

ReSPA

Regional School of Public Administration (Phase 1)

A Joint Initiative of the European Union
and the OECD, principally financed by the EU



RESPA/SC(2007)3/003

NETWORKING RESPA WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS

Competitive State – Competitive Leader

XIX International Conference on Training and Development of Senior Civil Servants

7-8 June 2007, Tallinn, Estonia

Mr. Davor Ljubanovic, Croatia, ReSPA Steering Committee Member

I INTRODUCTION

At the 4th meeting of the ReSPA Steering Committee held in Brussels on 25 April 2007 it was decided that ReSPA would, as one of its activities, fully support participation of the Steering Committee members at various international conferences in 2007. At the same time, based on the proposal made by the Secretariat, it was decided that Davor Ljubanović, member of the ReSPA Steering Committee from Croatia, will participate at the 19th International Conference on Training and Development of Senior Civil Servants in Tallin, Estonia, 7 – 8 June 2007.

The ReSPA was also represented by Nicolas Dubois, Secretary to the ReSPA Steering Committee.

Additionally, representing their institutions / countries three other ReSPA Steering Committee members / deputies participated at the conference – Svetlana Vuković and Jadranka Djurkovic from Montenegro and Biljana Nikolovska Žagara from Macedonia.

II CONFERENCE BACKGROUND

In 1968 Italy established the tradition of an international conference that provided senior civil servants, scholars and trainers in European countries an opportunity to meet every two years and discuss the challenges facing public administrations.

This tradition continued in 2007 in Estonia. The 19th International Conference on Training and Development of Senior Civil Servants focused on national competitiveness and its important driving force – senior civil service. Also the European Commission, reporting on the progress achieved in implementing the National Reform Programmes for growth and jobs in December 2006, emphasizes that positive effects of successful reform in one member state will be felt in all the others and therefore sharing the experiences could serve as inspiration for others.

III CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Summary

More than 100 representatives from 30 countries and 10 international organisations attended the Conference organised by the State Chancellery of the Republic of Estonia and contributed to the discussions about competitive Europe and competitive senior civil service.

The Conference was opened by **Heiki Loot**, Estonian Secretary of the State, stating that competitiveness as a topic for this Conference has been chosen because it is dominating agendas across Europe so it should also be approached from the angle of the senior civil service – a driving force of the competitive state.

During plenary part of the conference innovative ideas of how to organise senior civil service that will contribute to the development of national competitiveness were discussed. Former Estonian Prime Minister and Milton Friedman award laureate **Mart Laar** in pre-recorded interview expressed his views on creation of the competitive state with Estonia as an example. The Nordic view was presented by **Timo J. Hämäläinen**, Director of Research at the Finnish Innovation Fund (SITRA), who, based on the theory of social innovation, is looking for answers to the question: why are some nations capable of adopting the new so thoroughly and quickly, why others get stuck with their old structures? **Wolfgang Drechsler**, Professor and Chair of

Governance at Tallin Univeristy of Technology, was looking for an answer to the question: why, in today's rapidly developing environment of the global economy and information technology, should special attention be focused on civil service? One of his main thesis was that the most striking feature of Public Administration in 2007 is the demise of the new public management (NPM) and the rise of a new paradigm, probably the Neo-Weberian State (NWS) as an empirical European model of contemporary good Governance, because no improvements of efficiency, effectiveness nor of quality could be attributed to NPM reforms.¹ He also stated that given the size of public sector, the volume of public procurement, etc., it is clear that an optimally structured Public Administration as such is one of the most significant elements of a well-working state. Discussing the role of e-government, which was usually linked to the NPM, he said that e-governance can reinforce and support Weberian structures but is not tied to the NPM, neither theoretically nor empirically. **Pan Suk Kim**, Vice Dean of Yonsei University, Korea and **Jan Willem Weck**, Managing Director of the Dutch Senior Civil Service described the challenges of creating and innovating civil service in their own countries.

Working groups on the first day and field trips on the second day addressed the role of top managers, drawing on various experiences in the development of their key competencies – as seen by both top civil service executives and the people who train and develop them. Partnership between the public and the private sector, which contributes to the growth of national competitiveness, was also examined. Davor Ljubanović participated at Workshop II - Innovating Traditions in Leadership Development and the Field trip I – Management Cases in Focus.

In Workshop I - Leaders at stage – theories and experience, it was discussed how developments in public services in European countries seem to be following different approaches – some are keeping to be carefully laid out paths, while others have been thrown in at the deep end and had to teach themselves how to stay afloat. In that workshop leading managers from a number of countries met, and looking back at their development they searched for the best ways to direct and support the development of high-level managers and European countries' cooperation to this end. **Koen Becking**, General Director of ROI, the national training institute of the Dutch government and **Mariette Baptist-Fruin**, a senior training manager in ROI were moderators and **Aleš Zalar**, Senior District Court Judge in the District Court of Ljubljana, Slovenia; **Jaime Nicolas Muniz**, Deputy Director of the National Institute of Public Administration of Spain and **John Oughton**, former Chief Executive of the UK Office of the Government Commerce were speakers.

In Workshop II – Innovating Traditions in Leadership Development, participants discussed the options and opportunities that are offered by today's modern public administration schools and institutes in different countries for the development of high-level managers, and looked for ways in which they could work together. **John Cullen**, the Director General of the Institute of Public Administration in Ireland was moderator. In his introductory presentation he gave an overview of Irish Institute of Public Administration which covers the whole public sector and presented the training of senior managers. **Tore C. Malterud**, Public Management and Comparative Public Administration Senior Expert and Head of Unit of the European Institute of Public Administration presented European Institute of Public Administration and their training programmes and participants. **Eve Limbach**, the Estonian State Chancellery Deputy Head of Department of Public Service and **Mariann Veisson**, the Estonian State Chancellery Adviser of Department of Public Service jointly gave presentation on the Estonian senior civil servants training system. **Amilcar Arantes**, Vice-President of the National Institute of Administration, Portugal presented the National Institute of Administration (INA) and its objective - to contribute, through training, technical and scientific research and consultancy, to the development of the human resources of the Portuguese Public Administration. Through a number of questions and answers Mr. Arantes explained what INA finds the best approaches to training of top civil servants. Finally, **Gunnar Lindgren**, Deputy Director of the Division for Human Resources, the Office for Administrative

¹ See also Wolfgang Drechsler: „The Re-Emergence of „Weberian“ Public Administration after the Fall of New Public Management: The Central and Eastern European Perspective“, Halduskultuur, 2005, vol 6, pp.94-108.

Affairs, the Government Offices, Sweden, presented the Swedish example of senior civil servants training – what it consisted of, how to get senior civil servants to take a part in that training as well as some recent trends in such training.

The second day of the Conference started with the field trips. The aim of the Field trip I – Management Cases in Focus was to raise various management cases and with the help of the top manager, top manager consultant and participants find the best way to handle them. **Annika Uudelepp**, Secretary General of the Estonian Ministry of Environment, presented the case-study of the oil spill on the Estonian seashore to analyse of the role and functions of the top manager considering crisis as a litmus-test for the manager and his/her team as well as understanding the difficulties and presence of managerial dilemmas. **John Barker**, Director of the UK Government Office, held a presentation Professional Skills for the Government, describing evolving civil service leadership in 2003 (negative stereotypes as catalyst for change, historical strengths, newer approaches), what are the future leadership expectations and presenting a plan of action until 2012.

The aim of the Field trip II – Public Private Partnership in Estonian ID-card was to answer to a number of questions arising from the use of new technologies: what would be the ideal balance in state executed ICT projects; what are the different models for the partnership and key success factors; how are different countries responding to the emerging importance of the e-Government? **Linnar Viik**, a lecturer at the IT College and adviser to the Estonian Prime Minister on IT, innovation, research and development, was moderator and **Erki Arus, Tiik Pekk, Taavi Valdio** and **Ain Järv**, Estonian experts in this field were speakers.

Siim Kallas, former Estonian Prime Minister and now a Member of the European Commission – Vice-President in charge of Administration, Audit and Anti-fraud, held the closing session, explaining the steps the Commission has taken to ensure that its senior managers can be selected on the basis of merit, while at the same time allowing the Commission to achieve the presence from all Member States and reasonable gender balance. He also explained the Commission's processes for developing high potential staff, and explained the vital importance of ensuring that staff at all levels integrates rather than being ghettoized in national groups. Finally he considered future developments in governance in the EU and their possible impact on personnel policy.

IV FINAL REMARKS

As a conclusion what has the Conference brought, it can be pointed out that a close link between the modern, suitably updated, high-capacity senior civil service and competitiveness has been established by many speakers. Furthermore, the importance of senior civil servants training has been highlighted in many presentations, and training systems of several countries explained (Estonia, Ireland, UK, Finland, Sweden and Portugal). Two additional viewpoints should be mentioned as specially interesting – the demise of the New Public Management and its replacement by the Neo-Weberian State explained by prof. Drechsler and the crisis as a trigger mechanism for change, mentioned by a number of speakers mentioned in their presentations.

Conference breaks, field trips and the reception hosted by the Secretary of the State were used not only to exchange views on Conference topics and trends in Public Administration but also to inform hosts and other participants on the establishment of ReSPA and explain its organisation, objectives and activities.

At this point, I would like to mention the excellent organisation of the Conference as well as the organisation of my participation by the ReSPA Secretariat.

More details about the Conference together with the available materials could be found at www.riigikantselei.ee/19conference.

Attachments:

- Conference Programme;
- Timo J. Hämäläinen: “National Competitiveness, Social Innovation & Economic Growth” (conference paper & PP presentation);
- Wolfgang Drechsler: “Modern Senior Civil Service – Strengthening Competitiveness and Economic Growth” (conference paper & PP presentation);
- Pan Suk Kim: “Restructuring Higher-level Civil Service in an East Asian Perspective: A Case Study of a New Senior Civil Service in South Korea” (conference paper & PP presentation);
- Jan Willem Weck: “Quality as the Common Denominator” (conference paper);
- John Cullen: “Training of Senior Managers” (PP presentation);
- Tore C. Malterud: “EIPA” (PP presentation);
- Eve Limbach & Mariann Veisson: “Innovating Traditions in Leadership Development” (PP presentation);
- Amilcar Arantes: “Innovating Traditions in Leadership Development” (PP presentation);
- Gunnar Lindgren: “Training Senior Civil Servants – The Swedish example” (PP presentation);
- Annika Uudelepp: “Crisis – Defeat or Victory? - The test for the top manager” (PP presentation);
- John Barker: “Professional Skills for Government” (PP presentation);
- Siim Kallas: “Leading multi-cultural organisations – Developing the leaders in the European Commission” (conference paper);