OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability

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OECD Member countries invest considerable resources in public employment.

In 2015, an average of 9.5% of GDP was spent in OECD Member countries on general government employee compensation, making this the largest input in the production of government goods and services.

Historically, this investment has helped to support economic growth and stability. Public servants have been a major actor in modern society's greatest achievements: health care, education and childcare, access to water and sanitation, energy, communication, response to disasters, science and technology, among others. This underlines the fact that a professional, capable and responsive public service is a fundamental driver of citizens' trust in public institutions.

Today, however, the context and challenges of the public sector are changing at a rapid pace, and the capabilities of public servants and those who lead them must keep up. The OECD's Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability (PSLC) helps ensure that governments' ongoing investments in public employment continue to produce the desired results.

The Recommendation helps equip public workforces with the skills, leadership and people management systems needed to tackle today's and tomorrow's public governance challenges.

The Recommendation promotes a highly professional administration based on merit, transparency, accountability and the rule of law. Building on this foundation, it aims to improve the ways of organising and managing public employees to encourage proactive collaboration and innovation in the design and delivery of public policies and services. It recommends that Adherents embed these values and principles in the strategic management of human resources so that government ministries and agencies have a workforce with the capabilities needed now and in the future.

Finally, the Recommendation places a heavy onus on public service leaders, who require the mandate, competencies, and conditions necessary to provide impartial evidence-informed advice and speak truth to power.

The Recommendation on PSLC is based on a set of commonly shared principles, which have been developed in close consultation with OECD Member countries.

The development of the Recommendation also benefitted from a broad public consultation, which generated a high level of input from public servants, citizens and experts worldwide. The Recommendation presents 14 principles for a fit-for-purpose public service under 3 main pillars:

1. Values-driven culture and leadership,
2. Skilled and effective public servants,
3. Responsive and adaptive public employment systems.

01 VALUES-DRIVEN CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

01 Define the **values** of the public service and promote values-based decision making.

02 Build **leadership capability** in the public service.

03 Ensure an **inclusive and safe** public service that reflects the diversity of society.

04 Build a **proactive and innovative** public service that takes a long-term perspective in policy design and services.

02 SKILLED AND EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVANTS

05 Continuously **identify skills** and competencies needed to transform political vision into services which deliver value.

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

07 Recruit, select and promote candidates through **transparent, open and merit-based** processes.

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

09 Assess, reward and recognise **performance, talent and initiative.**

03 RESPONSIVE AND ADAPTIVE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SYSTEMS

10 Clarify **institutional responsibilities** for people management.

11 Develop a **long-term, strategic and systematic approach** to people management based on evidence and inclusive planning.

12 Set the necessary conditions for internal and external **workforce mobility and adaptability** to match skills with demand.

13 Determine and offer transparent **employment terms and conditions** that match the functions of the position.

14 Ensure that employees can **contribute** to the improvement of public service delivery and engaged as partners in public service issues.

The OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability was developed through the Working Party on Public Employment and Management (PEM), under the aegis of the Public Governance Committee (PGC). The PEM serves as a collaborative forum and platform for policy-makers and experts from public sector entities entrusted with civil service management responsibilities.

The PEM helps governments understand and shape the changing nature of work in the public sector and generate value for society through skilled, committed, and trusted public workforces.

The PEM helps governments implement the principles of this Recommendation by:

- Developing research on emerging trends in people management in the public sector
- Developing tailor-made advice for civil service reforms
- Identifying effective practices and tools and supporting their implementation
- Establishing indicators and benchmarking performance
- Building communities of practice and providing opportunities for networking

Public Employment and Management Project, OECD

Policy path-finders

· Recommendation on Public Service Leadership & Capability
· Good international practices
· Skills & Competency Framework

Champions for change

· Toolkit for implementing Recommendation
· Knowledge sharing & training
· Direct country support on specific topics

Thought leaders

· Emerging trends & solutions
· Data & benchmarking
· Country case studies

Community builders

· Working Party on Public Employment and Management (PEM)
· Network of Schools of Government (NSG)
· International workshops on specific topics

The final adopted text of the Recommendation *(17 January 2019)* is available online:
https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0445

For further information on the Recommendation or our work on Public Employment and Management, please see the website ***www.oecd.org/gov/hrm*** or contact:
Daniel.Gerson@oecd.org

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