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Directorate General for Structural Reform Support
Support to Member States Reforms
Governance and Public Administration

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2nd HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF THE EXPERT GROUP ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

Executive summary

The second High-Level meeting of the Expert Group on Public Administration and Governance of the European Commission (“Expert Group”) took place on 30 June 2022 in a hybrid format from 9:30-17:30 EET. The meeting was organised by DG REFORM and hosted by the Greek authorities in the amphitheatre of the National Gallery¹ in Athens. This meeting was the 3rd of the 5 scheduled Expert Group meetings for 2022.

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 were invited only for the morning sessions and included representatives of the European Parliament, the OECD, the World Bank, the Council of Europe, Expertise France, the European Institute for Public Administration (“EIPA”), the European Group on Public Administration (“EGPA”) and members of the Inter-service Group on Public Administration (“IGPA”) of the European Commission (“EC”). On average 90 participants joined the meeting. 35 in person and the rest online.

The high-level meeting allowed for the identification of key areas of work that can gather support of Member States for the work of DG REFORM in the area of quality of public administration and governance. The members of the Expert Group found it beneficial to meet each other in person and start building a community for sharing experiences and practices.

The meeting was structured in four thematic sessions which are summarised below.

1. Panel discussions with high-level representatives of DG REFORM, the Greek and French authorities

Mr Daniele DOTTO, Deputy Director of Directorate B² of DG REFORM welcomed the online and in-person participants and moderated the first panel discussions. Mr Dotto especially highlighted the importance of having an interactive Expert Group to exchange views on Public Administration and Governance issues. In the panel discussion the Director General of DG REFORM, Mr Mario NAVA referred to his impressions from the event of the previous day. This event was jointly organised by DG REFORM, the French Government through Expertise France with the support of the Presidency of the Greek Government. The event celebrated the “10 years of cooperation with the Greek Public Administration”³, where concrete reforms in the area were presented by the speakers. Mr NAVA also referred to his vision on the Expert Group as a body enabling the design of policy responses for

¹ [NATIONAL GALLERY NATIONAL GALLERY ALEXANDROS SOUTZOS MUSEUM](#)

² Also Head of Unit B.2 - Governance and Public Administration of DG REFORM.

³ [10 years of cooperation with the Greek Public Administration \(europa.eu\)](#)

tackling pan-European challenges and reforms while ensuring customised support to the Member States through the Technical Support Instrument (“TSI”).

Ms Vivi CHARALAMBOYIANNI, Secretary General for Human Resources, Greek Ministry of Interior, developed the critical success factors for the implementation of reforms and explained the set of reforms undertaken in Greece in the area of human resources management systems. The Greek reforms are part of an integrated approach instead of self-standing reforms.

Ms Nathalie GREEN, Deputy Director for statutory synthesis, governance and partnerships of the French Ministry of public transformation and the civil service (DGAFP) presented the key results of the French Presidency of the European Council focusing on the following: need for cooperation between networks, new ways of working, mobility and exchanges, common values and challenges of Public Administration, foresight and EUPAN strategy.

Mr Alain SCRIBAN, former Director of the European Commission, heavily involved in the technical support provided in the past to the Greek authorities in the area of public administration, presented his views on the added value of the Expert Group. Mr SCRIBAN explained that understanding and consideration of the local context and development of mutual trust are pre-requisites for the successful implementation of reforms.

2. TSI, modernisation of public administration and wider context

This session was moderated by Ms Nathalie BERGER, Director B- Support to Member State reforms of DG REFORM and was focused on the following topics:

- a) presentation of the main structure of the TSI process (Mr. HADJIYIANNIS, Head of Unit 01, Head of Athens Office of DG REFORM);
- b) degree of correspondence of the TSI projects supporting national reforms agendas of the Member States in the area of Public Administration (Athina MANTA, policy officer of DG REFORM);
- c) the overview of the reforms in the area of public administrations included in the Recovery and Resilience Plans of the Member States (Clara OHAYON, SG RECOVER); and
- d) the sharing of experiences, challenges to overcome, benefits and lessons learnt on the process of the TSI by the Member States, namely Greece, Latvia and Hungary (Vivi CHARALAMBOYIANNI, Elīna MĪLA and László CSEH respectively).

3. TSI in 2023

This session was moderated by Mr DOTTO, Deputy Director of DG REFORM and focused on the presentation of the main ideas for submitting multi-country requests in 2023 (Nicole DONKERS, policy officer of DG REFORM) and the presentation of the flagship projects available for 2023 in the area of public administration and governance, including the flagship project on the digital transformation for regional and local authorities (Roman DIEZ-GONZALEZ, team leader of DG REFORM), the flagship project on professionalization of public procurement personnel (Aleksandra MARCHEWKA, policy officer of DG REFORM) and the flagship on PACE - Public Administration Cooperation Exchange (Athina MANTA, policy officer of DG REFORM). At the end of the session, Mr DOTTO addressed a number of questions pertaining to the morning discussion focusing mainly on the modalities of the submission of requests for multi-country projects and the flagship project on PACE. The Expert Group members showed vivid interest in the PACE flagship which was designed taking into consideration the priorities discussed at the EU Ministerial Conference in Strasbourg, the

EUPAN meetings, the EUPAN Summer School and the needs stemming from the implementation of TSI projects.

4. Plans for the future

This session was moderated by Mr Mario NAVA, Director General of DG REFORM and focused on the plans for the future in the area of Public Administration and Governance by the EC, reform plans of the Member States and the priorities of the Czech Republic assuming the Presidency of the European Council during the second semester of 2022.

Mr. Christian ROQUES, Director DG HR of the European Commission presented the new Human Resources Strategy of the European Commission including the external mobility of Commission officials to national administrations of the Member States. Ms Mina SHOYLEKOVA, Head of Sector of DG REFORM presented the goals of Commission's work on public administration, including the initiative of the Commission to publish two communications on the principles and values of public administration and the science for policy making respectively. Mr Juha SARKIO presented the whole of government Finnish Strategy for Public Governance Renewal with five strategic priorities and seven policy areas. Mr Philip MCGRATH presented the Irish Public Service Reform Plans and focussing on the benefits from TSI and the current and future Transformation Programme. Mr Michal CZUDEK presented the Future Plans for Development of Czech Civil Service and Public Administration and the relevant priorities during the Czech Presidency of the European Council.

5. Round table discussions and breakout rooms

This session consisted of interactive table discussions for the Members of the Expert Group only (without the presence of observers). In practice this session consisted of 5 in-person groups and 1 online breakout room. Each group of participants brainstormed on one specific topic among the following:

1. How can common principles and values of public administration help promote adaptation and good performance?
2. How can public administrations benefit from the existing or new indicators?
3. How can the expert group help increase the benefit from the use of EU support to public administrations in Member States?
4. How can we learn better together in the context of the expert group?
5. How can the expert group help disseminate knowledge?
6. What do we need to build resilient public administration?

The groups were moderated by five B.2 policy officers of DG REFORM and online by Mr Kristian KRIEGER from JRC (breakout room). One representative of each group reported back to the plenary the key points of discussion and the main future actions required for each of the topic discussed. The members of the Expert Group showed great interest in knowledge sharing and the development of indicators by the EC allowing them to monitor performance of public administration. Exchanges with experts on these groups identified key areas interest to the Member States. This will allow DG REFORM to build a solid work program of the Competence Centre on Public Administration and Governance for the coming years with the support of Member States. Key areas identified at this stage include the development of appropriate indicators for the public administration, exchange of experience and good practices and the assessment anticipatory innovation governance capacity of Member States.

6. Conclusion

Mr DOTTO and Mr NAVA concluded the works of the second high-level meeting of the Expert Group in Athens by summarising the following conclusions:

- The members of the Expert Group found it beneficial to meet each other and start building a community/ a platform for sharing experiences and practices thanks to the in-person meeting;
- The Member States have demonstrated a strong interest to work together;
- DG REFORM will take action in the areas identified by the Expert Group with the view to supporting the enhancement of quality of resilient public administrations as was demonstrated through the clear link between the TSI projects and the national reforms undertaken in the area of public administration by the Member States;
- The next meeting of the Expert Group will take place in the autumn 2022 focusing on the topic of management of digital transformation.

The Greek authorities offered a guided tour to the Museum of the Acropolis and to the Parthenon and invited the Members of the Expert Group as well as DG REFORM staff to a formal dinner in the presence of the Minister of Interior, Mr VORIDIS.