Civil Service Bodies (CBSs) delivered their L&D programmes independently. There were no synergies and consistency, with CBSs doing their own procurement. This resulted in major inefficiencies and duplication across the Civil Service. This did not deliver value for money for the citizen and the Civil Service. In addition, there was no consistency of access to training for civil servants across Government.

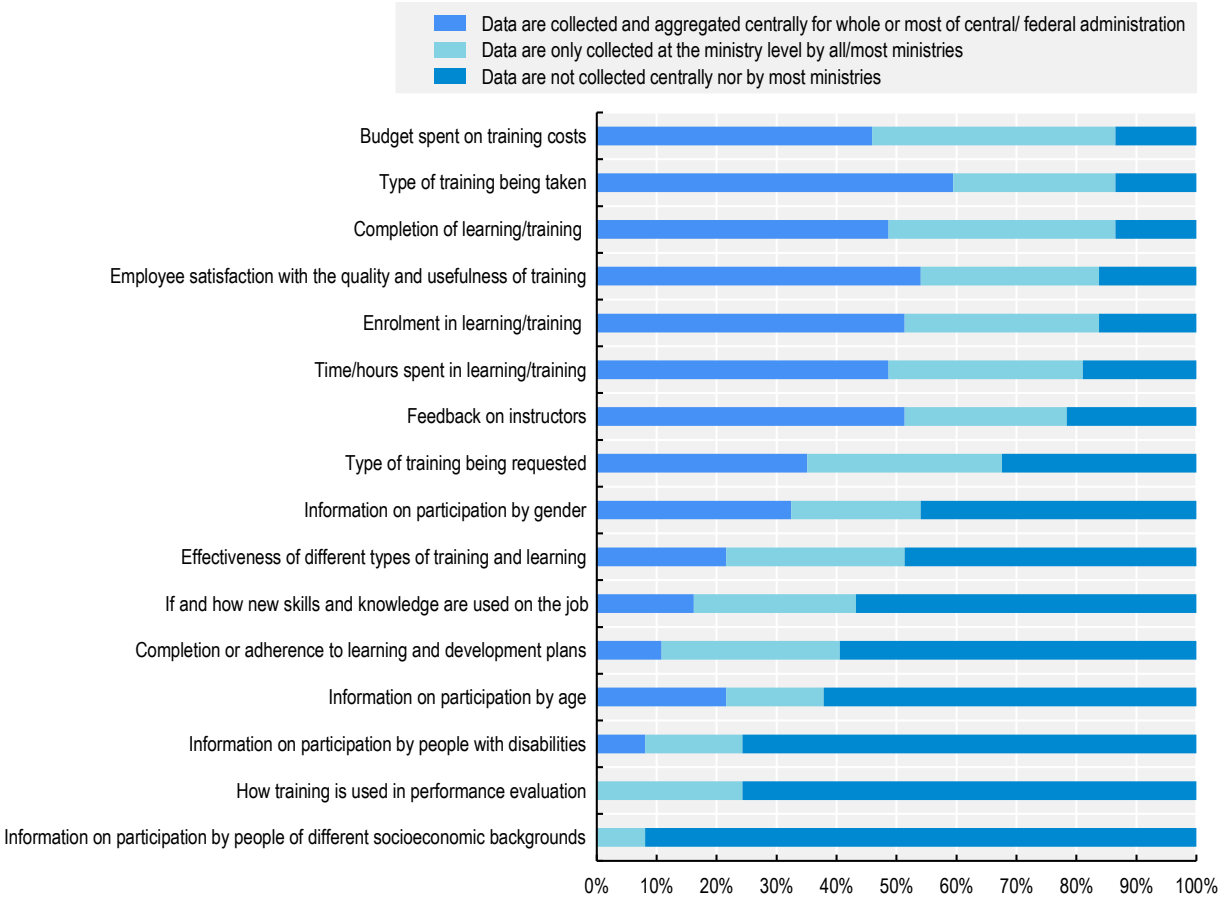
Significant variation exists across CBSs in terms of their size, business needs, culture, and locations. OneLearning is providing consistency in the employee experience in accessing learning and development and enable self-directed learning, encouraging civil servants to take ownership of and responsibility for their own learning and personal development.

OneLearning is a lean, efficient and effective team (headcount of 16) who are very dynamic and passionate about their work. OneLearning has established a culture of collaboration, flexibility, creativity and innovation, with constructive and honest dialogue being the norm within the team and in engagement with key stakeholders. Ongoing learning and development, benchmarking and horizon scanning are key to how OneLearning operates.

Source: Based on information provided by the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform

Figure 2.5. Data and indicators on learning and development (L&D), 2022

Percentage of countries that responded to the survey question



Note: N=37. Data for the United States not available. Original question: "Which indicators do you track regarding training and development?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 5 on Learning and Development.

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Notably, data collected on the diversity and inclusion aspects of training programmes ranked comparatively low. The survey asked if participation across various diverse groups – gender, disability, age and socioeconomic background – is tracked. The majority of responding countries do not track this information. This leaves questions about whether all employees are reached by training initiatives and being given opportunities for growth and development. Lack of data in itself does not mean there is an issue – but it is impossible to know for sure without it. Reaching all employees and allowing them to learn, grow and reach their potential can be a huge factor in creating a broadly skilled workforce.

Opportunities and incentives for learning and development in a modern public service

Incentivising learning

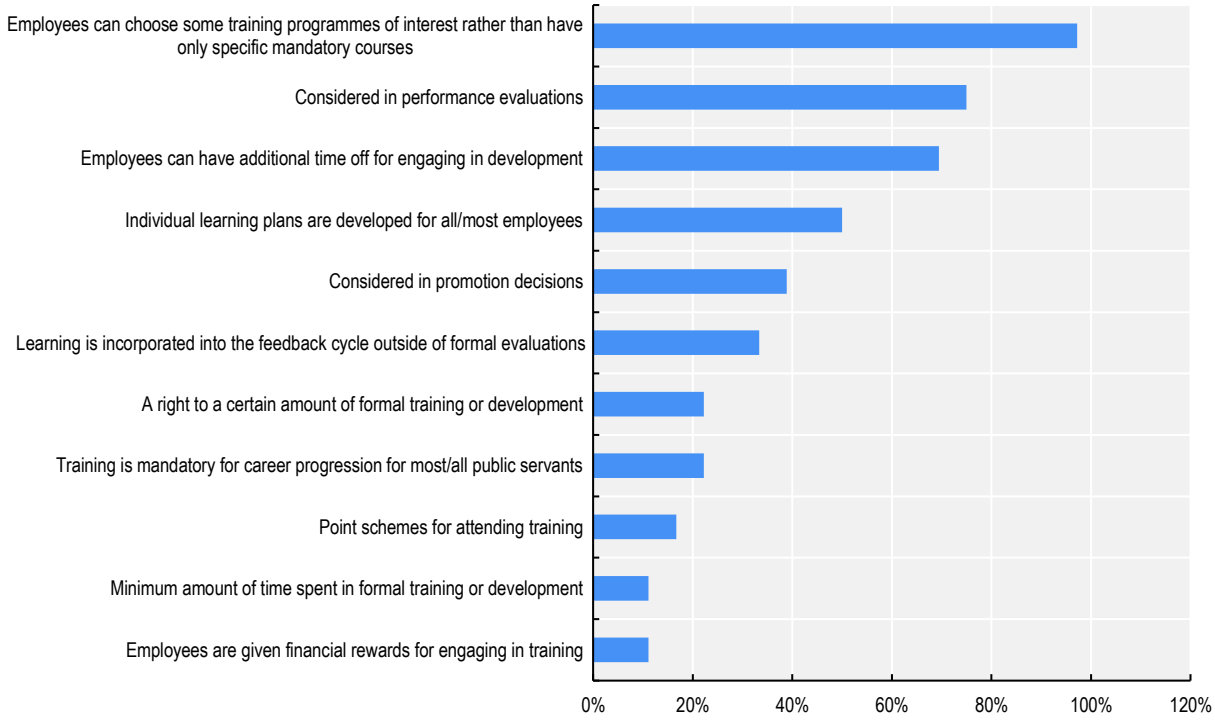
Workers need reasons – incentives – to learn. To engage in learning, employees must view it as valuable and purposeful. How an organisation and its management treat and incentivise learning, and the culture around learning expectations, matters substantially. The actual impact of learning at – and for – work, depends largely on an organisation's recognition of employees' learning efforts and individual competencies (Ioannidou and Desjardins, 2020[13]). Adults make decisions about whether to formally engage in learning, and also how and when to learn, when the perceived benefits outweigh costs. For this reason, top-down directives to learn do not usually result in desired outcomes, without some sort of incentive or justification for it in the mind of the learner.

Incentives for learners need not always be financial; in fact, linking learning to things like performance evaluation, career progression and feedback cycles can be more effective and contribute more to an overall culture of learning rather than it being perceived as an extra task. Further, increasing the overall visibility of these rewards, justifications or incentives for acquiring new knowledge can be key in motivating adults to learn. Linking learning to incentives such as performance evaluation is also an effective way of signalling the importance of learning, aiding to create a broader culture of learning. The use of competency frameworks, and incorporating them into human resource and development processes, can be a very effective strategy to define and incentivise development objectives.

Quite often, governments struggle to substantively incentivise development when it is not linked to these processes – for example, performance evaluations or promotion decisions – and is also not incorporated into feedback or identified as important by managers. To address this, redesigned incentive systems are now emerging in many OECD countries, as illustrated in Figure 2.6, below. Around 75% of responding countries say they consider L&D efforts in performance evaluations, and 50% are developing individualised learning plans for employees. Considering L&D in promotion decisions is an emerging incentive, with 39% of countries undertaking this strategy, although precautions should be taken to make sure such learning is relevant and not framed as simply a 'tick-the-box' exercise required for promotion. Financial incentives are rare among survey respondents.

Figure 2.6. Incentivising learning and development (L&D), 2022

Percentage of countries that responded to the survey question



Note: N=36. Data for the United States and Lithuania not available. Original question: "What types of incentives for learning and development are used?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 5 on Learning and Development.

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Existing but unused skills work against motivation for learning. Once news skills are developed, gaps and lags in their use can hinder learning cultures, productivity and employee satisfaction. Workers across OECD countries report that their existing skills are often under-used, and skill mismatches – where employees are both under- and over-qualified – are common (OECD/ILO, 2017[14]). If skills will not be substantively used or rewarded, workers are unlikely to be willing to attain them, or to "see the point".

Learning itself has many positive outcomes on an individual or personal level. It keeps adults happy, increases satisfaction at work and overall well-being. Learning at work is associated with lower turnover and greater levels of innovative thinking and overall acceptance of innovation. More and more research indicates that employees are more likely to stay at organisations that invest in their continual learning – but new skills must be used as well as learned.

Digital and technology-enhanced learning systems

Continual and habitual learning, and learning with new technology, reduce barriers to a workplace digital transformation. Creating a culture of learning can reduce hesitancy around developing new ways of thinking as well as using new technologies. Employees who are used to learning can more easily adapt to new software and platforms, assured that they will be able to learn the required new skills, and further, that their workplace will help teach them. It makes sense then that harnessing new digital technologies for use in learning can provide dual benefits. It can help employees learn new digital skills but it can also provide

substantive benefits in providing catered, rapid and interactive training that employees can take flexibly. Digital learning technologies also often allow for more effective measurement and monitoring of participation in, and outcomes of, learning systems.

There are also aspects of e-learning that can present downsides that should be considered in designing overall learning systems. The digital transformation, and shift to more numerous forms of and potential for digital learning, in many cases reduces the more passive, informal learning that often takes place through in-person interaction (for more on informal learning, see the next section), even while presenting many opportunities for learning that are more formal, active and intentional. Recent OECD work estimates that informal learning dropped by 25% in the COVID-19 crisis as a result of limitations to social interaction (OECD, 2021[4]).

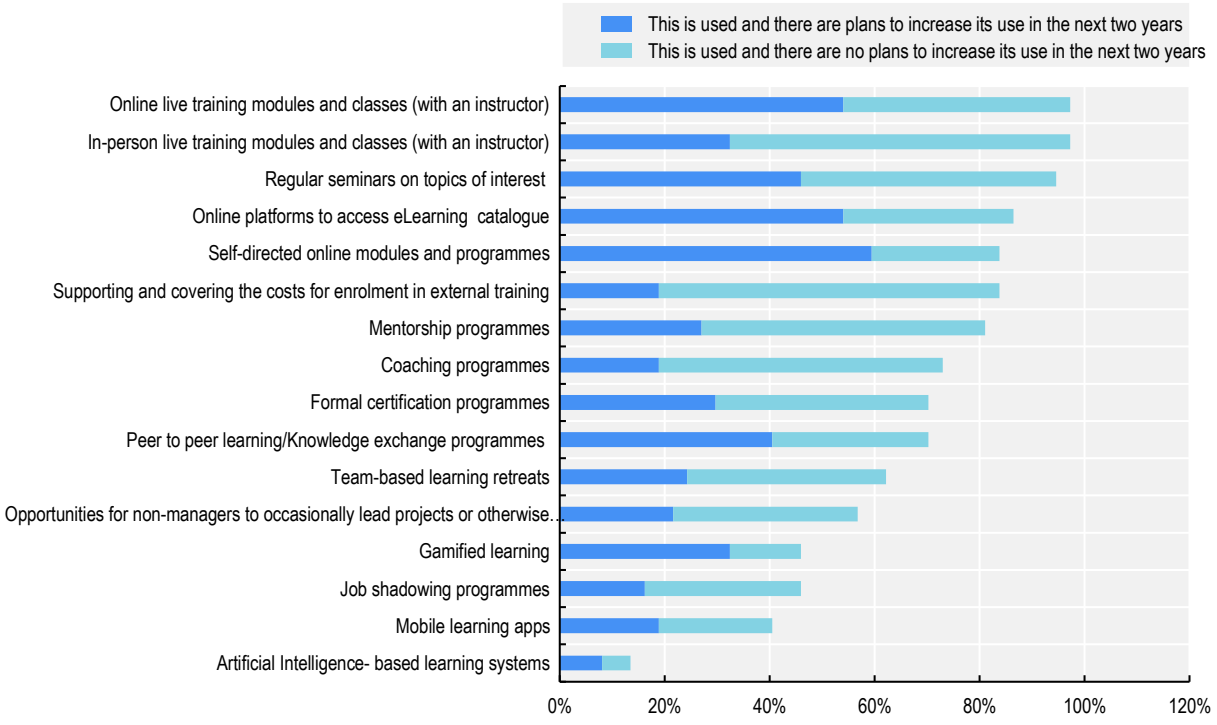
Even so, the use of digital technologies in learning systems – such as through remote instruction, AI and "social bots", and tailored approaches – hold tremendous potential for helping in reaching goals such as increasing learning culture and willingness to learn, monitoring and assessing of the effectiveness of training and making new knowledge more broadly available to underserved individuals (OECD, 2021[15]). Unlocking and harnessing the potential of digital and e-learning opportunities is an essential task for public service learning and development strategies, and to ensure that the use of digital technologies has a net benefit. Moreover, it can also have a positive environmental impact – Türkiye, for example, has calculated use of its online learning platform reduces the need for in-person travel and associated carbon dioxide emissions.

Online learning is now widespread, though there is room to grow. After the shift to telework that the COVID-19 pandemic brought, nearly all OECD countries now offer live training online or offer some sort of self-directed e-learning, often through their own portal or platform. In fact, three of the top five responses have a digital or online component. However, far fewer administrations have yet to incorporate other next-level digital technologies – such as apps, gamified learning and AI – into their learning systems. Figure 2.7 below illustrates this sharp drop-off in the types of digital learning being offered. Only 13% of responding countries are incorporating AI into their learning tools, while around 40% use mobile apps or gamified learning.

Korea, for example, is integrating many of these technologies into an ambitious e-learning platform (for more, see the case study on Korean's e-learning systems, in this publication). Finland provides another example. It's digital learning platform, called eOppiva, offers not only training modules but also innovative content like micro-learning content, blogs and podcasts – all available on a mobile app. Notably, several countries indicate that they plan to use these more advanced digital technologies soon (within the next two years).

Figure 2.7. The use of various tools for L&D, 2022

Percentage of countries that responded to the survey question



Note: N=37. Data for the United States not available. Original question: "Which of the following learning tools are used, or planned to be used in your public service?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 5 on Learning and Development.

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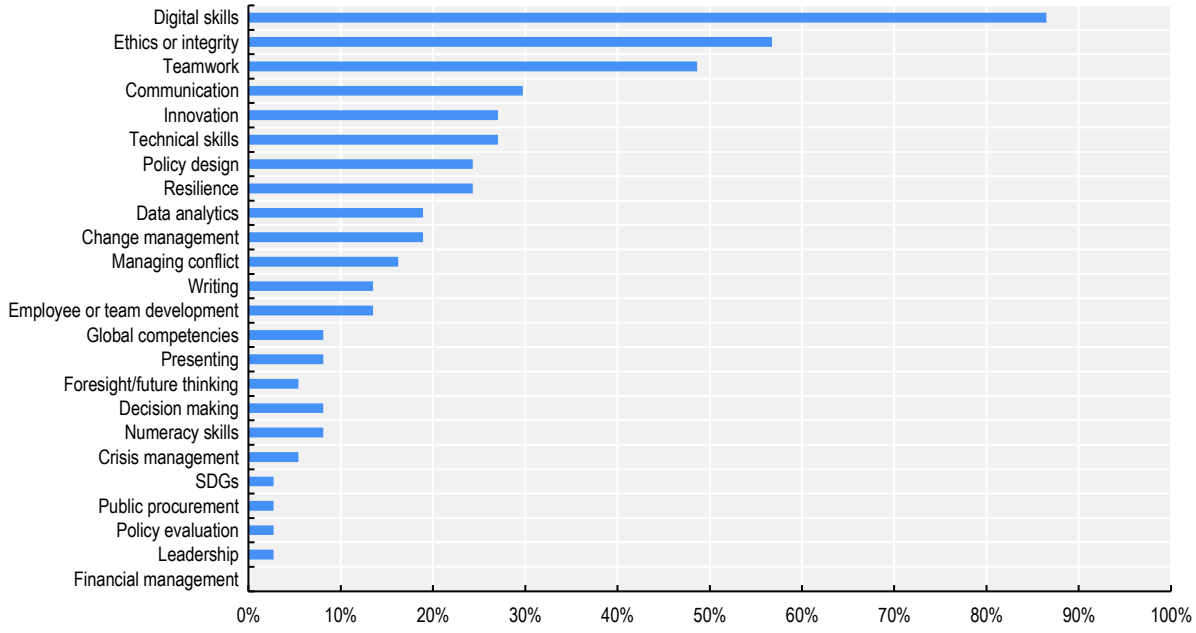
Anticipating and closing public service skills gaps through learning systems

Learning and development systems are essential for finding and closing skills gaps. Administrations aim to design their training offerings to target prioritised and needed skill sets internally. Figure 2.8 and Figure 2.9 illustrate the topics that countries say are their biggest priorities for L&D, for both non-manager employees and senior managers.

Across both groups, digital skills stand out, with 86% of countries ranking it in the top five for non-managers (the highest response) and 51% for senior managers (the second highest). Perhaps unsurprisingly, leadership comes in at the highest priority rank for senior managers with 89% of countries, and change management, innovation and ethics and integrity having around 40% each. Ethics and integrity also ranked highly for non-manager priorities with 57%, and teamwork rounding out the top three with 49%. The data may point to a lack of L&D opportunities for developing a pipeline of future managers; for non-manager employees, only 3% of countries ranked leadership in the top five priority skills.

Figure 2.8. L&D priorities for public servants (non-managerial), 2022

Percentage of countries that responded to the survey question

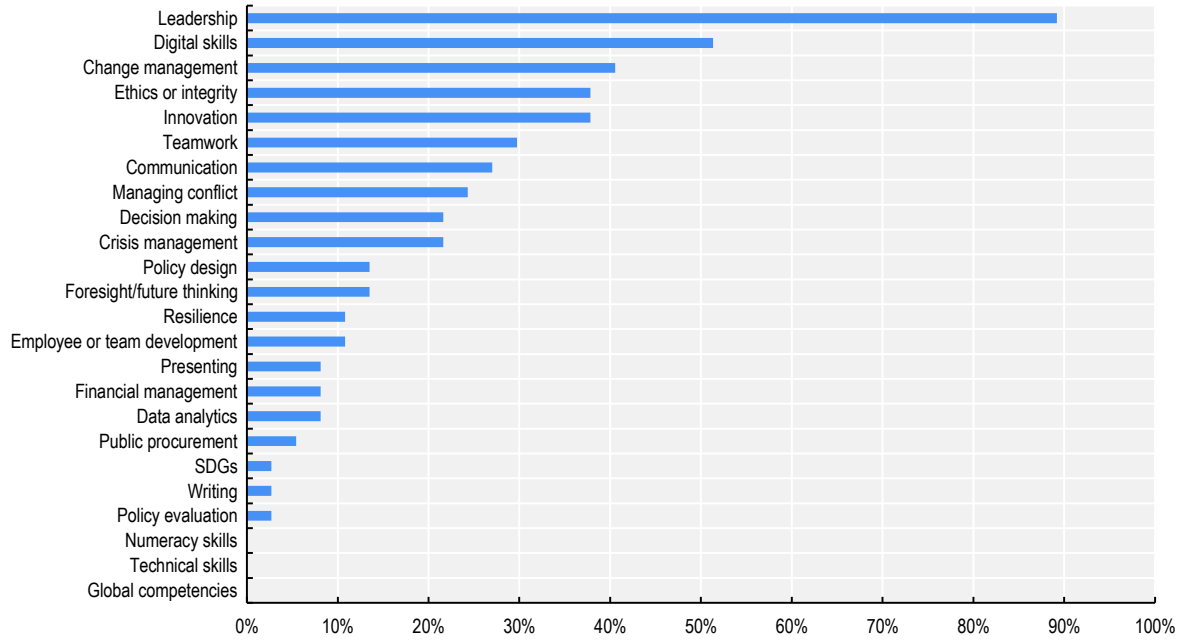


Note: N=37. Data for the United States not available. Respondents could choose five. Original question: "What are the top skill or competency types currently prioritised for learning or development across your country's public service?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 5 on Learning and Development.

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Figure 2.9. L&D priorities for public servants (senior managers), 2022

Percentage of countries that responded to the survey question



Note: N=37. Respondents could choose five. Original question: "What are the top skill or competency types currently prioritised for learning or development across your country's public service?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 5 on Learning and Development.

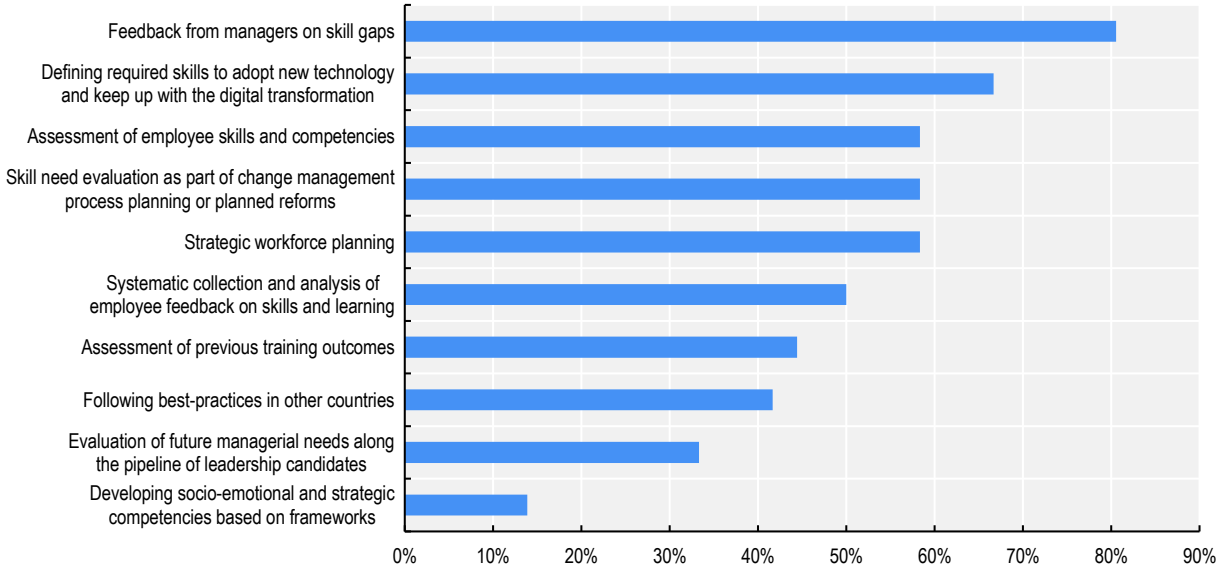
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How these subject areas are determined and prioritised can depend on the strategy of each country or administration, as evidence in Figure 2.10. Some countries (42%) try to keep afloat of global best practices, while formal assessments (58%), workforce planning (58%), and managerial feedback (81%) are common strategies to identify needs. Awareness of skills needed for the digital transformation is also a reason given by 67% of countries. This data also provides more insight on strategies to create a pipeline of future leaders, with only 33% of countries saying that this is a focus. Similarly, while the creation of competency frameworks is an emerging trend in public employment, only 14% of surveyed countries say they use such frameworks to identify L&D priorities.

Australia undertakes strategic workforce planning that takes the whole central administration into account and aims to identify skills needs in both the short and long term. Survey data is collected from various sources – including employee feedback, leadership, and individual ministries and agencies – and informs an overall risk assessment alongside a framework identifying areas with skill gaps. Capability areas with the highest risk and biggest gaps are then prioritised for learning and development focus. Greece is currently designing reforms that aim to identify skill gaps using various information sources, including managerial feedback, performance management results, and AI-assisted workforce planning. In Israel, development needs are linked to the skills model for civil servants, which informs training priorities across key skill areas.

Figure 2.10. Methods to identify L&D needs, 2022

Percentage of countries that responded to the survey question



Note: N=36. Data for the United States and Denmark not available. Original question: "How does your country's public service identify skills and competencies to prioritise for training?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 5 on Learning and Development.

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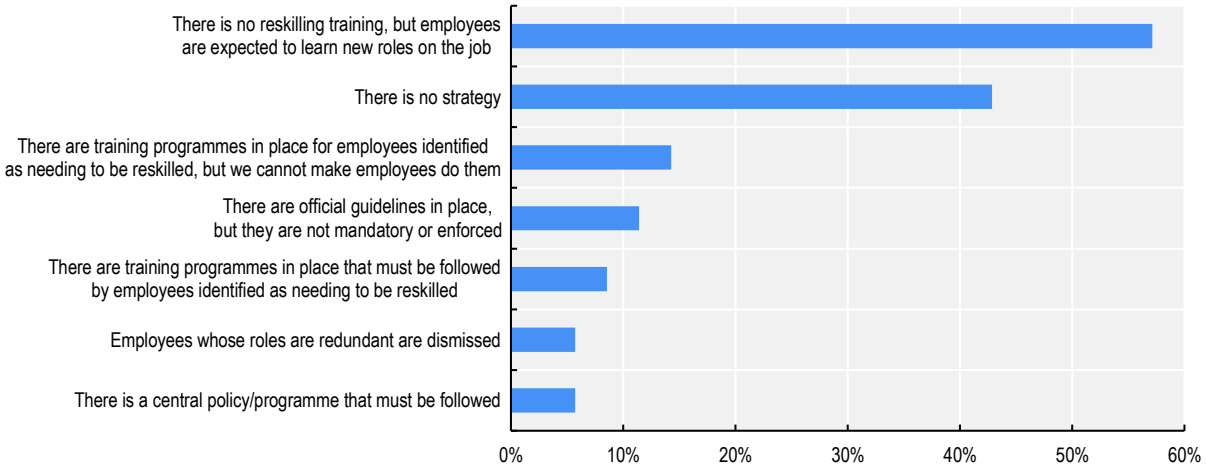
While many countries use their training systems to upskill and maintain employee skills, survey results show there is work to be done on aligning these systems with reskilling needs. As Figure 2.11 shows, a large majority of respondents indicate that there is no strategy or specific training for reskilling (training of employees for new skills to fill new roles after their original roles become redundant). An inability to reskill can cause major problems in an organisation, such as spending unnecessary resources on salaries and benefits for employees who do not hold needed roles, a sluggish or unproductive overall workforce, a lack

of learning culture or innovation, and essential roles going unfilled. Reskilling is also essential in a world of digitalisation, as some jobs become automated and other new roles appear. The modern public service is constantly changing, and must be able to rapidly and flexibly evolve its overall skillset, and mindset, to meet the challenges of a complex world of policy problems.

Successful reskilling strategies have many components. Beyond identifying redundant roles and affected staff, there is also a need for effective assessment of an employee's current skills and those that are needed. Pathways for reskilling can be put in place, to move employees between roles, and needed training programmes must be implemented internally or outsourced. Methods for evaluating the outcomes and effectiveness of the reskilling, and ways to adapt it as needed, can also be part of the strategy.

Figure 2.11. Strategies for reskilling, 2022

Percentage of countries that responded to the survey question



Note: N=35. Data for the United States, Germany and Denmark not available. Original question: "Is there a strategy for reskilling* employees whose jobs will become redundant (e.g. because of technological change)?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 5 on Learning and Development.

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Valuing different learning approaches and skills needs

Diverse learning to reach diverse people

Individual employees are likely to have diverse needs when it comes to learning. Some may thrive in formal learning environments such as instructor-led courses. Others may prefer a self-directed curriculum or choosing what they want to learn. Still others may learn more informally, such as through on the job tasks or mentoring. Providing an assortment of opportunities to learn, to reach the widest number of staff, therefore becomes vital.

Additionally, there are other needs of diverse employees to consider that influence learning outcomes. For example, workers who have childcare responsibilities may not be able to participate in training at certain times of day or that requires travel. Perhaps not all employees will feel comfortable in mentorship or leadership roles, and these may not be the best choice of development techniques for all roles. The underlying point is that effective development strategies take into account the diverse learning styles and

needs of the workforce and can flexibly adapt to provide opportunities that realistically provide the best outcomes.

OECD countries are beginning to expand the types of learning opportunities available to staff, as well as consider the ability of each type of learning offer to reach and benefit the entire, diverse, workforce population. This tactic is especially important considering the wide range of roles in the public sector, and the need to strategically offer training that provides targeted establishment of skills across areas and employees. Needed skills are ideally distributed across diverse employees, to further increase the depth of skills, experience and understanding that can be called upon when needed.

Learning can also be a driver of inclusion and diversity within a workforce. There are examples of efforts to foster diversity in learning and development in several OECD countries. For example, Canada runs a rotation programme called the Mosaic Leadership Development Program, which targets specific diverse groups, and is designed to develop future leaders across diverse backgrounds using job mobility and training initiatives. Canada also has specific training for executives intended to foster diversity and inclusion, such as sessions to develop inclusive leadership skills, a focus on Indigenous leadership, and peer coaching sessions with the Black Executives Network.

In Japan, gender inclusion is being pursued in part through inter-ministry training programmes that offer peer to peer learning and targeted development of management skills, and training to HR managers on creating environments that promote the development of female employees.

In Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training is a key mandatory learning module for induction programmes across all agencies. Some senior leadership training programmes teach senior leaders to perform ‘acknowledgement of country’ in the language of the local Indigenous peoples. Agencies also offer training on disability awareness, unconscious bias, and reasonable adjustment (for managers).

Incorporating and strategising informal learning

Informal learning has tremendous potential as part of an overall strategy. As evidenced above, learning can be active and intentional through formal courses, for instance. It can also be less formal, such as through non class-based formats such as workshops or discussions, or more experiential, such as through learning-by-doing or observing others. Collective learning from collaboration with others makes up a substantial portion of knowledge acquisition (Tikkanen, 2002[16]), especially when paired with structured reflection on what was learned and how to use or adapt new skills or knowledge. Informal learning generally makes up a substantial part of overall learning; in all likelihood, a much greater part than formal learning.

Where learning is more formal, the design of training modules and their delivery can be viewed as being as important as content in terms of whether employees attain new knowledge, retain it, and then use it in real situations. Formal learning can be effective in some circumstances, and less so in others. Sometimes, employees who may require training the most are the least likely to take it up. For workers already in employment, this often includes those in jobs at risk of automation, older employees – who tend to learn and use certain skills at a lower rate than younger workers – and those in lower-skilled or redundant roles (OECD, 2019[17]; OECD, 2019[18]).

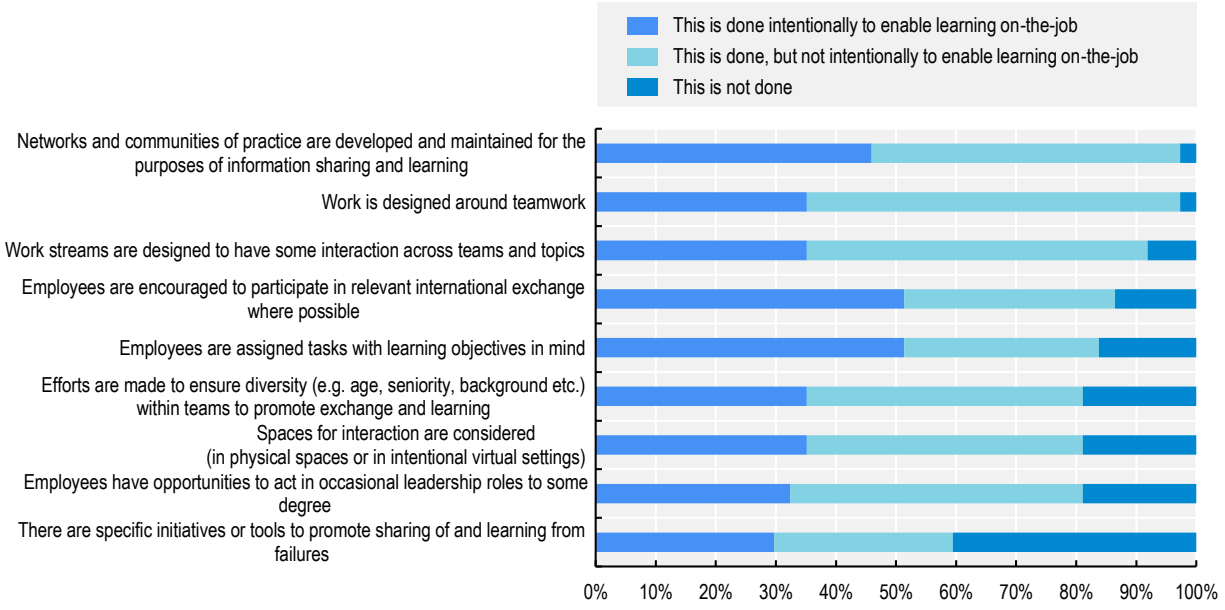
Informal learning is not only effective, but it can also address many of the challenges associated with formal learning. Informal methods such as giving workers more autonomy, structuring some tasks around teamwork, or enabling non-managerial employees to occasionally take on leadership tasks, though difficult to analyse and organise, can make up a substantial or even majority contribution to an employee’s learning. In OECD countries, around 70% of workers (in all industries, not only the public sector) have some degree of regular informal learning engagement, compared to just 8% who engage in formal training (e.g. towards a qualification) (Fialho, Quintini and Vandeweyer, 2019[19]). These types of learning can be as effective – or sometimes more effective – than formal learning and can often incorporate higher levels of active

attention and participation from the learner and reduce or eliminate issues related to selection for learning. While on the surface these learning opportunities are more complicated to structure, plan or amplify, finding ways to do so can provide a large return in terms of employee development.

While informal learning plays a vital role in workforce development, it can be difficult to tangibly plan, measure and offer. Many OECD countries are beginning to – or already do – structure work in ways that better foster or enable informal learning. While there are efforts to do this more systematically and strategically, in fact many administrations are already taking important steps without being concretely or intentionally aware of it. In Figure 2.12, we can see that many countries already use organisational and operational methods and tools that increase informal learning – such as networks of practice, designing work around teamwork and encouraging interaction between teams and work streams – to some degree, without having intentionally done so for the purpose of informal learning. When considering what is done without direct intent, nearly all respondent countries have implemented ways of working that foster informal learning, as evidenced below.

Figure 2.12. Methods used to foster and enable informal learning, 2022

Percentage of countries that responded to the survey question



Note: N=37. Data for the United States not available. Original question: "Ways of working can sometimes be structured in a manner that fosters learning on-the-job. Are any of the following methods used to foster learning on-the-job?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability, Module 5 on Learning and Development.

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This overlap provides a way to see that work and systems that harness informal learning can potentially be designed and implemented more intentionally and strategically. This provides enormous potential to augment learning and development capacity inside public organisations. Perhaps this would mean setting goals for the distribution of leadership tasks, even on a small scale, or strategic planning and design around the formation of teams or cross-project units. It could also mean adding in more time for reflection into feedback cycles, including discussions between managerial and non-managerial staff about how they learn from each other, and how to harness that interaction. Mobility between teams and departments, even over a short duration, can also be implemented into workforce planning.

Conclusion

The data in this report show that learning and development contributes strongly to organisational flexibility. It is also an area that is becoming more flexible itself – for example, through the provision of e-learning modules that allow staff to access learning opportunities relevant to them at a time that best suits or motivates them. Overall, the picture that emerges from the data is encouraging: most OECD administrations take a strategic approach to learning, tactics to create a learning culture are emerging, and there are many opportunities for effective informal learning. So, what can administrations do to make sure that their learning systems are flexible and contribute to organisational flexibility?

First, the goal of learning and development opportunities should be to contribute to a learning *culture* in the public service. Learning is not just something that happens in the classroom, or at occasional points in the career of a public servant – it is a critical part of ensuring that the public service is equipped to deal with emerging and future challenges. This may call for a review of learning content and formats, for example, to make sure that it aligns with broader organisational objectives, such as workforce re-skilling for the digital era. It also means broadening the scope of what learning is and how it takes place for adults; informal learning can make up a huge part of overall learning and skill acquisition and can be incorporated into strategies.

Second, the importance of leadership in the creation and maintenance of a learning culture cannot be understated. Learning cultures are reinforced by leaders who prioritise learning, who work to develop their staff, and who model learning behaviour through their own career-long self-development. Further, employees learn a substantial amount from their direct manager – meaning managers are at all times mentors and teachers, and as such, even more important for a learning culture.

Third, the incentives around learning opportunities, as well as the way they are framed, matter substantially. This reinforces the need to position learning content and formats as part of everyday work rather than as a ‘nice-to-have’ if workload and time allows. It also highlights the potential for greater linkages with career development. If employees have a clear sense of what it takes to be promoted, learning opportunities can be a valuable tool to help motivate and engage staff.

Finally, there is scope to gather and use more data to inform policies around learning and development. Many public services are focussing on leadership and digital skills, two areas that underpin public service flexibility and capability. Broadening the reach, diversifying learning opportunities, and developing insights around who is accessing or requiring what, and what skills have been developed where, can help paint a better picture of the overall impact – and future direction – of learning and development in the public service.

The broad picture is that lifelong learning across a workforce is essential for a flexible public service. Governments that create and maintain learning cultures are therefore better prepared to rise to the challenges they will face, and weather to storms they cannot predict.

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3 The future of flexible working arrangements

This chapter explores the future of flexible working arrangements in the public service. Many public administrations are currently exploring how to integrate new and recently-introduced tools to the broader workforce management agenda, including remote working and flexible time options. This chapter presents a selection of data highlighting the potential of flexible work practices, but also some limitations.

Key messages

- **The pandemic acted as a catalyst for change.** Despite flexible working arrangements, including working location and hours, being common across OECD countries before the pandemic, the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdowns that took place in several countries made flexible working arrangements even more common.
- **Public administrations are still defining the "new normal".** Across OECD countries, public administrations experimented with flexible working arrangements during the crisis. As countries now reflect on what the new normal looks like, and despite having identified clear benefits, public administrations are unsure about the future and the depth of modalities offered during the crisis.
- **Flexible working arrangements come in different sizes and shapes.** There are various different approaches to the scale, the coverage, and the organisation, of flexible working arrangements in public administrations.
- **Flexible modalities should be used strategically.** Public administrations should ensure flexible working arrangements are part of greater workforce planning, attraction and retention, and engagement strategies. There is a balance to be found between employee autonomy and organisational needs.
- **There are several implications to a prolonged implementation of those arrangements.** As work in public administrations becomes increasingly hybrid, discussions need to take place around how flexible working arrangements can be regulated and how to rethink office space.

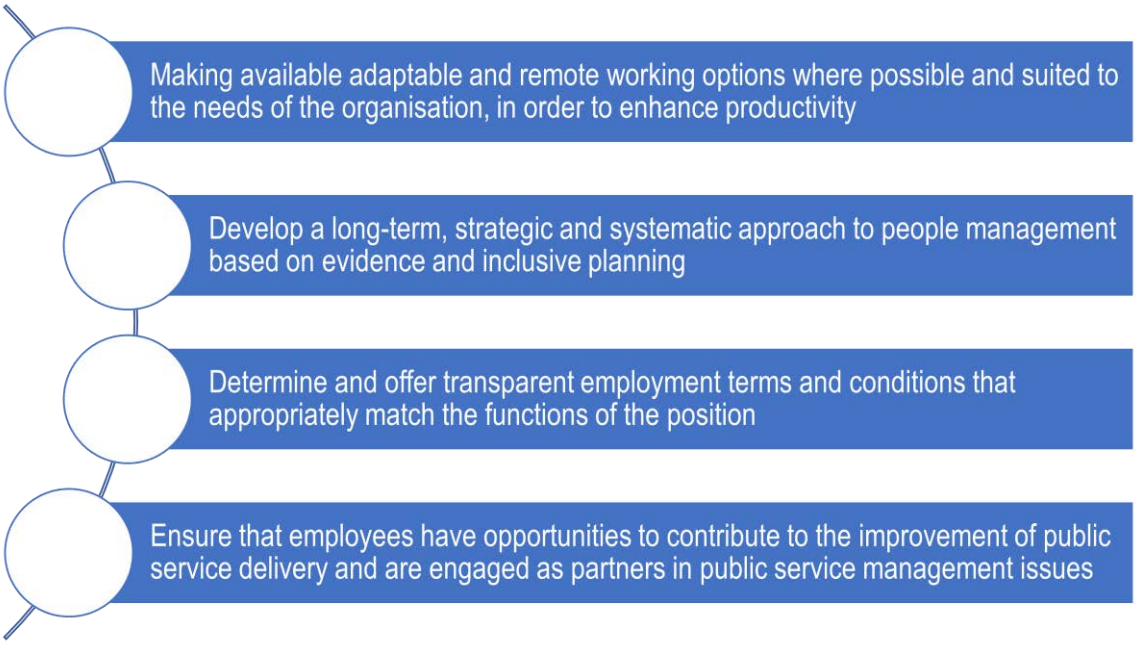
Greater use of flexible work arrangements has been a feature of the public service over the last few years, and particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic. Flexible working arrangements are not new, but they were used much more often during the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns in parts of the world. Most public servants experienced flexibility in two ways: adapting their working hours, and/or adapting their work location, usually by working from home. The early days of the COVID-19 pandemic represented a 'crash test' for public administrations, allowing them to better understand the positive sides and the limitations and risks such flexibility could represent.

With the COVID-19 pandemic receding, public administrations are at a turning point. Flexible working arrangements trialled during the pandemic have the potential to be modified and/or placed on a more sustainable footing, potentially delivering gains in productivity and employee satisfaction. Much attention is focussed on trying to identify 'the right number' of days that staff should reasonably be expected to be physically present in the office, in the private sector as much as the public. While important, this narrow focus misses the broader questions that underpin fundamental changes to how the public service will look in the future.

Going forward, public administrations must reconcile the tension between going back to the way things were before the pandemic (e.g. remote working only in exceptional circumstances) and shaping a 'new normal' centred around greater individualisation of working modalities, including greater flexibility in working hours and location. This individualisation brings new questions to explore: what jobs are best suited to flexible working arrangements? How to leave more space for trust in interpersonal relations? And how best to manage staff in this new environment?

The OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability addresses some of these issues through it call to adherents to explore and establish responsive and adaptive public employment systems:

Figure 3.1. OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability



Source: OECD (2019[1]), "Recommendation of the Council on Public Service Leadership and Capability", *OECD Legal Instruments*, OECD/LEGAL/0445, OECD, Paris, https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0445.

This 'new normal' is still at an early stage of development in most OECD countries, with in-depth and longer-term analysis of the implications to productivity, well-being, and workplaces for both employers and employees (for an overview of recent research, see (Edelmann, Schossboeck and Albrecht, 2021[2])). The OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability highlights the need for public administrations to work towards "making available adaptable and remote working options where possible and suited to the needs of the organisation, in order to enhance productivity" (OECD, 2019[1]). The recommendation, adopted before the pandemic, underlines the relevance of flexible working arrangements in developing workforce mobility and adaptability.

Box 3.1. Scope and definitions – Flexible ways of working

This chapter refers to two structural aspects that underpin flexible ways of working in the public service. These are: flexibility in choosing working hours, and flexibility in choosing working location. The following definitions are used:

- **Flexibility in choosing working location:** this usually refers to public servants performing their job or parts of their job outside the office, usually (though not exclusively) at their home. Different terms are used across the OECD that broadly refer to the same thing, e.g. remote working, hybrid working, flexi-working, home-working, home-office days, etc. Most public administrations consider or specify that remote working should only take place in the home, though some allow public servants to work from different locations.
- **Flexibility in choosing working hours:** this usually refers to the ability of public servants to adapt their working hours to some degree. This can be through flexi-time schemes, where employees must work a minimum number of hours per week but have some flexibility in deciding on the distribution of those hours, or through part-time work arrangements such as working only some days per week.

Common definitions of related concepts include:

- **Flexitime**: A working time model that allows staff to vary the time at which they start and finish their assigned work (cf. Recital 3 of EC Staff Regulation on Working Time) and sometimes also their amount of daily working time. (EUPAN)
- **Part-time**: Working 34 hours per week or less (compared to full-time work; (Eurofound, 2012[3])); most often carried out through some fixed hours every day (Eurofound, 2009[4]). (EUPAN)
- **Compressed working week**: Alternative work schedule in which hours worked per day are increased in order to do one's weekly work hours in less than five days (Bambra et al., 2008[5]). (EUPAN)
- **Trust-based working hours**: Working time arrangement that is based on the shift from a time to a results orientation in which workers' working time is not controlled by management (Singe and Croucher, 2003[6]). (EUPAN)
- **Remote work**: Possibility to work away from the office, whether from home or another location. The distinction is here made between full-time remote work and part-time remote work. In the first case, the employee does not have to go to the office and can work every day remotely. In the latter, the employee is allowed to work some hours/days remotely, but is expected to be at the office the rest of the working time.

Source: Author's elaboration; and (Korunka, Kubicek and Risak, 2018[7]).

This chapter draws on survey data from the OECD Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability to describe the current state-of-play with regard to flexible working arrangements across the OECD.

The COVID-19 pandemic as a catalyst for change

Flexible ways of adjusting work hours and location in public administrations pre-date the COVID-19 pandemic. Remote working experiments were already taking place in the 1970s in the United States public administration, and in 1996, the US Federal administration developed the National Telecommuting Initiative (NTI) that sought to enable part-time remote work for 60 000 federal employees by October 1998, and for 160 000 by the end of 2002 (Wendell Joice, 2000[8]). More recently, under the 2018 Austrian presidency of the Council of the European Union, the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN) published a report on flexible ways of working in EU public administrations (Korunka, Kubicek and Risak, 2018[7]). This report focused on identifying the types of modalities offered, to whom, and to which extent. The study shows that, pre-pandemic, flexible ways of adjusting work hours and location were numerous across the European Union, but usually only covered few public employees. This meant that in many countries, the legal and operational basis to implement those modalities already existed before the pandemic, and could be adapted and used at a greater scale relatively quickly. However, comparison between that dataset and the one presented in this report is limited due to the scope of questions and respondents.

As public administrations had to adapt, often overnight, to the pandemic of COVID-19 and the lockdowns that took place in several OECD countries, remote work went from being exceptional to the modality by-default of large shares of the public workforce. In close to two thirds of OECD countries, over 60% of the central/federal administration workforce worked remotely during the first wave of COVID-19 (OECD, 2020[9]). This experience became a 'new normal' in many public administrations: in 2020, only 14% of OECD public administrations expected to see a decrease in the use of remote work modalities.

The scale of remote working during the COVID-19 pandemic illustrated the potential for its continued and longer-term use post-COVID. However, it also highlighted some limitations to remote working in public administrations:

- First, not all jobs can be done remotely. In the category of 'public administration and defence', around two-thirds of jobs are estimated to be compatible with remote working. Those less compatible usually refer to manual jobs. Sectors such as finance (93% of jobs remote workable), communication (79%) or education (68%) feature a higher share of jobs that can be done remotely than agriculture, construction or mining and quarrying (all less than 20%) (Joint Research Centre, 2020[10]).
- Second, not all jobs that can be performed remotely are performed remotely. Sometimes this is because of explicit guidelines issued by the employer or implicit expectations on physical presence conveyed by managers or peers.
- Third, not all employees necessarily seek flexible ways of working. Research prior to the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted that, on average, employees were willing to accept an 8% pay-cut in exchange for the possibility to work remotely – a figure that may well have risen since. However, this number is contrasted by the fact that 20% of employees had little interest in remote working without financial compensation (Mas and Pallais, 2017[11]).

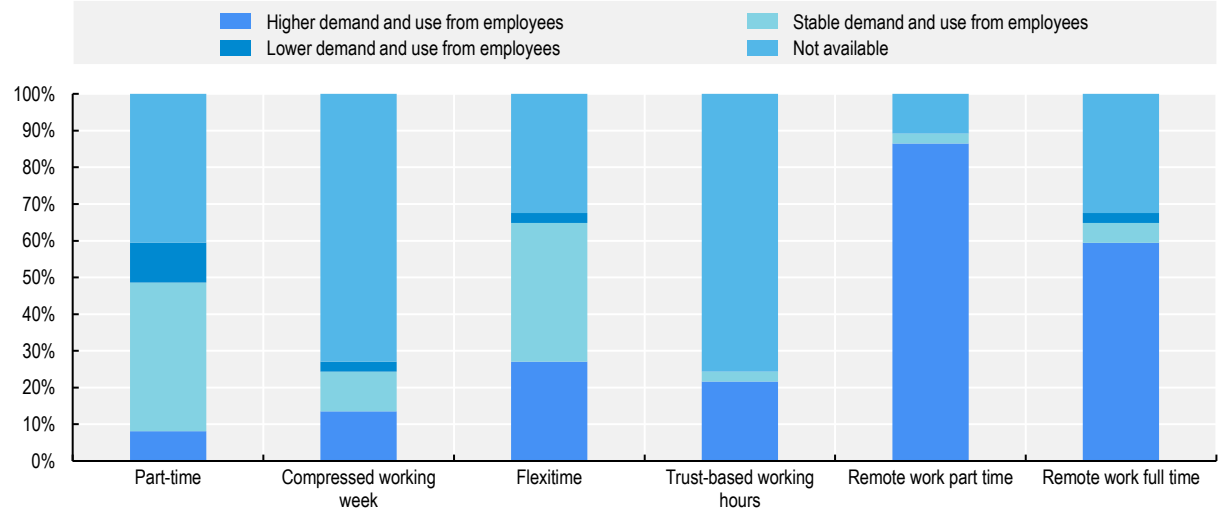
Remote work during the pandemic had two main effects on the relationship between the employer and the employee: schedules were generally more flexible to take into account obligations like home-schooling children during lockdowns, being sick, and caring for the sick. As managers had limited ways of monitoring activity in remote settings, the relationship between employers and employees was essentially driven by trust to a greater degree than in in-person settings. This shift impacted three types of relationships: employee/manager, employee/colleagues, and employee/organisation.

- **Manager-employee**: As many public employees want to benefit from flexible ways of working managers need the right tools and competencies to deal with hybrid workforces. For hybrid teams to work effectively, different types of risks need to be managed, such as the inclusion of remote workers so that they are not unduly penalised at the expense of in-person workers. Adapting to flexible ways of working means that managers should have access to training, guidelines and tools to communicate effectively and build trust with their teams.
- **Employee-employee:** The lack or the reduced amount of in-person interaction can also affect interpersonal relations between colleagues. In the case of remote work, informal face-to-face interactions are more complicated to organise and arguably less fulfilling than bumping into someone in the queue for a coffee. Where colleagues have different working hours, facilitating periods of overlap to enable in-person interaction may help make hybrid working arrangements more fulfilling.
- **Employee-organisation:** Finally, employees must trust that their employer (organisation) will develop and apply flexible working arrangements at scale fairly. If imposed with little or no consultation, flexible working arrangements may weaken organisational trust and generate friction within teams.

Applying lessons learned during COVID to a ‘new normal’

The public service across the OECD is now trying to apply the lessons learned to a ‘new normal’ in which public employees expect greater ability to make use of flexible working arrangements. Across the OECD, an overwhelming majority of countries now expect a higher demand and use from employees of remote work modalities: 86% of countries regarding remote work part time, and 59% regarding remote work full time (Figure 3.2). The data suggest a consensus forming around a hybrid model in which public employees can work part of the time remotely and the rest of the time from the office. However, the impact of the pandemic on use of flexible working hours remains to be determined, with a majority of countries estimating either a stable demand for these types of arrangement, or not having the possibility to tell. In both scenarios, virtually no OECD country expects lower demand for use of flexible working arrangements from employees.

Figure 3.2. Trends observed in public administrations regarding flexible ways of work

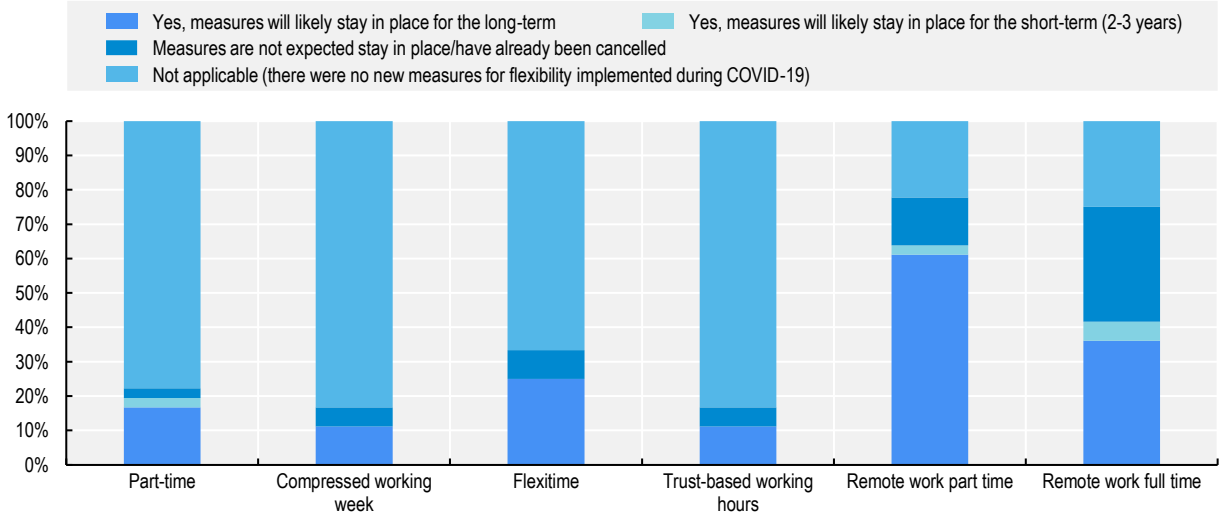


Note: N=37. data for the United States is missing. Original question: "Compared to before the emergence of COVID-19, which trends do you observe regarding new ways of working?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability.

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Public administrations have mostly been able to rely on pre-existing modalities to address new challenges raised by the pandemic and to address emerging employee expectations of greater flexibility post-pandemic. There is little indication that new measures and tools were introduced during the pandemic to give employees more ability to adjust their working hours, as shown in Figure 3.3. On the other hand, some countries such as Finland and Lithuania have developed new measures likely to stay in place over the long term for almost all the types of flexible working arrangements highlighted. This situation differs regarding remote work where new measures were implemented during the pandemic in over 75% of OECD countries. However, 35% of OECD countries expect to cancel recently-introduced modalities governing full-time remote work.

Figure 3.3. Change regarding the measures around flexible working arrangements

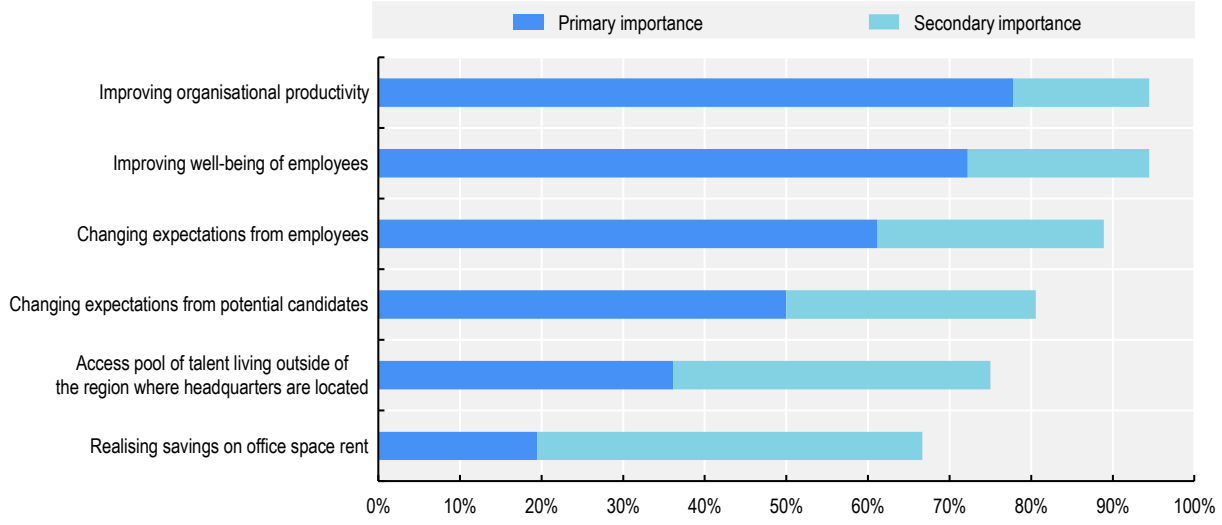


Note: N=36. Data for Germany and the United States is missing. Original question: "If any measures were implemented in the below ways of working during the COVID-19 crisis, are those measures expected to remain in place to allow for greater flexibility?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability.

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The COVID-19 pandemic has also been an opportunity for public administrations to analyse the benefits and risks associated with flexible working arrangements. Figure 3.4 highlights the positive factors that drive the development of flexible working practices: 78% of OECD countries highlight improved organisational productivity as being of primary importance in driving flexible working policies, 72% the improved well-being of employees, 61% the changing expectations from employees, and 50% the changing expectations from candidates. In other words, these types of flexible working modalities are seen as tools to make the public service more efficient, and able to attract and retain the talent it needs. In Portugal, for example, the public administration collected feedback both from senior level public servants (SLPS) and from other public employees on their remote work experience. Non-SLPS public employees highlighted the time saved in commuting and better personal/professional life balance as the main benefits of flexible working arrangements. Lack of professional contact, higher utility bills and long working hours were seen as the main negative ones (DGAEP, 2021[12]). It is probably still too early to tell whether the benefits of flexible working arrangements outweigh the negative impacts, but what is clear is that flexible working arrangements have clear benefits and clear risks. To harness benefits and mitigate risks requires clear communication between employees and managers, and continuing experimentation and collection of data to determine a reasonable middle ground.

Figure 3.4. Factors driving flexible work policies in the central/federal administration



Note: N=36. Data for Germany and the United States is missing. Original question: "Which factors are most important in driving flexible work policies in the central/federal administration?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability.

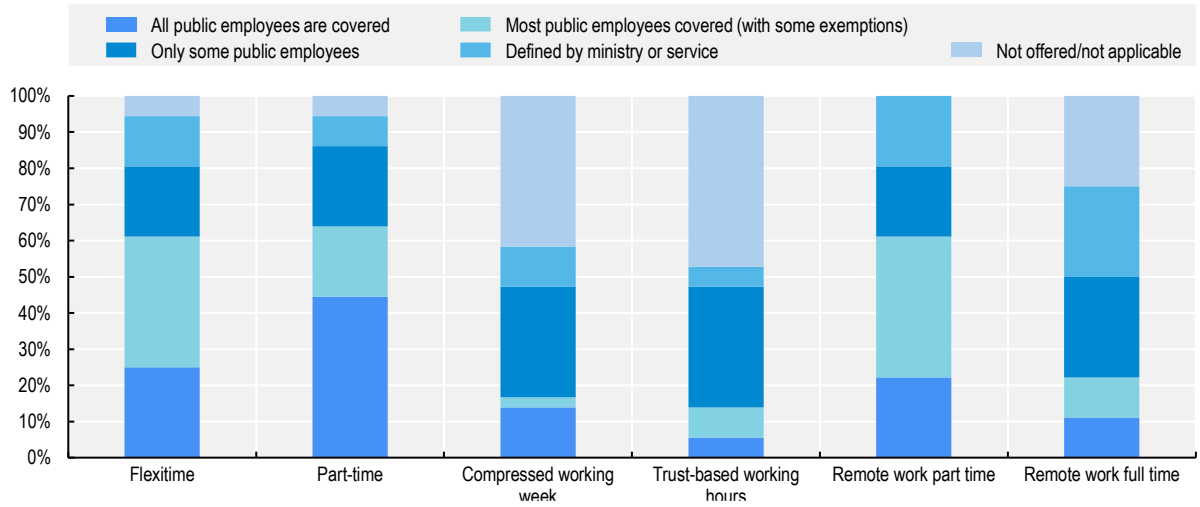
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Scope and coverage of flexible working arrangements in public administrations

Until recently, remote work used to be the exception rather than the rule. After the COVID-19 pandemic, however, 100% of OECD countries allow for part-time remote work to some extent (usually through mandating a minimum number of days in-person presence in the office), while more than three quarters (76%) allow for full-time remote work to some extent (Figure 3.5). Full-time remote work was rare in public administrations before the COVID-19 pandemic. However, with the scale of remote working during the pandemic, trust between manager and employee and between employees and their organisation is a key driver of flexibility when it comes to adjusting working hours and location. While many public administrations are still grappling with 'the right number' of remote working days per week, it is important to position these arrangements as part of a coherent strategy around staff attraction, engagement and retention.

Figure 3.5. Flexible modalities of work available in central/federal administrations

Share of OECD countries



Note: N=36. Data for Ireland and the United States is missing. The dotted line distinguishes flexibility in time and in space. Original question: "Which flexible ways of working are available, and to whom?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability.

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Compared to remote working arrangements, public administrations seem to have used or put in place fewer measures to ensure flexibility in working hours during the COVID-19 pandemic (though data do not capture informal arrangements between managers and staff to allow them to adapt hours to care for children during lockdowns, for example). This is despite the fact that some arrangements to adapt working hours have been around for a long time and require less technical adaptation. Flexitime arrangements, for example, are used in 94% of OECD countries. Concretely, flexitime translates into a limited amount of core working hours expected of public servants, and additional hours providing flexibility for public servants to organise their time as they wish. In Norway for instance, most public employees must be in the office between 9 AM and 2:30 PM, organising the rest of their mandated working hours as they wish. Part-time work is also a long-standing modality: 94% of OECD countries allow part-time work, and 44% of countries allow part-time work for all public employees. Part-time work is an important feature for people who do not want to or cannot work full-time, often because of family circumstances, and can be the only way for them to be active on the labour market. Across the Eurozone, public services concentrate a higher share of part-time employment than other sectors of the economy (European Central Bank, 2018[13]). This modality is widely used in the general labour market across the OECD, representing on average 16.5% of all employees and up to 36% in the Netherlands – whether it is done voluntarily or not (OECD, 2022[14]).

Compressed working weeks and trust-based working hours remain less widely offered than other types of arrangements governing working hours, and usually cover only a limited amount of public employees. For example, in Portugal, trust-based working hours are only available to specific professions carrying out specific tasks, such as conducting studies.

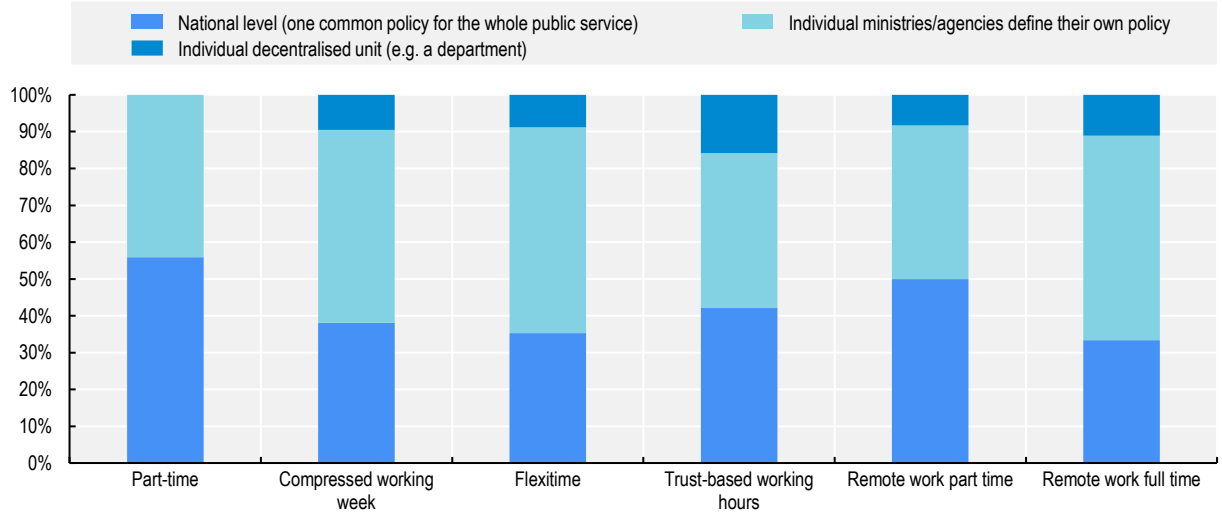
Despite being used less than arrangements governing work location, arrangements governing flexibility in working hours are being tested across the OECD and graining traction. In France, an experiment regarding compressed working week in the Ministry of Ecological Transition and the Ministry of Territorial Cohesion and Relations with Territorial Communities took place between 2019 and June 2022. This experiment, compressing a full working week into four days targeted employees wishing to return gradually to full-time work following changes in their family situation.

A balance between centralised and decentralised levels in regulating flexible working arrangements

Across OECD countries, there seems to be almost an even split between central and ministry-level of decision-making for modalities such as trust-based working hours, part-time remote working and full-time remote working (Figure 3.6). 56% of OECD countries organise part-time work at national level. Where possible, individual ministries are in charge of determining the conditions under which compressed working week or flexitime are possible. In all those situations, even when regulations are determined at the national level, the implementation is often left to the ministerial level. This ensures a minimum level of agreement on what is possible and in which conditions, leaving the ministries in charge of the concrete application depending on their ministerial context and realities on the ground. Central levels may have a particular role to play in ensuring consistency of application across Ministries and in providing support for organisations and managers, such as guidance on remote working or training on inclusive management to minimise the potential for bias against workers who make use of part-time arrangements.

Figure 3.6. Level at which flexible ways of work regulations/policies are determined

Share of OECD countries where said modality is possible to some extent



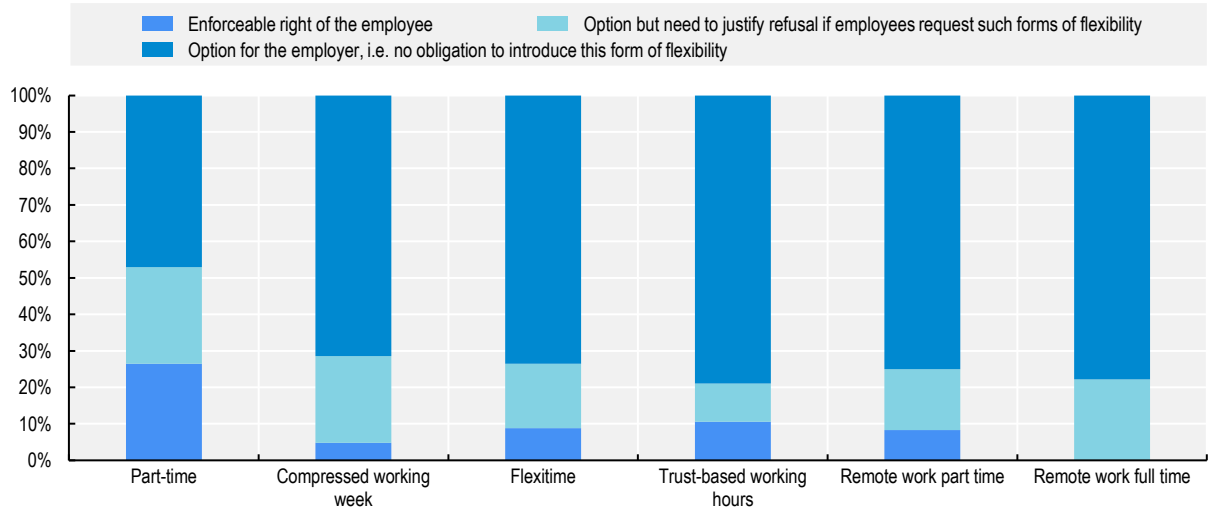
Note: To the left of the dotted line are arrangements governing flexibility with working location; to the right flexibility in working time. N varies depending on the category. N=34 for part-time, 21 for compressed working week, 34 for flexitime, 19 for trust-based working hours, 36 for remote work part time, 27 for remote work full time. Original question: "At which level are regulations/policies determined for the use of flexible ways of work?"
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability.

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Flexible working arrangements remain overwhelmingly options for the employer

In most cases across the OECD where flexible working arrangements are offered, employers have grounds to refuse to allow employees to make use of them Figure 3.7. Only Korea considers at least three of these flexible working arrangements as rights of employees. Embedding flexible ways of working therefore requires a constant dialogue between employers and employees. In over 70% of OECD countries, public employers do not have to justify refusing staff requests to make use of compressed working weeks, flexitime and trust-based working arrangements. Part-time work distinguishes itself from types of adjusted working hours by being an enforceable right of public employees in 26% of OECD countries, and an option which refusal needs to be justified in 26%.

Figure 3.7. Extent to which employers are required to provide flexible ways of working



Note: The dotted line distinguishes flexibility in time and in space. N varies depending on the category. N=34 for part-time, 21 for compressed working week, 34 for flexitime, 19 for trust-based working hours, 36 for remote work part time, 27 for remote work full time. Original question: "To which extent are employers required to provide these flexible ways of working?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability.

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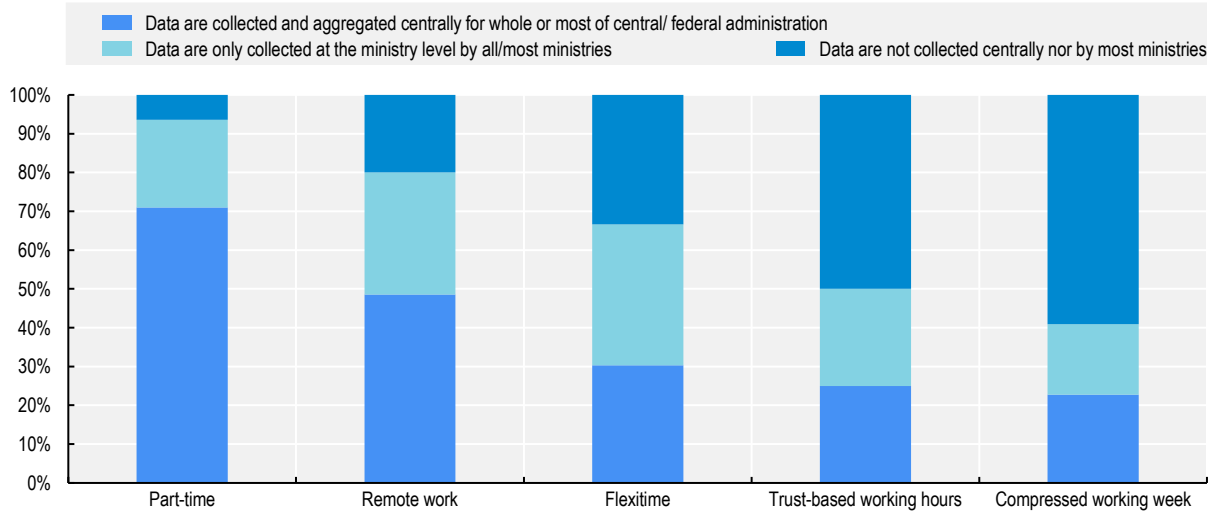
This points to the trade-off between allowing employees a degree of autonomy to make use of such tools as they see fit, and the need for managers to retain discretion over use of these tools depending on operational requirements. Navigating this situation calls for healthy dialogue between managers and staff around optimal working methods. In this context, some agencies in Australia have introduced an "if not, why not" policy, in which the manager has to justify potential refusals of demands from the employee. Moreover, despite remote work being widespread across public administrations, it is an employee right to request it only in Italy, Korea and Slovenia. However, those modalities are enforceable rights for specific parts of the workforce, such as staff with a disability. Such distinction is quite common across the OECD, with stricter protections for the employee in case of recent childbirth, taking care of a parent, or having a disability.

What next for flexible working arrangements?

Collecting data to improve inclusion

The goal for public administrations is not only to offer flexible ways of working to employees, but also make sure their use is part of a broader workforce planning strategy. Integrating flexible ways of working into broader strategies depends on reconciling employee autonomy to make use of flexible ways of working with organisational needs to set some limits on how the workforce as a whole uses such options. Data on part time and remote work is collected centrally or at the ministry level in respectively 88% and 76% of OECD countries having implemented those, but less so for flexitime (63%), trust-based working hours (50%) and compressed working weeks (41%).

Figure 3.8. Data collection on flexible ways of working



Note: N varies depending on the category. N=34 for part-time, 21 for compressed working week, 34 for flexitime, 19 for trust-based working hours, 36 for remote work. Original question: "Do you collect and aggregate data related to flexible ways of working?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability.

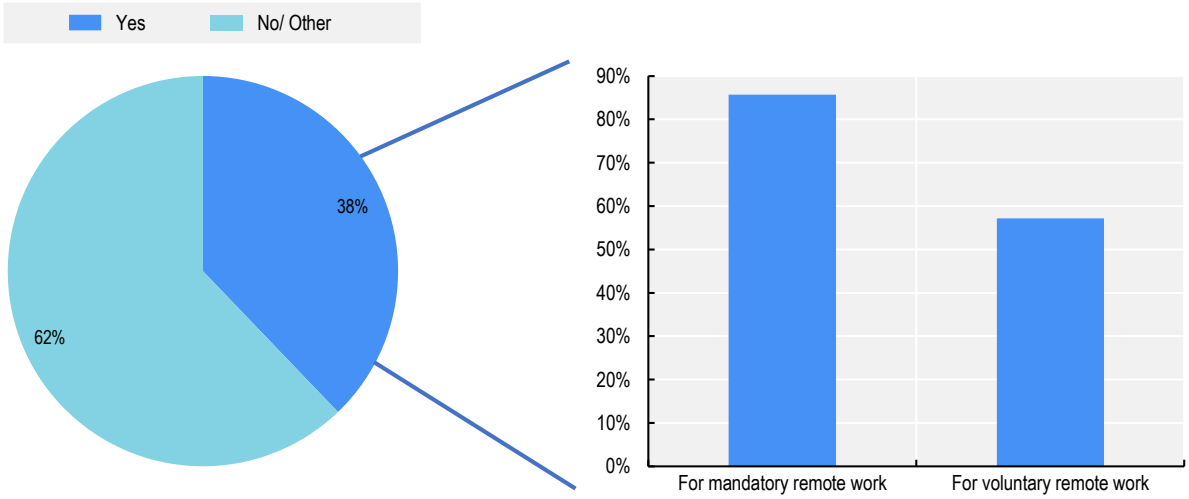
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Gathering more data and using it more effectively also supports inclusion. For example, data can be used to inform policies ensuring that remote work does not come as a burden for specific categories of the population for personal or financial reasons. For instance, the pandemic highlighted the negative impacts remote work could have on the gendered distribution of domestic and family responsibilities. Across 25 OECD countries, 61.5% of mothers with children under 12 reported they were taking on the majority or entirety of extra care work, while only 22.4% of fathers did (OECD, 2021[15]). Another study highlighted that, in the United Kingdom, mothers were interrupted in their work during lockdown 50% more than fathers (Andrew et al., 2020[16]). Those results however reflect a very specific situation, when most childcare options were either limited or impossible.

Some OECD countries are also exploring inclusion through trying to mitigate the costs generated by widespread remote working: more than one in three (38%) have provisions compensating expenses related to remote-work, whether this remote work is mandatory (32% of OECD countries) or voluntary (22%) (Figure 3.9). The Belgian and French central administration have developed allowances of EUR 50 per month for employees working at least five days remotely per month in Belgium, and of EUR 2.88 per

remote workday in France, with a ceiling of EUR 253.44 per year. Whereas most OECD countries provide basic technical equipment enabling remote-work, like laptops, other pieces of kit – like headphones for making calls, ergonomic chairs and desks, or lighting – may well come to more than the statutory allowance.

Figure 3.9. Legal provisions to compensate employees for expenses related to remote work



Note: N=37. Data for the United States is missing. The right-hand chart details the distribution of the "yes" answer, answer choices are not mutually exclusive. Original question: "Are there legal provisions to compensate employees for expenses related to remote-work?"
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability.

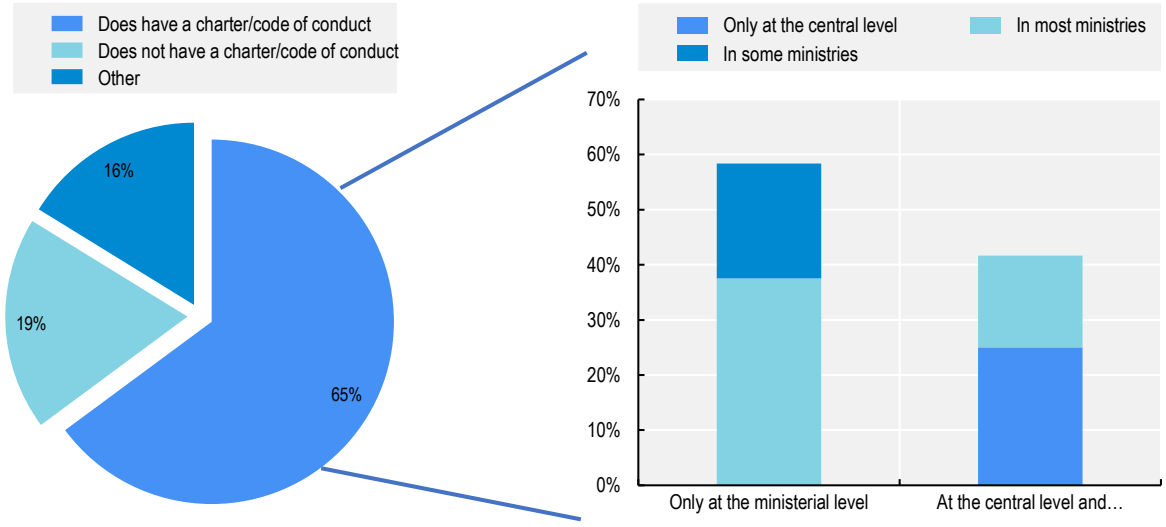
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Charters and codes of conduct for flexible working

Regulations regarding remote work have drastically evolved for public and private employees (Eurofound, 2022[17]). However, countries followed different paths and processes in redefining regulations on the topic. Some countries, such as France or the Netherlands, chose to base those regulations both in the public and private sectors on collective bargaining. Nordic countries used more sectoral collective agreements. These different approaches highlight the relevance and importance of collective bargaining in defining the settings of the future of work.

Regulations around flexible working can consist in charters or code of conduct that can help define its shape and the associated expectations. Charters and codes of conduct have already been adopted by 65% of OECD countries (Figure 3.10). In 59% of cases, only ministries designed and implemented those charters, which can result in variation of what they entail. The other 41% of OECD countries with a charter have a central charter, which might be completed and reinforced by ministerial charters.

Figure 3.10. Charters and codes of conduct articulating expected behaviour regarding remote work

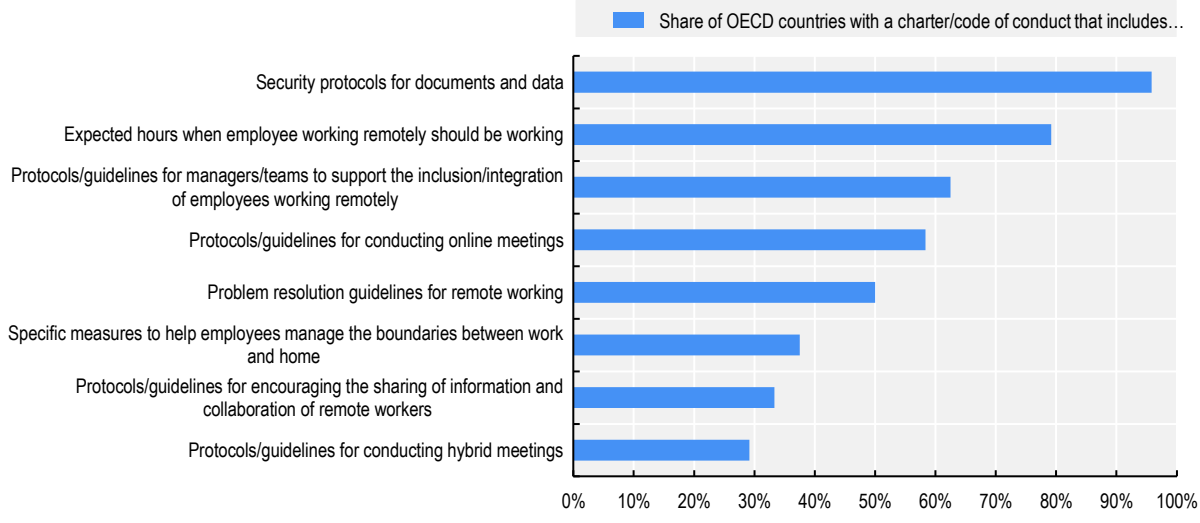


Note: Left chart: N=37. Data for the United States is missing. Right chart: N=24 (only countries that does have some form of charter/code of conduct). Original question: "Does a charter or code of conduct articulating expected behaviour regarding remote work exist?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability.

StatLink https://stat.link/m1ocvr

Charters on flexible working focus mainly on security protocols for documents and data (in 96% of OECD countries), expected working hours (79%), and protocols for managers to support remote management (63%) (Figure 3.11). The emphasis on expected working hours highlights the role of trust in implementing flexible working modalities. It also highlights the fact the border between working and non-working hours can be difficult to define, with a complex disassociation between workspace at home and personal environment. Such situation can create a situation of "work without end" (Eurofound and the International Labour Office, 2017[18]).

Figure 3.11. Elements defined in charters/codes of conduct regarding remote work



Note: N=24. Including all OECD countries with a charter/code of conduct articulating remote work in public administrations. Original question: "If [a charter of code of conduct articulating expected behaviour remote work exists], does it include:".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability.

StatLink https://stat.link/zbul8c

Box 3.2. Charter and codes of conduct regarding remote work across the OECD

Korea's Ministry of Personnel Management's guides on remote working

In Korea, the Ministry of Personnel Management has issued three manuals assisting organisations to make the best use of remote work: one for public employees detailing the guidelines around remote work, one for managers to help support employees, and a workbook detailing remote working rules, remote working application and authorisation procedure, FAQs, forms, and exercises to define whether the agent has an optimal working environment at home.

Peru's guide for remote work in public agencies

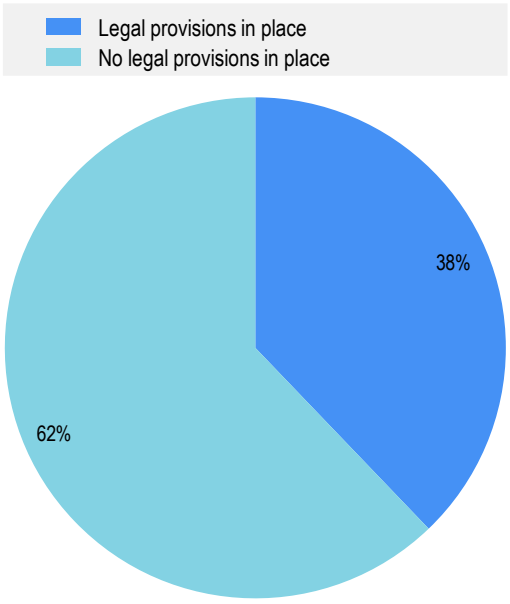
In April and June 2020, as the first wave of COVID-19 was impacting Peru's public service, the Public Service National Authority (*Autoridad Nacional del Servicio Civil – SERVIR)* developed two guides around remote work, one for employees and a specific one for manager. These guides include, among other elements, expectations around the work of public servants, guidelines around remote work conduct and a definition of the processes in place and the stakeholders involved. The guide designed for managers also gives advice on how to remain an efficient leader in remote settings, and how to plan for full remote work.

Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability.

The concept of 'right to disconnect' seeks to address the issue of work-life balance in a hybrid world, and refers to a worker's right to be able to refrain from engaging in work-related communications outside standard working hours. Over a third of OECD countries already have legal provisions to ensure the right to disconnect, either through law or collective agreements (Figure 3.12). A sensitive point of such regulation is to find a definition of working hours that is not too rigid yet still allows for some flexibility from an employee point of view.

In Portugal, law No 83/2021 of 6 December changed the teleworking regime, and amended the Labour Code. Article 199-A added to the Labour Code by this law, mentions that the "employer has the duty to abstain from contacting workers during the rest period, except in cases of force majeure". Across the OECD, the actual application of this recent right remains to be followed.

Figure 3.12. Legal provisions to ensure the right to disconnect



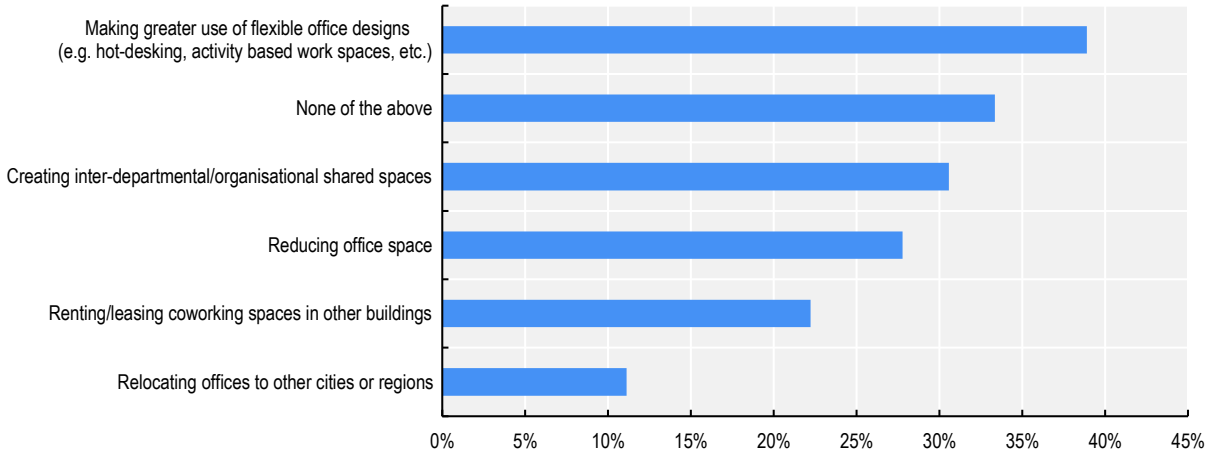
Note: N=37. In France, Italy and the Netherlands, those provisions take the shape of collective agreements for public servants. Original question: "Are there legal provisions to ensure the right to disconnect?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability.

StatLink https://stat.link/xyngjz

Rethinking office use and workspace layout

Greater flexibility in working hours and workspaces is leading public administrations to rethink their use of office space. Across the OECD, 59% of countries are developing plans to adapt to flexible ways of working, mostly by redesigning current office space or by rethinking the office distribution. 38% of OECD countries are seeking to make greater use of flexible office designs or create shared spaces between departments or organisations (27%). Finland is expecting to use all these plans regarding office space, with COVID-19 reinforcing a pre-existing trend of geographical deconcentration of office space.

Figure 3.13. Plans in public administrations regarding physical office spaces



Note: N=36. With 2 countries answering exclusively "other" (not displayed). "None of the above" is an exclusive answer choice. Original question: "Given the experience of the COVID-19 crisis, are there any plans in administrations regarding physical office spaces?".
Source: OECD (2022), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability.

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Fewer countries are thinking of using flexible ways of working as ways to rethink the office distribution, whether by reducing office space (27% of OECD countries), or relocating offices to other parts of the country (11%). In a context of greater local expectations from citizens, the relocation of office space from expensive capitals to cheaper urban centres allows for closer service delivery, greater capacity to attract talent residing outside of capitals, and operational budget savings, as suggested in Box 3.3.

Box 3.3. The Danish Better Balance policies to reorganise the geographic distribution of public servants

In 2015, the Danish government launched the Better Balance strategy (*Bedre Balance*), aiming at better organising the geographic distribution of central administration employees. The strategy initially envisioned the relocation of approximately 3 900 jobs, or 10% of government jobs based in the capital. Building on this strategy, a similar strategy called Better Balance II, was developed in 2018, aiming this time at relocating 4 000 additional jobs. Different agencies have been relocated throughout dozens of Danish cities and towns. Having two waves of decentralisation of central administrations has given to the Danish government insights on the effects of such transformation. Most notably, on the short term, productivity has slightly decreased and termination rates have increased. However, on the long run, agencies having completed their move receive more applications per vacancy than before – despite difficulties to attract specialised profiles – and the negative impacts mentioned above fade away.

Relocation of public administrations lead to obvious retention challenges. The Danish government decided to accompany all public employees throughout the relocation process. Employees that did not wish to relocate received DKK 25 000 to be spent on training schemes to be upskilled and be more competitive in their job search. Employees that accept the transfer received information about the local amenities for them and their families, and might have been eligible to promotions or training schemes.

Finally, such move also had an impact on public finances, reducing rent costs for office space in Copenhagen, and renting new office buildings in cheaper parts of the country. This is further reinforced by the fact that agencies now seek to share office buildings to minimise costs for renting and maintaining offices.

Source: Ministry of Finance (2018), Bedre balance II, Statslige arbejdspladser tættere på borgere og virksomheder

Conclusion

Flexible working arrangements have many potential benefits, though they come with their own specific challenges for both employees and employers. While it is still too early to definitely evaluate the long-term impacts of more public servants making use of more ways to work flexibly, some pointers are emerging.

First, the role of trust clearly emerges as a key enabler of flexible working practices. This may involve supporting managers to adapt long-standing ways of managing teams, shifting from control-based management to trust-based management. For organisations, this may also involve updating performance management frameworks to emphasise outcomes and results. Ensuring effective communication between employees and managers (and their representatives in workplace associations, trade unions, etc.) on evolving work preferences and needs is important to foster constructive discussions.

Second, the effectiveness of flexible ways of working can depend on how much autonomy employees feel they have to make use of them. Rules and regulations ensuring a right to disconnect, for example, may not serve their purpose if employees feel implicit pressure to check emails after working hours. Uptake of part-time work, too, may also not reach its intended purpose if employees – or certain categories of

employees, like more men than women – self-select out of using these modalities because of worries about career development.

Third, the trend toward greater individualisation of working preferences and conditions is likely to stay. This points to scope for greater consultation between senior leadership, managers and human resource bodies to develop flexible workforce management policies. Hybrid working arrangements, while popular among many public servants, also have their detractors. In determining future flexible working arrangements, all voices must be heard so that the principles of productivity, engagement and well-being are maintained.

Finally, flexible working arrangements are likely to appeal not just to existing public employees, but to future and prospective candidates. In a crowded and competitive labour market, the public service cannot afford to shoot itself in the foot by rowing back on key elements of flexibility that have come to be taken for granted by the types of in-demand profiles that they seek, such as in the digital and IT sector.

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4 OECD public service leadership and capability review of Brazil

The OECD recently carried out a *Public Service Leadership and Capability (PSLC) Review* of Brazil, which analyses the country's public employment and management systems against the fourteen principles of the OECD PSLC Recommendation. This summary includes targeted recommendations to support a fit-for-purpose public service that embeds the flexibility needed to meet current and future public challenges.

Brazil is taking important steps to update and modernise its well-established, professional public service made up of skilled and dedicated public servants (Box 4.1). For example, the government has been developing digital services and human resource management systems, putting in place more opportunities for workforce mobility, supporting ministries in undertaking better workforce planning, and creating more opportunities for leadership development. However, there remains scope to link up isolated policies and initiatives to improve their impact, and to simplify some of the legal and structural complexities of the public service career system. Many of the issues addressed in this project look at addressing rigidities in the public employment system, with a view to making it more flexible and able to meet the complex changes faced by Brazil's public service.

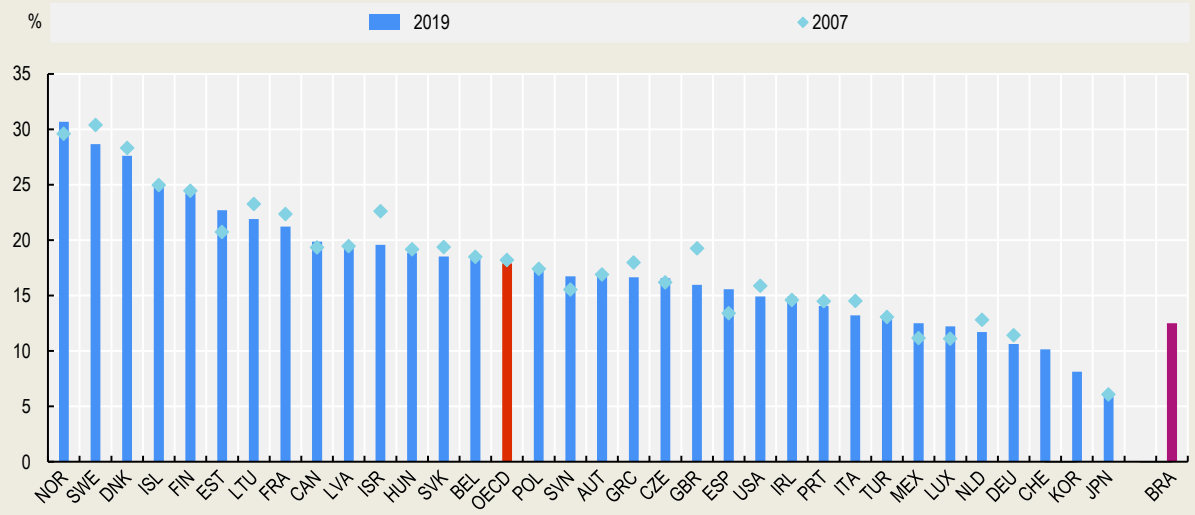
The OECD Review of Brazil's Public Service Leadership and Capability is the first of its kind – a new approach to peer reviews structured around the 14 principles of the OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability (Figure 4.3). The Review began with a scan of workforce management practices across all 14 principles of the OECD Recommendation, conducted in the autumn of 2022. This was followed by a deeper dive into three priority areas for reform: redesigning the career system for a modern and agile public sector, strengthening flexibility through better management of temporary contracts, and developing a mature performance management system. The process benefitted from peer input from representatives from France and Portugal, who shared their experience designing and implementing civil service reforms in these priority areas.

Box 4.1. The size and shape of public employment in Brazil

In Brazil, government employees represent 12.5% of total employment, slightly below the OECD average of 17.9%, but above the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) average of 11.9% (Figure 4.1) (OECD, 2020[1]; OECD, 2021[2]). However, the expenditure in Brazil for compensation of public employees is relatively high. The compensation costs are 13.3% of GDP (public enterprises excluded), compared to the average for OECD member countries (9.2%) as well as LAC countries (8.9%) (Figure 4.2) (OECD, 2020[1]; OECD, 2021[2]). Given this high investment in public employment, the public service should set out to achieve the most value from this investment to promote a professional, capable and responsive public service that is able to provide efficient public services responsive to the needs of citizens.

Figure 4.1. Employment in general government, 2007 and 2019

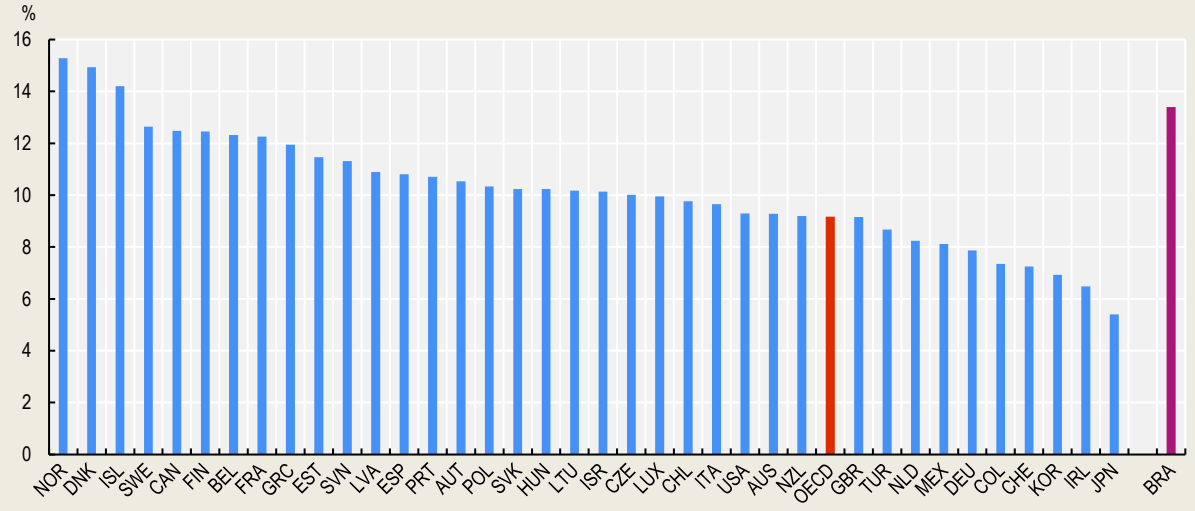
Percentage of total employment



Note: Data for Australia and New Zealand are not available. Data for Korea and Switzerland are not included in the OECD average due to missing time-series. Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Luxembourg, Norway and Switzerland: 2018 rather than 2019. Japan: 2017 rather than 2019. Iceland and the United States: 2008 rather than 2007.
Source: (OECD, 2020[1]; OECD, 2021[2]).

Figure 4.2. Compensation of general government employees, 2019

Percentage of GDP



Note: Data for Chile and Türkiye are not included in the OECD average because of missing time series or main non-financial government aggregates. Data for Japan, Brazil and Russia are for 2018 rather than 2019.
Source: OECD National Accounts Statistics (database). Data for Australia are based on a combination of National Accounts and Government finance statistics data provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Figure 4.3. OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability



Source: OECD (2019[3]), "OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability", OECD, Paris, https://www.oecd.org/gov/pem/recommendation-on-public-service-leadership-and-capability.htm.

The first pillar of the OECD PSLC Recommendation focuses on a values-driven culture and leadership. In this area, the scan finds that Brazil has taken some steps to strengthen the senior level public service by consolidating the system to better distinguish managerial roles throughout the hierarchy and introducing minimum criteria for appointment. The National School of Public Administration (ENAP) has worked with entities to develop a leadership pipeline and train future leaders. Furthermore, *LA-BORA!gov* (a learning and innovation lab in the Ministry of Public Management and Innovation) and ENAP have been crucial in putting forward innovative solutions to public policy challenges. However, the Review encourages Brazil to expand the implementation of these initiatives throughout the public service and embed them in a broader vision of the senior level public service in Brazil. The Review also identifies important gaps in the area of diversity and inclusion where there is a need to develop policies beyond quotas and collect better data.

The second pillar of the PSLC Recommendation centres on skilled and effective public servants. The Review recommends that Brazil systematically identify the changing skills needed and integrate skills development with learning opportunities. This is limited, in part, by the career systems which are not flexible enough to recruit and assess new skill sets. Recruitment processes are very transparent, but there is scope to introduce modern assessment methodologies of candidates' competencies. More appropriate assessment methodologies could be identified, while also clarifying the role of private sector organisations in running the assessments. The Secretariat of Personnel Management and Performance *(Secretaria de Gestão de Desempenho de Pessoal,* SGP) could use the authorisation process of the opening of new recruitment competitions more strategically to underline the need for strategic future-oriented competencies.

The third pillar of the Recommendation highlights responsive and adaptive public employment systems. Within the public employment system of Brazil, the SGP has a broad mandate to set operational standards. The progress in the digital transformation of the public service provides an opportunity to delegate more strategic HR management tasks to the HR units as more operational tasks are automated. However, this needs to be accompanied by measures to build capacities within the HR units to take on more strategic people management. This should be reflected in a strategic approach to public employment which reinforces existing efforts for workforce planning to build a more forward-looking public service. Lastly, nascent efforts to measure and strengthen employee engagement could be followed-up with decisive actions to take steps towards a more open and engaging public sector culture.

Underpinning many of the challenges across the three pillars is a need to simplify the career system, which is the legal and structural foundation of Brazil's public employment system. While the SGP has undertaken some efforts to reduce the numbers of the careers and harmonise the system, a broader reform process stands to improve public service efficiency.

While a full-scale reform of the career system likely requires a long-term perspective, and will depend on broad political support, various short- and medium-term steps can be undertaken to address the fragmentation, rigidity and inequities of the system. Specific recommendations include:

- **Simplify the career system** by developing a vision of an ideal career system based on functions and transversal skills, and work towards that vision by reducing overlap of careers, combining careers with the same functions, harmonising employment conditions and developing common job profiles that include transversal and future-oriented skills.
- **Ensure salary equity** by reviewing comparable functions across careers to set common basic salaries for new careers.
- **Establish common criteria for career progression** which take into account professional development and performance, and work towards a career progression system where levels of responsibility and expertise increase as public servants move up the career ladder.
- **Strengthen workforce flexibility through improved mobility** by developing common frameworks that underline the value of transversal competencies and skills; reducing barriers for public servants to change careers when warranted; building on and further promoting existing programmes for mobility; and considering mobility in promotions and performance reviews. As recommended in the *OECD Centre of Government Review of Brazil* (OECD, 2022[4]), this could also help to foster co-ordination between centre of government entities.

Flexibility can also be strengthened by improving the strategic use of temporary contracts. This may help to meet short-term and immediate needs as well as recruiting specific in-demand skills. In order to do so, Brazil could:

- **Update the conditions for hiring temporary employees**. This would include a broad reflection among key stakeholders on the terms and conditions for temporary employees which should avoid creating a two-tiered system. Simplified recruitment could also be considered.
- **Explore measures and policies to better respond to surge capacity and punctual needs**, such as improved mobility.
- **Mitigate the risk of abuse of the temporary scheme** by limiting the amount of time temporary employees can be hired and rehired, ensuring conflict-of-interest policies are implemented and observed, and ensuring recruitment procedures meet a common high standard for merit and transparency.

Finally, reinforcing the performance management system stands to provide better incentives for public servants. Key recommendations to strengthen the performance management system are to:

- **Harmonise performance processes and modalities** across careers to develop a standard that can be expected by all public servants. This includes giving responsibility of the assessment process to the host entity regardless of the career**.**
- **Simplify the performance rating system** to a 3-point scale, and set the middle point (2) as the default score for all public servants.
- **Address underperformance** by developing a mechanism to tackle underperformance through professional development and regulating performance-related dismissal as an option of last resort.
- **Align organisational and individual goals** by strengthening ImpactaGOV, a strategic learning and development body, and further integrating the People Development Plan (Plano de Desenvolvimento de Pessoas) and individual objectives.

- **Reinforce the capabilities of managers** by providing better guidance, training and support on conducting performance assessments and dealing with underperformance.

Building on the insights and recommendations of these outputs, the OECD, in co-ordination with the SGP, developed guidelines for establishing or merging careers in the Brazilian public service. The guidelines put forward a common vision on structuring careers based on simplifying the career system, encouraging transversal careers across entities and promoting mobility. A simplified remuneration structure could facilitate the management of personnel expenses. The recognition of professional performance in career advancement and training opportunities can provide incentives for the continuous professional development of public servants.

The following parts of this chapter go deeper into each of the areas of analysis described above.

Designing the career system for a modern and agile public sector

The 'career system' in Brazil is the backbone of the public service. This means that developing a fit-for-purpose public service in Brazil is difficult without identifying and addressing the underlying the challenges presented by the career system.

The Brazilian career system is comprised of 117 careers (*carreiras*) and 43 'groups of jobs' (*Plano de cargos)* with 87% of Brazilian public servants belonging to one of these careers. These careers and groups of jobs are narrowly defined occupational or professional job categories that are often attached to a specific entity. Many careers contain the same functions and job types, but for different entities. There is duplication and overlap among many careers and some careers no longer meet the needs of the public service. However, these types of careers cannot be abolished ('extinguished') as long as there are still serving public servants in that career. Overall, this results in a high degree of rigidity, fragmentation and inequality.

In recent decades, many OECD countries have analysed the set-up of their public administration and restructured job categories and career paths to better meet the needs of a modern public service. In general, public administrations restructure their job classification systems to reduce transaction costs by dealing (as far as possible) with collectives rather than individuals, meaning that they tend to structure the workforce into distinct categories. This may be done according to occupational grouping, i.e. the job performed, or professional corps (the profession to which an employee belongs). The most efficient approach is to ensure that common categories are used to the largest extent possible across as many organisations as possible. This simplifies the management of large workforces by applying common employment conditions and arrangements for as many employees as possible.

Efforts to increase flexibility in OECD countries have led to the creation of broader occupational groups and their transversal application across as many organisations within the public service as possible. This means that skills and competences are defined in a way that allows public servants to move more easily across occupational groups and organisations, strengthening flexibility. Examples of changes made to pay and grading systems in various countries include the replacement of incremental pay scales by broad salary bands, restructuring along the lines of job families, and the rationalisation of job classification systems.

In Brazil, there are no job classification standards or overarching competency frameworks for the public service. The employment conditions, including salary amounts and structures, differ significantly as each career negotiates specific changes to its legal statutes, often directly with Congress. This has led to a high degree of fragmentation and internal competition between careers regarding employment conditions.

Each career is defined in its own law. Therefore, this inflexibility is exacerbated by the fact that any new careers or changes to existing careers have to be passed by Congress. As a result, equipping the public service for the future by including new skills and capacities is a complex and long process, as is making

any reforms or changes to existing careers. To address this, the SGP has been requiring entities to complete any request for the creation of a new career with an assessment how the new career aligns with the public service digitalisation agenda. This is a first step towards including new skillsets, although it does not help to reduce the overall number of careers.

The SGP has worked to exercise stronger control over the creation of new careers by routinely verifying if requests for new careers could be either used as an opportunity for merging already existing careers or creating more transversal careers (i.e. careers that exist in multiple entities, thereby standardising employment conditions). As a result, no new careers have been established in recent years. For example, when creating the National Nuclear Safety Authority in 2021, instead of creating a new specific career for the authority, an already existing career was expanded to be employed in this authority.

Making deep changes to the career system requires significant legal and constitutional reform which is difficult to accomplish in the short to medium term as this will depend on political consensus. However, there are opportunities for more short- and medium-term steps which do not depend on legal reforms.

To systematise the creation of new careers, the SGP could build on the guidelines for creating new careers proposed. \ These guidelines could be used to build a common understanding for the efforts undertaken to reduce fragmentation and rigidity of the career system. Training HR units according to those guidelines, discussing why specific criteria have been put forward and systematically using the guidelines as a checklist before submitting requests for career creation to the SGP, would facilitate the work of the SGP.

Building on this, the SGP could develop a strategy for grouping and organising functions in the public service, including how to identify and classify common job categories and positions within functions to avoid duplication and reduce the overall number of careers. There is risk that positions break away from their parent function as has happened before. So this would need to be managed carefully. By analysing the careers and the needed skills and competencies as well as any future skills needs, a competency framework could support the development of those skills. This could also include a reflection on transversal skills to promote flexibility of the workforce.

Promoting mobility can contribute to higher professionalisation and resilience of the public service. In Brazil, only a few careers are designed transversally – i.e. with posts in multiple ministries and agencies, for example the career of Specialist in Public Policy and Government Management (EPPGG). The only possibility to enter a career is through a competitive entry exam for the specific career enabling the hiring of public servants at the lowest grade of the career. This means that the career system is rather rigid and inflexible to anticipate or react to short-term needs as public servants cannot be assigned, permanently or temporarily, across careers. Mobility opportunities are limited as only moves within the career are possible and depend on senior level public servants providing these opportunities.

Underlining and valuing transversal skills can be a way to build a more flexible workforce that can respond to short-term needs. Mobility can foster learning and exchange of information as well as promoting co-ordination on cross-cutting priorities which was identified as a challenge in the Brazilian public sector in the *OECD Centre of Government Review of Brazil report* (OECD, 2022[4]). However, in Brazil, the skills and qualifications set out for careers do not consider transversal skills as a benefit given that careers are usually attached to a specific entity.

To promote a more flexible public service that values transversality, Brazil could prioritise new careers that are organised according to functions, span across entities and define transversal skills and attributes. Brazil should explore lower entry criteria for public servants to other careers as well as being able to join careers at higher career levels. Further efforts could be also invested in the mobility programme set out by the SGP in line with Ordinance Nº 282, of July 24, 2020. It is an encouraging step towards more mobility, however, it could be further promoted and scaled up throughout the public sector for additional entities to take advantage. The talent bank already in place could help to provide a platform for specific areas and in-demand skills by building a specific stream searching for those skills, e.g. innovation. Lastly, guidance

could be offered to public servants, managers, and entities. Apart from general guidance, this could include for example, succession planning checklists, transfer checklists, onboarding sessions, risk assessment (for conflict of interest), and performance management guidance.

Regarding career advancement in the Brazilian public sector, the only form of progression possible in most careers is movement up the salary scale based on seniority or a combination of seniority and performance.) Depending on the career, the top of the scale may be reached in a relatively short time. For example, public employees belonging to the internal revenue service can be at the top level in 11 years. In comparison, it may take 20 years for a public servant belonging to the Special Jobs Plan of the Ministry of Finance (now Ministry of Economy). Furthermore, career progression in Brazil is not commonly associated with a higher demand for technical or managerial skills.

Brazil could consider reforming career progression. First, for those careers that will be newly created, career progression criteria should go beyond seniority and take into account additional factors, such as performance. Brazil could begin with three levels within the career – junior, standard, and senior. Junior positions could be the common starting point and be oriented towards learning. The standard category would be the biggest, while the senior positions would be reserved for those who have developed a deep specialisation and/or take on supervisory functions. In this kind of structure, career progression would be based on demonstration of skills and effectiveness, for example through selection process for promotion to provide better incentive structures. In the long-term, Brazil could also consider initiating a discussion to provide opportunities for public servants to enter other careers at higher levels and in this way provide career progression.

The salary structure in the Brazilian public service at federal level is complex, as each career has its own salary scale and allowances, resulting in more than 700 salary grids. The base pay represents approximately 40% to 60% of public servants' remuneration, with the rest made up of a myriad of differentiated benefits (OECD, 2010[5]). There is a large difference between basic salaries of comparable functions given the fragmentation of careers.

Ultimately, Brazil will eventually need to redesign the wage structure to align with future needs, rather than those of the past. This should include standardising and consolidating the various salary components (base pay, bonus payments, etc) to make pay more transparent and easier to manage. This may be a challenging and long-term undertaking given the interests involved. However, the SGP could take steps towards reducing the inequity of salaries among comparable functions. To provide pay equity, the SGP could establish an average basic salary for each function, based on a review of pay for all jobs that conduct similar work across careers. This basic salary per function could be taken as a standard basic salary for any new careers to be created. In order to mitigate the risk of a politicisation of salary-setting, an independent commission or service could help focus on the situation of each career.

Strengthening flexibility through the increased use of temporary contracts

Temporary hiring in the public service can help to meet short-term and immediate needs and requirements as well as recruiting specific in-demand skills. Not only, but especially in the event of crisis, the public service has to deliver results quickly and needs public employees who can fill in to cover unexpected workload increases, employee illness, leave and departure. At the same time, temporary employees will need training and onboarding, though the knowledge and skills will be lost once the temporary employees finish their contract.

In Brazil, the hiring of temporary staff is subject to restrictive conditions to meet demands of exceptional public interest. All cases qualifying for this are specifically defined through a prescriptive list of special circumstances in Law Nº 8 745 of 1993. This includes for example assistance in a state of emergency or researchers to collect data for the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics. The restrictions on hiring

temporary staff make the Brazilian public sector inflexible to react to any short-term needs. It also means that almost all the hiring that takes place has considerable budgetary implications, given that it implies long-term commitment. This is reflected by the relative low percentage of temporary staff in the public sector in Brazil. In July 2022, 5% of all public employees of the Brazilian federal public service were employed under the temporary regime, while 87% of the Brazilian public servants had permanent contracts.

Increasing the use of temporary recruitment in Brazil would require a legal reform to change the conditions under which temporary staff could be hired. This should be preceded by an extensive stakeholder discussion to reflect on who needs civil service protection, what are core state activities which can only be undertaken by permanent public servants, and under which conditions temporary hiring should be used. In addition, Brazil could explore measures to build surge capacity by setting up a pool of public servants which could be mobilised on short-term notice and increasing short-term mobility opportunities.

There is a risk that short-term hiring mechanisms are used to address long-term resourcing needs. A two-tiered system of permanent public servants and temporary public employees who are contracted long-term and performing the same jobs must be avoided. To manage the risk of circumventing conditions for temporary hiring, managers need guidance from HR offices as well as increased monitoring on the uses of temporary employees. Otherwise, this may adversely affect equality of access, merit and transparency.

Transparent terms and condition should be introduced for temporary hiring across the public sector to ensure transparency and consistent application. These could include:

- Type of functions/positions and circumstances: Set out which type of functions may be filled by temporary employees – and define those core state activities which should be reserved for public servants. Exceptions under certain circumstances, such as activities of distinctly short-term nature could be included. Part of the reflection would be if those set out in the current law are the right ones or need to be amended.
- Recruitment: This could be a simplified procedure which allows for a short timeframe to recruit.
- Compensation: This should be broadly in line with civil service salaries for similar function, while allowing for some flexibility to be able to attract sought-after skills.
- Term length: Clear limits should be set, including specific criteria and limitations for contract renewals to ensure that temporary hiring is not used as means to undercut the civil service regime by hiring temporary employees long-term. Part of the reflection on these elements would include if the term lengths currently defined are appropriate and effectively implemented or need to be amended.
- Cooling-off periods: Defining a period after which a temporary employee can be hired again by the public sector. Currently, this is set at 24 months. The reflection process around these elements would need to deliberate if this period is effective or should be amended.
- Working conditions and ethical standards: These should be largely in line with the those of permanent public servants.
- Performance evaluations: These should be similar to those for public servants in comparable functions and be taken into account if contract renewals are possible.

Temporary hiring often allows for more simplified recruitment procedures which means lengthy staffing processes are avoided making the contracting quicker and more flexible. In Brazil, the hiring of permanent public servants takes on average one year. For temporary employees, it takes around 255 days as the same steps need to be taken throughout the hiring process as for permanent employees. Only in the cases of emergency, this time can be reduced by avoiding a selection process. This means that the opportunity for temporary hiring does not provide any advantages of flexibility.

In the discussion on a legal reform, a simplified recruitment process could be considered. While this should not reduce minimum standards of transparency, fairness and merit throughout the recruitment process, the hiring process should be considerably shortened to allow for flexibility. This should also include procedures to manage conflict of interests during the recruitment process and measures to avoid political influence. The recruitment could be decentralised with entities conducting the processes directly and allowing for simplified recruitment processes based only on a job interview. Similarly, the administrative procedures should be analysed for time efficiencies, such as reducing the time currently needed for authorising temporary hiring requests. However, in the case of simplified recruitment systems, care must be taken to ensure that limits to the use of temporary hiring are well designed and respected, to avoid the temporary scheme becoming a backdoor into core public service jobs.

Developing a mature performance management system

In an ever more constrained environment, public administrations seek to optimise processes, increase efficiency and achieve objectives. This means emphasising the performance of both organisations and individuals. In this context, performance management systems can link performance and HR decisions, allowing to monitor and evaluate the performance of public administrations and servants. Across the OECD, performance management systems have traditionally been characterised by elaborate monitoring systems, explicit goals, performance measures and targets. performance management systems are used as development tools that can develop talent, lead to a greater alignment between individual and organisational goals, and address under-performance.

Brazil's federal administration uses performance management with many of the objectives listed above, however the systems could be simplified, reorganised and better aligned to improve their impact. Performance assessments amount to a rating attributed by the immediate supervisor. The average performance grade given throughout the Brazilian federal public service is 98/100, which is significantly high, and raises questions about the significance and value of the current system.

The career system in place in Brazil also affects performance assessment as responsibility for the detailed design of the performance management process rests with the career of origin and the entity responsible for it, based on guidelines from the SGP.

Good performance and underperformance are hard to identify in the Brazilian federal administration, as the inflated ratings given do not accurately reflect employees' performance. In this context, performance rewards fail as a motivational tool, as they are perceived as automatic rewards given by default. This also means that underperformance cannot be properly addressed, no matter the incentives put in place to tackle this challenge.

Brazil should consider the introduction of a 3-point system where all public servants by default receive a score of 2. A score of 3 would be limited to a small number of proven high-performers, and a score of one reserved for those with clear performance problems that must be addressed. At the beginning, it could be prudent to limit the awards for high performance to a certain percentage.

To make this as effective as possible, Brazil would also need to harmonise the performance assessment systems in each career, so that managers are working with one common system across their workforce. This could be done either by standardising the timing and approach across all careers, and/or by shifting the responsibility for performance management design from the careers to the individual entities.

In Brazil, good performance amounts almost exclusively to performance bonuses, with performance-related pay representing a variable share of total compensation in each career. Performance-related pay can represent in some cases between 50% and 70% of total pay. This high percentage could stand to create a positive incentive if the system were able to detect and reward performance effectively. However in Brazil it appears to create a system in which public servants almost always receive their full performance

bonus and perceive it to be part of their basic fixed salary. Considering its importance, such high bonuses risk creating a disincentive for managers to give public servants any lower ratings that would threaten their pay. This likely contributes to the explanation of why ratings of public servants' performance are so high. In line with a simplification of the performance system to the three-point scale suggested above, the existing performance pay could be integrated into the regular civil service pay (or leave it for those who score 2), and reserve a smaller pay bonus and/or non-financial award only for those who score 3, to realign awards with truly exception performance.

An efficient performance management system can help to identify underperformance and set up appropriate mechanisms to address it, such as informal counselling, verbal or written warning, mandatory training or even dismissal of public servants.

Underperformance is rarely addressed in Brazil. Although Article 247 of the Federal Constitution states that underperformance can lead to dismissal, no appropriate mechanism is in place. Brazil could regulate dismissal for underperformance as a last resort. However, this should be accompanied by an escalation mechanism that addresses underperformance through 1) counselling and support; 2) training opportunities; 3) reassignment; and 4) dismissal as last resort.

At the organisational level, performance agreements give a measuring framework for outputs and goals. Entities should be able to define and identify a handful of goals, around which performance can be measured and strengthened. Goals should then be cascaded to specific units or departments, with managers translating organisational objectives into individual ones.

In Brazil, the People Development Plan (*Plano de Desenvolvimento de Pessoas*, PDP) developed by each entity aims to align the development necessities with the strategy of each entity, through clear organisational objectives. Concretely, the People Development Plan focuses on the skills needed and the ways to develop them. In order to guide entities, the SGP is currently developing an initiative called *ImpactaGOV* to assist entities in developing People Development Plans.

As the SGP continues to support entities in developing organisational performance targets, efforts could be taken to define individual goals which link to the People Development Plan. This would mean, among others, reinforcing the capacity of managers to do so and structure objectives around entities, departments, and individuals.

Finally, considering senior managers' task and special position in public organisations, their performance is often evaluated differently. More than two thirds of OECD countries have a performance-management regime for senior managers, based in a majority of cases on outcome, output, organisational management indicators, and performance-related pay. In Brazil, formalised performance assessment is not mandatory for senior level public servants. This can hurt the legitimacy of performance management systems in the eye of public servants, and creates an accountability concern in the eye of citizens. As new senior level public servant careers are being defined and a specialised leadership competency framework is implemented, it could be beneficial to develop efficient performance mechanisms targeting this group.

Assessing the Brazilian public employment and management system against the Public Service Leadership and Capability Recommendation

While the first section focused on the priority areas, the following sections provide an analysis of how the public employment and management system in Brazil aligns with the other principles of the Public Service Leadership and Capability Recommendation not addressed as part of the priority areas.

Pillar 1: Values-driven culture and leadership

Defining the values of the public service and promoting values-based decision-making

Common values in public administrations are the basis for a common understanding of what is desirable, not only as an outcome (societal well-being and progress) but also in how that outcome is achieved (fairness, transparency, accountability, etc.). Common public values create the basis for a culture of trust, which, in turn, permits greater flexibility and innovation in organisations and individuals while still ensuring compliance and integrity. Building a values-driven culture in the public service requires a clear understanding of what these common values are, and how they can be transmitted through effective values-based leadership.

Various pieces of primary and secondary legislation articulate the values of Brazil's public institutions and set out standards- or codes of conduct- for public servants. The Office of the Comptroller General (*Controladoria-Geral da União*, CGU) has established a set of core public values in co-operation with the OECD following a large consultation in 2021. These include: engagement; integrity, impartiality; kindness; justice; professionalism; and vocation (Controladoria-Geral da União, n.d.[6]).

The SGP could display stronger leadership in promoting and communicating these common values. The SGP could mainstream these values throughout public employment policies. The Ministry of Economy should ensure it models public values such as merit, transparency, results-based management (accountability), and user-focus, especially in the recruitment, promotion, and assessment of public servants.

Building leadership capability in the public service

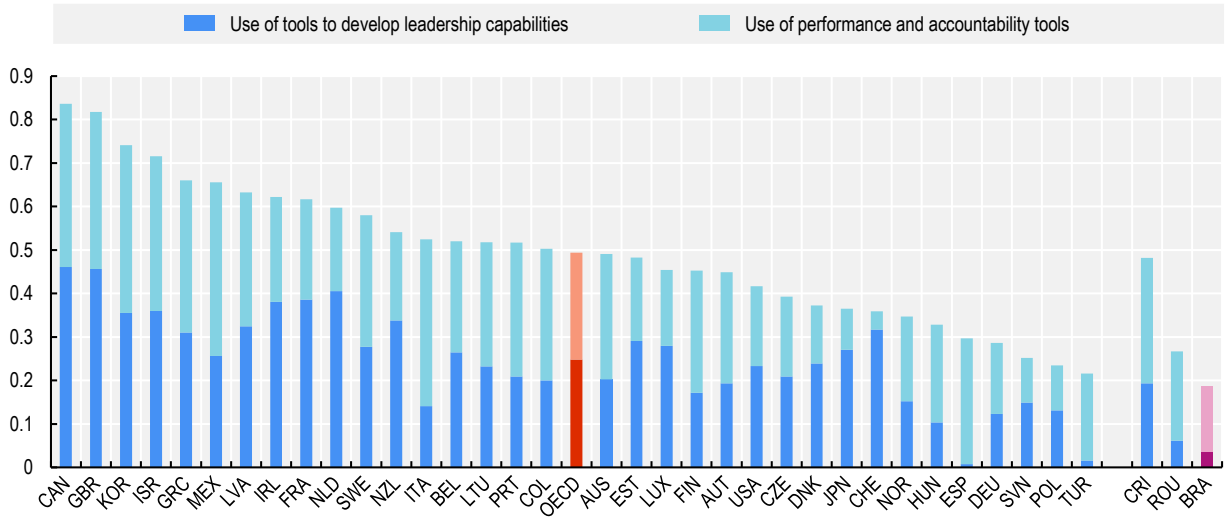
Capable leadership is required if public administrations are to keep pace with an increasingly complex, volatile, and uncertain world. It is senior level public servants (SLPS) who are responsible for transforming policies into action. In order to be successful in these endeavours however, SLPS need to have both the right skills and institutional support to deploy them.

Recent reforms in Brazil have aimed to clarify and consolidate the senior level public service regime in Brazil by introducing the CCE/FCE regime. The new regime carries over some recent requirements from a previous 2019 Executive Order to establish minimum criteria for selection/appointment. To develop a pipeline of SLPS, the SGP and ENAP jointly developed and recently piloted a programme called *LIDERAGOV*, whereby a group of selected public servants participated in a leadership development programme, after which they were put forward for CCE/FCE positions.

Despite these efforts, Brazil still has a long way to go towards developing a coherent senior level public service, accompanied by a broader strategy, and appropriate institutional support. Competitive selection processes remain the exception rather than the norm. Key dimensions of strengthening the senior level public service regime that still need to be developed include performance assessment criteria; learning and development; and open, transparent promotion opportunities. This is reflected in the OECD's pilot composite indicator on the management of the senior level public service.

Brazil should continue to strengthen the legal framework and institutional support for the senior level public service by building on the findings of the 2019 OECD report on innovation skills and leadership (OECD, 2019[7]) which recommended more specific minimum hiring criteria and expanding the use of competitive recruitment, among others. Furthermore, a dedicated team or unit to manage SLPS, monitor compliance with guidelines and set out a coherent learning and development strategy. Such a unit would help ensure the implementation of new policies, provide guidance and support to ministries, support strategic mobility of managers and leaders across departments, and serve to monitor progress over time.

Figure 4.4. Pilot index: Managing the senior level public service, 2020



Note: Data for Chile, Iceland and the Slovak Republic are not available. Data for the Slovak Republic are not available as the senior level public service is not a formalised group.
Source: OECD (2020), Survey on Public Service Leadership and Capability.

StatLink https://stat.link/h9r1gt

Ensure an inclusive and safe public service that reflects the diversity of the society it represents

An inclusive and representative workforce contributes is not only necessary to ensure fairness and equity, but also stands to improve efficiency and capability by broadening the range of skillsets and experience available in the workforce, boosting opportunities for innovation.

In Brazil, diversity in the public sector is not prioritised, particularly at management levels which where white men are greatly over-represented compared to the general population. In 2018, the share of women in the Brazilian public sector represented 44.8% (Fundação Escola Nacional de Administração Pública, 2018[8]). In senior management, only 16.8% are women and in middle management 35.1% of the positions are held by women, well below the OECD average of 37.1% for senior positions and 48.2% of middle management positions (OECD, 2021[2]). Furthermore, Brazil's public service is predominantly white. Approximately 64% of all public servants are fully Caucasian, with this number growing to around 75% in management, compared to 43% of the Brazilian population reported white (IBGE, 2018[9]).

There are few policies in place to increase diversity, apart from quotas. Recourse mechanisms for employees who feel they have faced discrimination are limited, and those that do exist are reportedly not well known or actively promoted. In addition, data on the issue is, in many cases, not available. While information of ethnicity and gender is collected, other inclusions information seldom is. Further, the utilisation of data that exists does not currently appear to be widespread for purposes of measurement or monitoring.

To promote diversity and inclusion, more extensive policies should be introduced, including actively collecting data for monitoring and measurement. In addition, Brazil could conduct barrier analyses to address roadblocks to the public service for underrepresented groups. Evaluating attitudes about diversity within the administration could help to pinpoint areas of action. Lastly, creating recourse, watchdog or complaint mechanisms and processes would support employees in raising instances of discrimination.

Build a proactive and innovative public service that takes a long-term perspective in the design and implementation of policy and services

The public sector is facing increasingly complex and ever-changing challenges that demand innovation and forward-thinking mind sets. Initiatives to increase innovation in public sector contexts are often fuelled by the will and enthusiasm of committed public servants, working to change organisational cultures that emphasise stability and status quo.

In Brazil efforts have been made to promote innovation through several initiatives which aim to increase innovative processes and systems and the development of innovation competencies. These include *LA-BORA!gov*, a laboratory for innovation in people management, and pilot skill-development programmes within SGP. ENAP also acts as a hub and incubator for innovation-related projects.

Nevertheless, additional steps could be taken to consistently recognise and develop innovation as a value or core competency. Innovation is often viewed with high degrees of hesitancy due to repercussions of failure. The administration would benefit from a framework to help identify and foster the innovative skills and competencies needed in employees.

To incentivise innovation, Brazil should advance on the Recommendations of the OECD report '*The Innovation System of the Public Service of Brazil'* (OECD, 2019[10]). Newly built competency frameworks could incorporate innovation skills, and embed them into HR management, career development, hiring and mobility strategies. Performance review systems could be used to realign incentives towards innovation. In addition, networks of innovators could be reinforced and rewarded to connect people working in innovative areas, thus creating support mechanisms, nurturing new ideas and working towards creating a culture of innovation.

Pillar 2: Skilled and effective public servants

Continuously identifying skills and competencies needed to transform political vision into services which deliver value to society

The complex and inter-connected nature of challenges facing governments means that they must be able to attract, recruit and develop many types of skills and competencies. Therefore, public administrations must take an in-depth look at what types and mix of skills and competencies are needed now and in the future.

In Brazil, strong efforts have been made to strengthen digitalisation of key services. However, entities struggle to identify and develop the needed competencies to support the digital agenda. One way to support this, is the mandatory development of the People Development Plan (*Plano de Desenvolvimento de Pessoas,* PDP). Based on these assessments, the SGP, in co-ordination with ENAP, plans concrete capacity development training programmes to develop capacities across the public sector.

In addition, ENAP developed a classification of transversal competencies – a strong step toward mapping what skills and competencies are needed in the Brazilian public sector. This framework appears to be a first step at developing a common but flexible competency framework.

To reinforce the efforts taken to identify skills and competencies needed in the public service, the SGP could support entities further in their capacity to identify digital skills and transversal competencies related to the digital transformation of the public service. This could extend to skills on planning, co-ordination, and prioritisation to improve the effectiveness of the centre of government as recommended by the *OECD Centre of Government Review* (OECD, 2022[4]). The SGP could also facilitate discussions on changing skills requirements between entities and training providers such as ENAP. Lastly, the identified competencies should be integrated into people management processes, especially recruitment and learning and development.

Attract and retain employees with the skills and competencies required from the labour market

Public services increasingly require a wide variety of skill sets and professional backgrounds to address complex public challenges. This is why public services must be able to attract people with new and emerging skill-sets, as well as hard-to-recruit skill-sets (such as in the digital field) that are in demand by the private sector.

The Brazilian public sector is generally seen as an attractive employer but finds it hard to attract candidates with specific skill sets, in part due to the limitations of the career system as described above. At the same time, recruitment restrictions) have limited the ability of the Brazilian Federal Public Service to attract new talent. Furthermore, the distortions of the salary system mentioned previously can lead to a mismatch of supply and demand.

The SGP could deepen insights on what aspects of attractiveness appeal to specific groups and sought-after skills. It could also develop more proactive recruitment practices to compensate for the relative lack of new openings and ensure a better match between candidates and jobs on offer. This could include creating and systematising partnerships with universities to present career opportunities to students in areas of particular interest to the public service, communicating more strategically about public sector jobs opportunities (e.g. through social media), or supporting current employees to engage with a more diverse range of groups and backgrounds.

Recruit, select and promote candidates through transparent, open and merit-based processes, to guarantee fair and equal treatment

Recruitment and promotion processes should be fit for purpose to guarantee fair and equal treatment. Transparency is a core feature of recruitment processes in the Brazilian Federal public service. Recruitment competitions are advertised publicly and the list of successful candidates is published. While this transparency is welcome, it is important to make sure that the recruitment processes test relevant knowledge and skills as well. There is scope to identify ways to better assess skills (OECD, 2019[7]) in a systematic manner. This means making sure that candidates are tested through modern methods, and for competencies that align with job performance and long-term organisational goals.

Currently, most stages of the recruitment openings in Brazil are outsourced to private companies by the entity that is hiring. Outsourcing different aspects of the recruitment and selection process can enable entities to access more sophisticated ways of assessing candidates than are available in-house. However, the scale of outsourcing may also point to a lack of human resource skills and capability at entity level, which is an area to be explored further.

Brazil could analyse how new assessment methodologies could help to recruit candidates with future-oriented skills and competencies, while also better aligning authorisations for new recruitment competitions with strategic workforce planning needs across the Federal public service. Furthermore, the extent of the role, of private sector organisations in designing and running testing and assessment for public sector positions should be assessed and a strategic approach to their use developed.

Develop the necessary skills and competencies by creating a learning culture and environment in the public service

Learning and development is a core part of public sector capability. Learning is not just a tool or a product provided by human resource departments – it is an essential skill that public servants must acquire over the course of their careers.

While there are learning opportunities in the Brazilian Public Service, there is significant scope to take steps to move toward a more joined-up culture of learning. While ENAP has been supporting a culture of

continual learning through re-framing its offer to entities in terms of solving business needs, there is a barrier to aligning the results of the People Development Plan at entity-level with the formats and content that ENAP proposes.

In Brazil, entities struggle to provide learning and development opportunities linked with long-term organisational goals. For example, participants to certain modules run by ENAP receive a certification, but when it comes to hiring or promotion decisions, that certification counts for relatively little. The burden is placed primarily on managers for encouraging learning and employees' intrinsic motivation.

Mangers could be supported in their role of creating and incentivising a learning culture, for example as part of performance management. Entities could be supported by providing guidance on how to interlink the People Development Plan with the training offer by ENAP and how to integrate the learning outcomes at the organisational level.

Pillar 3: Responsive and adaptive employment systems

Clarify institutional responsibilities for people management

Within the public employment system, various institutions and entities have responsibilities for people management. Setting institutional responsibilities for designing, leading and implementing the elements for people management are fundamental to ensure the effectiveness of the public employment system.

In Brazil, the institutional responsibilities, mandate and capacities of its actors could be better aligned. The current structure is characterised by the SGP setting operational standards and relying on top-down regulations, while it does not have an operational mandate. Meanwhile, HR units are often overburdened with administrative tasks and have limited resources and capabilities for more strategic people management.

Conscious of this, the SGP is pushing towards a higher degree of automation of administrative tasks through the introduction of the electronic platform "*Sou.gov".* It provides public employees their HR profile and opportunities to manage any administrative task through the platform, including searching for job opportunities. This facilitates the work of the HR units and has the potential to HRM staff to take on more strategic tasks.

To strengthen more strategic people management in the entities, the SGP in co-ordination with the HR units in the entities could assess which norms and regulations hinder flexibility and evaluate where specific responsibilities could be delegated to the HR units to allow for more innovative practices. The degree of delegation will have to be mirrored by an increase of capacities within the HR units. As HR professionals take on a new role, it could be considered to develop an HR career path building on the certification course to be offered in 2022 on 'payroll' and 'workforce planning'.

Develop a long-term and strategic approach to people management

A long-term and strategic approach to people management in the public sector helps to get the right people in the right job or position at the right time. By assessing the skills needed and available in relation to strategic priorities and requirements, the public sector can better prepare its workforce for future needs.

The development of strategic approach to people management and availability of tools is rather limited in Brazil given the rigidity of the career system, with a focus on ensuring compliance with norms and regulations, controlling the size of organisations, limiting the number of new careers created and providing staff in policy priority areas. Meanwhile, a shared vision on public management could be further developed to advance a common understanding on the kind of public service envisioned.

This could be achieved by identifying the public employment goals set out in the Federal Development Strategy and breaking them further down into actionable items and what this means in practice for public

employment and management. Evaluation efforts should also be introduced to measure progress on any goals set.

Implementing the strategic vision for the public service depends on the workforce and its capacities and skills to deliver services to the public. This makes it essential to plan workforce development. While the SGP has a good overview of the overall staff numbers and costs and can project the development of staff in the future, it could use these statistics in a more strategic manner. It currently mostly reacts to the entities' indications of future hiring needs as new policy priorities arise. Conscious of this, the SGP has made some progress in recent years towards strategic workforce planning. In co-operation with the University of Brasilia Foundation, it has developed the *Workforce Dimensioning Project.* The project aims to develop and implement a reference model to support the definition of the ideal number of staff in each entity, identify needs in the workforce and anticipate change.

While this is a first step towards strategic workforce planning and developing a common understanding, the scope is very ambitious and may risk overcharging those responsible for implementation. It is therefore key to prioritise objectives and develop a scaled approach building on progress achieved. In addition to the approach at entity-level, the SGP could also work towards a workforce analysis of the current available skills and those needed in the future throughout entire public sector using the information provided by the Workforce Dimensioning Project where available.

Employees as partners in public service management issues

The effectiveness of the public service ultimately depends on the public servants providing those services. One key element to consider is the level of engagement of public employees. Enabling employee representation and entering into constructive social dialogue with them can be conducive to engaging public employees in public service management issues and involving them actively in improving the public service.

In order to provide opportunities for exchange, the SGP has set up a permanent institutional channel for exchange with unions through the Department of Labour Relations in the Public Service. This provides an opportunity for engaging in constructive dialogue with the unions. However, the discussions held are quite detached from the priorities developed within the SGP or the issues at entity-level with mostly unions raising issues they would like to address, but not vice-versa. There seems to be also no formal agreement on how issues debated are followed up on. In the public service, the right to strike is not formally regulated.

The SGP could strengthen the use of the institutional channel to build a constructive dialogue and proactively engage with the unions on changes and reforms. Brazil could also consider regulating the right to collective bargaining for employees of the public sector in order to enable more effective employee representation.

Beyond formal dialogue through unions, employee engagement may also be strengthened through specific tools within the entities. Employee engagement and perceptions should first be measured through government-wide employee surveys conducted at regular intervals (e.g. annually). The SGP has undertaken several efforts to measure employee engagement, for example through the OECD pilot module on employee engagement and a public sector wide survey in partnership with 'Great Place To Work', ENAP and the República Institute. While these are promising first steps towards establishing a baseline on employee engagement, no follow-up actions have been designed so far.

The SGP should develop an employee survey that aims to measure job engagement and its drivers, and conduct this survey at regular intervals to track changes over time. The SGP could then support leaders of entities to develop a number of actions to respond to survey results with a focus on improving scores and addressing challenges identified.

Lastly, channels for employees to report grievances and violations of integrity standards without fear of reprisals can be an effective measure to expose irregularities, mismanagement and corruption. In Brazil,

various channels are available to public employees to report grievances or integrity violations. However, the establishment of these channels is only a first step. In order to make these effective, the public sector will need to foster a culture in which public officials feel confident in reporting misconduct and not fear retaliation for reporting.

Brazil could design awareness-raising campaigns on the reporting channels aimed at building trust and showcasing support for these channels from the leadership in a whole-of-government effort. In addition, the SGP could train leadership in building an open organisational culture and receiving and managing reports on misconduct in co-ordination with the CGU.

Guidelines for the creation or merging of new careers in the Brazilian public service

Building on the findings and recommendations of the OECD Public Service Leadership and Capability Review of Brazil, the OECD in co-ordination with the SGP proposes the following guidelines presenting criteria for the creation and merging of new careers in the Brazilian public service.

1. Simplification of the set of plans, careers and effective positions

The multiplicity of plans, careers and positions makes it difficult to manage the workforce, tends to increase personnel expenses and generates various asymmetries. It makes the public service inflexible by limiting opportunities for restructuring and reassigning personnel. It may also reduce the attractiveness of the civil service by proposing a restrictive career path with limited opportunities for mobility and variety. Reducing the overall numbers of careers and avoiding duplication of positions while also harmonising the main terms and conditions across careers and plans could help to overcome these issues, while allowing for the necessary diversity in the set of activities to be performed.

2. Expansion of the careers to multiple bodies instead of assigning careers to single bodies (autarchy model)

Currently, the underlying logic of the career system is that “each entity needs to have its career”. To simplify the career system and allow for more flexibility, careers would be structured according to the function performed, not according to the body or entity to which they are linked. This means that functions that are found in several bodies should be structured as a career with transversal attributions that can work in all those organisations that perform these functions. The career can be further broken down into specific job families, however, the main features related to career progression, key skills, and remuneration should remain comparable. The specifics of each organisation can be valued and managed in people management processes, such as selection, admission and development, without necessarily having a career of their own.

The existence of careers that compile functions common to different organisations brings several advantages for the public sector:

- flexibility to manage the allocation of the workforce to meet needs that prove to be a priority over time
- incentives for public servants seeking new professional challenges
- wider learning and development opportunities for public servants
- improved coherence across organisations and bursting of silos by creating a wider network of relationships between public servants, with the potential to support the implementation of new projects and programmes, in particular across organisations; among others.

A transversal model will ultimately contribute to improving the quality of public policies and public services delivered to citizens.

To strengthen flexibility of the public service, the transferability of positions, careers and plans needs to be a priority. This means new positions, careers and plans should be able to fit across entities and cluster where applicable several functions based on broad, transversal attributions. In this way, position, careers and plan are designed so they can be adapted to the needs of the public administration over time.

3. Personnel mobility mechanisms that ensure flexibility

The specific and narrow attributions for positions and careers which are enshrined in specific laws makes it difficult or prevents the mobility of servers. In addition, there is a culture of retaining people in the entities where they were initially allocated. To facilitate mobility, the public administration has some legal mobility mechanisms for the public servant to act in a horizontal, vertical, functional, internal, external, temporary or permanent dimension, among them: removal, redistribution, assignment, requisition and change of exercise for composition of workforce.

For the efficient and effective use of these personnel mobility mechanisms, it is necessary that new or altered plans and careers adopt criteria that encourage the application of these mechanisms, as well as provide for transversality elements, such as transversal skills and qualifications, that privilege a dynamic, agile, adaptive and flexible workforce, as required by the contemporary work context.

4. Promotion of greater equity between remunerations

Another characteristic of the multiplicity of plans and careers is the wide salary variation between positions with similar attributions within the scope of the federal Executive Power itself. It is suggested to seek a more equitable model while observing the necessary specificities of certain areas and activities. It is important that public servants when analysing the set of positions in the public administration, recognise their remuneration as fair. This means that equal work should be paid equally.

5. Simplification of the remuneration structure

Currently, there are a variety of bonuses, indemnities, incentives, remuneration, aid, additional and other instalments. This makes it difficult to properly manage personnel expenses, generates internal imbalances and distorts the original objective that motivated the creation of these specific remuneration components. The simplification of the remuneration structure, in addition to facilitating management, provides transparency to the servers themselves and to society and encourages isonomy in the remuneration policy.

6. Recognition of professional performance and development in career progression

Currently, most servants reach the highest career levels within a decade or two of service. This period does not correspond to the length of service required for retirement so the public servant can be “parked” for more than 20 years after reaching the top of his career until he retires. There are also difference between careers in how fast public servants can reach the top of the career. In addition, the current model of progression and promotion has shown to be a merely formal process, not based on the professional achievements of the public servant.

New or altered careers and plans need to aim for a harmonisation throughout the public service. They should provide public employees with opportunities for capacity development throughout their working life. Careers should also evaluate the progression and promotion rules and performance management tools, to create incentives for the continuous professional development of public servants to deliver results for society.

7. Prioritisation of strategic and complex activities

Hiring public servants is a long-term (financial) commitment by the public administration given the permanent nature of their contract. Considering the evolution of state action over time, it is necessary to design positions, careers and plans that not only correspond to current needs, but are also flexible to adapt to future needs. Meanwhile more ad-hoc, temporary functions may be better suited to be outsourced meaning the specific expertise can be hired for a determined time period.

In this context, priority for new careers should be given to designing positions more suited to the core state activities, concentrating efforts on final activities and giving space to the indirect contracting of services, whenever this solution proves to be more adequate to guarantee the focus of the direct action of the public administration.

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5 Case studies on flexibility

This chapter presents four case studies that illustrate how OECD countries are approaching the issues of flexibility. It shows how the United Kingdom is embedding flexibility in a new learning and development framework and how Korea is using digital technology to enhance its learning offer and data collection. The chapter shows how Belgium is designing mobility opportunities to be more flexible and how Slovenia supports mobility with specific IT tools.

The future of learning and development in the United Kingdom's Public Service: The Government Campus and Curriculum

Introduction

The United Kingdom has taken on an innovative and ambitious large-scale strategy aimed at reimagining and streamlining the learning and development (L&D) system for its 450 000-strong public service. The Government Campus and Curriculum[1] (GCC) aims to bring all the central Government teams responsible for training, learning and development under one umbrella., while reorganising the overarching strategy into one coherent package. It also adds e-learning, data, and evidence into the strategy and the L&D offerings. The focus has been to develop an explicitly defined curriculum – built around knowledge, skills, behaviours, networks, capabilities, and qualities – that serves the needs of the whole civil service. Through a framework of five strands, the programme has put a greater focus on management and leadership, developed standards, and more clearly defined expectations for all civil servants. The Government Campus and Curriculum is a modernisation and reform programme[2] designed and delivered by the Government Skills and Curriculum Unit (GSCU) and is a main pillar supporting the long-term efforts to professionalise the UK public service.[3]

The majority of UK civil servants are aligned with a "profession"; a series of roles created to define careers and their paths, ensure learning, development, and accreditation, and provide clarity around tasks, workstreams and advancement. The profession system underpins the employment structure in the UK civil service. The GCC initiative supports and enables the professionalisation of the civil service by ensuring there is a structured and strategised system for developing staff and clarifying learning paths. Examples of professions include economics, operational delivery, finance, science and engineering, project delivery, and policy. The GCC includes training specific to these, as well as skills needed for government generally and for stages of an employee's career, such as managerial training.

In early 2021, the UK government published its plan for the creation of the GCC.[4] The intent is to create an all-encompassing system that catalogues and analyses training skills needs and corresponding learning offers, ensures coherence and clarity in development plans, enables a learning culture, recognises skills and future skill needs, and serves as an access point for all public servants to access learning offerings.

Embedding flexibility

As implied by its name, the Government Campus Curriculum has two central features: the campus, and the curriculum. These two components make up the central features of the GCC; where and how learning is delivered (for instance, on an online platform or in person), and the skills, competencies and knowledge taught.

Conceptually the Campus aspect is more than the delivery model – it's a complex system of internal and external suppliers, delivering through a wide range of modes. Training has often been independently or uniquely delivered across the civil service by varying departments, ministries agencies and professions. The GCC attempts to bring all government training together, and makes it accessible to the wider civil service, whether designed and delivered as part of the central strategy or not. It aims to reduce duplication, maximise economies of scale, and eliminate barriers to accessing training that already exists. Some training is offered online through a new platform, some through other means (for example, webinars, information handbooks, coaching), and some is offered in person – aiming to make better use of physical government facilities and recognising the flexibility of open platforms (e.g. FutureLearn, a widely used online learning platform that the United Kingdom has a contractual agreement with to create courses and use with high volumes of people). An inventory of available physical space is made more efficient through the system, by cataloguing space in buildings and making existing training accessible across the public service rather than contained to specific ministries. By expanding and streamlining learning systems,

employees from several ministries can attend in-person training at another, reducing overlap and creating networks. These multiple access points for learning, and the community they create, makes up the "campus" portion of the GCC.

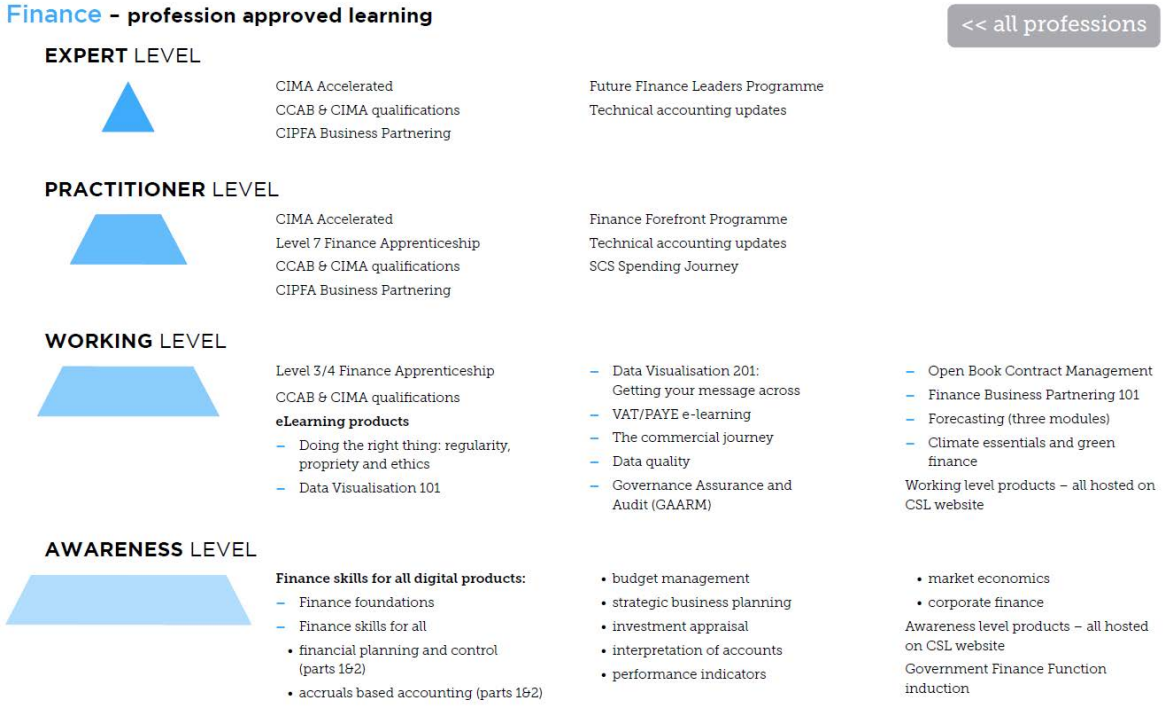
The varying subject matter available makes up the "curriculum", and is divided into five strands:

- Strand 1: Foundations of Public Administration
  - Essential, universal skills and knowledge. For example, digital essentials, personal effectiveness, and health and safety.
- Strand 2: Working in Government
  - Knowledge and skills specific to working inside a government, such as managing public money, managing relationships with ministers, and knowing about how government works.
- Strand 3: Leading and Managing
  - Managerial and leadership skills for developing and existing managers across a range of roles and departments.
- Strand 4: Specialist Skills
  - "Led by the professions for the professions". Specialist skills through accredited training and professional development for profession and function members. There are 28 recognised professions and 14 functions in the UK public service.
- Strand 5: Domain Knowledge
  - Subject area knowledge, often across key policy areas or specific to a ministry.

Each of these strands encompasses a collection of related topics, each of which hold a multitude of learning offerings. Under each of these topics there is an expanding array of choice for learning opportunities. Figure 5.1 shows options under the Finance profession.

Figure 5.1. Example of the variety of offerings contained in the GCC

Some of the learning offerings for the Finance profession across various levels



Source: Provided by the GCC Unit.

Work on cataloguing, categorising, evaluating, and making available the full set of learning opportunities continues under the GCC initiative. Beyond what already exists, additional training can be designed or procured when gaps are identified. This can be done in-house but is also frequently contracted or purchased from expert content and service providers. The trainings available through the GCC are intended to be accessible to all government employees, vastly expanding the learning opportunities available, increasing cross-topical and inter-ministerial networks, reducing overlap, and allowing for easier tracking of learning undertaken, and skills attained, by the workforce.

Box 5.1. How do I … be a Minister?

Government Campus Curriculum: Induction for All – training for new ministers and their staff

The Government Campus can expand its offerings when faced with exceptional learning needs, for instance when new important policy areas emerge or if a skills need is identified. An early training initiative that meets a significant need is a targeted new induction for all new civil servants and a programme of dedicated ministerial training that supports new ministers and those who will work closely with them. This means that whoever you are, on joining the government system, you are given the best opportunity to succeed.

The Induction to the Civil Service online course has been completed by around 15 000 civil servants over two years. GSCU has used the flexibility and social learning functionality of the FutureLearn platform to create a more customised, innovative, and active learning experience for new starters. The content was produced internally by experts and is continually tested by colleagues across government for relevance. It is designed to fit alongside Departmental and other local inductions. Evaluation feedback shows consistently high gains in knowledge across eight key areas, as well as very positive user experience.

The ministerial training intervention, a series of masterclasses, was developed through desk-based research and focus groups with ministers. The analysis unveiled a clear need for training and induction for new ministers, who felt unsupported from the centre of government in their new roles.

All of the inductions are targeted at those in the first 100 days in the job, though can give relevant and useful knowledge to those that have been in post for many months or even years. An important success of the ministerial training programme has been the rollout of legislation training for those ministers taking a bill through parliament, providing important procedural and practical insights from experienced colleagues. The general induction works to demystify the jargon and complexity of the UK system and shares hints and tips to aid a successful start. Valuable learning can also come through social opportunities, where participants learn with, through and from one another using comments and moderated questions throughout the course.

Conclusion

The GCC is a developing initiative that is still in early stages after being launched in 2021. A primary and immediate aim of the GCC has been to better organise and streamline learning and find ways to bring all offerings into one coherent system. But beyond this, the GCC has several ambitions for the medium and longer term. These plans aim to build the GCC into a broad and overarching learning system that fosters and enables the overall learning culture and goals of the UK public service.

Chief among these ambitions is to make better use of data and technology. This can be to enhance and measure learning offerings and platforms, but also to enable better response to crises, support employee career progression, and maintain a future-ready workforce. Innovative technology and digital solutions,

alongside coherent and effective data collection, can aid the United Kingdom in building the GCC into a substantive and reliable keystone of the learning and growth environment.

One aim along these lines is to build a skills database, which would track and categorise the pertinent skillsets of the entire workforce. This goal is long term and very ambitious and would work by integrating learning outcomes and training as well as recruitment, evaluation and promotion data alongside inputs from employees and managers. The idea is to have a coherent database of the skills of each employee, so that they can be called upon in the event of need, such as a crisis, an event requiring surge capacity, the formation of a new working team, and so on. As an example, languages spoken would be an included skill. This arose as a clear need with the war in Ukraine; staff were needed who spoke Ukrainian to handle issues such as communication with the Ukrainian administration, the influx of refugees, and the co-ordination of aid and arms shipments. A skills database would allow for the quick and efficient identification of staff with needed skills. Since it is not known which skills will be needed in the future, it is important that the database would contain as much information as possible.

This would also allow for data analysis that could be used to identify skills gaps, aid in performance management, and help with the strategic planning of training offerings. More broadly, using data to better manage skills gaps, contribute to recruitment needs, and design training is another goal of the GCC. Consistent and coherent data collection, and its expert analysis, can help the UK plan for the future and ensure that is workforce has the skills and competencies required.

Data and technology can also be used to make training more individual and targeted, which can also contribute to the overall workforce skills planning. The United Kingdom aims to create a system in which employees are directed and signposted to what types of training they should be taking, where it be specialised or generalised. This can help fill gaps in individual employees' own knowledge and skills. Learning experts in the UK administration describe the development plans for many employees as being T-shaped; employees must have domain-specific knowledge, but also generalist knowledge and skills (for example, about working effectively in government or upskilling digitally). It is not enough, in a modern public service, to just have one. Technology can be used to inform employees about their needed training, assess skills, and track what has been done or may be needed. This is one future aim of the GCC.

Data is also needed to undertake outcome measurement and monitoring of learning and development endeavours, such as training offerings. The GSCU has developed a thorough and rigorous evaluation strategy to measure the impact of both training offers and the Campus and Curriculum itself.[5] Information on the outcomes of courses, programme evaluation, platform use, attendance and participation, diversity indicators, and so on is needed. Evaluating the success of learning is in the public interest, and programmes are audited. The UK Civil Service estimates its annual spend on learning and development to be around GBP 300 million and getting high returns on this expenditure is a priority for the UK administration. The GCC now has a team of people working on a redesign of data, including its collection and use. A challenge for this team is that existing data is not of high enough quality – and without high-quality data, the team cannot glean high-quality insight. A long-term dedication to data is needed, alongside a commitment to procuring and maintaining the infrastructure required to store and access it.

Infrastructure is just one aspect of the technological requirements for the long-term aims of the GCC. The initiative also requires a modern and expansive platform, capable of linking all existing training and allowing access by nearly half a million public servants. Before the creation of the GCC, many ministries and departments ran their own distinct platforms, some of which continue to operate. Bringing all systems under one umbrella is a large technological challenge. The GCC also aims to expand the scope of what e-learning can be; beyond only online modules, but also within an ecosystem that can encourage and enable sharing, interaction, content creation, and a broader range of training offerings.

The GCC is also exploring the best balance between online and digital learning and the use of physical spaces. An earlier and well-known UK administration learning initiative – the National School of Government – was a physical campus with face-to-face courses, which left a legacy in the administration.

Though it was closed in 2012, the United Kingdom is now evaluating how to best balance physical training with e-learning capacity. At the same time, it also must balance learning being both centralised and decentralised, and how to make the best of all options more broadly available. The creation of networks, cross-ministerial sharing, and communities of practice is a focus. A system available to all can encourage high-performing and large ministries to create and share training and aid under-resourced ministries without the capacity to create learning offerings. The focus now is largely on enabling collaboration and meeting the needs of learners, whatever the best method for that may be. In many ways, it is a clean slate to develop a new strategy and way of doing things.

The team behind the GCC aims to build it into an essential and long-term staple of the UK administration's workforce strategy that provides consistency and coherency in learning prioritisation. It is a major component of fostering and maintaining a learning culture throughout the public service. Embedding the GCC into processes and practice, using innovative methods and an evidence-based approach, is the long-term overarching aim of the initiative.

Learning cultures in the public service: E-learning in Korea

Introduction

This case study is an example of how Korea is developing digitalised and online learning systems that support an overall culture of learning within a modern, future-ready workforce. E-learning has been a priority of the administration for more than two decades. As technology has evolved, so has the strategy, and recent advancements and reforms are no exception. A new online learning platform incorporates a multitude of types of learning content and encourages learning content creation and interaction across the workforce. This system reflects the changing nature of online interaction in society, keeping up with the needs of an evolving society, and the expectations of the next generations of public servants.

The Korean government's Human Resources development (HRD) online platform for public official includes the Government e-Learning Centre that has been in operation for more than 20 years and the new HRD Platform launched in 2023.

Embedding flexibility

Korea has two main HR development online platforms: the Government e-learning centre and the HRD intelligent open platform. The Government e-learning Centre and the HRD Platform are both platforms where learning content for public servants is gathered and consumed, but there are differences in several aspects such as content providers, types of content, and the technologies applied to each platform.

First, in the case of the Government e-Learning Centre, government L&D agencies are the main providers of learning content. However, in the HRD Platform, anyone, including government agencies, private companies and creators, can provide learning content. The Government e-Learning Centre plays a role of one of the content providers in the HRD Platform.

Second, the Government e-Learning Centre focuses on online training for public servants, whereas the main purpose of the HRD Platform is to enable public servants to search and learn from various materials in the workplace, so that learning can take place naturally while working and be part of the working culture. So, the HRD Platform covers not only e-learning content but also documentary content such as academic materials, research papers and policy papers that can be referenced while working.

Third, the HRD Platform recommends personalised learning content considering aspects such as job duties and learning history, by utilising Big Data and AI that are not used in the Government e-Learning Centre. The HRD Platform therefore intends to be a customised learning content recommendation system applying AI and Big Data technologies for the first time in the field of HRD for public official.

Government e-Learning centre

The Government e-Learning Centre was launched before the turn of the millennium. It is an online learning system for public officials that provides e-learning courses and mobile learning services for learners to access their desired learning contents anytime, anywhere. It aims to increase the effectiveness of learning by offering public servants diverse and high-quality on-demand learning content.

Basic educational content like public service values, administrative philosophy, leadership and job skills that public servants have to know are uploaded and updated. Also, the L&D institutes purchase a variety of educational programmes from private sector providers (e.g. on language, economy and business administration, liberal arts, and international affairs) and offer public servant these contents for free through this centre. In addition, videos edited by filming offline classes and seminars are offered in the form of Government-Massive Open Online Courses (Gov-MOOC) and micro learning is available for users to select and learn topics of interest. There are also e-books and open courses that can be taken without registration.

To improve user experience, the National HRD Institute (NHI) established an all-in-one system optimised for mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones in 2017, in co-operation with public and private L&D institutes. Thanks to these efforts, public servants are able to use e-learning services regardless of the time and their location.

The Government e-Learning Centre also provides an informal social collaboration service so that learners can share their knowledge and information. Users can do various informal learning activities such as communities, blogs, knowledge sharing Q&A, free bulletin boards and content evaluation. The NHI expects this social networking collaborative learning service to help create a knowledge ecosystem in the public service.

The Government e-Learning Centre has long been striving to provide an environment for public officials to learn comfortably anytime, anywhere. In this sense, it has played a leading role in creating an online knowledge ecosystem in Korea’s public service.

However, the Government e-Learning Centre has some fundamental issues which limit its ability to respond to rapidly changing policy environments. First, most of the content has been supplied by the government, which means that creating and distributing new content requires complex and time-consuming procurement processes. This sometimes results in failure to provide learning content in a timely manner and can be a big barrier for start-ups and small businesses that want to move into the learning market for public officials. Secondly, the Government e-Learning Centre does not integrate sophisticated content recommendation functions driven by the latest technologies like Big Data and AI. Therefore, there may be a certain level of limitation in accurately recommending learning content that the user needs and wants. Third, the Government e-Learning Centre is not a system for real-time online lectures. So, in the period of COVID-19, most L&D institutes used video conferencing systems produced by the private sector for real-time online lectures. However, using private video conferencing systems is expensive, requires annual costs and can pose particularly security concerns.

To overcome these challenges and take a leap forward, the Ministry of Personnel Management (MPM) has established a new open platform from 2020 to 2023.

HRD intelligent open platform

Innovation in science and technology and changes to the policy environment present an opportunity for a total renewal in the way HRD is delivered for public officials. With the advancement of technology, it has become possible for a learning system to recommend personalised learning content applying AI and Big Data. In addition, younger age groups tend to prefer learning content that can be consumed in a short time. Furthermore, in 2020, most offline training for public officials was suspended to prevent the spread of

COVID-19, so the importance of building a digital infrastructure for non-face-to-face learning received even greater attention.

In this context, the MPM began developing an innovative learning platform in 2020 that collects high-quality content from inside and outside the government, recommends customised learning products, facilitates various activities that can connect work and learning and integrates a real-time video lecture system. The platform underwent a pilot launch before being scaled up across the administration.

The HRD Platform is designed with an open architecture so that anyone will be able to easily provide L&D content, including small businesses which were often excluded from the procurement processes required for the e-Learning Centre. Any content provider can access and join this platform without complex procedures, provide contents directly to consumers and make a profit. Employees themselves can also become content creators by uploading training they make, often as micro-content (e.g. short videos). Furthermore, the MPM has plans to provide various analysis data such as user preferences and sales revenue for each content subject through this platform to help them create better learning products aligned with the actual needs of public servants.

At the core of the HRD Platform is a customised content recommendation function based on Big Data and Artificial Intelligence. This recommendation function uses a content labelling model - the Active Learning methodology. This is a method of effectively and accurately classifying vast amounts of data such as learning products and HR information, and recommending personalised learning content to learners. The HRD Platform, as of December 2022, contains more than 1 200 000[6] learning products are uploaded on this platform.

Public officials are required to complete 100 hours of training every year, but it is not easy for most public servants to secure extra training time for learning and many practical learning activities in the workplace such as data surveys, searching for materials and sharing materials are not recognised as learning time. However, various work-related activities in the HRD Platform such as searching, communication, and sharing work know-how will be automatically recognised as learning hours. Public officials who effectively use the HRD Platform will no longer have to rush at the end of the year to fill training hours.

The HRD Platform provides a hybrid learning environment where instructors or managers can freely design and deliver a curriculum by combining online, offline, formal or informal learning methods. Namely, one curriculum can consist of e-learning, real-time video lectures and field lectures. For example, pre-learning is possible using e-learning or micro learning, and lectures on theory can be held with a real-time video lecture system. Field practice and evaluation can be conducted through offline classes. The fact that various educational methods can be mixed should mean that the most effective curriculum can be designed and learning effects can be maximised.

The HRD Platform integrates social learning tools that supports interaction and knowledge sharing among learners. It is expected to facilitate an online learning community where information and knowledge in the public service will be accumulated and expertise will be shared through the following social learning functions. For example, if there is content that public servants want to share with colleagues, they can register the feed by copying the URL. When they share their learning content, their colleagues can click "I like it" and post comments such as learning reviews and experiences. In addition, they can ‘follow’ interested learners and create groups of learners with similar interests to share information and make research groups. Furthermore, learners can bundle various learning resources into a single learning process according to a specific topic or purpose. They can also share their own learning collection and learn other collections created by their colleagues.

In 2021, a real-time video lecture system was mounted on the HRD Platform. This service was piloted with various functions like attendance management, class records, and real-time interactions such as chatting and quizzes. In addition, by the end of 2022, various functions to support video lectures were added such

as interfaces, monitoring class concentration and encouraging participation in learning. A mobile service suitable for video lectures is also possible.

Conclusion

Korea is using various new digital technologies to build an ambitious universe of learning that is fit for the modern world and a new generation of public sector learners and users. With the launch of the Intelligent Open Platform, the administration is innovating and making use of technological advancements and aligning its future needs with its current strategy implementation. The platform embraces a new way of doing things, breaking from traditional methods and putting innovation skills to work – something many central administrations are working to achieve. This new open and collaborative digital system for learning uses new technology to its fullest, such as using AI to filter and make learning suggestions. But the system is also harnessing the immense benefit of less formal ways of learning, such as through interaction and discussion, and sharing one's own knowledge through participating in content creation.

Korea is also demonstrating leadership in the collection and use of data on learning. The digital systems have the ability to provide data on a multitude of things, which in turn can help the administration continually improve on the design the online platform and the public service learning and development strategy as a whole. Data can be collected on who is doing what and on how people are learning and interacting with the technology. There is also potential to track the outcomes of learning in the workplace, and to identify where in the workforce certain skills can already be found (e.g. seeing where content is being created and who is discussing it in more advanced ways).

Korea's plans to link both systems – the long-established e-learning centre as well as the Intelligent Online Platform – and to buttress the learning offerings within each, has the potential to aid in a smooth transition to new ways of learning and ensure that all public servants can find and undertake training that works for them in their roles. Together, these systems aim to build a big-picture learning and development strategy and platform that is fit-for-purpose for the modern world and its complex policy problems. Korea's ambitious next generation of public servants are participating in the creation of their learning systems, and as such, a culture of lifelong learning through their careers.

Promoting mobility in the Belgian civil service

Introduction

Promoting mobility of public servants within an organisation, across organisations and between different governmental levels can help to provide opportunities for skills and competence development for public servants as well as being able to restructure the public workforce according to demands.

The Belgian civil service has developed several programmes to promote mobility opportunities permanently and temporarily, and within and among organisations. The variety of these programmes increases the flexibility of the Belgian public service allowing the public service to proactively structure the workforce according to long-term as well as short-term needs and offers civil servants with a greater variety in their career paths. This case study looks at the mobility programmes in detail, in particular at how they have been implemented and integrated in the wider array of public employment and management tools.

Embedding flexibility

Permanent mobility opportunities

In the Belgian civil service, permanent mobility can be characterised according to three different types:

1. Internal mobility (within the same organisation).
2. Intra-federal mobility (between organisations within the federal administration).
3. Inter-federal mobility (between different governmental levels).

The way internal mobility is organised largely depends on the organisations themselves, however, it is common that opportunities are published internally. In larger organisations this works quite well, while smaller organisations have at times issues in finding suitable candidates. Over the last five years, the number of civil servants taking advantage of mobility opportunities has continuously increased (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1. Uptake on internal permanent mobility opportunities

Year	Average	Maximum
2018	5.3%	37.4%
2019	5.9%	31.6%
2020	6.2%	30.6%
2021	8.4%	54.8%

Note: The percentage indicates the number of civil servants that moved within the same organisation compared to the total number of civil servants within the organisation.
Source: Information provided by the Belgian Federal Service.

In comparison to internal mobility, permanent intra-federal mobility, referring to mobility between organisations, is structured at a more general level. Vacancies are published on an internal website which effectively creates an internal market for opportunities. The advantage of hiring staff through this channel compared to external hiring is that the hiring is usually more simplified and can be done on a more ad-hoc basis when needs arise. The number of civil servants taking up permanent mobility opportunities within other organisations has remained relatively stable. Some organisations do however hire new staff mostly through this permanent mobility scheme (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2. Mobility opportunities promoting permanent mobility among organisations per organisation

Year	Average	Maximum
2018	16.8%	50.0%
2019	13.7%	50.0%
2020	12.3%	88.2%
2021	10.4%	84.6%

Note: The percentage indicates the number of civil servants that moved between different federal organisations compared to the total number of new hires (internal + external) per organisation.
Source: Information provided by the Belgian Federal Service.

Intra-federal mobility, referring to mobility between different levels of government, is quite rare within the Belgian civil service. Less than 1% of mobility pertains to this category. Currently, there is no specific policy to incentivise this, and reward systems differ between local, regional and federal levels of government, which may explain why this is relatively rare. Intra-federal mobility can also signify a higher cost for civil

servants with potential relocation, change of working language and working practices given that practices may be less harmonised than at the federal level.

Temporary mobility opportunities

By using temporary mobility, the public sector can react flexibly to ad-hoc temporary needs in specific areas of the public sector, for example in the event of a health crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, or other specific isolated events, for example the organisation national census.

In Belgium, several programmes for temporary mobility are in place. As a result, the Belgian federal service can react flexibly as was the case during the COVID-19 pandemic when the number of temporary mobility opportunities increased significantly in comparison to previous years (Table 5.3). In fact, in one organisation 97.3% of all new hires were temporary staff from other organisation in 2020.

Table 5.3. Temporary mobility opportunities used

Year	Average	Maximum
2018	3.0%	17.4%
2019	4.2%	32.7%
2020	9.7%*	97.3%
2021	4.4%	37.1%

Note: The percentage indicates the number of civil servants that moved between different federal organisations on a temporary basis compared to the total number of new hires (internal + external) per organisation.
* strong increase due to corona crisis.
Source: Information provided by the Belgian Federal Service.

Two specific temporary mobility streams are:

1. *Special Federal Forces* denotes a temporary mobility programme designed for organisations that have an urgent temporary need for specific assignments or project, for example a centre for asylum requests during the refugee crisis. The period for the temporary assignment is usually not pre-determined. Opportunities are published through a launch call, followed by a condensed selection process consisting of an interview. The salary of the selected candidate is paid by the sending institution.
2. *Talent Exchange* is a mobility concept for employees of the Belgian public sector at all levels, federal, regional, community, municipal and provincial services. *Talent Exchange* allows participating organisations to exchange talents for specific assignments or projects lasting from 6 to 18 months, and to offer them new challenges adapted to their skills. The network is promoted at the central level with human resources offices supporting the promotion at the organisational level.

In comparison to the *Special Federal Forces* the timeframe is determined from the start of the assignment. The vacancies are posted on a central website as well as internal websites of organisations. Candidates undergo a simplified recruitment process which consists of an interview. Vacancies can therefore be filled quicker than through external hiring. Similar to the *Special Federal Forces,* the salary of staff taking part in the *Talent Exchange* is paid by the sending institution.

There has been a quick growth of member organisations in the beginning, which has now remained stable. The majority of organisations participating are larger organisations. In 2021, 219 assignments were published. Overall, the numbers have been increasing steadily with mobility opportunities of 12 months being the most common (Table 5.4).

Table 5.4. Mobility placements taken as part of Talent Exchange

		2019	2020	2021
6 months	**Total**	2	2	0
	Returned	1	0	0
12 months	**Total**	31	47	53
	Returned	17	30	*
18 months	**Total**	3	0	1
	Returned	3	0	*

Note: 11 out of 19 federal organisations provided data for this table.
* no information yet.
Source: Information provided by the Belgian Federal Service.

The promotion of mobility largely falls on human resources services and internal websites. In the beginning of programmes such as *Talent Exchange* and *Special federal forces* specific information campaigns were launched to promote the programmes. Managers play an important role in encouraging staff to take advantage of mobility programmes or to use the programmes in their own teams. Additional programmes provide career guidance and identify options for civil servants. These include the *Career centre*, which is housed at the DG recruitment and development of the federal public service Policy and Support (BOSA). This is supported by a network of career coaches in the organisations. Furthermore, to facilitate mobility, Belgium is currently working to create a platform that would collect demand and supply for mobility bringing together opportunities in one place.

Conclusion

For the Belgian civil service, the principal advantages of using mobility programmes is to be more flexible and hire staff through a quicker process. It can also help to hire staff for functions that are difficult to hire through the external market. For civil servants of the Belgian federal public service, while formally mobility is not a factor to consider in promotions, it can nevertheless be useful in showing the flexibility of candidates and demonstrate their transversal skills.

In Belgium, the positions that are suited most to the programmes are mid-level career professionals, for example project leaders. Meanwhile, operational services use mobility programmes less which often has to do with the specific skills needed. To broaden the scope of the mobility programmes, one of the key challenges Belgium is trying to tackle is to offer programmes for careers that require lower education. One possibility discussed is to offer mobility regularly on specific days of the week. It would signify a more punctual exchange which can offer more flexibility. This can help to build skills, while ensure the specialist skills remain within the organisation.

This case study of mobility programmes in the Belgian federal public service illustrates how in order to promote mobility, it can be useful to draw up different mobility programmes that support specific types of mobility and needs. One of the key factors to make the mobility programmes a success in Belgium has been to showcase successful examples and how they have been advantageous for both the public service organisation as well as the civil servant. Once managers have experienced how mobility can help them fill needs and how their team can benefit from experiences gained during a placement, they are also more likely to not only support staff in pursuing mobility opportunities, but actively encourage staff and use mobility programmes within their own teams. Supporting programmes, such as career guidance, can help to further institutionalise mobility programmes.

In Belgium, it has also proven vital to continue to develop new formats and programmes for mobility to target specific groups or specialisation. Being able to monitor which target group the main programmes reach, allows the federal service to realign programmes and to design new mobility opportunities in those

areas which are taking less advantage of mobility. Efforts to design mobility opportunities for staff to develop IT skills illustrate this.

As a result, the mobility programmes put in place in the Belgium have increased the flexibility of the public service to react to any short-term needs. This was particularly visible during the COVID-19 pandemic during which the numbers for temporary mobility assignments increased exponentially. Indeed, in some organisations more than 90% of new staff was recruited through temporary mobility.

'*Is-Muza*': Developing an IT tool to strengthen mobility and people development in the Slovenian public administration

Introduction

One of the core values underlining the upcoming civil service reform in Slovenia is ensuring that staff find their work meaningful and to support lifelong learning to equip the workforce with skills needed for the future. At the same time, increasing mobility is one of the goals of the reform as one way to increase work productivity and responsiveness of the public administration. To support the management and development of employees and to facilitate mobility, Slovenia has created an interactive IT system called *Is-Muza.* The objectives are two-fold:

- increase mobility, career development of employees, engagement and motivation by providing an internal project marketplace
- support managers, employees and Human Resources (HR) departments in the area of effective employee management.

The tool was initially targeted at employees in the Ministry of Public Administration and has been slowly rolled out to the entire public sector

Embedding flexibility

Throughout the development phase of *Is-Muza*, the Ministry of Public Administration in Slovenia set out a plan for implementation, including a pilot phase before roll-out to the entire public administration. The plan identified stakeholders, resources, timeline and responsibilities. In addition, a working group with representatives from different ministries was established who would act as 'ambassadors' in each entity. The following considerations were taken into account in order to successfully implement *Is-Muza*:

Stakeholders

- Project managers must understand the system and form reasonable expectations of how it would work.
- Participating staff should have time to take on the tasks offered.

Resources

- Scale of the pilot is important: too many staff joining at once would become unwieldy and difficult to learn from; too few would risk missing a quorum of projects for there to be true choice and agency for participating staff.
- Software will be needed for the online platform to function; this could be as simple as a message-board tool which allows comments and names contributors.

Timeline and responsibilities

- Responsibility for the platform would initially fall under the Ministry of Public Administration, with the possibility to decentralise it as an independent service as other ministries join.

Implementation of the platform took place over a 12-month period, with weekly meetings in the first month and monthly meetings thereafter to assess the setup and uptake of the system. A launch conference was organised in order to raise awareness of the tool. Furthermore, the Ministry of Public Administration conducted live trainings for managers and HR offices and developed a short promotional film for employees.

Is-Muza consists of two modules:

1. Internal labour market
2. Development of employees

Module 1: Internal labour market

Module 1 provides an internal labour market for temporary and permanent mobility. It presents possibilities for informal exchange of information on supply and demand in the state administration bodies. It encourages entities to use the internal labour market before holding a public competition or public announcement. By increasing mobility of employees, the internal labour market aims to acquire key personnel faster, optimise personnel planning and facilitate the search for experts and knowledge within the public administration. Lastly, it is expected that mobility can help to identify talent and motivate and engage staff by providing diverse opportunities for development.

Through the internal labour market, public servants and personnel offices are able to make public announcements regarding vacancies or availability for mobility in the case employees. The module includes data on knowledge needs, work needs and potential candidates, including their knowledge, skills and competences. Currently, about 30 000 users, both permanent and fixed-term contract employees use *Is-Muza*. On the employer-side it is used by ministries, bodies within ministries, administrative units and government offices.

A particular focus in the design of the system was to make it intuitive. The IT systems provides a template how to publish opportunities, be that vacancies or availability of employees. The opportunities are formulated in an engaging, simplified, and accessible manner (Table 5.5). Positions can be either temporary or permanent. Managers can post projects and tasks on the online platform for staff to volunteer or apply to work on them. Employees publishing availabilities and searching for opportunities can do so anonymously if wanted. Employees, managers and HR offices can access vacancies, with managers being able to send a direct message expressing their interest in employees. The recruitment phase is simplified and usually done via an interview. On average it takes about 75 days to finalise the recruitment.

Table 5.5. Announcement types on *Is-Muza*

Permanent employment contract	
Public employee	**State body personnel offices**
I want to change work post or field of work (anonymous)	We are looking for a public employee for a work post
I want to work additionally in a project group, work group or project unit	We are looking for a public employee to work in a working group, project group or project unit
I want to share my knowledge, experience, skills	We are looking for a public employee with knowledge, experiences and skills
	Available civil servants placed on the internal labour market – LEGAL OBLIGATION
	People with disabilities – search for relocation opportunities based on their remaining work capacity – LEGAL OBLIGATION
	We are looking for a candidates to fill positions in the army
Fixed-term employment contract	
Public employee	**State body personnel offices**
I am looking for work due to the termination of a fixed-term employment contract	We are looking for a public employee to conclude a fixed-term employment contract

Module 2 Development of employees

In addition to the internal labour market, *Is Muza* includes a module on employee development, specifically competence identification, development interview and identification of training needs. The objective is to equip managers with an easy tool to manage employees and support them in life-long learning by identifying skills gaps and suitable trainings. The identification of competences is based on the competency model which is categorised according to three competency types: leadership competences, job-specific competences and core competences. Based on this, development interviews are organised several times a year. The IT-tool supports managers to conduct these interviews by providing a unified electronic form that creates automatic reports for different users. This can also help to analyse mobility opportunities as part of skills development which can be identified through Module1: Internal labour market of *Is-Muza.*

Conclusion

In developing *Is-Muza*, the Ministry of Public Administration has been able to identify the added value of the tool for different target groups. For the public administration, *Is Muza* provides an IT tool to facilitate HR processes signifying less paperwork and reducing time consumption. It also supports the continuous process of integrating HR processes, while increasing transparency. Overall, this means that the capacity of the public administration is improved.

Is Muza supports HR by improving the capacities of the HR function. It provides templates for specific processes such as internal mobility and people development. The tool itself also represents a contemporary approach to HR management and development by underlining mobility as a way to increase flexibility and life-long learning to equip the workforce with the skills needed.

For public leaders, *Is Muza* is an intuitive tool to support the management and development of employees. Providing easy to use templates can help to strengthen awareness for the need to manage professional development. Supported with trainings and awareness-raising, it can also enhance skills, knowledge and competences for people development.

Lastly, for employees, *Is Muza* strengthens awareness of the importance of life-long professional development and helps to identify mobility opportunities through which skills, knowledge and competences may be developed which in turn can increase motivation and engagement.

Evaluating the pilot phase, the Ministry of Public Administration has identified several success factors to create an enabling environment for the roll-out and use of *Is Muza:*

- It is key to change the mindsets of public leaders in considering that mobility does not mean losing talent, but rather to perceive it as skill development and as such encourage staff to take advantage of advertised opportunities. Positive examples and experiences are key to showcase this.
- The involvement of managers in the early design phase of the tool contributed to ownership of managers as co-creators.
- Constant revision and evaluation of the system contribute to ensuring user-friendliness.
- The nomination of “ambassador” who promote the IT tool in the entities and can answer any questions helps to create ownership and promote *Is Muza* within the entities.

Notes

[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-government-campus-curriculum, or the platform at https://campus.learn.civilservice.gov.uk/

[2] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/993902/FINAL_Declaration_on_Government_Reform.pdf

[3] https://www.civil-service-careers.gov.uk/professions/

[4] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-new-curriculum-and-campus-for-government-skills/better-training-knowledge-and-networks-the-new-curriculum-and-campus-for-government-skills

[5] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1035932/Evaluation_strategy_final_version_24_Nov.pdf

[6] 800 000 Academic journals, 200 000 Judicial precedents, 42 000 Youtube content, 140 000 content from Government e-Learning Centre.

Public Employment and Management 2023

TOWARDS A MORE FLEXIBLE PUBLIC SERVICE

This is the second edition of a regular publication on public employment and management issues. This edition explores the theme of flexibility in the public service workforce through the angles of workforce mobility, learning and development, and flexible working arrangements. It presents comparative data and analysis as well as country-specific case studies to help governments design and embed greater flexibility. This report also features a synthesis of the OECD review of public service leadership and capability in the Brazilian Federal Public Service. Taken together, the insights of this edition can help guide and shape flexible work practices for a high-performing public service.



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