



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
Directorate General for Structural Reform Support

## **1<sup>st</sup> HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF THE EXPERT GROUP ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE**

### **Executive summary**

The inaugural meeting of the Expert Group on Public Administration and Governance of the European Commission (“Expert Group”) took place on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022 on a virtual session.

Representatives from the Member States included senior officials from national authorities responsible for horizontal issues, policy, coordination or modernisation in the area of public administration. Observers invited included representatives of the European Parliament, Norway, the OECD, the World Bank, the Council of Europe, the European Institute for Public Administration (“EIPA”) and the European Group on Public Administration (“EGPA”).

The Director General of DG REFORM, Mr. Mario Nava opened the session from the Athens office of DG REFORM demonstrating thus the importance of working closely with the Member States. Mr Nava welcomed the participants and explained the role of DG REFORM as the lead policy Directorate General leading the work of the European Commission in the area of Public Administration and Governance. He stressed the significance of quality public administration for EU policies, EU legislation and for the optimal implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Plans. He concluded highlighting the importance of the Expert Group as a **platform for dialogue** between the European Commission and the Member States, the **complementary role** of the Expert Group to other existing thematic networks in this area and the importance to respect the **differences of constitutional traditions** and organisational set ups of the Member States.

Ms Nathalie Berger, Director of Directorate B<sup>1</sup> of DG REFORM took the floor to thank the invitees for their participation. She presented the work of DG REFORM in the area of public administration and governance focusing on the activities that support the development and dissemination of thematic and country knowledge<sup>2</sup> the creation of synergies between several EU instruments and finally the need for mutual learning through the dialogue in the Expert Group. She stressed the nature of the Expert Group as a permanent structure that will work based on a continuous and comprehensive work programme to be **co-designed** by the European Commission and the Member States in order to address jointly the common challenges (to be) identified.

Mr Thierry Lambert, Director of Inter-ministerial Directorate for Public Sector Transformation of France, presented the French Barometer, a government **data-based tool** aimed at measuring and reporting on the progress of selected government policy objectives. Mr Lambert stressed the granularity of the system and its application at the central as well as the regional levels.

Ms Paola Caporossi, President of the Public Rating Agency in Italy and senior expert on Public Administration and Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance, held the following presentation: “The administrative capacity index: a tool to assess and improve public

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<sup>1</sup> Support to Member States Reforms.

<sup>2</sup> Notably the flagship and multi-country projects in the context of the Technical Support Instrument - “TSI”.

administrations' administrative capacity". Ms Caporossi presented an **innovative assessment method** for measuring the capacity of public administration, based on data already available with several benefits for public funds, the citizens and investors.

Mr Daniele Dotto, Deputy Director of Directorate B<sup>3</sup> coordinated an interactive session and presented the types of issues and themes that the Commission proposes for discussion. He focused on three pillars of interest, i.e. thematic dialogue on topics of common importance, the pillar of sessions concerning data and information for improving methodologies, and thirdly the "exchange" pillar, which could cover proposals to discuss reform approaches under different instruments.

Representatives from other services of the European Commission and of several Member States (notably France, Italy, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Bulgaria and the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission) intervened to support the initiative of the European Commission to establish the Expert Group, stressed the importance of the dialogue in the respect of the respective roles and responsibilities and of the existing networks; they proposed common challenges for thematic discussions. A dedicated session for co-designing a work programme for 2022 and for adopting the Rules of Procedure of the Expert Group will be organised soon by DG REFORM.

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<sup>3</sup> Also Head of Unit B.2 - Governance and Public Administration of DG REFORM.