Institut Européen
d'Administration Publique

European Institute
of Public Administration

# EIPASCOPE

**EIPA's 20th Anniversary / *20ème anniversaire de l'IEAP* *2001/3***



# EIPA's 20th Anniversary

# EIPA's Board of Governors

***Henning Christophersen***

*Chairman of EIPA's Board of Governors; former member of the European Commission; EPSILON, Senior Management Consultants, Brussels*

## EIPA at Twenty

As Europe enters the third millennium of the modern era, and the European Institute of Public Administration moves more modestly into its third decade, it is a good time to look back briefly and reflect how much the challenges facing Europe and the Institute have changed in the last twenty years, and to think ahead as to what may come in the future.

**1981**

Let us go back for a moment to 23 March 1981, the day that EIPA was officially opened in Maastricht…

...By happy coincidence for the founders, a European Council is taking place in the same city. Yet EIPA is being born at what is, if anything, rather a bad time for European integration. Words like "Europessimism" and "Eurosclerosis" are in the air. The common market is pretty uncommon in many respects, and the liberalising flavours of *Cassis de Dijon* have only just begun to reach where other approaches could not. France and Germany are both going through major political changes which will only result in the appearance on the European stage of François Mitterrand in May and Helmut Kohl next year. There are 10 Member States, Greece having joined on 1 January. Further Mediterranean enlargement seems uncertain. It is even less imaginable that what is going on in Poland (in March 1981, Solidarity is in its fourth month of open activity and already provoking Soviet warnings) will prove to have been the beginning of the end for the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, with the eventual prospect of opening up the Community across the whole continent. Even the enlargement which had brought in Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom in 1973 is still being digested with some difficulty...

It was presumably also a coincidence that on the very same day that EIPA opened, the BBC first aired the episode of *Yes Minister* in which the mythical Minister of Administrative Affairs says No to becoming a European Commissioner, amid domestic political manoeuvres and a series of exchanges revealing a rather special understanding of European integration and the work of "Common Market officials". This kind of thing clearly had to be remedied! A few years later Margaret Thatcher herself, as Chairman of the European Council in the second half of 1986, kindly gave the following introductory comment above her picture on the first page of EIPA's Activities Programme for 1987.

> "Those who are engaged in the work of the European Community know how much they need to understand each other's perspectives and their way of doing business. Through the activities of the European Institute of Public Administration, senior civil servants are able to share their experience and increase their understanding of both the national and Community setting for their work. In this way we can achieve a more effective European Community to the benefit of all its citizens."

EIPA had been launched.

**1991**

Ten years later, much has been achieved, in Europe and in EIPA. It certainly seems a better time for European integration. The legislative programme for Completion of the Internal Market by the end of 1992 is well on the way; the still-fresh unification of Germany appears to have been successfully handled; Intergovernmental Conferences are under way on both Political and Monetary Union...

...23 March 1991. EIPA staff are recovering from the organisation of a major Colloquium on Subsidiarity held the previous day with the presence of Jacques Delors in the Limburg Provincial Government – precisely where the Maastricht Treaty would be negotiated at the end of the year, incorporating in the Treaty of Rome the subsidiarity principle that "decisions should be taken as closely as possible to the citizens"...

The Institute's 10th birthday coincided with what was, perhaps more profoundly than most people really understood at the time, the birth of a new Europe. In March 1991, the Soviet Union was in its last agonies and Yugoslavia on the verge of collapse. Germany had become the single biggest country in the Community. And in these conditions, the Community was about to embark on creating a single currency and a Common Foreign and Security Policy, quite apart from making the single market actually work in practice.

**2001**

Another decade, and the Community of 12 has become a Union of 15, with the prospect of expanding to 27 or so over the next few years. The scope and complexity of the Union have grown almost unimaginably too. Almost all areas of life – and all parts and levels of public administrations – are affected by European integration. The Institute has grown, with our new building in Maastricht, and started to reproduce. Antennae have sprouted up in Luxembourg and Barcelona, and "filial activities" emerged in Poland.

23 March 2001...Shortly before the actual date, a first "Event Celebrating EIPA's 20th Anniversary" was held, devoted precisely to the priority issue of "Enlargement" which conditions almost all our activities and projections. Yet on 23 March, a visitor to Maastricht would have found one of the Institute's regular open seminars on "European Negotiations" and another advanced workshop on state aid taking place. Other staff members were working on funded research in areas ranging from environmental integration and European policy coordination, through the role of committees in European policy-making and policy implementation, to new trends in e-government in the Member States. On the same day, EIPA's Antenna in Barcelona organised a workshop in Milan on the regional and local impact of the Euro, in cooperation with the Lombard regional training institute...

**The Future**

The European Union is still learning how to deal with enlargement, and how to manage ever-increasing policy demands amid ever-increasing diversity. In this context, public administrations will have to deal with qualitatively new problems, which will require new forms of training and support.

In a very broad perspective, the Union seems to be caught between two poles of attraction as it faces these challenges. On the one hand, there is a pull towards *simplification*, towards a more straightforward "constitutional structure" for the Union in which there is a clearer division of decision-making competences – both between European institutions and between levels of authority – as well as clearer systems of formal accountability. This was largely the spirit of the Declaration on the Future of the Union adopted by the European Council in Nice in December 2000 (albeit with a very welcome emphasis on the need for broad and deep public debate) which places the emphasis on clearer delimitation of competences, treaty simplification and the role of national parliaments. It has now become a political debate about whether the EU needs an explicit "finalité politique" – and a Constitution.

On the other hand, there is a recognition that such a complex system as the European Union necessarily requires rather "messier" kinds of *participation*, flexibility and multi-level management both for effectiveness and legitimacy. This is, perhaps, the essential spirit of the Commission's White Paper on European Governance. To quote Romano Prodi:

> "Europe is not run just by European institutions. EU policies have to be implemented on the ground by a range of actors: national and regional authorities, local councils and increasingly civil society. The best way to ensure this happens *efficiently and effectively* is to involve these actors much more systematically in *designing* EU policies."

This places new demands on public administrations at all levels, including the Commission, in particular the ability to manage networks. The main objective of the ongoing reform led by Neil Kinnock is to ensure that the Commission will be better at performing its core functions. This means greater decentralisation within Directorates-General, including skills in managing delegated budgets, as well as better coordination across DGs. But it also requires more attention to the demands of managing the external networks through which European policies are formulated and implemented. Network management skills have to cover a range of situations including contract management where the Commission is the principal but not the customer or client; project management where the Commission has to provide leadership in initiating new ventures; and establishing the frameworks within which European agencies operate. To summarise, it means having the ability to recognise and respond to the specific management challenges of different kinds of partnership.

Governance is not meant to be a simple matter. There are real potential tensions involved.

To quote the October 2000 Work Programme of the Governance White Paper:

> "greater participation should not undermine the executive's accountability to Parliament; more extensive consultations held earlier in the decision-making process should not make this process more unwieldy or complicated; the organisation of networks should not dilute the Community method; greater decentralisation should not undermine the consistency of and compliance with shared objectives; greater involvement of civil society should not lead to by-passing of national or infra-national public authorities."

These are new and important challenges for everyone. I am confident that over the next twenty years, EIPA will continue to play a central role in helping European administrations prepare to manage the profound changes involved in improving performance, and enhancing democracy, in our ever-enlarging European Union. ❑

# An Action Plan for EIPA

***Prof. Dr Gérard Druesne***
*Director-General of the European Institute of Public Administration*

In 1999, the Board of Governors of EIPA put a "Review Committee", composed of some of its members and external experts, in charge of evaluating the Institute's performance and the relevance of its actions, some 20 years after its foundation (in March 1981). On the basis of the Committee's report, which was submitted in October 2000, the Institute's Management drew up – in close cooperation with the Academic Committee and the Works Council – an action plan defining the objectives, priorities and strategy of the organisation for the years to come. The Board of Governors discussed the action plan at its meeting in Maastricht on 2 and 3 July 2001, decided between the various options proposed and approved the document, which in particular presented 29 actions to be carried out. Every year the Management will report to the Board on the extent to which the action plan has been realised.

**1. EIPA's mission**

Supporting the European integration process by contributing to the development of the capacity of public administrations and civil servants to deal with EU affairs: formulated in 1981, this "raison d'être" of EIPA has not lost any of its relevance, which has actually increased on account of the extension of the legal basis resulting from the Single European Act, the Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties, and will increase further once the Nice Treaty has been ratified. The successive enlargements and the prospect of the accession of 12 or 13 new Member States in the coming years, the broadening of the field of Community policies, and the transformation of the economic and geopolitical environment as a result of the globalisation process have underlined the growing importance of training public officials and have led to a greater awareness of the necessarily European dimension of public administrations. A combination of other factors points in the same direction: the reduction in size of the public sector in several countries, administrative reforms undertaken in many EU Member States as well as within the European Commission as highlighted in the contributions to this special edition of the EIPASCOPE, and the development of information and communication technologies, which is related to the rising expectations of citizens in terms of the legitimacy/credibility of their administration and their confidence in it. There is no doubt that public servants are at the centre of a large movement which pays no heed to borders and imposes obligations where it concerns competence and effectiveness. Only a well thought out and systematic approach to training can deal with this.

In line with this analysis, the action plan clearly lays down the fields where EIPA is to act:

- priority is of course given to the governments and administrations of the EU Member States as well as to the Community institutions, bodies and agencies; but on a par with these are the countries which are candidates for accession to the EU and the countries which are linked to the EU through the European Economic Area (e.g. Norway) or bilateral agreements (e.g. Switzerland);
- the second group comprises countries that border the Union, particularly the Balkans and the partners in the Mediterranean area identified in the "Barcelona process", as well as Russia and Ukraine (which the European Council granted a sort of "pre-candidate" status);
- as regards other countries, especially those engaged in an integration process (e.g. Latin America) or those which are of special importance to the EU's external relations (such as China), the decision to involve EIPA must be taken on a case-by-case basis by the Management or the Bureau of the Board of Governors.

**2. Training**

The Board of Governors has of course reaffirmed the absolute priority that should be given to training in EIPA's activities: being both a European institute of public administration and an institute for European public administration it should occupy a growing place when it comes to the provision of European training for public administrations, in order to develop both the European dimension of national and regional administrations and the public management skills of the staff of the European institutions. This objective must be achieved by means of contract activities, where the Institute responds to orders or requests from public administrations of the Member States or the European Union, in the form of invitations to tender or direct agreements. It is in fact essential for the initiative to be taken by those who ask for / receive training when it

comes to defining needs, and for training institutes to constantly adapt the training they offer accordingly. However, an establishment such as EIPA must also be able to play a "pro-active role" on the European scene: its unique character, both intergovernmental and linked to the European Union (perfectly expressed in the structure of its Board of Governors which gathers together representatives from the Member States and the Commission), its multinational scientific staff and the presence of experts seconded to EIPA by various European countries, give the Institute a sort of responsibility to be in the vanguard of European training. EIPA is therefore organising an increasing number of "open activities", in which it takes the initiative and which it announces via journals, by post and on its web site and for which anyone who is interested may register on an individual basis. It is in the mix of these two approaches to training – even though the contract activities should of course remain predominant – that the specific nature of the Institute lies.

The training provided by EIPA concerns the EU institutions and decision-making procedures, Community law and the different European policies (the first pillar, common foreign and security policy and the emergence of a defence policy, as well as justice and home affairs), public management and comparative public administration. The Board of Governors has in principle agreed to a proposal of EIPA's Management aimed at finding consensus among the governments on the creation of a list of European topics regarding which it would be acknowledged that the training provided in the Member States, though of course it is not to be harmonised since public administration as such does not come within the remit of Community competences, should however be relatively similar in all countries. Civil servants in national (and in some Member States regional) administrations increasingly participate in meetings within the framework of the Community decision-making process, whether in Council working groups or on Commission committees, and the civil servants would be more effective if in each Member State their training in certain areas were to be organised according to equivalent objectives and methodologies. EIPA will therefore, in its specific field of competence, strive to offer European modules that can be organised in each Member State that would like to have such training, in cooperation with its national institute of public administration.

### 3. Research-development

Applied research is an essential component in the development of training activities: it makes it possible not only to constantly update existing programmes and to adapt case studies, role-plays and simulation exercises to the development of administrative realities, but also to work in new or little explored areas which may then lead to new training being organised. Negotiations on accession to the European Union in which twelve candidate countries are involved have also resulted in the implementation of an important research programme aimed at helping the administrations of these countries to define methods to adapt their national legislation and to include the *acquis communautaire* in some negotiation areas. For these reasons, the existence within the Institute of an autonomous applied research capacity, made up of the permanent scientific staff who cover all or most of the fields that come within the Community's competence, European policies and comparative administration/management, constitutes the real "added value" of EIPA which has gradually emerged over the past 20 years and which it is important to preserve and develop.

As a centre of expertise on European policies and the management of public administrations EIPA would like to add two specific functions to its current activities. Developments in the field of European integration and their impact on public administration are reasons for the Institute to assume a sort of "early warning function" as regards foreseeable mid or long-term developments, regularly reporting on them to the Directors-General responsible for the public service in the Member States. An "observatory of European civil services" could also be established, which would be complementary to the PUMA programme of the OECD and would focus more on the specific needs of European countries. However, such a development of the Institute cannot be realised under the current funding arrangements and the Board of Governors has been made aware of the need for additional human resources for this purpose. The Management of the Institute will draw up the documents on the issues related to the objectives and terms to be considered, basing itself in particular on cooperation with the PUMA service.

### 4. EIPA's structures

The Board of Governors, which both represents the Member States of the Union and the European Commission, must play a more active role in defining the Institute's strategy and priority areas. For this purpose the Bureau will from now on meet five times a year and will have more members (in addition its current members – Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary-General and two elected members – representatives from the Troika countries will be on the Bureau).

The more spectacular change decided on by the Board of Governors concerns the Scientific Council, which in its current form will be dissolved. Over the past years the proportion of academics and experts in EIPA's fields of activity in the Scientific Council had become very small, and the Council mainly consisted of the directors of the national institutes of public administration of the fifteen Member States, representatives from the countries associated with the Institute (now 7) and a Commission representative. As such, it had in fact rather become a sort of forum to discuss the terms governing the cooperation between EIPA and the national schools, with only a subsidiary function as a body providing scientific input to give direction to activities and particularly research programmes. Moreover, its link with the Conference of the directors

of the national institutes of public administration, created in 1995, seemed quite unclear, as the two bodies almost had the same composition (with the exception of the representatives of the countries associated with EIPA, who only joined in meetings of the Scientific Council), to the extent that there was a growing feeling that work was being duplicated.

The Scientific Council is therefore being replaced by a scientific unit, directly attached to the Director-General and composed of five experts on Community law and European policies, public management and comparative public administration, appointed by the Board of Governors. It will closely cooperate with EIPA's scientific staff, particularly the Research Committee the role of which will be reinforced. Later, it will be up to the DGs, and even the Ministers of the Public Service of the fifteen Member States to decide on the organisation and functioning of the Conference of the directors of the national institutes of public administration, and on the role EIPA should have in it. However, whatever the case, a new type of representation of the countries associated with EIPA will have to be thought up when the old-style Scientific Council no longer exists, as this representation is expressly laid down in the agreements linking them to the Institute and remains an essential factor in their progressive and growing inclusion in EIPA's activities, particularly where it concerns the countries that are candidates for accession to the European Union.

**5. EIPA's Antennae**

At the moment EIPA has two antennae: the European Centre for Judges and Lawyers in Luxembourg, established in 1992, and the European Centre for the Regions in Barcelona, set up in 1996. The Board of Governors adopted a general EIPA strategy regarding any requests for the creation of new antennae from national or regional governments: the determining criteria for a new antenna are that it should increase EIPA's activities and its influence in the field of European training, in fields where – for lack of sufficient human resources – its presence is limited or even non-existent. So, it is in no way the intention to create "mini-EIPAs" in other places in Europe and even less to "franchise" the Institute's name in different countries. Any request for the creation of an antenna will therefore be considered from the viewpoint of its effect on the development of the Institute and the extent to which it will help to meet the training needs of public administrations in Europe. Moreover, the antenna's staff must be recruited in accordance with the general rules of the Institute in order to preserve its multinational character, at least where the scientific staff is concerned, according to the philosophy prevailing in Maastricht, Luxembourg and Barcelona, and all financial implications must be considered to ensure that the functioning of the antenna will in no way lead to a deficit in EIPA's consolidated accounts.

The Board of Governors immediately implemented this strategy, since at the meeting of 2-3 July 2001 it had approved the proposal of the regional government of Lombardy to establish an antenna in Milan dealing with social affairs and health care policy, subject to an agreement being signed that meets all the above-mentioned conditions.

**6. Resources**

EIPA is one actor among others on the European training market, and it has to cover most of its expenses through payments received for the services it offers in terms of training, research and consultancy. In 2000, the subsidies from the Member States of the European Union represented only 32% of the Institute's gross income, which means that 2/3 of its means of existence have to be generated by its activities. The subsidy from Chapter A-30 of the EU Budget (EUR 800,000 per year since 1999) is considerably lower than those granted to the other three European institutes that also receive money from a budget line in the same chapter. This difference is worrying at a time when the training of public administrations in European affairs is considered a pressing need. Moreover, on the eve of the most important enlargement the Union has ever known, the capacity of the governments concerned to incorporate the *acquis communautaire* and to implement European policies will be a determining factor in the harmonious integration of the new Member States into the EU. EIPA will not be able to obtain a significant increase in its budget line on its own initiative – only the joint awareness among all the governments of the Member States and the European Commission of the legitimacy of this request may lead to additional financing in the European budget. The Board of Governors has given the Institute's Management the mandate to first draw the attention of the Directors-General of the Public Service to this matter at their meeting to be held under the Belgian Presidency in November 2001. ❑

# European Commission

***Horst Reichenbach***

*Director-General for Personnel and Administration at the European Commission*

## Reforming the Commission – Meeting the Challenges of the Future

In order to meet the challenges of change – both in the general environment and more specifically in the European integration process – the Commission must review and adjust its organisation, structures and working methods. Even without the prospect of enlargement, the Commission has recognised that it has never sufficiently well adapted to the changes that have already taken place.

Along the road of the integration process, the Commission has accumulated so far an increasing number of implementation tasks which constitute a growing drain of its resources. A first result is an adverse effect on the impetus and on the leadership role that the Commission is to contribute to the integration process by virtue of the right of initiative enshrined in the Treaties.

Besides, the trend of increasing implementation tasks at the Commission's level runs counter to broader societal developments. As a matter of fact, the affirmation of the subsidiarity principle and the resulting calls for more decentralisation reflect the legitimate request for greater involvement of the society at large and for bringing the action closer to the citizens.

Also, technological innovation is fuelling in-depth changes in society. IT is changing the landscape as we knew it because for instance, it offers opportunities for decentralisation without losing overall information, reporting and accountability.

This is all part of the evolving concept of governance that we are witnessing not only on a European scale but worldwide. Most national and international administrations have already taken steps to adjust to the changing environment. They have already gone a long way towards reforming their structures and systems, and more measures are being taken or planned.

The Commission intends to take a hard look at the general evolution of governance through President Prodi's commitment on the White Paper on governance due later this year. The Commission intends to adjust to the changing world by re-focusing itself on core activities and concentrating on the mission and the objectives of European integration.

It is in this context that the Commission is committed to administrative reform. Its overall objective is the creation of a first-class public administration, based on a culture of service. That culture will be firmly anchored on the principles of independence, responsibility, accountability, efficiency and transparency.

The case for reform is unanswerable. Reform is equally necessary in order to close the gap that has arisen between activities and resources. The Commission's resources must be carefully deployed where they are most needed, efficiency gains must be realised wherever possible.

The Reform Strategy was set out in the White Paper published on 1st March 2000. This presents a detailed road map for the entire Reform process, accompanied by a 98 point Action plan, a demanding and clear timetable and an indication of the service responsible for delivering on each point. The White Paper is itself the result of careful consultation with all staff and their representatives. It concentrates on three main themes : finance, management and personnel.

First, the Commission has already started on completely replacing an outdated system of financial management, control and audit with a system that allocates and emphasises individual responsibility, increases accountability, greatly strengthens security in the financial activities of the Commission, and ensures value for money.

Second, it is introducing a strategic planning and programming system which will use Activity Based Management and Budgeting to ensure that the tasks of the Commission will be continually matched with the resources needed to implement them. That will ensure greater coherence of activity, greater transparency and improved management.

Thirdly, it is introducing modern human resources policies which will mean that the high quality staff of the Institution are properly used, trained, managed and motivated.

The reform process is now well underway. The Commission has adopted recently (28 February 2001) consultative policy papers designed to implement the Reform strategy. These cover – among others – working conditions, equal opportunities, discipline, whistle-blowing, recruitment, appraisal and promotion, training and mobility. Before being adopted, these policy proposals will be the subject of thorough consultation with staff and their representatives. This consultation process will continue to the summer of 2001, and the Commission will then be in a position to finalise its

proposals, either for immediate implementation or, where necessary, for presentation to the Council as a global package of changes to the Staff Regulations in December 2001.

The White Paper draws on several sources of inspiration in setting the direction for Reform. Many of the recommendations of the second report of the Committee of Independent Experts on the functioning of the Commission were reflected in the White Paper. But internal reports and the views of staff themselves provided valuable analysis of weaknesses as well as proposed improvements. In addition the Commission has sought to identify and draw on best practice elsewhere in public administration.

In an international, multi-cultural organisation such as the Commission, it is important that Reform should not be seen as the imposition of a particular Member State's administrative model. As a result, the Reform proposals reflect common themes behind administrative reform across the Union, and demonstrate that the Commission's own Reform process is fully in line with the general trend, particularly greater focus on good management and the provision of a high level of service to customers.

This Reform is, in the context of the European integration process, a uniquely ambitious, demanding and necessary project that is vital to strengthening the confidence of the Member States, the EU Institutions, the citizens of the Union and Commission staff themselves in a Commission that is an independent, accountable, efficient and transparent organisation founded on a culture of service. The Commission is being modernised in order to be able better to perform the roles and duties provided for in the Treaties, equipping it with the skills and tools it needs to meet the challenges that lie ahead. The process of European integration needs a strong, effective and responsible Commission – reform will help it fulfil that role. It is a reform from which all stand to benefit. ❑

# An Invisible Pillar of the European Union

***Jan Voskamp***

*Former Civil Servant in the Netherlands; Secretary-General and Member (in a personal capacity) of EIPA's Board of Governors*

The twentieth anniversary of the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) is an apt occasion for taking a closer look at public administration in the European Union. The unanimous decision in 1981 of the – then ten – member states of the Community and the European Commission to endorse the establishment of EIPA, was perhaps the first evidence of an emerging *system* of public administration of the Community. EIPA was meant to be a common facility of the public administrations of the member states and the institutions of the Community for providing professional support to civil servants in dealing with administrative issues of European legislation and regulation.

Public administration in a European context is not much exposed to political attention. Those, as the author of this article, who are professionally occupied with the development of public administration may occasionally be tempted to bring the object of their work into the limelight. They realise however that public administration in a European context flourishes well on the verge of the political arena and that there is no urgent reason for claiming stronger political commitment. Nonetheless, the twentieth anniversary of EIPA, that is a key player in European public administration, justifies a few words about the importance of the issue.

In any state a well-developed and reliable infrastructure of public administration and public service is a cornerstone of democracy. It is a prerequisite for governments meeting their goals and a condition for economic, social and cultural welfare. This doctrine of governance also applies for a formal organisation of states as the European Union of – presently – 15 Member States.

Usually the European Union is represented as a construction, resting on pillars of which normally only the first, the second, the third – and sometimes a fourth (defence policies) – are mentioned. One pillar – public administration – remains out of sight because in the sense of the Treaty it is an informal pillar. It is however not a less important pillar than the others. Without the support of this Invisible Pillar the whole construction would collapse.

The Invisible Pillar really exists. It consists of the public administrations of the member states and the services of the Commission, each permanently engaged in processes of modernisation and reform, while a satisfactory degree of cohesion is ensured by a light structure of regular but informal meetings.

From the beginning, in 1957, *public administration* was left out of the Treaty. It was strongly felt at that time – and still so today – that public administration of a member state belongs to the sovereignty of the State and that interference from Community levels should be avoided. The Treaty made no direct reference to national administrative efforts although it obliged member states to take all necessary measures to enable the working of the Community (Article 5) which, of course, would include measures in the domain of public administration.

Initially, member states were developing their own administrative capacities for dealing with Community legislation and regulation. As European integration was getting off the ground and cooperation between the member states became ever closer, an embryonic system of European public administration was emerging. Insofar as one could speak of a system of European public administration, it was not structured and consisted of each member state doing its best to comply with the Treaty.

Gradually it became recognised that nationally isolated efforts were no longer satisfactory and that, although public administration would continue to be regarded as a non-Treaty issue, some light form of European structuring would have to be applied. The creation of EIPA in 1981 was one of the first – if not the very first – tangible results of this view.

Another result was in 1988 a first, of course informal, meeting of ministers of the public service of the member states. On the agenda was the administrative dimension of European integration. The meeting arrived without much discussion at agreement about the desirability of cooperation between the member states in the domain of public administration. The ministers did however not succeed in finding an operational solution for structuring administrative cooperation in such a way that it could be safeguarded from Community or intergovernmental interference.

In a third meeting, in 1991, the ministers finally decided that issues of European public administration would be dealt with at the level of directors-general. For this purpose the directors-general of the public service of the member states and the director-general with corresponding responsibility for the administrative

services of the Commission were requested to meet – informally – twice annually. The meetings would be chaired by the director-general of the member state occupying the EU Presidency but would not report to the Presidency. The unwritten rule for the directors-general is that they will further public administration and public service in a European context without sacrificing national autonomy in that domain.

Today the half-yearly informal meetings of directors-general and occasional informal meetings of ministers constitute the structure that supports public administration in the European Union. Formalising this structure in the working area of the Treaty is neither necessary nor desirable. Looking back at ten years of informal meetings it can be concluded that they have caused no tendency toward administrative harmonisation or unification in the European Union. The meetings have however contributed to administrative cohesion. Consultations during and between the meetings about processes of modernisation and reform of public administration have undoubtedly contributed to adapting the administrative capacities of the member states to the preparation and implementation of European legislation and regulation.

There is however room for enhancing the effectiveness of the meetings of the directors-general. Improvements within the existing meetings structure are well feasible and are in fact being pursued. For instance working groups of experts on particular issues of European public administration have been established and are reporting to the meetings of the directors-general.

Challenges for future joint action within the European structure of public administration emerge from the increased complexity and scope of European integration. Examples of potential joint action are, to mention just a few:

- The creation of a 'standard' training programme in the European Union (additional and complementary to training at national level) for civil servants who have to collaborate with colleagues of other member states in processes of preparation and implementation of EU legislation. First attempts already have been made and difficulties that are being encountered do not seem to be insurmountable.
- Enabling civil servants to work in other member states than their country of origin. In several member states mobility between different ministries or between central and regional levels of administration is normal practice and is considered to have a positive effect on personal professional development and on organisational efficiency. Mobility between member states and the Commission is often being encouraged for similar reasons. Mobility between the administrations of member states would be similarly useful but is, although allowed by European legislation (free movement of labour), still impaired by complicated technical problems. Much work still can be done before civil servants are able to work during parts of their career in one or more other member states.
- The creation of a permanent observatory for retrieving – and making available – information about developments of public administration and public service that are going on in the member states. EIPA would be well placed for being entrusted with this task, in particular because of having an autonomous status and not adhering to the Council or the Commission. In fact, among the very first drafts by EIPA's founding fathers for the profile of the future institute, before applied research and training were added to EIPA's portfolio of tasks, prevailed the concept of an institute for comparative study of public administration.

I'm confident that EIPA will continue its efforts for keeping upright the Invisible Pillar of European public administration. ❑

# Belgium

***Michel Damar***
*Secretary-General, Belgian Federal Ministry of the Civil Service*

## New Prospects for Management of the Belgian Federal Civil Service in the 21st Century: The Copernicus Plan

**Context**

Starting in the 1980s, a triple crisis of confidence has been apparent in relations between the political authorities and the public, in contacts between government departments and users, and also between the political authorities and the staff of the government departments. The 1990s highlighted the need to face up to the complex nature of the problems before us – in particular as a result of the reform of government when regional and community authorities were created in Belgium, and the increasing impact of the European Union. In addition, other factors are still increasing the pressure for change in the civil service: the rapid growth of technology, the demands of the public and businesses as well as the management of uncertainty in an environment in which the public services find themselves almost competing with each other.

Adjustment of the public services to the continuously and rapidly changing social context is therefore essential. Also, the federal government agreement of July 1999 makes the first point of its programme the creation of "an efficient and alert administration".

**Principles**

In order to meet the challenge of ongoing radical change, eight major principles have been formulated: to be customer oriented; to set targets; to grant increased autonomy to the public services; to make managers accountable; to make government more transparent; to simplify rules and processes; to develop a quality control system for the services provided and to work out a mechanism for evaluating public policies.

These are the principles underlying the Copernicus Plan, which is a key priority of the Belgian federal government. Exceptional financial resources have been released to ensure its fulfilment. Systematic recourse to outside consultants and consultation with senior civil servants are building considerable momentum. Regular communication campaigns mark the different stages of the plan's implementation: information days, television programme, various publications, website.

**Five foundations of the Copernicus Plan**

This Copernican revolution rests on five pillars.

The aim of the first pillar is to develop *a new relationship between the political authority and the federal departments*. A clear definition of their responsibilities towards each other has been stated: the political authority will decide on political actions and oversee the department; the department will assist in the preparation of public policies and will implement them. The political "cabinets" have therefore been abolished and consequently a strategy unit has been created in each federal public service to prepare and evaluate policies.

The second foundation lays down a *complete recasting of the federal organisation chart*. The main themes can be broken down on the one hand into reorganising essential tasks – on the principle of creating uniformity in the spheres of activity – and, on the other hand, maintaining a clear distinction between strategic management and operational management, and finally reducing the number of levels of hierarchy. The former ministries have been divided into ten vertical public services responsible for a specific domain: interior, justice, finance, employment and social dialogue, public health-food safety-the environment, external relations, defence, social security, economy-small and medium-sized enterprises-middle class-energy, mobility-transport. Four horizontal public services provide support in terms of co-ordination, technical assistance and methodological or normative management. These services are: general co-ordination (the Prime Minister's service), management and budgetary control, personnel and organisation, information and communication technologies. When a new government is being formed, temporary public programming services are set up to take charge of equality of opportunity, sustainable development, social integration, telecommunications, etc.

The third foundation creates *temporary employment contracts for all management posts* with autonomy in respect of staff and resources. The manager is responsible for the results obtained in the implementation of an agreed management plan and operational action plan. Selection and recruitment are effected on the basis of competence profiles tested during an assessment and an additional test. Recruitment to the first two career grades is also open to persons outside the federal civil service. The six-year employment contract provides for an annual appraisal, a salary in line with the private sector employment market and autonomy in terms of the

organisation of services and the internal management of human, financial, IT and logistical resources.

The fourth foundation concerns a *new approach to financial controls*. Reorganisation of the budgetary and financial cycle requires increased decentralisation of management skills. The organisation of financial controls and internal audits, controls after rather than before the event and the development of analytical compatibility are therefore being extended and amplified.

The final pillar requires a fundamental overhaul of personnel policy to create a *human resources management system*. A number of actions are in the process of implementation, for example a specific system of "top managers", the creation of Human Resources Management units in each federal public service, a new appraisal system, reform of the policy on careers to maintain the appeal of the posts and link pay to performance, the transformation of the recruitment service and the federal training institute, staff surveys, a training policy for staff with potential, development of communications.

**Critical factors for success**

The Copernicus project requires a change of attitude both from the political authorities and from civil service staff. This will come about through the development of a climate of trust and mutual respect and a commitment to government action and pro-active loyalty on the part of staff in government departments. To give up old habits in order to engage in new behaviours, that is the challenge! To this must be added real legislative and regulatory adjustments plus ample financial resources.

**Prospects for radical change in service provided to the public**

The basic objective of the Copernicus Plan is to provide the public and society as a whole with an efficient, high-quality service by introducing a new management culture, new administrative structures and a new policy on the management of human resources. At the same time, a policy oriented towards e-government will act in concert with all the other levels of power in Belgium. Future online services appear to be a necessary addition to the reform undertaken, which will make the public services of the 21st century even more visible and credible. ❑

# Denmark

***Finn Hoffman*** †
*Director, Personnel and Management, The Danish State Employer's Authority, Ministry of Finance*

## The Danish State Sector: Challenges and Reforms

**The Danish model**

In contrast to other continental European countries, Denmark has traditionally dealt with salary, employment and working conditions in the labour market through the use of a collective agreement process generally known as the 'Danish model'.

From a Danish perspective there are many advantages associated with the 'Danish model', including:

- Improved dialogue between employee and employer as a constructive tool ideally suited for sustaining workplace development;
- Industrial arbitration as an alternative to the civil court system as an instrument for flexible and speedy resolution of workplace disputes.

Judging by the relatively low level of disputes in Denmark both employees and employers accept, and are satisfied with the 'Danish model'.

**Developments in the Danish state labour market**

Three important reforms were implemented in the Danish state labour market from the 1990s onwards. These reforms focused on:

- Administrative reform;
- Salary and wage reform;
- Education and training reform.

**Administrative reform**

From the end of the 1980s and throughout the 90's the Danish state sector workplace was structured round a decentralised-organisation-based concept. One principal feature was that decision making should rest in the hands of the employees who also had responsibility for these decisions. The other guiding principle was that responsibility – and its associated decision making role – should be as closely as possible to the 'customer'.

To a growing extent central administration operates by way of frameworks covering general agreements and financing. One of the measures deployed is management by contract and in this respect many Danish state sector workplaces are managed by means of institution specific contracts supplemented by contracts that lay down individual targets and salary scale for each institution's leader.

'Welfare and Service' is another administrative policy project. Started in 2000, but as yet unfinished, this project is targeted towards political processes and decision making. The project's reference point is service enhancement and improved dialogue between citizens and the institution and between citizens and politicians.

In connection to the welfare and service project a numerous consultations have been carried out with members of the public and in this way they have had the opportunity of influencing the political processes through direct contacts and discussions with politicians.

**Salary and wage reform**

Until recently public sector salaries and wages were centrally negotiated and determined in negotiations between the Ministry of Finance and the central trade organisations. This system provided very little scope for negotiating salaries on an individual basis, based on the recognition of employees' qualifications, their special workplace related responsibilities, or their role and performance. Salary and wage reform – began in 1998 – is constructed on the twin platform of a basic salary system and locally agreed individual allowances. In the interests of flexibility these allowances can be granted either on a temporary, permanent or one-off basis.

The salary and wage reform has already demonstrated the fact that a more flexible system allows the possibility of remunerating employees differently by taking into account their individual qualifications and workplace performance. At the same time this reform has provided public institutions with greater scope for recruiting and retaining employees – especially at a time when a prosperity boom has placed increasing pressure on the labour market.

Salary and wage reform has also placed the focus on management development. Apart from the professional aspect, local managers have now entered a new workplace dimension, that of being personnel managers. Leaders in the state sector have to develop their qualifications on an ongoing basis in order to match the demands made on them to solve tasks in a professional manner. Management development in individual institutions is an important component of personnel policy and needs to be established in a workplace-adapted dialogue with employees.

**Education and training reform**

Considerable work has been initiated for systematising the development of individual competences, especially in relation to employees. Competence development is more than commonly after, or further education. Competence development is employee development of new knowledge, skills and/or attitudes. Competence development is often associated with courses, professional skills' updating and general education, but primarily it represents training that takes place at the workplace in a particular working environment.

Competence development is necessary because managers and employees are the state sector's most important resource and their development is therefore vital in terms of professional, flexible task management.

In order to improve the awareness and insight into competence development, the Danish State Employer's Authority and the personnel organisations established the State Centre for Competence and Quality Development on 1 April 2000. This new centre will advise managers, shop stewards and other employees on systematic competence development.

In particular, the centre is expected to become an important advisor to smaller institutions that have limited in-house staff development resources.

In this connection the respective parties involved in collective wage bargaining have established a foundation. Amongst other things this foundation contributes financially to supporting employees' competence development in connection with changes of employee function at these institutions.

Even though the Danish state sector is currently taking numerous initiatives to ensure a more flexible labour market, there are still many areas of development required to make the state sector labour market more attractive. Recently for example, a major study was carried out on factors that appeared to motivate employees' attitudes to what constituted a good workplace and how motivation could be increased by the work at the state sector workplace. Additionally, further analysis of existing and future qualifications of state sector managers is presently in progress. The analysis is being undertaken in such a way so as to make it possible to compare public sector managers with managers in the private sector.

**Future challenges**

***Labour shortages: social responsibility as an instrument***

Danish labour market forecasts generally indicate that labour shortages will arise within the next few years. State sector workplaces will need to recruit and retain the best employees on an ongoing basis if these workplaces are to continue to be able to deliver the services and output expected by citizens in a modern welfare society.

The potential in the labour market needs to be utilised more effectively also passive labour resources should be made the most of in such a way that all available labour market resources are activated. Amongst other things, this involves the best possible use of passive labour resources that are either outside, or on their way out of the labour market. Such measures include:

- A variety of employment schemes aimed at persons with a reduced capacity for work;
- Integration of ethnic minorities;
- Retaining older employees in work;
- Reducing absence due to illness.

Currently the Danish state sector's greatest problem is that employees are older on average than those found in the private sector and that a large proportion of the workforce will be retiring within the foreseeable future. The solution to this problem lies in attracting young employees while at the same time retaining older employees longer.

***Individual and flexible work planning***

There is a general trend towards a preference for more individualised working terms and conditions instead of large collective settlements – especially amongst younger groups in the labour force.

In a study carried out by the Danish State Employer's Authority concerning the factors that motivated people to go to work, it emerged that the work content performed by an employee is the most important motivating factor, followed closely by a good working environment and salary conditions.

Lifetime work credit schemes that allow employees to work more during one period of time and less during another, offer the possibility for individuals to flexibly adapt their working hours.

Furthermore, there is potential for entering into agreements for setting up remote workplaces, so that for example an employee can work at home two days a week instead of physically going to work. This initiative also takes family policy issues into account.

A senior scheme has been set up to retain and extend the services of older employees in the workplace. Senior schemes reflect the need to retain valuable knowledge possessed by valued employees. Working conditions can be tailored to the needs of individual employees – for example by a reduction in the time spent at work.

In this way each individual employee is afforded the possibility of having a greater influence over his or her own working environment.

**Europe and the Danish state sector labour market**

The 'Danish model' principally implements directives relating to labour market conditions by way of collective agreements. In this way these collective agreements are maintained and strengthened in the Danish labour market, and advantages are similarly retained through use of an agreement-based model.

The agreement-based model enables flexible and speedy implementation of Danish labour market initiatives, while at the same time respecting the directives. In this way both the parent-leave and part-time directives have been implemented through

collective agreements in Denmark.

Collective agreements typically cover two to three years, thereby enabling labour market adjustments to be made within a few years. This makes it possible quickly to take advantage of the European trends for agreeing on new measures and reforms as well as implementing new directives.

Foreign companies may enter the Danish market by tendering for projects. Tendering of this type results in labour market cultures of other countries inspiring new initiatives on the Danish labour market.

The counterpart to tendering is the free movement of labour within the EU. The need for recruiting qualified manpower presupposes that vacancies that exist in Denmark are known outside Danish borders and that foreign qualifications allow access to the domestic labour market.

For the Danish state sector labour market an Internet job database has been sat up and this makes it much easier for citizens from other countries to apply for jobs, especially as access to job advertisements is now independent of printed media.

Denmark has established a Centre for Evaluating Foreign Qualifications (CVUU). The centre makes evaluations by carrying out enquiries as to whether a foreign exam qualification matches the level of a Danish exam. In this way foreign qualifications comparable to Danish equivalents provide access to appointments carrying the same employee agreement benefits as operate for applicants holding Danish qualifications.

There is considerable interest in improving the quality of administration within the public sector, both at a European level and in the individual member states.

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is an easy to use self-evaluation tool for public sector administration. The model provides options for evaluating both strengths and weaknesses and allows for the understanding and use of quality management techniques within public administration. In addition CAF facilitates pan-European administration bench-marking.

The Danish state is taking an extremely positive view of the measures and reforms being introduced in other European countries with regard to attracting and maintaining highly qualified manpower, and to the initiatives that are being implemented to ensure greater quality within public administration. Contacts and networks involving colleagues abroad, and not least of all the EIPA connection, provide influence and inspiration for the continued development of ideas for both an efficient and attractive state sector labour market, and for a modern public sector administration – geared up to meet the challenges facing Europe over the next decade. ❑

# Germany

***Günther Wurster***
*Director of the German Post-Graduate School of Administrative Science (Bundesakademie); Ministry of the Interior*

## An Effective National Public Administration Is an Essential Precondition to Becoming a "Europe of the Citizens"

An efficient public administration, which enjoys the trust of the citizens, fulfils vital tasks for the State and society. It also has a key role to play in the success of the European integration process.

As many States in the EU are striving to follow the example of Germany, the modernisation of the German public administration is also of high European relevance.

On 1 December 1999, the federal government adopted the programme "Modern State – Modern Administration". The aim is to change the administration, its actions and its conception of itself.

The federal government's model for administrative modernisation is that of the "activating state". It is not an exercise in belt-tightening, but – to continue the metaphor – is about exercise itself, and a resulting fitness and vitality. This formula can be summarised as "what society can do as well or better than the State, should be done by society itself". This new division of tasks should be stimulated and supervised by the State. It must support the citizens, not dictate to them. The activating State must hold itself back enough to let creativity and performance freely develop. Society and the citizens are ready for this. A new culture is also needed within public administration. Both necessarily belong together. In addition, a further expansion of public budgets in Germany is not economically tenable. The State's ability to act is reaching its limits. The future programme of the federal government adopted in September 1999 provides that the expenditure of the *Bund* will be reduced by € 75 billion over the next four years.

There is no alternative to this savings plan. What is important is that the necessary savings be considered and used as an opportunity for modernisation.

The issue of "administrative reform" or "State modernisation" is not new. The aims and methods have been known for some time. For decades different concepts have been discussed, reports drawn up, and suitable and unsuitable approaches have been identified and rejected.

In this respect, there is not a need for recognition, but for action. Political will and a corresponding "political strength" is necessary to make headway in this field. The notion that a programme is only good when it is implemented therefore also holds true for the modernisation programme with the model of the activating state. The federal government has decided to achieve the aims of the programme through concrete projects. There are 15 main projects and so far 23 additional projects in the federal administration as a whole. These projects should breath life into the concept of the activating State in four fields of action.

With the modernisation of State and administration, the federal government is following a general policy. Not only must the internal structure of the administration be changed, but also the relationship between the State and the citizens. An additional factor in the restructuring of the State and the administration of the federal Republic of Germany is the relationship between the individual levels of the administration, that is to say, the relationship between the *Bund*, the federal *Länder* and the municipalities.

### 1. Greater acceptance and effectiveness of law

In the first field of action the federal Government wants to increase the effectiveness and acceptance of law. The *Bund* has particular responsibility here due to its many legislative competences. Lawmaking is becoming increasingly demanding. It must be geared towards a social reality which is in constant change. The role of law has to change as modernisation aims to give private individuals room for self-initiative and self-regulation. A major necessity is deregulation, a reduction of laws and rules. According to the new procedural rules of ministries, the necessity of new laws that are planned must be justified and it must be stated whether a time-limit can be set on their application as well as whether self-regulation is a possibility.

### 2. The *Bund* as a partner

The field of action "the *Bund* as a partner" refers on the one hand to cooperation between administrative levels. Germany has a federal and decentralised structure. In accordance with the concept of the "activating State", the relationship between the *Bund* and *Länder* requires greater flexibility for the *Länder* levels.

On the other hand it refers to the relationship with the private sector. The most successful project at the moment is certainly the initiative "Germany 21 – setting off into information age". Currently, 70 companies from the field of modern information technology have joined together with the federal government to direct and accelerate Germany's transition to the information age.

At an international level Germany is not one of the front runners in using new media. For instance, when the size of the population is taken into account, the number of Internet connections in the USA is three times higher than in Germany. Accordingly, the economic importance of the information and communication sector in the USA is markedly greater. While in America it constituted 7.6% of GNP in 1998, in Germany the figure was only 4.5%. Another comparative example at European level: in the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark and Norway, 9% of employees work in the information and communication sector, while in Germany the figure is 5%. The programme is already showing its first successes. Many projects and individual initiatives concern for example the provision of early support for children and young adults in handling the new media. The fact that schools in Germany will in future have free internet access is also considered a particular success. It will therefore be possible to broaden access to the new media, to promote innovative jobs and to strengthen European and international cooperation.

### 3. An effective, economical and efficient administration

The third important field for reform is in the creation of an effective, economical and efficient administration. The aim is to have an administration that performs better and costs less. To achieve this, the decision-making and working procedures in the ministerial administration should be critically reviewed and changed if necessary. A precondition for this is comprehensive quality management.

The Federal Ministry of the Interior will make much greater use of the instrument of agreements on targets where its subordinate authorities are concerned It will conclude corresponding agreements by the end of the legislative period. Initial agreements on targets show that here the right way to result-oriented steering has been found. It will make room for creative, committed and responsible action – and therefore for greater effectiveness and efficiency in the administration. Moreover, a fruitful debate is now underway among the staff concerning their own targets.

The federal government wants to use the introduction of new financial and accountancy instruments to give an important impetus to the drive for efficiency. It wants competition between the authorities in the federal administration to bring about the best solutions. Comparable data is however a necessary precondition and a database will be created using cost and performance accounting, through which strengths and weaknesses can be identified and possible efficiency dividends can be mobilised.

Here, the instrument of benchmarking is particularly appropriate. The federal government is also promoting this steering instrument for the federal administration and has thus started to put together areas for comparative purposes.

To achieve an effective, economical and efficient administration, the possibilities of modern information and communication technologies should also be harnessed. One of the ideas in this context is that citizens should only need one central point to go to in an interlinked administration, i.e. the information should move, not the citizens. Irrespective of which authority is responsible for a given administrative matter, the request should reach the competent authority via the internet and should link up departments with various competences. The administration should gear itself towards the needs of the people, not to its competences. BundOnline 2005, the e-government initiative of the federal government, will therefore offer improved services and modernise internal administrative procedures. The initiative includes the obligation the federal government has imposed on itself to make available online all the services of the federal administration that can be put on the internet by 2005 – for the citizens, business and the administrations at central, federal and municipal level.

### 4. Motivated staff

The aim of the modernisation programme is for the administration to be perform better and cost less. To achieve this, the administration is dependent on motivated employees. This is the precondition for effectiveness and a willingness to achieve something. Self-responsibility and better opportunities for development create the conditions in which the available performance potential can also be harnessed for modernisation. The task of the *Bund* is to create the necessary basic legal conditions in the area of civil service law. There should be more room for innovative solutions that enhance motivation and performance.

Alongside the amending of civil service law, staff development in the federal administration is a main project in the modernisation programme of the federal government. The aim is to promote staff in accordance with their needs as well as those of their employer. All the Ministries will draw up staff development plans in this legislative period. This is an important precondition to achieving a new administrative structure together with the staff.

In the future, greater demands will be made on employees in the public sector in terms of knowledge and skills. In addition to specialist knowledge, more methodical and technical know-how as well as general competences and skills are called for with which to deal with new developments. Thorough general and basic knowledge together with Europe-oriented expertise will be necessary. Opportunities for continuous education should be offered in view of the constantly changing requirements resulting from Europeanisation.

Even though all languages of the Member States are official EU languages, knowledge of foreign languages is indispensable when it comes to close contacts with or in other Member States. Despite the dominance of English and French, knowledge of other EU languages could be of great use in bilateral relations. The public administration must therefore offer the possibility to acquire or improve knowledge of foreign languages.

In this context job criteria should be reviewed generally with the aim of assessing how best to ensure that staff have (additional) qualifications in European matters. Personal initiative in the public service should also be strengthened. A precondition for this is for employees to be given greater responsibility and more opportunities for development. This will increase the feeling of responsibility, the satisfaction with the work place and the preparedness to work in the European institutions or in other Member States.

The rising professional demands – particularly on account of European enlargement, growing expectations regarding performance and the process of continual learning require staff to have a high level of social competence in terms of communication and cooperation skills. Public administration must fully ensure that these skills are acquired and kept. This is indispensable for partnership-based cooperation in Europe.

An important task of the public service is therefore the continual further development of qualification structures for learning how to use new knowledge and for making appropriate use of negotiation strategies at European level.

The highest federal authorities also make frequent use of the possibility to second staff for a limited period of time as so-called "national experts" to the European Commission. This qualifies our administration for task areas of European relevance and is, as regards applications for long-term positions in Brussels, a contributing factor in raising the proportion of German staff, which is still to low. Exchanges with the administrations of partner countries are just as important. In the future they will be more important than ever for successful cooperation between the Member States and for the uniform application of EU law.

Therefore, facilitating mobility between the national public services is a key aspect of the informal cooperation between the ministries responsible for the public service in the Member States.

The federal government's programme is demanding but realistic. It will certainly be no easy task. However, it is necessary to make the administration fit for the future in Germany and in Europe. ❑

# Hellenic Republic

*Efstathia Bergele*
*Director-General, Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation*

## Greek Administrative Reform Policy

European Union is adapting herself in the new era by resetting its strategy and redefining its targets in refer to the public administration and local governments. A broad outline for the European policy of public reform is given to us by the references in the conclusions of all Summits after Lisbon.

In Greece, we clearly regard as necessary the existence of a European policy for public administration and in this framework the responsible Greek Ministry promotes:

- The advance of computerisation of public services and the broad use of Internet.
- The interventions for the improvement of the quality of public services through the simplification or abolition of complicated or needless procedures.
- The reform of the regulatory framework of administrative action aiming at the opening of the markets and the strengthening of competition.

To succeed the above mentioned goals the Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation has designed and is now implementing a new comprehensive reform Programme called "Politeia". The most important measures of this programme are:

**National council of administrative reform**
The Council established by Law 2839/2000, functions as a governmental institution for consultation with the social and political parties. Within its competence are the elaboration of proposals for administrative reform and the evaluation of the administrative operation in general.

**e-Government**
The Greek Government has elaborated and is now implementing a comprehensive programme to support the e-Government, named "Information Society". The aim is to create an open and effective government, offering better services to citizens and firms, in an environment of greater access to public information and transparency.

The Greek governmental policy, which is related to the e-Europe initiative, aims especially to facilitate the development of cheaper and faster Internet access, help the integration of youth into the digital age, initiate the participation for all in the knowledge-base economy, accelerate *e*-commerce, evolve government online and electronic access to public services, introduce health online and develop intelligent transport systems.

***Internet Portal Sites for Users and Administration***
There are many different Internet "portal" sites helping users of administrations in their search for information services:

- There is www.government.gr, which inform the citizens on the development of the Government Policy in such fields as economy, quality of life and others.
- There is www.gspa.gr and www.ypes.gr that is the site of the Ministry of Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation, which inform citizens on administrative issues, elections, procurement of positions for public servants, etc.
- The National Printing House site (www.et.gr) regarding the online provision of legislation and official government texts through "Electronic Subscriber".
- There is www.infosociety.gr that aim to initiate the active participation of citizens in the creation of Information Society.
- We have created a web-site (www.ypai.gr), where every application form for all administrative procedures can be electronically found. Until now more than six hundred (600) public documents (application forms) have taken electronic form and are now available in the Internet. To support citizens of remote territories in dealing with the administration by using this site we are creating "Citizens Bureau" in the closest to the citizen administrative level, i.e. the municipality. A pilot application of this Programme called "ARIADNE", is now operating in 96 municipalities in the islands of the Aegean Sea. By the end of 2001 the programme will include all the documents needed for the sum of the administrative procedures a citizen might have to initiate, and in the next years it will be operating in every municipality of the country.
- The Ministry of Finance has implemented a considerable number of IT projects in the fields of taxation (TAXIS programme), customs offices, treasury-budget, etc. Furthermore, it has promoted the development of a portal (www.taxisnet.gr) for the electronic exchange of receipts and, in particular,

the electronic filing of Value Added Tax statements (e-VAT). The Ministry is also currently considering the possibility of supplying taxpayers with a smart card identifying its holder in order to allow economic transactions and issuance of standardised tax certificates at special points of service.

***Electronic Signatures***

The Ministries of Public Administration, Communication and Transportation, and Justice are in charge of preparing the complete legislation for e-signatures along with the creation of the regulatory framework for Trusted Third Parties and other mechanisms who will certify and control the creation and use of e-signatures. The relevant presidential decrees are about to be issued.

However, the existing regulation (Law 2672/98) already authorises and supports the use of e-mail communication and the e-application/distribution of a limited (in classified categories) number of documents with public administration.

**Quality of services**

***"Citizens' Information Centres" in 39 Prefectures***

Special bureaux have been created in 39 out of the country's 54 Prefectures, in order to provide better quality of general and local administrative information to the citizens. The measure will soon be extended to the others Prefectures.

***The "Citizen's Guide"***

The "Citizen's Guide" is a book where every citizen can find information concerning all administrative issues, and public services telephone numbers. Increasing the information technology use in the Public Sector, the "Citizen's Guide" is now available through the Internet (www.gspa.gr). Furthermore, it is also possible to consult this guide in the Information Centre of the Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation that functions also as a call-centre (tel. number 177).

***"1464": 24hour Information call-centre***

At this telephone number all kind of administrative information are provided to the citizen on a 24hour basis. We are also creating the "Administrative Multi-Shop" in the centre of Athens, where citizens can be informed or served by specialised public servants in several administrative matters.

***The issuing of Public Certificates through a Call Centre***

There is a call-centre (tel. number 1502) from which citizens may ask the issuing of several public certificates (e.g.: Certificate of birth, Registrar's certificate of birth, wedding and death, etc.). The telephone application is transmitted through FAX to the competent service, which issues the certificate and send it to the citizen by a registered letter. By now 50 certificates are provided by phone application. The received telephone calls by "1502" are almost 50.000 per month.

***Afternoon operations for most used services***

A different timetable to that already existing for public services will be applied to the mostly used services in order to facilitate the citizens. Pilot applications are already in force in 5 Tax Agencies, 2 Social Insurance Funds and 1 Prefecture. Soon the measure will be extended to 20 Municipalities in Athens and Thessaloniki with an objective to be applied in all agencies by the end of year 2001.

***Simplification of administrative procedures***

A Special Ministerial Committee has been created to work on the simplification of all administrative procedures by the abolition of any unnecessary secondary document that might be required for the issuing of a certificate or licence or by reducing the number of competent agencies involved.

***Compensation Committees***

In the Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation and in the country's Regions, there are in operation committees competent to examine applications for delay in processing citizens' matters, beyond the provided by laws timetables (Law 2690/1999).

***Task Force for solving ad hoc problems in services with big clientele***

This Committee has been created with objective the 'on the job' intervention for the re-organisation of public services with many and difficult problems, in order to immediately improve the service provided to the citizen.

***Code of Administrative Procedure***

Since March 1999, is in power the new Code of Administrative Procedure (Act 2690/99), which contains all the Public Administration's obligations concerning its relationship with the citizens.

Some of the main provisions of the code are:

- The obligation of the Administration to proceed ex officio to actions imposed by law and within the time defined by law, without waiting for action on behalf of citizens.
- The hearing of the interested party as it is provided for by the Greek Constitution prior to the implementation of the unfavourable measures.
- The determination of cases where administrative authorities have to refrain from any action or procedure in order to provide the necessary guarantees for an impartial judgement.
- The determination of matters pertaining to deadlines within which citizens or the Administration has to proceed to certain procedures (exclusive character, interruption, and calculation).
- The rules governing the formation – composition – meeting – function and resolution of collective administrative bodies.
- The rules governing the publication and the revocation of the administrative act.

**Quality of regulations**

Regarding the regulatory quality, Greece was among the first country-members of the OECD that underwent an examination on "Regulatory Reform" progress and is actively participating in the European initiative "Better Regulation" in order to improve quality of its regulations:

- A Special Inter-ministerial Committee for the implementation of the Greek Regulatory Reform Program has been created.
- We undertake actions to improve transparency and strengthen the public consultation process in order to include all subordinate regulations and adopt uniform notice and comment procedures.
- We are also moving fast, in collaboration with the Ministry of Development, to establish a central registry of administrative procedures and business licences and permits, and to initiate a comprehensive review to determine how to reduce burdens.
- Launching a programme of codification to reduce legal uncertainty, the Greek Ministries are on a rolling and priority basis reviewing and evaluating the stock of existing regulations and paper work.

**Human resources development**

We continue our efforts to improve the mechanisms within the administration to produce quality outcomes for the citizens. The public service is always undergoing a reform, elements of which are:

- The performance based management and evaluation system.
- The introduction of incentives based on merits and achievements in the pay system.
- The enhancement of flexibility within the public administration for movement of resources, competencies and people, and
- The promotion of co-ordination and co-operation between ministers in the form of inter-ministerial management groups.

In this scope we develop the following:

***Collective Bargaining in the Greek Civil Service (Law 2738/99)***

The collective Bargaining Law constitutes a landmark in the Greek administrative system and is now in the second year of its implementation. The issues, which can be negotiated, are the following:

- the education and training of civil servants
- measures of health and security
- issues of social security with the exception of issues concerning pensions
- issues of salary or financial conditions of civil servants.
- exercise of union rights
- issues of leaves and working time as well as issues concerning the mobility of personnel (placement and various forms of internal transfers)
- the interpretation of the condition of the collective labour agreements.

***Access of European Union's citizens to the Greek public services***

According to the law 2431/1996, citizens of all European Union's member states have the right to be employed in the public services, legal persons of public law, public enterprises and legal persons of private law.

Almost all the Ministries have defined, by presidential decrees, the specific job positions which European citizens have the right to access.

The Minister of Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation has the overall responsibility not only for all presidential decrees but also for the whole implementation of relevant regulations. All that work is expected to complete by the end of 2001.

***Public servants' ethical code***

The draft of the Public Servants' Ethical Code is already completed by the Ministry of Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation and will be subject of collective negotiations with the Supreme Administration of Greek Civil Servants Trade Union.

***Personnel Recruitment***

New regulations for recruitment of public services personnel that accelerate the procedures of recruitment in the public service without changing the core essence and the philosophy of the initial law (2190/94) for objectivity, transparency and meritocracy, has been introduced.

***Regional Centre of UN for Public Administration and Human Resources***

By collaboration of the Greek Government and the United Nations, a Regional Centre was established in Thessaloniki in order to provide 'know how' in public administration issues at Central and Eastern European Countries.

***Introduction of performance measurement in the public sector***

The Ministry of Interior & Public Administration has created a Special Committee to elaborate:

- A system that sets productivity measurement criteria of public services and employees.
- The necessary regulations for the creation of a Special Evaluation Body in the Ministry of Interior and Public Administration and the Specific Evaluation Committees in every ministry.
- The linkage between the public servants' remuneration and their productivity and efficiency.

***Enhancement of control and transparency***

The Secondary Disciplinary Committee of Public Administration that has been established by the Law 2839/2000 has the responsibility of control of all disciplinary cases that are referred to it either by the punished public servant or by the agency, and the possibility to impose penalties to members of first disciplinary councils, as well as to employees individually, who committed disciplinary offences. ❑

# Spain

*C. Román Riechmann*
*Director-General of the Civil Service, Ministry for Public Administration (MAP)*

## Current Characteristics of the System of Public Administration in Spain and Ongoing Reforms

This paper refers to the model of Civil Service existing in Spain. The Spanish civil service is currently a mixed system as it contains two different elements in the same model: the selection by Corps and the classification of jobs.

It is also a unitary model that combines common basis applicable in all Public Administrations at a central, regional and local level, and rules established by each central, regional and local administration because of their own power to organise civil services.

We can distinguish two principal kinds of personnel working in Public Administrations in Spain: civil servants and employees. The Statute fixes the rights and duties of civil servants. For contractual employees there are different specific rules.

**Rules of the Statute**

***1. Recruitment***

The Annual Public Employment Offer lists the vacancies to be covered by new civil servants or other public employees in the Public Administrations during the year. Selection is based on the following principles: No discrimination (by race, sex, religion or social position), Selection by merit and capability, and Publicity.

To gain admission to the Spanish Civil Service a specific knowledge about the State and Public Administrations is required. Open competitions are based on a series of subjects prepared and published by the Administration. The Selection Boards finally choose the questions. Another procedures as Merit assessment or a mixed formula of the two can also be used.

The requirements to participate in the recruitment process are: EU nationality (or Spanish in sectors concerning national interest); Full civil rights capability; Over 18; Physical health and integrity; Possession of diplomas; Not to have been dismissed from the job as a result of a disciplinary enquiry nor disqualified for the fulfilment of civil service.

Boards of civil servants with similar or higher academic qualifications than the ones required for the posts to be filled are in charge of recruitment. Members can't be in the majority of the same Corps for which the selection is intended.

***2. Career structure***

After passing the competitive examination and, if applied, the selective training course, candidates are engaged as members of a specific Corps and a particular post is filled.

Corps are classified into five Groups: A, B, C, D, and E depending on the academic qualifications required. Candidates to enter the Corps of the highest group, A, must be at least graduates; group E only requires the school leaving certificate (this is the basic and minimum level in Spain).

There are thirty job levels and the members of each Corps may be engaged in one of them depending on the group A, B, C, D or E of his Corps. (for instance: Group A levels 22 to 30).

Job level has a decisive impact on professional promotion and income.

The career system is based on two main aspects: personal grade and professional promotion.

Personal grade is gained when a person fills one or more posts of the corresponding level during two years without interruptions or three years with interruptions. The grades that civil servants can consolidate are those of the levels of filled posts. Grade consolidation implies the right to receive at least a part of the salary corresponding to the level of the post filled.

***3. Performance appraisal and promotion***

For the moment there are no specific rules about performance appraisal but is a point included in the new draft of Staff regulations.

Civil servants can be promoted to other posts having higher level but included in those corresponding to their Group level. The procedure may be merit assessment or free designation. They can also have a promotion to a higher group if they have the diploma required and pass a competitive examination. In those competitions they may be exempted from some examinations and have preference for filling vacancies according to a procedure for internal promotion.

***4. Mobility***

The procedures for filling posts are competition, free designation, staff redeployment, secondment and interim assignment.

a) Competition allows the selection of the most suitable civil servant to occupy a specific job. An Assessment Committee must evaluate merits, personal grade, performances in the previous job, training courses and years of service.
For posts of levels 26 to 30 there is a specific competition procedure. It must be specified in the notices for covering the posts.
Specific competition consists of two stages:
- At the first stage an assessment about personal grade, previous job, training courses and length of service is made.
- In the second, specific merits related to the features of each job will be assessed. In order to do this, civil servants can be asked to provide reports or to agree to an interview.

b) Free designation procedure consists on a discretionary designation and replacement of civil servants, bearing in mind the specific nature and duties of the jobs.
This procedure is used to cover posts such as those of Deputy General Director, secretariats of senior civil servants and those with a special responsibility. Designation is carried out after public notice and always on the proposal by the administrative unit. According to rules applied this is an exceptional system, since the majority of the posts are filled using the competition system and only the remaining are filled by free designation.

c) Staff redeployment
Civil servants occupying a non-specific job can be assigned by service requirements to other of a similar nature, provided that the new job has same level, same special bonus and provision procedure, and placed in the same location.

d) Secondment
This is a procedure to fill a post if there is urgent necessity. Any official who fulfils the requirements for the post according to the List of Jobs may be assigned. This situation cannot exceed one year, renewable for another one if the job is still vacant. The post must be included in the following vacancy notice.

e) Interim assignment
When a civil servant is removed from a free designation post, or the post is suppressed or he has ceased from a job obtained through the competition system can occupy provisionally another one corresponding to his Corps or Scale.

### *5. Discipline and professional incompetence*

In relation to discipline specific rules are applied. An official with similar or higher level than the official concerned is responsible for the procedure. No specific rules are applied for senior managers and staff representatives are not involved.

According to general rules the length of any procedure cannot exceed three months.

During a legal or disciplinary procedure a provisional suspension can be agreed to a civil servant. If so, he will be temporarily deprived of the exercise of duties and rights inherent to the status of civil servant, although has the right to 75% of his salary, seniority pay and bonus payments.

When there are concurrent criminal investigation relating to the same factual situation the administrative procedure is suspended.

Offences and sanctions are set forth by the staff regulations. The sanctions can be: Reproval, Compulsory Mobility, Suspension and Dismissing.

Dismissing can be a disciplinary sanction or a result of a court decision. In these cases the civil servant loses his job.

### *6. Pay and pensions*

For civil servants, salaries are adjusted depending on Government guidelines included in the annual budget approved by law every year even if there are agreements between the Unions and the Administration about salaries increments. For contractual staff there is a collective bargaining.

The current system payment for civil servants consists of basic pay and supplementary pay.

Pensions for civil servants are calculated on the basis of the annual basic salary, equal for civil servants of the same Group. The pension is a percentage of this salary depending on the years of activity. A maximum is accorded with 35 years. The percentage that corresponds to a civil servant is reduced to a 50% to calculate the pension of his/her widow. Reduction to a 25% is calculated when there is one orphan and a 10% more if there are others, with the limit of a 50%. Invalidity pension is a 200% but years until retirement are considered years of activity.

### Specific rules for contractual staff

Labour employees in the Public Administration in Spain are submitted to general labour rules also applied to the Private Sector. Their specific labour conditions are set by Agreement signed by the Administration ant the Trade Unions.

### Aspects related to European integration.

General rules applicable to the Spanish Civil Service have been adapted to the Treaties, in particular those authorising nationals of other Member States to participate in open competitions to enter the Spanish Public Service.

Another rules concerning seniority pay for every three years of service have been also modified and periods worked in the public service of other Member States are now considered.

Finally two agreements have been signed between the Central Administration and the Administration of the Autonomous Communities and Local Administrations in April 1999 and June 2000. According to

those agreements the same criteria will be introduced in the internal rules of those Administrations.

**Ongoing reforms**

According to constitutional rules, the Government is preparing a new law to establish the basis of the Staff regulations applicable to all public administrations at a central regional and local level.

The Constitutional Court has already explained that those basis will necessary refer to recruitment, career structure and administrative positions, rights and duties, responsibility and discipline, creation of Corps and rules to access to them and the of filling posts procedure.

Future bases of the staff regulations will have to respect, in any case, Article 103 of the Constitution in which the main principles to organise Public Administration and the Civil Service are mentioned. ❑

# France

***Raymond Piganiol***

*Head of Mission on European and International Affairs; Directorate-General of Public Administration and Public Service; Ministry of Public Service, State Reform and Decentralisation*

## The Current Characteristics of the French Civil Service and Its Reform; the Effect of European Integration

I am lucky enough, and I believe this is quite unique, to have been on two occasions – from 1988 to 1993, and then since 1998 – a member of EIPA's Board of Governors, on which I represent France. Lucky in two ways: that these periods have coincided with genuine professional mobility, with European issues as a common point of reference; and that they have enabled me to get to know and appreciate three chairmen of the Institute's Board of Governors, and four General Directors – all of them, in fact. I would add that the fact that these two periods were not consecutive has allowed me to assess the changes in the intervening period, perhaps better than one continuous term.

I have also had the good luck (shared with an ever-decreasing number of European colleagues), to have participated since 1989, and to be participating at the present time, in almost all meetings of the European general directors, and ministers, in charge of administration and the civil service.

This dual experience would no doubt allow me to take a look back over the evolution of European integration in terms of what it implies (despite the principle of subsidiarity!) for national governments, and to recall the role of EIPA in this integration process. I could, for example, recall that, at the beginning of the period I am talking about, we were living in a reassuring peace of mind, born of a literal reading of § 4 of the former Article 48 of the Treaty of Rome (now Article 39), which excluded "employment in the public service" from the scope of freedom of movement. As administration and the civil service was, on principle, the exclusive jurisdiction of Member States, they were not affected by European integration. To be sure, meetings of general directors of the civil service were being held at the time and 1988 even saw the first meeting of ministers in charge of the civil service – here, in Maastricht. But all this was a bit superficial, with no real practical implications.

It was at this time that the realisation dawned that the public administrations are totally involved in European integration. This realisation was not self-evident, even though the government departments directly responsible for Community programmes, the common agricultural policy, the environment, consumer issues, etc. felt directly involved. But this was not the case, at least in France, with a very large majority of government departments. Moreover, rather than freedom of movement, it was the demand for quality in national public services that came as a revelation. Increasingly, decisions on the setting-up of economic agents took into consideration public services, understood not only in terms of mandatory levies, but again in terms of quality pure and simple: systems for communication, telecommunications, and formalities imposed on businesses, where this was not in terms of direct competition.

However, a 20th anniversary is not an occasion for taking stock but rather for looking to the future. Also, rather than trying to show how during this period, this matter – the civil service confronted by European integration – went from being a "non-subject" to a subject of major concern to those responsible for the civil service, in France as in all our partner countries, I would like to put forward a few ideas for consideration, ideas which could inform the discussion of the role of national administrations in relation to European integration, and, conversely, the effect of European integration on the national administrations and their reform.

First of all, I would like to emphasise the fact that the notion of "European administrative space" which, evoked only five years ago, would have "frozen with terror" more than one manager in the national public administration, is now a reality. It is now more than ever essential to take account of this dimension, at the level of administrative managers and political managers. This is the reason why managers – at general director level – of civil services and administrations of Member States of the European Union meet on a regular basis with the European Commission, to discuss in particular developments in public management.

These meetings are held in an informal atmosphere: the Member States are, on principle, responsible for the organisation of their administrations and their civil service; their cooperation is therefore of an informal nature. The European Union has no authority in this area as it is covered by the principle of subsidiarity.

At the present time, the three main subjects for discussion among general directors are as follows: human resources – covering themes such as the European training programme, mobility between national administrations, social dialogue or ethics – public

management – innovative public services, a common framework for self-evaluation, quality of public services, e-government – governance, ending with the discussion, on several occasions, of the modernisation of the European Commission, and the broadest theme of the management of change in the work of the general directors.

During its presidency of the European Union in 2000, France also took the initiative to organise a meeting of ministers (Strasbourg, 7 November) to set the stakes firmly at the political level. One of their conclusions was to insist on the need for regular meetings. In the words of the general resolution which they adopted, they "reckon that the hard work underway and successful implementing of the agreed resolutions do require the organising of regular ministerial meetings, in a form to be specified by each presidency. They will enable them to assess the headway made, to tackle possible difficulties and to keep a strong political direction. In this respect, the ministers welcome the readiness expressed by Sweden, Belgium and Spain to take an active part during their own presidencies in the implementation of this European strategy to modernise public administrations".

This "European strategy to modernise public administrations" affects each Member State, in the same way as the European Commission. In my view, it calls for an analysis of the challenges to be faced by European public administrations over the next few years, which can be shared by national civil service managers.

It is therefore an activity which cannot be pursued on the basis of "every man for himself", without pooling our ideas.

During their meeting in Strasbourg on 9 and 10 November, the general directors stressed the importance of ensuring the continuity of their action, the main areas of which are social dialogue, the modernisation and quality of public services, mobility, benchmarking and the use of quality indicators, the new information and communication technologies and the European training programme. This scope of work does not call into question the responsibility of each Presidency. They will be supplemented with proposals made under the Swedish presidency .

The aim of the work undertaken by the latter, within the framework of a "permanent secretariat" for meetings of general directors, whose remit was decided in Strasbourg, is to construct a medium-term programme for these meetings. It is mainly based on an analysis of the challenges with which national administrations are faced.

In essence, it is European integration, with increased mobility, that will lead to increased common expectations with regard to public services; but it is also the development of e-government, coupled with the demographic factor, which will both weigh on public funds and make civil service recruitment more difficult. The focus of discussions at international and, particularly, European level with regard to public service has gradually shifted over the past ten or twenty years to public management, concerning issues such as the development of the range of public services, their organisation, cooperation with the private sector (delegation of public services), improving the quality of public services, the involvement of the public or taking their views into account, the exercise of public authority, the ability and willingness to change, and improvement in the management of change.

Furthermore, the enlargement of the European Union raises new challenges for managers of national civil services and will be a very important factor for change. It only represents "gains to be expected both for the East and for the West", under a certain number of conditions – in particular joint projects, in which there is a move from competition to complementarity, between administrations in the Member States and candidate countries, our future partners within the enlarged Union.

In short, "new public management" is frequently the subject of debate, while the organisation of public services varies considerably between Member States, depending on the way the civil service is organised (statutory or contractual), the basis of the legal system (Romano-Germanic law or customary law – "*Common Law*") and employer-employee relations (social dialogue).

The question is therefore whether a common European culture will emerge with regard to public management and administration. This does not mean convergence towards a single "model" for administration and the civil service (which would in any case require substantial changes in most national public administrations), but more a mutual enrichment through the sharing of better practices.

In this context, my contribution is to try to match the major challenges facing national administrations with possible answers.

Matching the major challenges – which for the sake of convenience I have kept to the minimum number possible – with possible solutions, in other words instruments on which civil service managers rely, could take the form of a double-entry schedule, in which each row would represent a major challenge and each column one of the possible instruments; the relevant matches between these two entries could be possible solutions, on which I believe people could concentrate their thoughts.

An initial sketch could take the form as shown in the table on the opposite page.

This allows for 25 possible "matches". In a very rough analysis on 3 levels of possible importance only, which inevitably is also very subjective, I determined very high relevance ratings with regard to the following themes: e-government, quality of public services, quality of regulation. The management of change, of course, appears everywhere. As to the "human resources" theme, which appears to be slightly in retreat, it raises a sufficient number of short-term issues to justify its inclusion among the priorities. And if, within this theme, we pick out training, we arrive at a maximum relevance rating, as it involves the impact of European integration and the enlargement of the European Union: issues in which

| | e-govern-ment | Human resources | Quality of public services | Quality of regulation | Management of change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Impact of European integration | 1.1<br>XX | 1.2<br>X | 1.3<br>XX | 1.4<br>XX | 1.5<br>XXX |
| Enlargement of the Euro-pean Union | 2.1<br>XX | 2.2<br>XXX | 2.3<br>XX | 2.4<br>XXX | 2.5<br>XXX |
| Reform of the European Commission | 3.1<br>XXX | 3.2<br>XX | 3.3<br>XXX | 3.4<br>XXX | 3.5<br>XX |
| Public expectations | 4.1<br>XXX | 4.2<br>X | 4.3<br>XXX | 4.4<br>XXX | 4.5<br>XX |
| Ageing population | 5.1<br>XX | 5.2<br>XXX | 5.3<br>XX | 5.4<br>X | 5.5<br>X |

EIPA does, of course, have a privileged part to play.

I should, of course, specify what I would intend to have as the content at each of these "matches". By way of example, match 2.2 (enlargement/human resources) could be the occasion for determining how to work more in terms of complementarity than competition, as is still generally the case at the present time. Match 4.5 (public expectations/management of change) could give rise to regular exchanges of experience (monographs, presentation of case studies), but it would be premature to go down the path of looking for a common methodology.

This kind of analysis would – if it gave rise to joint work at expert level, or at general director level – surpass the analysis of the individual factors for convergence of national civil services, such as freedom of movement between civil services, the impact on the civil service of transversal European policies, the application to public employment of the general principles of the European Union, in particular on occupational equality, general directives (part-time employment, parental leave) or the framework agreement on fixed-term employment. More generally, it should allow everyone – and by this it should be understood that I am thinking in particular of EIPA – to position themselves as an actor in the context of these changes. The changes must not be imposed. They can only result from the common will of civil service managers.

There are, in fact, only two possible attitudes: either we shout, each in our separate corner, "subsidiarity first" – and it is highly unlikely that satisfactory results will be obtained. Or else, we try to anticipate, to take joint political initiatives in a process which will supplement our national models with a few common elements. Then we will have an opportunity to "control the pace of progress".

It is, I am convinced, the direction of the initiatives taken by ministers in Strasbourg in November 2000. ❑

# Ireland

***Tom Considine***

*Secretary-General, Public Service Management and Development, Department of Finance*

## Public Administration in Ireland Today

**The Irish Public Administration System**

Ireland is a constitutional democratic State with a population of over 3.75 million. The Constitution provides that Parliament shall consist of the President and two houses: a House of Representatives (Dáil Éireann) and a Senate (Seanad Éireann). The Prime Minister (the Taoiseach) is the head of government and he/she nominates the other members of government, the Ministers. A Minister is responsible for one or more government departments. Central government is made up of about 30 government departments and offices (i.e. ministries), employing some 31,000 civil servants (the *Civil Service*) with a small number of ministerial advisers. The Civil Service is part of the wider public service that employs over 235,000 people between the civil service, the health and education services, the police and defence forces, the local authorities and the non-commercial state bodies.

The Irish public service has served successive governments and the country well and has a proud record of achievements, integrity and impartiality. It has of course undergone changes to reflect those in the economy but in general its organisation and structure has remained largely unchanged since the foundation of the State in the 1920s. Membership of the European Union in the 1970s brought a new dimension to the international work of the Irish Civil Service and since then its role in supporting government in the conduct of European and wider international affairs has grown considerably. It has also played a key role in the periods of the Irish EU Presidency and has achieved notable successes in its management of these to date. The introduction of the Single Market in the early 1990s and other developments including the Maastricht Treaty have also had effects on the role of the Civil Service in relation to EU-wide matters and developments. EU membership has required a more proactive approach to policy co-ordination, as well as cross-departmental working arrangements. In this context, lessons drawn from the most recent Irish EU Presidency have helped to inform ongoing improvements.

As a nation, membership of the European Union has helped to enhance our prosperity and economic development – but the impact of the EU is not just economic. It has helped also to broaden our international role and modernise our society. In addition, Ireland's economic growth in recent years has been dramatic and has been accompanied by considerable social change. Economic and social change has created a more demanding environment in which the public service must operate and is presenting new and different challenges for all of us.

These changes have required a fundamental rethink of the way we manage the business of the State.

**Modernisation**

Ireland, in common with countries world-wide, has therefore been pursuing a major modernisation programme for the public service since the early 1990s. Informal developments driven by senior management in the civil service resulted in a formal initiative – the Strategic Management Initiative or SMI as it is more commonly known – being launched by the Taoiseach (i.e. Prime Minister) in February 1994. The overall aims of SMI are to provide excellent services to citizens and businesses, to enhance the contribution of the public service to national development, and to make efficient and effective use of available resources. The SMI quickly led to a blueprint for a significant programme of change known as *Delivering Better Government* (DBG) which was launched by the Government in May 1996. The SMI/DBG is the bedrock of the current modernisation programme. The key elements of the programme are discussed in more detail later in this article.

**Evolution of SMI/DBG**

The SMI/DBG was preceded by several previous programmes of modernisation dating back to the late 1960s. While each of these met with some limited success, it cannot be said that fundamental reform or reorientation of the Irish public administration system ensued. However, the thinking and principles which underpinned these earlier attempts informed the thrust of, and approach to, the SMI/DBG initiatives.

There were many reasons why modernisation was back on the public administration agenda in the early 1990s. In the late 1980s, Ireland had faced severe budgetary problems and public expenditure programmes were curtailed. Indeed, for the first time ever, a voluntary early retirement scheme was put in place to reduce the overall number of public servants. These developments gave rise to concerns at senior management

level about overall efficiency in the use and management of resources. Moreover, senior managers became increasingly aware of the need for change and were dissatisfied with the rigidity of existing structures and processes. Many aspects of the human resources and financial management systems were regarded as outdated and unsuited to current needs and developments. The increasing use of, and growing dependence on, information technology in day-to-day work and delivery of services also highlighted the need for changes in work processes and practices.

Critically also, the increasing complexity of economic and social developments were straining the capacity of the public service to meet the needs of the country. Public expectations had changed resulting in demands for more and better services and greater value for taxpayers money. Allied to this was a greater awareness of the role played by the public service in the performance of the economy generally and of the need to ensure that it did not impair economic competitiveness. Membership of the European Union and the impact of European integration on policy formulation and development were also driving forces.

**SMI/DBG Objectives**

*Delivering Better Government* has essentially two objectives – to improve all aspects of service delivery including policy formulation and management and improve the internal functioning of the public service. Major initiatives have been taken to achieve these objectives and thus ensure a process of continuous improvements in the delivery of services and the management of the public service. In the case of service delivery, i.e. the external focus, the principal developments have been:

- the provision of improved access to public information and decision making under the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 which underpins the drive towards greater openness and transparency;
- a Quality Customer Service initiative under which Customer Action Plans have been put in place by each organisation setting out service delivery standards;
- development of a regulatory reform programme aimed at reducing red tape and making regulations simpler and more accessible; and
- initiatives to promote the effective management of cross-cutting issues in areas such as poverty, children, competitiveness and infrastructure.

Internally focused developments include:

- the Public Service Management Act 1997 which provides a new statutory basis for devolving responsibility and accountability and specifies greater clarity for the roles of Secretaries General in government ministries;
- implementation of a new performance management and development system and a range of other initiatives aimed at improving HR management and practices generally and including, among other things, an updated code of ethics and greater equality of opportunity;
- development and introduction of new financial management systems and systematic reviews of public expenditure programmes; and
- e-government programmes to promote the electronic delivery of public services as part of the Government Action Plan for the Information Society.

Overall the modernisation programme is made up of a series of inter-related and reinforcing initiatives designed to ensure a holistic approach. It is a challenging programme which has now been in train since 1996 and will continue to develop and evolve over the years ahead.

**Strategic Management**

The SMI/DBG programme is underpinned by the ongoing development of a strategic management framework throughout the public service. The framework comprises organisational statements of strategy, which ministries must now publish at least every three years under the Public Service Management Act 1997, business/service plans and performance management. The framework is designed to ensure clarity and relevance of organisational goals and objectives, a more structured approach to their achievement and a means of monitoring and evaluating progress.

Embedding the strategic management process in the day-to-day management and operation of each organisation is particularly challenging. Organisational statements of strategy and associated business/service plans are now commonplace but as yet the new approach to managing performance at the organisational and individual levels is only at an early stage. Effective performance management is seen as a critical and essential element of the process, without which the required focus on achieving objectives and ensuring continuous improvements in performance will not be realised.

**Support Environment**

From the outset, the SMI/DBG programme has received the full support of successive governments and opposition parties. This has ensured the continuity of purpose and commitment necessary to maintain such a long-term programme of modernisation. There has also been trade union support though there is concern about some of the HR initiatives in relation to their implications over the long term. A key factor in ensuring the support of the various stakeholders is the partnership approach to modernisation. The previous national development programme and pay agreement – *Partnership 2000* – introduced formal partnership structures at the organisational level for progressing the implementation of the modernisation programme. As a result, in each organisation the process is pursued through partnership committees representative of management, staff and unions. This approach has enabled and facilitated a greater understanding of what the programme entails and support for its implementation. The current national

programme – *The Programme for Prosperity and Fairness* – builds on this approach and further strengthens the link between pay increases and implementation. This link is discussed below.

It is recognised that the modernisation programme requires assistance by way of some additional resources if it is to be progressed. To this end, a Change Management Fund has been established to help co-finance the additional personnel and other requirements, e.g. external consultancy, training, etc., which are needed in the civil service. The fund has an annual budget of IR£5 million, or € 6.35 million, for each of five years. There is also an Information Society Fund which is available to co-finance e-government and other e-business initiatives. This fund, which covers a three year period, has an overall budget of IR£110 million or € 139 million.

An important prerequisite in implementing change is appropriate training and development. Accordingly, significant effort has gone into promoting training and development and encouraging organisations to raise the level of activity in this key area. Targets for expenditure on training and development have been set in the national programmes – the current programme seeks to achieve an expenditure of 4 per cent of payroll by end 2002.

**Progress and Next Steps**

Significant progress has been made since 1996 when DBG was launched. In particular, the necessary building blocks, such as the supporting legislation and development of statements of strategy and business plans, have been put in place. Quality customer service plans have also been developed and expenditure programme reviews undertaken. Progress has also been made in devising and developing HR and financial management initiatives, including in particular the performance management and development system and the Management Information Framework which will encompass a more comprehensive system of financial management and accounting and related performance indicators. But much remains to be done.

In this regard, the *Programme for Prosperity and Fairness* (PPF) has set a new context for implementation of the modernisation programme. The PPF requires performance indicators in relation to the modernisation programme to be set for each sector of the public service, including the civil service, and the validity and achievement of these indicators will be assessed by a Quality Assurance Group, which will include external business/customer representation. Payment of the final phase of 4% pay increase under the PPF will be conditional on these targets being achieved.

There will be ongoing implementation of the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) and needed refinements will be made on the basis of an evaluation as the roll out progresses. The necessary legislative changes to streamline the recruitment process will be brought forward in 2001 and ongoing monitoring and implementation of the measures to deal with gender equality will continue. A review of the partnership process is being undertaken which will consider, among other things, the support needed to develop further the partnership structures. In addition, a Public Service Benchmarking Body has been established to examine public service pay and jobs in comparison with the private sector.

The roll out of the Management Information Framework will continue and there will be further delegation of financial authority to individual ministries within agreed parameters and criteria.

During 2001 significantly enhanced electronic information services directed at both citizens and business will be provided including an authentication service for use by Internet-enabled systems in individual government agencies.

To enable a speedier and better informed response to the increasing complexity and rate of change in today's environment, new and innovative approaches to policy development including scenario planning and research, management of cross-cutting issues and enhancing institutional capabilities must be pursued. The challenge of modernising the Irish public administration will continue in the years ahead and, given the changes taking place in the EU and elsewhere, will continue to require imaginative solutions and the commitment of public servants and politicians alike. ❑

# Italy

***Pia Marconi***

*Director-General, Office for the Innovation of Public Administration, Department of Public Administration*

## The Reform of the Italian Public Administration

In the early nineties in Italy there was a strong need to reform the Public Administration. The process of change that began was led by two main objectives: the reduction of the overall costs of the Administration and its services and the improvement of the effectiveness and quality of the services provided. The first goal was a response that had to be given to the problem of the ever growing public debt, no longer sustainable especially according to the new requirements that public spending had to meet in order for Italy to join and stay in the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). The improvement of the quality and effectiveness of the services delivered was an answer that had to be given to growing citizens expectations, more and more unsatisfied with the Public Administration's performances.

The first steps of the reform were made in many directions: towards a more transparent and accountable administration (1990); towards an administration closer to citizens and their expectations, strengthening the role and tools of local authorities in delivering public services (1990) and introducing "Service Charters" (1994); towards a more flexible and efficient use of human resources in the civil service, with the reform of the Senior Civil Service and the application of Civil Law to Civil Servants (1993 and 1998).

An important element that favoured Italy's effort to change its administrative system is the participation in the European Monetary Union (EMU) and the adoption of the Single Currency, that required public systems more and more efficient and competitive. The decision of the Italian Government, in the second half of the Nineties, to be in the first group of Countries joining the Euro, enhanced the will to better the administrative system.

Since 1996 the Government speeded up the process of change and managed the reform within a more coherent framework: a broad delegating law, No. 59 of 1997, the first Bassanini Law, followed by other acts (Acts No. 127/97 and 191/98) set out the strategy for public administration and public management reform, allowing the executive to adopt decrees to implement rapidly the modernisation policy. Within this framework important measures concerned:

- the devolution of administrative tasks and functions, ("administrative federalism") and the redesign of the government structure;
- the simplification of procedures and regulatory quality;
- the completion of the civil service reform;
- the review of the performance management system;
- the use of information technology.

### Devolution of administrative tasks and functions ("administrative federalism") and redesign of the government structure

In order to create a leaner and more efficient State, a policy based on the principle of "subsidiarity", both horizontal and vertical, was adopted. According to the principle of horizontal subsidiarity, several actions have been taken: phasing out unnecessary government activities; outsourcing activities that can be more efficiently undertaken by the private sector (business and non-profit organisations); liberalisation of public utilities and massive privatisation programme: the latter has been the world's largest one in the period 1993-1999 (total revenue up to end 1999: 91 billion euro).

According to the principle of vertical subsidiarity, functions and responsibilities were transferred by 31.12.2000 to the regions and other local authorities in a significant number of fields. At the beginning of 2001 the devolution process has been completed. As a result, the role of the Central Government has been reduced and concentrated on certain core responsibilities (such as defence, foreign affairs, public security and justice) and its size and the number of its structures have been slimmed down.

This aspect of the Italian reform clearly reflects the evolution of the European Integration process and the central role that in the founding Treaties is given to citizens and their needs. The principle of subsidiarity, that is present at EU level since the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, helped the application to the Italian Administrative system of the same principle. This resulted in the strong move towards the implementation of the administrative federalism, compatible with the Italian Constitution, that does not set up a federal State.

### Simplification of procedures and regulatory quality

The simplification process has been reinforced identifying the administrative procedures that must be abolished or simplified each year and introducing

important measures to cut red tapes and improve the relations between citizens and government. Two new remarkable tools aimed at improving regulatory quality have also been introduced: the Regulatory Impact Analysis and the adoption of consolidated texts which replace thousands of laws and decrees.

**Civil Service Reform**

Italy has deeply rethought the public personnel system in order to ensure the effective carrying out of public management reforms. The Civil Service Reform started in 1993 has now been completed. The special statute based on administrative law governing the majority of public sector employees, including senior civil service officials, has been abandoned (with only few exceptions).

**Review of the performance management system**

The Italian Government has radically transformed the models and systems of control over administrative activities by replacing attention to formalities with attention to results. Recently the performance management system was reviewed, giving a substantial boost to the management control and foreseeing the evaluation of public managers and introducing strategic control. These relevant measures are aimed at improving the efficiency of public administrations (costing less), at strengthening accountability of civil servants and at ensuring the effectiveness of policies.

**Use of information technology**

The Italian Government has decided to implement e-government to accelerate the process of radical reform and modernisation of public administrations by extensively using ICTs. As a result of this the Government will be more accessible, efficient and responsive. The relationship between citizen and administration will be revolutionised: all services for which it is technically possible will be supplied on-line; citizens will be able to obtain them via portals.

In the future, the European integration process is likely to have a more direct influence on improving Public Administrations' performances, especially after the Lisbon and Strasbourg Councils of Ministers responsible for Public Administration. On this second occasion the Ministers agreed to co-ordinate their efforts to improve the performances of National Administrations and the quality of the services delivered to citizens and to do so they decided to set up, in the attempt to move towards a "common European Space for Public Services", a permanent framework for benchmarking and decided to build a system of reference indicators for National Public Administrations. ❑

# Luxembourg

***Pierre Neyens***
*Director of State Personnel Administration, Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform*

## Public Administration in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

### I. General remarks

#### *1. History*

The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, which encompasses an area of 2,586 square kilometres and has about 435,000 inhabitants, is by far the smallest country of the European Union. Its current economic success is mostly due to its will to integrate into larger economic groups, with all the political risks this involves: the Customs Union with Germany (1842-1918), the Economic Union with Belgium (since 1921), the Benelux (since 1944) and the European Union (since 1951). Because of its size, its geographical location and its level of development, Luxembourg cannot be self-sufficient. Moreover, few countries have been exposed to so many political, legal, social and cultural influences from their neighbouring countries as Luxembourg over the past two centuries. Since the Austrian period (1714-1795), it has been subjected to no less than 4 political systems (French, German, Belgian and Dutch) which have all had a considerable effect on Luxembourg's political and administrative system. During this historical evolution, each new political system incorporated – at least part of – the legal principles of its predecessor while retaining some of its own aspects. The present role of the State in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg should be analysed in the light of its turbulent history.

It should be noted that the State of Luxembourg was created as a Grand Duchy by the European powers at the Congress of Vienna in 1815. This State was however a mere legal construction which was only sovereign in name. It was not until 19 April 1839 and the Treaty of London, when the European superpowers of the time fixed the new borders of the Grand Duchy such as they are today, that one could speak of a real State of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

Building a State was a difficult undertaking in 1839, but the Luxembourgers were up to it. The authorities set to work and created the large administrations which a State that wants to be autonomous cannot do without: public works, land and registry, and tax departments. For everything related to political life and to law, Luxembourg looked to Belgium and France, while for the economic aspects and social legislation it followed Germany. The result was a product *sui generis* where a mix of influences led to a typical Luxembourg solution. In 1841, Luxembourg was to have its first Constitution.

#### *2. The organisation of the Luxembourg State*

The Luxembourg State is a representative democracy, in the form of a constitutional monarchy. The organisation of the Luxembourg State is based on the principle that the tasks of the various powers must be distributed between different bodies. The separation of powers is therefore the result of the thinking behind and context of the Constitution without being officially laid down therein.

The executive power lies exclusively with the Grand Duke. He is assisted in this task by the members of his Government, i.e. the ministers and state secretaries who each govern a specific branch of public administration. In relation to the legislative power, the Grand Duke's power is restricted by the Constitution which allows him to enact the regulations and orders necessary for bringing laws into effect, "but he may never suspend the laws themselves or dispense with their enforcement". Thus, the organisation, functioning and control of the public administration are ensured by the bodies of the executive power, i.e. by the Grand Duke and the Members of Government.

The legislative power is the only authority competent to create public services or authorise their creation, with the exception of the formation and organisation of the Government, which is reserved for the Grand Duke. The Government exercises its supervisory and leading role through its general or special provisions such as grand-ducal regulations and orders, ministerial decrees, and ministerial instructions or decisions. The responsibility of the ministers, the annual vote on the budget, judicial control of regulations and orders, and administrative disputes provide some of the many checks on the executive power available to the legislative and judicial powers. The legislative power is jointly exercised by the Grand Duke and the Chamber of Deputies. No law can go through without the consent of both the Chamber and the Grand Duke. Finally, judicial power is exercised by the courts and tribunals. Neither the executive power nor the legislative power can influence the judicial power in any way.

Besides these three powers, there are a number of advisory bodies which participate directly or indirectly in the political decision-making process in Luxembourg. In 1924, this determination to establish institutional consultation and deliberation procedures led to the

creation of professional councils (e.g. the Civil and Public Servants Council, the Private Employees Council). Created in 1966, the Social and Economic Council is another advisory body whose task is to study economic, financial and social problems that affect several economic sectors or the national economy as a whole. Particular mention should be made of the "National Tripartite Conference" which was created by the law of 24 December 1977. Major projects of the Government that aim to stimulate economic activity and maintain an acceptable employment level are all discussed and approved within the Tripartite Conference.

Finally, the Council of State is an independent institution, which, in a way, is required by the Constitution to exert a moderating influence as a second legislative assembly in the Luxembourg unicameral system. The Council of State issues an opinion on all government and non-government bills as well as on any amendments to these texts that may be proposed during the procedure and are referred to it by the Prime Minister, i.e. the President of the House. The Government may also ask the Council of State for its opinion on the principle of the bill before officially submitting the definitive bill or draft regulation. Finally, in administrative matters the Government may ask for the opinion of the Council of State regarding all senior civil service matters.

## II. Luxembourg's public administration

The Government's administrative tasks are carried out by ministerial departments and public services which come under its control. It also exercises, to a certain extent, supervision over the municipal administrations. This is particularly the task of the Minister of the Interior.

### *1. The central administration*

Access to the public service is reserved for Luxembourgers. However, nationals of the Member States of the European Union may hold posts in the fields of research, education, health, land transport, post and telecommunications, and distribution of water, gas and electricity, provided that these positions do not involve direct or indirect participation in the exercise of public power.

The ministerial departments represent specific groups of public services and each form a part of the central administration. The Cabinet determines which public services are provided by which department and each Member of Government heads one or several ministerial departments. Besides ministers, the Government may comprise one or several State Secretaries in charge of one or more ministerial departments and whose competence has been delegated by the minister of the department to which he/she belongs. Each minister has one or more advisers who assist him/her in effectively managing the department.

### *2. General services*

Some public services are delegated to central government agencies and form special administrations led by Heads of Administration with specific decision-making powers, such as the Tax Department, the Land Registration and Estates Department, the Road Construction and Maintenance Department, the Forestry Management Agency, the Labour and Mines Inspectorate and the Employment Department.

However, these general services remain directly responsible to and closely supervised by the competent minister. They are not decentralised services such as the municipal administrations, or public institutions. It merely involves deconcentration and not decentralisation. In this framework the Luxembourg law enforcement entities, which comprise the army and the police force, also form part of the general services of the central administration. The Constitution expressly reserves for the legislative power the right to regulate the organisation and powers of the Luxembourg law enforcement entities.

## III. The administrative reform

The Governmental Declaration of 12 August 1999 provides for various measures to be realised in the field of administrative reform in the future. In order to continue the State's development towards greater flexibility, the Government is giving administrative reform fresh impetus based on existing structures. The objective is to promote a State which is close to the user and transparent in its functioning. The creation of new departments, the introduction of new state services and staff development are subject to strict control with a view to the economical but efficient management of the public administration.

### *2. Objectives*

First of all, it is important generally to take stock of the strengths and weaknesses of the administration in relation to the main elements of its functioning. Furthermore, specific objectives and activity indicators are being developed for each service to establish a sounder basis for decisions about the allocation of resources and to be able to improve the quality of the service provided. A modern system for the management of posts is being set up including the development of organigrams for each service and descriptions of the posts appearing in the organigram. In order to bring the administration closer to the citizen, "citizens' assistance bureaux" will be established at regional level which will facilitate contacts between citizens and the administration through the appropriate channels. Similarly, together with the staff, the administration's opening hours for the public are being reviewed, a measure which will bring the administration and the needs of the user closer together. Finally, the introduction of new arrangements as regards working time (25%, 50%, 75% part-time) constitutes a great novelty implemented in the framework of the administrative reform. At a general level, staff from all levels will continue to be involved in the action undertaken to modernise the administration.

The element of "organisation" within the State will also be upgraded. In this context, a central unit in charge of assisting and advising departments in matters of administrative reform is being created within the Ministry of the Public Service and Administrative Reform. Together with the services concerned, this unit conducts regular audits within State services and implements the conclusions drawn from these analyses. It also examines, from the viewpoint of administrative reform and on the basis of current impact assessments, the repercussions of the dossiers submitted to the Cabinet on the user and on the functioning of the administration.

### *2. Administrative reform through electronic cooperation*

Lastly, it should be pointed out that administrative reform through electronic cooperation (RACE) allows the State to provide services of a better quality by taking advantage of the possibilities offered by new information and communication technologies. For instance, the "e-government" programmes and projects follow the "e-Europe" and "e-Luxembourg" objectives by creating e.g. a "single" portal for the public sector, while at the same time allowing the progressive and coherent development of Internet sites for all public bodies ( e.g. e-VAT, e-job, a law site, a documents site, a forms site, a public procurement site).

The objective is to involve all citizens in the information society, i.e. to put new technologies at the service of citizens and businesses as well as of State officials and public institutions. Another aim is to promote e-commerce by furthering the development of a suitable legal framework (e.g. electronic signatures). Finally, new technologies should be made available to education and research through the creation of a reliable and efficient communication infrastructure in these fields. Regarding this matter, it is important that Luxembourg be connected to the main international communication networks. ❑

# The Netherlands

***Emil Broesterhuizen***
*Deputy Director of Research and Science Policy, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Netherlands*

## The Next 20 Years: EIPA's Position as a Training Institute

In the first Twenty years of its existence, EIPA has earned itself a permanent place among the institutes for the education of public servants in Europe. Not only for those from the Member States. The education and training of public servants from pre-accession nations and prospective Member States has risen already. Given the on-going European integration we may expect EIPA to expand its working set and will be able to take on an increasing number of clients.

The public administration 'environment' is prone to rapid and indeed radical change because of several trends:

- globalisation and internationalisation;
- individualisation;
- computerisation.

**Globalisation and internationalisation**

Economic integration, the expansion and dissemination of the media, and cultural internationalisation are causing the world to develop into a constantly more closely-knit entity. The process of European integration in this world is a predominant process for the states located in the old continent. At the same time we see that regions (and in certain cases cross-border regions, such as the region surrounding Maastricht for instance) are starting to play a more significant role in the development of countries and in the policies of national governments (*and* the EU). The word 'globalisation' is coined for this tow-tier development. The status of national governments is being 'weakened' from two sides as it were. Workers in national governments will need to learn to operate within a system of multi-level governance, the management of societal processes (in the widest sense of the word) within a system of different administrative levels.

**Individualisation**

The assertive citizen, or as some would say, the 'calculating citizen', wants to see his individual wishes met to an ever-increasing extent. The same applies with regard to businesses and non-governmental organisations. Governments (local councils, regional authorities, national governments and the governing bodies of the European Union) are constantly requested to deliver tailor-made solutions. This has a major effect on how governments face citizens, businesses and organisations. Not only when executing general or specific measures, but it also has consequences on the decision-making processes. The increasing level of legalisation in society is an additional complicating factor. The signals sent out from society are more powerful and far more diverse than ever before. Specific, difficult to combine and often conflicting interests tend to distort these signals. The interactive development of policy can contribute to the signals from society becoming involved in policy development and in the preparation and actual taking of political decisions. Political opinions are to an increasing extent being determined through media exposure and research into public opinion.

**Computerisation**

The far-reaching development of information and communications technology (ICT) has a very high level of influence on public administration processes. This relates not only to the options already at the citizen's disposal to obtain information about the public administration and the policy developments and measures the public administration is engaged in, but also to the possibilities available to the public administration for gathering, analysing and using information on a wide range of subjects in the fulfilment of its duties. Openness and accessibility of government information are principles which are inextricably linked with the democratic legal order of our society and will be employed, indeed must be employed, where the provision of government information to the citizen is concerned. Today's means of providing information makes it possible for governments to serve its citizens more quickly and more effectively than ever before, for instance when administering a wide variety of measures.

**The central place of knowledge and information**

These developments compelled governments to radically adjust the way they worked. Openness, swiftness, effectiveness, a clear and broad vision of the 'policy environment', entrepreneurial spirit, and – and this is very important where the increasing level of European integration is concerned – a feeling for culture and cultural differences are all catchwords that apply in this context. A central place is also taken up by knowledge and information.

Compartmentalisation, group interests coupled with

the interests of the societal sector one is acting in the interests of, ineffective bureaucratic procedures and pure incompetence stand in the way of broad, open acquisition and dissemination of knowledge. This leads to mishaps in the field of policy; occasionally even to physical disasters. Public servants must be prepared for new, more integral procedures, public service organisations will increasingly be required to develop effective knowledge management, both internally and with one another.

**EIPA'S strategic position**

An important task set aside for EIPA is to give formal instruction to the public servants of the various countries on European legislation and regulations, European political-administrative structures, etc. In this respect the market is by no means limited to the public servants of national governments. After all, the European Union has had programmes in place that focus on individual regions for some years now. Nor may we forget that the employees of companies – which to an increasing extent are being confronted with European legislation (it is not without reason that industrial organisations are strongly represented in Brussels) – also have a need for such formal knowledge.

Learning to operate in the multicultural European context, for instance in negotiations where the cultural factor has such a strong influence, is equally important. It is also just as important that EIPA acquires and disseminates knowledge on multi-level governance (local/regional – national – international). This theme in the field of public administration science has as yet been insubstantially developed. It is fortunate that this issue plays an important role in the theme of 'Administration in motion', the theme the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), the Dutch research council, has made one its priorities for the next four years in its recent Strategic Plan 2002 – 2005. EIPA is in a good position to study this subject in depth and to incorporate it in the study programmes and training courses it offers its clientele.

This brings me to the strategic position held by EIPA. It goes without saying that EIPA's core task is to develop and provide study programmes and training courses for public servants, and will indeed remain so. Nevertheless, the developments and trends outlined in the foregoing make it more than ever before essential that EIPA takes its time to investigate the consequences of these developments, particularly from the European perspective. After all, only then will EIPA be able to continue providing study programmes that distinguish themselves by virtue of their topicality if it keeps ahead of those processes of change that take place both in and around public administration. This necessitates in-house research, plus a solid network of scientific institutes, especially in the field of public administration, political science and economics. One is only able to secure a serious place in networks of this kind if one really has something to offer, if one is able to contribute new knowledge and insights. This is out of the question if one has no meaningful research effort of one's own.

**In conclusion**

EIPA's good starting position allows it to take up the numerous challenges optimistically. I congratulate the institute on its fourth lustrum and wish it every success for the years to come. ❑

# The Netherlands

***Martin van Rijn***
*DG Management & Personnel policy of the Netherlands*

## The Movement of the Netherlands from a Classic Public Service to a Competitive Modern Civil Service

Looking back over the developments in the Dutch Civil Service in the past two decades one cannot overlook the question why all these changes came about?

In general terms it is clear that society itself produced important new demands.

Later a new political trend emerged around these demands referred to as a "purple", reflecting the co-operation between the leftwing 'red' social democrats and center-right 'blue' liberals in the Dutch Government, nearly a decade now. It started like this:

In 1980 "The Economist" informed the global community about the *"Dutch disease"*:

- high inflation;
- no growth of GDP;
- rising unemployment;
- rising budget deficits.

Analyses such as these, did not miss its effects on the social partners in the Netherlands.

In 1982 the Wassenaar Agreement between Government, Employers and employees agreed on countervailing measures to produce job growth. A radical new approach evolved:

- reducing the budget deficit;
- ensuring stability in monetary relations;
- reducing labour cost, through moderating wages, lowering taxes on labour, more flexibility.

Also for the Government a redirection-strategy came about. A multiannual approach aimed at:

- enhancing competitivity of our national economy;
- reinforcing market forces;
- deregulation;

had a considerable impact on the work of the Dutch Director-General for the Civil Service.

A new starting point for the Dutch Civil Service evolved in the late eighties:

(1) Governmental organisation is a key issue in creating competitiveness of national economies;
(2) Competition policy increases under a single currency in Europe; and therefore
(3) Governmental organisation must be reliable and flexible.

This Jobs above income strategy worked, as in 1998 the Economist revealed *"The Dutch example":*

| | 1982 | 1998 |
|---|---|---|
| – budget deficit (GDP) | 6.6% | 1.25% |
| – Unemployment | 8% | 5.3% |
| – Public share GDP | 59.8% | 47.5% |
| – civil servants % total | 14.8% | 11.5% |

Since 1998 these figures improved even further. It looks so simple, but its realisation required much social patience and political endurance. The big problem is, that in the beginning of these processes, no rewards whatsoever were visible for anybody. Germany and France face that problem now. We suffered their stress throughout the eighties into the middle of the nineties.

The tough impact on the Dutch public sector has been for a large number of years: 1) wage cuts, 2) reducing benefits, 3) reducing numbers of civil servants and 4) a new organisation of work:

- privatisation;
- devolution;
- flexibilisation.

The structure of the Civil Service changed too. The Netherlands always had an open post system (no career-structure), but on top of that a further "normalisation" of conditions of employment in line with the private sector took place, however for better and for worse. The social security was gradually arranged trough the same funds as applicable for the private sector. Collective bargaining was organised on a package-basis:

No changes without dual consent about everything (1993). This mechanism contains one of the secrets why comparable social dialogue-procedures work out quite differently in the Netherlands from similar attempts elsewhere. It is an interesting cultural thing.

The Flexibilisation comprised:

(1) General Laws lifting restrictions on:
  – part-time labour;
  – flexible labour;
  equally applying to governmental organisations too.
(2) Privatisation of Governmental bodies.

The result is impressive between 1982 and 1996:

| | 1982 | 1996 |
|---|---|---|
| – Total No civil servants | 795,500 | 680,700 |
| – % part time workers | 20% | 37% |
| – and flexible working hours: 1982: 40 hrs a week | | |

From 1988: 1882 hrs year in several varieties:

- variation per month;
- 4 days 9 hours per week;
- 5 days 8 hours per week + extra holidays;
- 4 days 8 hours per week + 1 day 4 hours.

From these results it can be seen that the reduction of the workforce in combination with flexibilisation was possible, serving the interests of both employers and employees:

- Employers' perspective: working hours better adapted to working process; better allocation of workforce over the day;
- Employees' perspective: more possibilities to adapt working hours to family situation

However in 2001 it looks exaggerated to indulge too much in self-satisfaction about the "Dutch shining example" mentioned in the Economist. Why?

Firstly: A high number of the population under 65 is still inactive. Reasons:

- great number of people over 55 in early pension schemes;
- high numbers in disability benefits ;
- Activity rate over 55:
  - public sector 17%(1998)
  - private sector 13% (1998).

We share this problem with many nations, and we welcomed the Stockholm conclusions.

Secondly there is not enough growth of the per capita GDP, despite the general high growth;

Thirdly the Civil Service is now challenged by the consequences of its economic success:

How to fill the vacancies, because of

- the tense labour market;
- the demographic problem;
- the hard core unemployment.

Lastly some qualitative aspects of Civil Service developments seem to have been underweight because of the many years of selfcontainment. In the field of employability, ranging from ICT-knowledge to European knowledge as provided by EIPA, new initiatives are necessary in the coming 5 years. I am happy to see that also my colleagues of the 15 member states think in the same direction. From the achieved competitivity of our economies, we will now have to move in qualitative, more modernist, directions, without falling back in old economic mistakes.

That is why I congratulate EIPA heartily on behalf of Minister Vries with its first 20 years of existence in the Netherlands, and I am looking forward to a very long continued scientific co-operation this century. ❑

# Austria

***Emmerich Bachmayer***
*Director of Section II – Public Service; Federal Ministry for Public Service and Sport*

## Administrative reform in Austria and the projects currently underway

Austria is looking back as a recent EU Member on its cooperation with EIPA, which began in 1992, three years before Austria's accession to the EU. In this transition phase, EIPA's role was crucial as a tutor of numerous Austrian civil servants who had to prepare and realise Austria's EU membership. EIPA also deserves thanks for its support of the cooperation involving the Directors-General and the Ministers of the Public Service in the EU – particularly in the framework of the Presidency of the Council of the EU. In the case of Austria, this applies above all to the former Director-General, Isabel Corte-Real, who always put great efforts into relations with Austria.

**Administrative reform in Austria**

In 1989, Austria took a first step at federal level towards modernising its administration through the "administrative management" project. A further step was taken in 1998 through a comprehensive "administrative innovation programme" (*VIP*) with many targeted projects. This modernisation process is focused on the citizens, their interests and needs, as well as on the creation of a lean, cost-effective administration that is transparent and offers quality services.

***Challenging structural conditions***

The public administration is faced with major savings plans against a background of budget consolidation. Irrespective of this, the citizens have high expectations of the standard of performance of the administration which are based on the private sector. The administration is therefore being called upon to raise standards of performance with increasingly scarce resources.

The quality and performance of public administration are decisive locational factors in international competition. Three central demands in particular are made of the administration: a high degree of legal certainty, client-focused services (e.g appropriate infrastructure), client-oriented performance (e.g. speedy authorisation procedures), and an economical use of resources.

***Increasing efficiency and effectiveness – performance-oriented administrative leadership***

These structural conditions show the need to implement major structural innovations in administrative management. Decisive factors in performance-oriented administrative management are the formulation of strategic performance targets, a critical analysis of administrative performance ("task criticism") and, if necessary, the reorganisation of business processes and organisational structures. Performance indicators are an integral part of each administrative modernisation process as they indicate what output was required to achieve the desired effects of administrative action and how economical the use of resources was. The introduction of performance indicators has moreover produced a lever for innovation, as the creation of indicators goes far beyond the technical process, in particular involving the administrative management in a creative and innovative process. Performance indicators are an essential tool when it comes to making political discussions more concrete and decisions more objective. In the introduction of "complex" elements of New Public Management, these indicators must be integrated into an overall concept to prevent the effect of individual elements "fizzling out" as has sometimes been noted in "model States" of administrative reform.

A *Balanced Scorecard* is already in use in certain sectors of the Austrian federal administration. It enables the creation of a clear information system for administrative managers. Balanced Scorecard models are however only suitable as steering instruments if concrete target values are agreed upon for specific output and intended effects, and if the performance indicators are integrated into a comprehensive steering model, that is to say, if also linked to corresponding incentive schemes. It is precisely the determination of efficiency targets – indispensable as a steering instrument for the implementation of performance indicators – that is particularly challenging for the public administration. It is in this context that very close cooperation between the administrative managers and the political leaders is required.

***Performance report in accordance with international approaches to reform***

For over three years now, the performance of the Austrian federal administration has been documented in the form of a general report, and the existing system of indicators is being further developed to encompass the general trends of New Public Management. Austria's EU-wide

survey on the state of development and the use of performance indicators as well as its current observation of the international scene has shown that the approach it opted for in producing a performance report at federal level which covers different ministries is unique, with Austria taking the leading role in this respect.[1]

A comparison of the performance reports produced so far clearly shows the improvements achieved. The participating sectors have learnt to apply the techniques and instruments of performance-related administrative management, and in doing so have found out which structural, strategic and cultural challenges are linked to the definition and the application of indicators. The required output orientation could be institutionalised by most of the institutions involved. It is a welcome fact that client surveys – an important basis for measuring the effectiveness of administrative actions – are increasingly being carried out.

Nevertheless, there are still qualitative differences in the performances of individual sectors of the administration. These differences show that establishing new management and guiding philosophies is a time-consuming and complex process.

The quality of the performance report will in future be measured on the basis of whether it has been successful in "breathing life into" the performance indicators. This means reaching a new level of quality in its fourth year (2001). In the first three years, it mainly involved introducing the philosophy of performance indicators as a central element of administrative management and enabling a transfer of learning and knowledge to take place between the departments. This alone is already a demanding task, as measuring performance in public administration is no easy venture and is made more difficult due to complex policy and decision-making processes.

In the future the administration will act more like a holding and in particular ensure service provision, i.e. the administration will have a differentiated understanding of its role. There will be more administrative units which mainly act as service buyers and ensure that the purchased services meet the requirements. This is where control instruments will gain in importance. Guaranteeing the necessary quality will take a more prominent position. This is linked to the carrying out of regular satisfaction surveys among the citizens as well as surveys about their main concerns, which can be used as a basis to discuss and agree on specific programmes and performance, with due regard for political processes.

With regard to the introduction of performance indicators, it is important to combine performance indicators with other management and steering models to prevent performance indicators from becoming a self-referential bureaucratic act.

***Use of information and communication technologies in public administration***

A substantial part of the administrative reform is the realisation of e-government. To promote the use of information and communication technologies in public administration, the federal government launched an "information technology offensive" in 1998. This "information technology offensive of the federal administration" contains the political and strategic considerations about how information technology (IT) can be used and pushed forward in the administration in the implementation of e-government.[2] At the centre of all these efforts is the aim to be citizen-friendly, support the economy and simplify the administration.

The concept contains a concrete list of measures which should be periodically updated by the coordination committee for IT. The stated political goal is the fundamental intention "to actively use new technologies in the public administration to improve the service offered to the citizens, for purposeful cooperation with business as well as for a leaner State" and thereby to put the aims of being "citizen-friendly", "supporting business" and "simplifying the administration" at the forefront. Key areas in the strategic organisation of the introduction of information technology are its use both within the administration (for example e-mail, electronic file systems) and in external relations with the citizens and companies. For the interaction with the private sector, the aims are – among others – to make electronic access to the public administration as comprehensive and widespread as possible in the future and thereby push forward the use of electronic requests to authorities, the application of the "one-stop service" principle (a central contact point for all requests to the authorities), as well as Kiosk-Systems.

To enable the concrete implementation of the Council Decision, the federal government of Austria has put together a key comprehensive information and communication technology package entitled "e-Austria in e-Europe". "e-Austria in e-Europe" presents the activities that have already been implemented and the plans of the entire federal government until the end of the parliamentary term. For the continuation and implementation of the "e-Austria in e-Europe project", an e-Austria Task Force has been set up at the Federal Ministry for Public Service and Sport *(BMÖLS)*. One of its tasks is to draw up an action plan which shows the current state of affairs as regards e-development in Austria, defines short and mid-term objectives and proposes concrete projects and measures to the federal government or the ministries in the framework of e-Austria. For example, in the area of education, out of awareness of a responsibility towards youth, all schools should have access to the net and to virtual education opportunities by 2001. By 2002 all teachers should be trained in the use of the Internet and the new media.

*Closer Bund/Länder cooperation*

In order to guarantee the implementation of "One-Stop-Shopping" and to ensure that the services offered by the public administration in the future are harmonised across federal and *Länder* borders, the IT coordination committee set up by the Federal Ministry for Public Service and Sport developed a concept of greater

cooperation between the Austrian *Bund* and *Länder* in the area of information and communication technologies. This cooperation in the use of information technology should make it possible on the one hand to cope with the increasing demands on the public administration in the information area and on the other hand to present different IT procedures to the citizens and business in a uniform way. In addition, with the aim of realising e-government, closer cooperation will be necessary in many technical (e.g. identification) and organisational areas.

*E-Government initiatives in Austria*

- "Help.gv.at" (online helpdesk)
  The internationally renowned project www.help.gv.at (@mtshelfer online) is an example of a successful Austrian solution. This project has a central place in greater client orientation. In making it possible to prepare and/or carry out official procedures electronically, the future plans of the administrative innovation programme (*VIP*) meet those of e-government. Currently the Federal Ministry for Public Service and Sport, together with the Federal Ministry for Economy and Labour (*BMWA*) in conjunction with the Austrian Chamber of Commerce and the association of industrialists and private companies, are putting together an online advice centre for companies.
- "Austria House/Austria's Virtual Marketplace"
- Smart cards (citizens' cards)
- European computer driving licence
- Austrian electronic document archive

As regards the services offered to the citizens, general electronic access to the most important basic services should be available by 2003. Most official procedures (for issuing passports, driving licences etc.) should be dealt with online by 2004, and by 2005 it should be possible to carry out all official procedures electronically. Currently for example the land register, the companies' register and court orders can be viewed via the Internet. For the next stage, interactive communication with the authorities should be developed. The first step can be seen in Finance Online, a trial project of the association of business trustees, the Ministry of Finance, and 129 tax consultants, which has been running for two years. With this system, tax consultants can access the financial data of their clients directly and can transmit tax declarations electronically to tax offices. In a further step to improve matters, tax assessments of the tax authorities should be delivered electronically, and a possible extension of the system to all citizens should be examined. At the same time it will still be possible to carry out administrative procedures in the traditional way, as it cannot be assumed that all citizens in the future will have access to the Internet either at home or at work. Public terminals should guarantee that people who do not have access at home can also take advantage of the new possibilities.

***Cooperation in the EU***

During Austria's first EU Presidency in the second half of 1998, the Directors-General as well as the ministers responsible for administrative reform adopted the EU best practice initiative. The aim was to improve the quality of public services, and to achieve this through learning from best practices. A working group developed the common assessment framework (CAF) as a self-assessment tool for administrations that want to improve the quality of services in their field. Through the excellent cooperation between the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), the German Post-Graduate School of Administrative Science in Speyer and the European Institute of Public Administration under the overall direction of Mr Michael Kelly, the CAF was further developed, finished and tested for the first time under the Finnish and Portuguese presidencies (second half of 1999 and first half of 2000). Austria is making every effort to promote the use of this instrument at all levels of the administration.

**NOTES**

1 http://www.bmols.gv.at/Verwaltungsinnovation
2 http://www.bmols.gv.at ❑

# Portugal

***Rui Manuel Pessoa de Amorim***
*Secretary-General of the Public Administration and Public Service Council*

## Efforts to Modernise the Civil Service

The experience gained over the past ten years in the reform and modernisation of the Portuguese civil service has been characterised by decisive commitment to its many aspects, ranging from those relating to clarifying areas suitable for state intervention, the structure of the civil service, the system of organising, managing and running services, personnel and public employment policy including the management of human resources, to the adaptation of the civil service to the needs of the information society and dialogue with the public, its favoured "client".

The philosophy underlying these efforts and the types of activities and measures adopted do not necessarily fit the same mould. In fact, over the last decade there was an initial phase (1990/1999), marked by specific reforms in many aspects of renewal of the civil service, and a second phase, which is still in progress (1999/2001), and which is particularly concerned with structural reforms. This latter option results from the fact that in today's conditions the improvement of public sector management cannot be confined to simple isolated initiatives to improve the management and operational system of the civil service and its image. Rather, it has to fit in with the redefinition of the criteria for sectors subject to state intervention, as well as the specific structure of the "edifice" of public administration and its human environment.

The initial phase coincided with a period rich in solutions which were adopted in various areas, namely: construction of an Administration of Citizenship, promotion of a new public management culture and improvement of personnel and public employment policy. Below are the main initiatives in each of these areas:

**Administration of Citizenship**

- Laying down codes of conduct for public services in their dealings with the public;
- Establishment of the Citizen/Administration Forum to create an interface between the civil service and the public;
- Setting-up of the Enterprise/Administration Commission, which has the same goal but from the business point of view;
- Creation of one-stop shops (*Lojas do Cidadão*), where the public can access a variety of services that they need every day;
- Business Support Centres, which provide the technical assistance required to set up, change and wind up businesses;
- Introduction of a Complaints Book at each public office (register provided for members of the public who wish to air their grievances or suggestions on the ability of the services to respond).

**New public management**

Initiatives such as those listed below have stimulated special interest:

- Creation of the Inspectorate General of Public Administration, the department responsible for verifying and monitoring the effectiveness and efficiency of public services;
- Arranging for management audits of human resources and administrative modernisation;
- Obligation on services to prepare their plans and activity reports as well as the social balance-sheet on an annual basis;
- Implementation of a quality assurance system in the public services and a system of administrative modernisation agreements in the areas of debureaucratisation, simplification and deregulation;
- Creation of a quality award for the public services to reward the services that have adopted the best innovative measures and appropriate administrative practices;
- Adoption of quality charters by public services to broadcast their commitment to their internal and external "clients".

**Personnel and public employment policy**

Among the measures adopted, the following should be highlighted:

- General census of the civil service to get to know the public administration in terms of personal and professional characteristics of civil servants;
- Revision of the framework law on professional training;
- Revision of the Statute on senior staff with particular regard to recruitment for the posts of Director of Services and Head of Division;
- Regulation of collective rights (collective bargaining and right of participation) ;

- Provision of a system of professional training courses;
- The creation of a Course of Advanced Studies in Public Management (INA).

The second phase of administrative modernisation for the period after 1990 began about two years ago. It is characterised, in essence, by the importance attached to structural reforms coupled with timely measures to facilitate the resolution of any problems that lead to less positive machinations in the services.

The aim of the studies currently in progress into structural reforms is:

a) approval of the direction of the process of deconcentrating and decentralising the civil service;
b) the establishment of information elements in the system of organising, managing and running the civil service;
c) the adoption of a framework law with the aim of overseeing the creation and activities of public institutions, as indirect government departments;
d) the provision of measures aimed at improving the human resources management of the civil service, so as to increase its flexibility and efficiency. These measures will include the creation of a human resources database for the civil service, the centralisation of recruitment for staff grades common to different ministerial departments, the creation of a work exchange to facilitate the redistribution of staff and the improvement of the system of intersectoral, interdepartmental and interprofessional mobility;
e) the establishment of a Commission for the Simplification of Legislation, whose task will be to identify areas of legislation which would benefit from revision, to conduct studies with the aim of simplifying and improving the regulation of legislation, to analyse and propose measures designed to facilitate access to legislation and to present situations which could benefit from deregulation measures and from being subject to less legislation;
f) the establishment of a Commission to revise the Code of Administrative Procedure with the aim of providing improved, flexible solutions with regard to prevailing civil service practice and the development of citizens' rights as a whole and ways of safeguarding them.

We are convinced that the way the issue of administrative reform and modernisation is regarded can contribute to a leap forward towards improving the management of the civil service, enable it to recover its image and contribute to its complete integration into the "European administrative space". ❑

# Finland

***Teuvo Metsäpelto***
*Director-General, Personnel Department, Ministry of Finance*

## Public Administration and Its Current Reforms

**The Finnish Public Sector**

Public management reform has been important political issue in Finland for quite some time. All Governments since 1987 have included it in their programmes. The political steering of reforms has been the responsibility of the Ministerial Working Group on Public Management reform.

In spring 1998 the previous Government issued a set of political guidelines for the policy of governance in the form of a Government Resolution. The programme of Paavo Lipponen's second Government, appointed in April 1999 includes objectives for more extensive use of new information technology and the reforms of Central Government. The main aim of the Government's economic policy is to boost employment, which in turn means securing stable economic growth and pursuing tight budgetary policy.

The Central Government consists of 13 ministries and 80 subordinate agencies. The biggest sector of State government is universities, which employ some 28,000 state employees. On the regional level the administrative functions of the state are dealt with by provincial offices, courts and various regional agencies. The state employs altogether 121,000 within the state budget and 7,000 in state utilities financed by their own incomes outside the state budget.

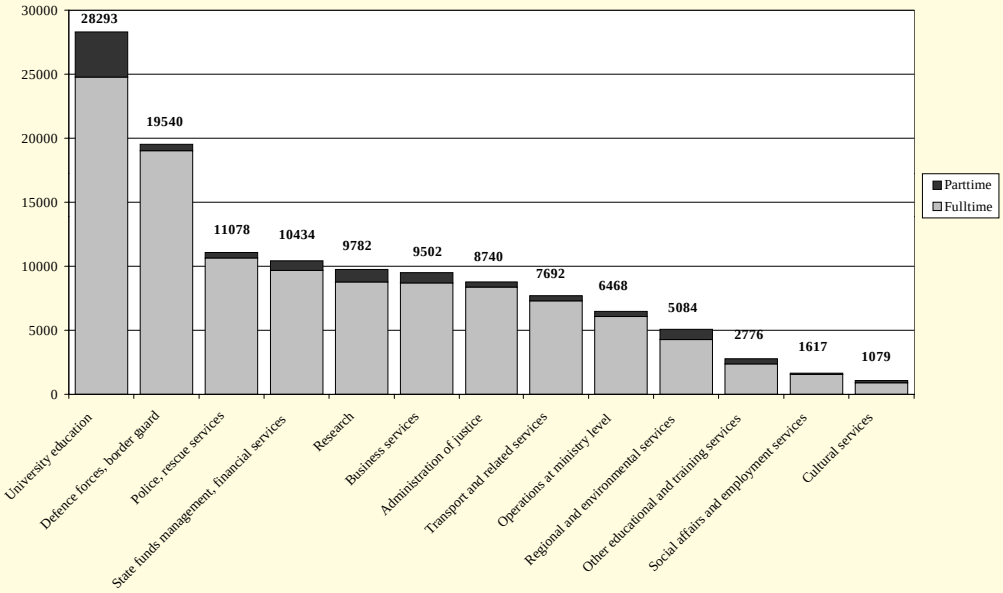
Over the past ten years the number of state employees has been reduced by 90,000 as a result of rationalisation of the State functions and transforming these functions (e.g. Post- and telecommunications, State Railways) into State enterprises and State-owned companies. Later some of these companies have been privatised.

In Finland the local public sector provides to large extent basic services e.g. in the areas of public health care, social security and education. Local public sector, municipalities and federations of municipalities, employ 415,000 persons. Finland has 450 municipalities.

The public sector altogether employs approximately 550,000 persons, i.e. 24 % of labour force.

In recent years regional and local government have been subjected to wide-ranging reforms. The current area of reform is central government.

*Table: Central government personnel by sub-sector in 2000*




**Central Government Reform**

The Ministry of Finance commissioned **in 1999** three international experts to look through the Finnish central government in international perspective and give a report on the direction of the reforms needed. The expert group submitted its final report in June 2000 (*A Potential Governance. Agenda for Finland.* Geert Bouckaert, Derry Ormond and Guy Peters).

The Finnish Government decided in June 2000 general outlines of the reform project. Based on this following five groups of projects were launched to carry forward the reform:

***1. Strengthening government's coordination and cooperation***

These projects look i.a. at coordination from the prime minister's point of view and from the ministries point of

view, the Governments strategic and coordination tools, structural principles of central government and strengthening the technical support (collection of data and information and analysis) when preparing the Government programme.

***2. Strengthening the steering role of ministries in their administrative fields***

These projects aim at strengthening the steering role of the ministries in performance management, improving planning and preparation and strengthening the trust of citizens and personnel towards ministries.

***3. Strengthening citizen government connections and quality in administration***

In this group there is a project with a goal to strengthen citizen-government connections by finding new ways for consultation and participation. There are as well projects aiming at improving the quality and increasing the use of benchmarking in the Finnish central government.

***4. Information systems of government***

The projects try to solve how the different information systems of the central government could better work as a whole and thus better serve the decision making of the government.

***5. The State as an employer***

The objective is to improve the government's status as a competitive employer.

This project includes in fact not only central government in a narrow sense like ministries but all levels within the State administrative organisations. One of the main reasons for this project is the high turnover of state employees between 2001-2010 because of the age structure. The objective is to set up guidelines for the personnel policy of the State as an employer.

The guidelines are due to be set by the Government Decision on State Personnel Strategy presumably in the autumn 2001. Some of the key elements of the strategy will be:

a) setting clear values and ethical standards of the public administration,
b) improving the competitiveness of the state as an employer in order to get skilled and motivated personnel e.g. by changing over to a pay system based on the demands of the job analysed by job evaluation on one hand and personal performance on the other hand as well as devising other forms of incentive and reward,
c) developing professionalism among public managers and creating a new generation of public managers (innovative and people-oriented leadership culture based on interaction and trust) and
d) emphasising that the prime responsibility for personnel must be carried by individual units themselves.

The implementation of this strategy will start immediately after it has been approved. It is proposed, that the Government would evaluate attainment of the targets of the strategy in 2004.

Recruitment to the civil service is decentralised . To contribute to the visibility of the state as an employer The Ministry of Finance has however substantially increased its efforts in informing young people of the civil service jobs. That includes cooperation with the recruitment units of the universities and producing information material giving an updated description of the state as an employer.

**Implementation of the Central Government Reform**

The guidelines for further steps of the reform of central government based on all these projects should be decided during the 2001. The Government discussed the results of the projects so far in June the 20th 2001. The implementation of reforms in all areas mentioned above is meant to take place as soon as possible, at latest during the next government period 2003-2007. ❑

# Sweden

*Margareta Hammerberg*
*Director, Division of Personnel Policy, Ministry of Justice*

## Swedish Public Administration – New Challenges

Swedish public administration is facing new challenges. Even though the situation in the public finances has been improved during the last years there is still a need for better management of the resources that are available. New, more complex social problems require different types of input and new working methods. Higher quality and flexibility in public services are required by the citizens as a result of the overall development in the society. Internationalisation is changing the preconditions for public administration. Sweden's accession to the European Union and entry into the single market has altered the conditions of work for the Swedish central government administration.

The Government has, moreover, changed its principles for management of central administration from detailed regulation to performance management. The agencies have gained greater freedom of action to use their given resources to attain the Government-defined objectives of their activities. The agencies have been entrusted with responsibility for making their own decisions on staff, internal organisation, investments in information technology and provision of premises.

### Public Administration in the Service of Democracy

In 1998 the Government presented a Bill, *Central Government Administration in Public Service,* with guidelines for and requirement on future public administration. The Bill defines the emphasis of forthcoming work on developing central government administration in Sweden. On the basis of these guidelines the Government in 2000 initiated an administrative policy programme of action extending over a number of years. The programme, *Public Administration in the service of democracy – an Action Programme*, presents the fundamental values and the prerequisites that are to serve as guidance for the government agencies according to the Bill, and the steps to be taken by the Government for long-term development of public administration. Key words for central government administration of the future are quality, service and public access. In this administration, the citizens are to come first. A short summery of the Governments Action Programme is presented here.

### The Governments Action Programme – Fundamental values and conditions

#### *Democracy, the rule of law and efficiency*

Swedish public administration is very important for the everyday life of the population, and for democracy, welfare, economic growth and Sweden's ability to operate internationally. The objectives for the 21st century are for public administration to be accessible and accommodating while complying with high standards for the rule of law, efficiency and democracy. It is to have the full confidence of citizens and provide business and industry with good conditions for work and growth. It is to be a successful public administration that is respected internationally.

#### *Citizens in focus*

Certain common values must apply to the administration as a whole. The working of the administration, how it is controlled, led, organised and how it operates are of crucial importance for the efficient functioning of a democratic society and for public confidence in democracy, as well as for welfare and economic growth. The administration must provide services in such a way as to give the greatest possible utility for the public, businesses, local government, organisations, etc. within the given economic frameworks.

#### *An open public administration*

Public access is one of the basic principles in Swedish society. The work of government agencies and contacts with citizens, businesses and the media is to be characterised by a high level of accessibility. The language used is to be as simple and comprehensible as possible. Government must benefit from the opportunities provided by, for instance, new technology to facilitate openness and insight. A necessary condition for fundamental values on openness to be effective is that the work organisation and methods of work are adapted to new requirements and prerequisites.

#### *Capacity for change and quality*

Sweden is to be to the fore as regards the quality of public administration in an international perspective. The public and businesses make increasingly high demands on government. Agencies that are able to do the right things at the right time in the right way while using

resources economically gain public respect. Systematic efforts to improve quality should be an important part of the work of agencies in developing their activities. The outcome of the work of change depends on good leadership and creative staff. It is therefore important to create working conditions of this kind at the agencies.

***Further development of performance management***
Performance management means that objectives are set, performance is followed up and an assessment made that can serve as the basis for further action. The work of improving performance management is continuing, by, for instance, adapting activities, i.e. adjusting objectives and demands on reporting performance better to the varying conditions of agencies.

***The state as an exemplary IT user***
Services that are intended for individuals and businesses shall be offered via Internet, "electronic administration". The 24-hour agency is to be the guiding concept in this context. Information technology is also to be used as an instrument in the common development of knowledge and expertise in public administration.

***The state as an exemplary employer***
The Government has delegated large parts of employer policy to the agencies. Employer policy means such issues as the provision of staff and managers, development of skills and mobility, pay and other terms of employment. Delegation is intended to enable the agency to use employer policy as a means to achieve the objectives for activities. Delegated employer responsibility enables agencies to shape the organisation, working procedures and the provision of expertise to take into consideration the needs of operations.

Thus, employer responsibility of the agencies is a strategic management instrument in quality improvement and in the development of internal work processes. When staff and management work together, issues relating to, for instance, working conditions and the working environment are integrated in the development process.

***The opportunities provided by the generation changeover***
Attractive working conditions in public employment make it easier for agencies to find skilled staff in the long-term. In the period up to 2015, an increasing proportion of employees will retire. The ability of the agencies to provide the organisation with skilled staff is one of the major challenges confronting them in the first decades of the twenty-first century. Government can succeed in competing for labour only if agencies continue to strive to be stimulating, creative workplaces with a good working environment and a well-planned staff and wage policy.

***Skills and ethics***
The work of the administration rests on highly skilled government employees. Public administration needs staff with good administrative knowledge, a good ability to communicate, integrity, good judgement and an ethical approach. The Government requires agencies to have clear objectives for their provision of skilled staff and that the employees have the appropriate skills for operations.

***Supply of managerial staff***
The Government's power of appointment is an instrument to control the administration. The Government will continue to appoint senior staff, primarily the heads of agencies. A well-functioning Government control requires a well-planned and implemented policy for provision of managers (recruitment, introduction, continual development, mobility). Heads of agencies are expected to apply Government policy in the internal provision of managers.

**Government measures for long-term development of the public administration**
Achieving the objectives for administration requires a continual work of change at all levels. The programme of action includes a number of measures that are in process or that the Government is planning to introduce. Measures for long-term development aim at creating forms of organisation, governance and management that provide the conditions in which the three basic values, democracy, the rule of law and efficiency can permeate the whole administration.

***Some examples of the Government's projects***
A number of important projects relate to governance including the development of performance management, operational adaptation of agency control, attempts with operational agreements, development of goal and performance dialogues, and an overview of regulations governing the agencies.

The measures aiming at *better service for citizens and businesses* include producing the criteria for the 24-hour agency, pilot activities with service declarations and the use of electronic signatures.

A *campaign for openness* has been initiated to increase knowledge and awareness among the public and agency staff on the principle of free access to public records and its role for openness and democracy.

If the administrative policy objectives are to have the required impact, *better follow-up* is required of the efforts to change by the agencies. The agencies' adaptation to public requirements can be monitored by performance indicators and reporting requirements. In this key issue, there are grounds for the Government to find forms for obtaining points of view from the public, by, for instance, trials with public panels.

Another part of the follow-up of administrative policy is the Government's annual report to the Swedish Parliament, the Riksdag, on developments in government administration. The Swedish Agency for Public Management's report *The Swedish Central Government in Transition* is a general review of overall developments in public administration with respect to the effect of structural changes on the economy and employment,

etc. There is an increased need for systematic follow-up and evaluation of administrative policy.

*Sweden's membership of the European Union* and inclusion in the single market has made Swedish public administration subject to a system of institutions, regulatory frameworks, and procedures that is to some extent new and which changes the conditions for the methods of work of public administration. The EU-related work in public administration is undergoing development. The experiences of public administration of working within the EU have been evaluated and will serve as the basis for an exchange of experiences between the Government Offices and the agencies.

The full programme can be read on the Government Offices web site: www.justitie.regeringen.se/justities fragor/statligforvaltningspolitik/ ❑

# United Kingdom

***John Barker***
*Director, Recruitment and Development of People, Cabinet Office*

## UK Civil Service Reform and EU Integration

**Introduction**

Our understanding of "EU integration" is "the processes related to the development of the European union". In this article we are primarily looking at "Public administration". What will the challenges for the future be, as we face an enlarged public management forum of 20 or more members?

Some of these challenges mirror those faced by the Commission and member states. This article looks at the recent civil service reforms in the UK and whether there are any lessons/parallels for EU integration.

**How did UK civil service reform come about?**

The UK currently has around 463,000 civil servants from a population of 60 million people and a 5 million public sector made up of a central administration, regional and local government, health service and police authorities.

In 1997 the incoming Labour government decided to embark upon a large programme of civil service reform. There were many drivers behind this change:

- Public-private sector comparisons;
- An explosion in the use of IT;
- Increasingly powerful consumers;
- Rising customer demands and expectations;
- Constitutional change (UK regions/Europe);
- Media exposure.

The Government had to face the challenge of the times and embrace new opportunities, by modernising the way it worked: the way it devised policies and programmes, the way the civil service delivered services to individual citizens and businesses and the way it performed all the other functions of a modern government.

A vision was articulated to achieve this:

> "Government should improve the quality of our lives. Government matters – we want it to deliver policies, programmes and services to make us more healthy, more secure and better equipped to tackle the challenges we face. Modernisation was vital if the government was to achieve that ambition."

In March 1999, the *"Modernising Government"* plan was drawn up. Its central objective was to help make the UK a better place for everyone to live in. Modernisation had a purpose: to make life better for people and businesses. The plan was a long-term (3-5 years) programme of improvements.

**Package of reforms**

- Public services should be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;
- "Joined up government";
- Unnecessary regulation and rules stifling innovation should be removed;
- All services to be delivered electronically by 2008;
- There should be a new focus on delivery.

To ensure government was both inclusive and integrated, there were three aims in Modernising Government:

- To ensure policy making is joined up and strategic;
- To make sure public service *users* not providers are the focus by matching services more closely to people's lives;
- Delivery of public services that are high quality and efficient.

**Five Key Commitments**

(1) *Policy making:* forward looking to deliver outcomes that matter, not simply reacting to short term pressures;
(2) *Responsive public services:* deliver public services to meet the needs of the citizens, not the convenience of service providers;
(3) *Quality public services:* deliver high quality public services and not tolerate mediocrity;
(4) *Information Age government:* use new technology to meet the needs of citizens and business;
(5) *Public service:* we will value public service, not denigrate it.

The key commitments having been articulated, there were several public service challenges to be faced:

- How to implement constitutional reform (devolved government for Scotland and Wales) while preserving a unified civil service;
- Integrating the EU dimension into policy making;
- How to make public services more responsive to users;

- How to create a less risk averse culture;
- How to improve collaborative working and joined up delivery;
- How to manage the service;
- How to think strategically.

**So what action was needed?**

We needed to bring more people into the civil service from outside (for example from the private and voluntary sectors). There had to be a greater commitment to mobility, so that civil servants would gain experience in the private and voluntary sectors during their careers. Recruitment criteria had to be reviewed, so that the right kind of people would be taken on. We needed to create opportunities for young staff to be promoted quickly. We had to provide incentives for innovation, collaborative working and excellent service delivery, and to make our performance pay systems effective so as to reward high quality delivery and to reinforce the changes in behaviour we wanted.

Sir Richard Wilson, the Head of the Civil Service, reported to the Prime Minister in December 1999 and identified *six key themes* for the reform agenda:

(1) Stronger *leadership* with a clear sense of purpose;
(2) Business *planning* from top to bottom;
(3) Performance management;
(4) A dramatic improvement in *diversity*;
(5) A service more open to people and ideas which *brings on talent*;
(6) A *better deal* for staff.

The Civil Service Reform programme is about improving the way we manage people in the civil service, to deliver better services to the public and excellence in policy making, ensuring that the civil service makes a difference and builds on the ambitious "Modernising Government" change programme. Its *goal* is to create a more open, diverse and professional civil service which:

- Puts the public's interests first;
- Innovates, creates and learn;
- Where people take personal responsibility, work in partnership and use new technology.

This means:

- A tougher emphasis on results and outcomes;
- Better researched, more innovative solutions;
- A wider range of experience, ideas and professionalism;
- A better European focus;
- More creative and collaborative working;
- A pride in public service.

Some examples of *innovation* are the new units in Cabinet Office which work on a range of issues which cut across the business of many traditional Whitehall departments, for example the Social Exclusion Unit and the Performance and Innovation Unit. We have also been looking at citizens' "life episodes" (for example marriage and retirement, and the associated services they require) and have set up a People's Panel which gives grass roots input into policy making. Our web portal "UK Online" and NHS Direct both bring government services closer to the citizen.

**So what progress has been made so far?**

The Civil Service Management Board has appointed senior "champions" for each of the six key themes. Change Management Division in the Cabinet Office lead the reform programme, monitoring the action plans drawn up by different ministries and publicise good practice across Whitehall. We created an "Invest to Modernise" fund (£100 million, available over 2 years) to which ministries can make bids to finance some of their reforms. For example, Lord Chancellor's Department is using it to introduce 360 degree feedback for all of its staff, not just for its senior civil servants.

**Europe's role**

A large part of the reform programme revolved around bringing about a "step-change" in the attitudes of Whitehall towards the European Union. This is now being achieved through the *Insight Europe* programme, through enhanced secondments and an improved programme of reciprocal training whereby all the European schools of public administration work together, as they are doing in the concurrent management reforms in the European Commission led by EIPA itself.

**Future challenges**

The UK shall continue to build more *exchanges* with other member states, with staff from the EU institutions and with the accession countries, so that we can understand each other's ways of working better, whilst preserving and appreciating national differences. Formal and informal secondments are a good way of doing this. We will also contribute actively to the *reform programme* for the European Commission. Reform is crucial to modernise the Commission, improve the way it uses taxpayers' money and to bring it into line with the best of public sector practice. Together with other member states we have provided information on Human Resources best practice which has helped the European Commission shape its vital reforms.

The UK sees the role of the Directors General of Public Administration as of key importance in EU integration, for example in helping member states' administrations face the challenges of e-Government by sharing best practice. ❑

(The original texts submitted in English have not been edited or revised. Not all the translations into English have been done by EIPA's Linguistic Services)

# *CONSEIL D'ADMINISTRATION*
# *INSTITUT EUROPÉEN D'ADMINISTRATION PUBLIQUE*
# BOARD OF GOVERNORS
# EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

(Situation au 1 septembre 2001 / *Situation on 1 September 2001*)

## Président/*Chairman*

Mr Henning CHRISTOPHERSEN
EPSILON
Senior Management Consultants
49, rue de Toulouse
B – 1040 BRUSSELS

## Vice-président/*Vice-Chairman*

N.N.

## Secrétaire général/*Secretary-General*

Mr Jan D. VOSKAMP
Onze Lieve Vrouweplein 22
NL – 6301 BE MAASTRICHT

## Membres/*Members*

**B**
M. Michel DAMAR
Secrétaire général
Ministère de la Fonction publique
Bâtiment Copernicus
Rue de la Loi, 51
B – 1040 BRUXELLES

**D**
Mr Günther WURSTER
Präsident
Bundesakademie für öffentliche Verwaltung
Bundesministerium des Innern
Willy Brandt Strasse 1
D – 50321 BRÜHL

**DK**
N.N.
Ministry of Finance
Frederiksholm Kanel 6
DK – 1220 KØBENHAVN K

**GR**
Mrs Efstathia BERGELE
Director-General
Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization
15, Vassilissis Sofias Ave
GR – 106 74 ATHENS

**E**
Mrs Carmen ROMÁN RIECHMANN
Director-General of Civil Service
Ministerio de Administraciones Públicas (MAP)
Maria de Molina 50
E – 28071 MADRID

**F**
M. Raymond PIGANIOL
Chef de la mission des affaires européennes et internationales
Direction générale de l'Administration et de la Fonction publique
Ministère de la Fonction publique, de la Réforme de l'Etat et de la Décentralisation
32, rue de Babylone
F – 75700 PARIS

**IRL**
Mr Tom CONSIDINE
Secretary General
Public Service Management and Development
Department of Finance
Upper Merrion Street
IRL – 2 DUBLIN

**I**
Mrs Pia MARCONI
Director-General
dell'Ufficio per l'innovazione delle pubbliche amministrazioni
Dipartimento della Funzione Pubblica
Via del Sudario, 49
I – 00186 ROMA

**L**
M. Pierre NEYENS
Directeur de l'administration du personnel de l'Etat
Ministère de la Fonction Publique et de la Réforme administrative
63, avenue de la Liberté
L – 1931 LUXEMBOURG

**NL**
Mr Emil A.A.M. BROESTERHUIZEN
Deputy Director and Head of the Department for General Questions of Science Policy / International Cooperation
Directorate for Research and Science Policy
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
P.O. Box 25000
NL – 2700 LZ ZOETERMEER

Mr Peter VAN DER GAAST
Head of the International Civil Service Affairs Division
Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations
P.O. Box 20011
NL – 2500 EA THE HAGUE

**A**
Mr Emmerich BACHMAYER
Leiter der Sektion II – Öffentliche Leistung
Bundesministerium für öffentliche Leistung und Sport
Wollzeile 1-3
A – 1010 WIEN

**P**
M. Rui Manuel PESSOA DE AMORIM
Secrétaire général du Conseil Supérieur de l'Administration et de la Fonction publique
Rua General Firmino Miguel
Torre 2-4-A
P – 1600 LISBONNE

**FIN**
Mr Teuvo METSÄPELTO
Director-General
Personnel Department
Ministry of Finance
Mariankatu 9 – PL 286
FIN – 00171 HELSINKI

**S**
Mrs Margareta HAMMARBERG
Director
Personalpolitiska enheten
Ministry of Justice
Rosenbad 4
S – 103 33 STOCKHOLM

**UK**
Mr John BARKER
Director
Recruitment and Development of People
Cabinet Office
Admiralty Arch (South Entrance)
The Mall
Spring Gardens
Room 1.06a
UK – LONDON SW1A 2 WH

**Commission européenne / European Commission**
Mr Horst REICHENBACH
Director-General
Personnel and Administration
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200, office SC 11 9/12
B – 1049 BRUSSELS