

**MULTI-COUNTRY INITIATIVE “GOVERNMENT
ACTION IN RESPONSE TO ECONOMIC DOWNTURN
Workshop: "Impact and Challenges of the Economic Crisis
on human resource management in public administration”**

- Event report -

Date of the document	Report prepared by	Status
24.02.2010	<i>Karin Närep, Reelika Väljaru, Ministry of Finance, Estonia</i>	<i>Draft No 1</i>
Report reviewed by		MCA Coordinator
<i>Anne Caroline Tveoy and Nenad Rava, RCPAR</i>		<i>Inese Vaivare, State Chancellery, Latvia</i>
MCA partners		
Latvian State Chancellery, Ministry of Finance of Estonia, the Main Department of the Civil Service of Ukraine		

General information

Full title	<i>Impact and Challenges of the Economic Crisis on human resource management in public administration”</i>	
Location/s	Tallinn, Estonia	
Key dates	Starting date	04.02.2010
	Ending date	05.02.2010
	Other dates (if relevant)	
Purpose / Objectives	<p>The main purpose of the seminar was to enhance the knowledge of, and to facilitate sharing of experiences amongst selected public administrators in the area of human resource management. In addition, the seminar was supposed to be the opportunity to give input for comparative study on human resources management that will be conducted as a follow-up activity.</p> <p>The workshop was a joint effort of organizations involved in promoting public administration reform in the region through sharing of knowledge and experiences, and improving the existing methodologies. The objective of the seminar was also to build upon several other activities implemented in Estonia and other countries in the regions: <i>The 5th Annual Public Management Summer Institute “Restructuring Government to Overcome Crisis”</i> in Latvia and other initiatives dealing with public administration reform in the region.</p> <p>Training and discussion was supposed to emphasize best practices and lessons learned in the region in order to demonstrate and share accomplishments in public</p>	

	management. As a result of the presentation of the case studies, participants should have the understanding of the human resource management process in presented countries with an emphasis on the most recent government actions reacting to the impacts of the economic crisis – and consequent challenges and lessons learned – which would facilitate regional benchmarking if appropriate.	
Number of participants	Total number	30
	Per country	Azerbaijan 1, Bosnia & Herzegovina 2, Estonia 12, FYR Macedonia 1, Hungary 2, Latvia 3, Lithuania 2, Moldova 1, Serbia 2, Ukraine 1, Ireland 1, Iceland 1, UNDP 1
List of lecturers / trainers / external experts	<p>Niamh Hardiman, Senior Lecturer, School of Politics and International Relations (SPIRe), University College Dublin</p> <p>Margret Björnsdóttir, Director of Institute and part-time Lecturer, Institute of Public Management and Politics, Department of Political Science, University of Iceland</p> <p>Tiina Randma-Liiv, Professor of Public Administration and Policy, Tallinn Technical University</p> <p>Annika Uudelepp, Member of the Executive Board and Director of Program Governance and Civil Society Program, Praxis</p> <p>Katri Vintisa, Consultant</p>	
Brief summary of the event	<p>The seminar was a unique and important opportunity for public administrators / practitioners from countries in the region to discuss the recent events – economic crisis – and its impact on human resources management in public administration. As the crisis has been very recent there are no comparative studies (information) available, so the seminar was especially useful in providing an opportunity to analyze different patterns and draw some preliminary conclusions from the responses of the different countries. The seminar consisted of plenary sessions with the keynote speakers from Iceland and Ireland as well as country contributions from the region. The template and methodology for presenting the country contributions was provided by the expert, to ensure uniformity and consistency. The input provided will be the basis upon which the comparative study following the seminar will be developed. The seminar was concluded by the third keynote speaker, from Estonia, who analyzed the possible approaches to the crisis in the CEE countries.</p>	

Agenda

Day 1		
Date and location	04.02.2010 Tallinn	
List of main sessions / working groups	Title	Person in charge
	1.Economic Crisis and Public Sector Reform: Lessons from Ireland	1. Professor Niamh Hardiman (University College Dublin,

	<p>2. Iceland 2000-2012 “From world class prosperity to depts and downsizing”</p> <p>3. Workshops (country presentations)</p> <p>4. Discussion, conclusions</p>	<p>Ireland)</p> <p>2. Margret Björnsdottir, Director of Institute and part-time Lecturer, Institute of Public Management and Politics, Department of Political Science, University of Iceland</p> <p>3. Representatives of the countries</p> <p>4. Annika Uudelepp, Member of the Executive Board and Director of Program Governance and Civil Society Program, Praxis</p>
Results / Learning points	<p>The evaluation scores of the participants are attached (annex). The presentations and the following discussions were judged of high value by the participants. It was particularly useful to have a common template and methodology for the country presentations, and as most the presentations followed the template, it was easier indeed to reach the targets of the seminar. It could be pointed out that more discussion with the (keynote) speakers could have taken place before the seminar. Although the organizers made suggestions about which issues to highlight, some of the speakers concentrated too much on the theoretical approach, leaving little time for the countries’ real experiences’. Nevertheless, the participants gave high marks to the overall effectiveness of the presenters’.</p>	
Day 2		
Date and location	05.02.2010 Tallinn	
List of main sessions / working groups	Title	Person in charge
	1. Workshops (country presentations)	1. Representatives of the countries
	2. Discussion about the research methodology	2. Katri Vintisa, Consultant
	3. The impact of the crisis on the governance and HRM in CEE	3. Tiina Randma-Liiv, Professor of Public Administration and Policy, Tallinn Technical University
	4. Final conclusions	4. Annika Uudelepp, Member of the Executive Board and Director of Program Governance and Civil Society Program, Praxis Damir Ahmetovic
Results /	The evaluation scores of the participants are attached (annex).	

Learning points	<p>Again, the presentations and the following discussions were judged of high value by the participants. The discussion about the methodology achieved its two targets: to agree on main points etc and to decrease the possibility for misunderstandings in the follow-up to the seminar.</p> <p>The presentation delivered by Prof Tiina Randma-Liiv, about the civil service in the time of crises, at the end of the seminar contributed to seeing the presentations delivered during the two days of the seminar in a larger perspective.</p>
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Materials / Outputs

Title	Author/s	Format of the document
Economic Crisis and Public Sector Reform: Lessons from Ireland	Professor Niamh Hardiman (University College Dublin, Ireland)	<i>Ppt and word</i>
Iceland 2000-2012 “From world class prosperity to depts and downsizing”	Margret Björnsdottir, Director of Institute and part-time Lecturer, Institute of Public Management and Politics, Department of Political Science, University of Iceland	<i>Ppt</i>
The impact of the crisis on the governance and HRM in CEE	Tiina Randma-Liiv, Professor of Public Administration and Policy, Tallinn Technical University	<i>Ppt</i>
Research methodology	Katri Vintisa, Consultant	<i>Ppt and word</i>
Country contributions (10) Azerbaijan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Estonia, FYR Macedonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Serbia, Ukraine	Representatives of countries	<i>Ppt</i> <i>All in electronic format</i>

Summary of the achievements

(comparison with relevant aspects of the MCA Action plan)

Intended Output	Relevant Activities	Performance Indicators	Results achieved
<i>Output 2: Selected public administrators have received in-depth training on specific issues of restructuring the government – workshops</i>	<p>2.1. Agreement on agenda and participants of workshops</p> <p>2.2. Selection of lecturers and participants</p> <p>2.3. Organisation of events</p> <p>2.5. Workshop 2 “Human Resource Development” takes</p>	<p>1. At least 15 public administrators from region have increased their knowledge</p> <p>2. At least 7 countries have prepared country reports (questionnaires)</p>	<p>1. 21 public administrators from region have increased their knowledge.</p> <p>2. 10 countries have prepared country reports (according to the same methodology) and presented these during the seminar</p>

	place in Estonia 2.6. Evaluation of results		
<i>Output 3: Public administrators in the region and abroad have an access to the information of countries on selected topics – questionnaires and comparative reviews</i>	3.3. Work on questionnaires in the workshop 3.4. Work on comparative issues in workshops		

Evaluation

Did the event delivery upon its original objectives? And if now, why?	<p>The event did achieve the objectives. The main purpose of the seminar was to enhance the knowledge of, and to facilitate sharing of experiences amongst selected public administrators in the area of human resource management. In addition, the seminar was supposed to be the opportunity to give input for comparative study on human resources management that will be conducted as a follow-up activity.</p> <p>As there will be also follow up of the seminar – the comparative study- it will give a possibility to have a unique source of information about the actual issue of the crises about which there is no (or not easily available and comparative) information available at the moment.</p>
Did the event meet the expectations of the participants? And if now, why?	According to the feedback of the participants, all participants rated highly the content of the seminar (53% of participants thought the content was excellent and 47% good). All participants also rated highly the selection and mix of topics presented (50% excellent and 50% good)
How effective were the trainer/s, facilitator/s, expert/s?	According to the participant’s evaluation the overall presenters effectiveness was highly rated (36% participants though it was excellent and 64% good).
How useful in general was the whole event? What may be the effect of this event?	<p>The event might be evaluated as very important. As the crisis is still very recent, it is not possible to analyze yet the whole impact of the crisis on the public administration, however it is possible to analyze and compare the actions of the governments and their impact or consequences so far. Moreover, the seminar provided an overview of the trends in the field of the human resources management in public administration, allowing the participants to identify common trends and differences between the countries represented.</p> <p>The feedback from the participants was overall positive, including the future impact on their everyday work. All participants thought that seminar increased their knowledge of public sector human resource management measures in time of crisis (40% strongly agree 60% agree). Most of the participants also felt that as a result of this seminar, they are more motivated to push or advocate for change in human resource management practices in their ministry or organization (20% strongly agree, 53% agree, 27% neutral).</p>

Other comments and remarks	
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<if a separate evaluation report exists, please put it in the annex>

Please, describe the follow-up to the event (if any)

The follow-up will be the comparative research on challenges for public sector human resource development in economic downturn. The purpose of the research will be:

- To consolidate experiences and lessons learned, focusing on the challenges and their impact on human resource situation in future;
- To draw the main conclusions;
- To identify the main trends and approaches to public sector human resource management (HRM);
- To produce recommendations for future development.

The research will focus on

- the activities *done* or *planned* in the field of human resource management of public sector (with the emphasis on on-going initiatives or activities approved by the government) ;
- the reasons for carrying them out;
- the possible consequences of above mentioned actions in short, middle, and long term.

The research will include the cases of the following countries: Azerbaijan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Estonia, FYR Macedonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Serbia, Ukraine. The deadline for the final report is 29. 03.2010.

Please, describe eventual challenges and problems regarding organization of the event

There were no major problems. The organizers from the Ministry of Finance received valuable assistance and guidance from the UNDP RCPAR representatives as well as from the main project partner – Latvian State Chancellery. As this was the local organizers' first experience in organizing an event with the UNDP RCPAR, it was valuable learning experience, not the least with regards to the procedures etc involved in organizing such event.

One lesson learned was that more time is needed for the tender and contracting the speakers and researcher, as the technical issues might take more time than planned.

Please, indicate suggestions and recommendation for future organization of similar events

Guidelines or a set of suggestions could be provided by the UNDP RCPAR to the local organizers, concerning both the content (e.g. the possibility to invite international speakers) and the technical/administrative requirements (tenders for the speakers etc). Such guidelines would be helpful for local organizers.

List of annexes:

- A. The summary of the feedback from the participants