



**CEDEFOP**

European Centre for the Development  
of Vocational Training



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

## Study visit group report

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| <b>Group No</b>           | 245  |
| <b>Title of the visit</b> | New Trends in Training and Development of Civil Servants |
| <b>Topic</b>              | Reforms in National Education and Training Systems       |
| <b>City, country</b>      | Warsaw, Poland   |
| <b>Type of visit</b>      | Mixed  |
| <b>Dates of visit</b>     | 19/10/2009 – 21/10/2009                                  |
| <b>Group reporter</b>     | Dagmar WALLER  |

### Introduction

The 10 participants on this study visit came from a variety of countries and perspectives, including those responsible for the development training and those involved in delivery. We especially appreciated the mix of Eastern and Western European countries and of course Turkey which provided an excellent opportunity to explore and understand different approaches to the training of public administrations at national, regional and local level.

We would like to thank the study visit organisers, Krajowa Szkoła Administracji Publicznej, for the time and effort taken to make this study visit so informative. Their warm welcome, generosity and humour added much to our visit. In particular we would like to thank Michal Mierzwa for his friendliness, support and patience.

The additional attendance of George Kostakis, CEDEFOP, and Jo Hawley, GHK, added much to our discussions and we hope that our experiences will help in the future development of this programme.

### Findings

This section summarises the findings of the group while visiting host institutions, discussing issues with the hosts and within the group. You will be reflecting on what you learnt every day. But to put them together and give an overall picture, you need to devote a special session to prepare the final report on the last day of the visit.

**In this section, it is important that you describe not only things you learnt about the host country but also what you learnt about the countries represented by group members.**

1. One of the objectives of the study visits programme is to exchange examples of good practice among hosts and participants. Cedefop will select well-described projects/programmes/initiatives and disseminate them to former participants and a wider public, including potential partners for future projects. Therefore it is important that you identify and describe all aspects that, in your view, make these projects/programmes/initiatives successful and worth exploring.

Describe each of the good practices you learnt about during the visit (both from the hosts and from one another) indicating the following:

| title of the project/programme/initiative       | country | name of the institution that implements it (if possible, provide a website) | contact person (if possible) who presented the programme to the group                                       | whom the project/programme/initiative addresses | what features of the project/programme/initiative make it an example of good practice   |
|---|---------|---|---|---|---|
| National School of Public Administration (KSAP) | Poland  | KSAP<br>www.ksap.gov.pl   | Various including<br>Dr R Sobiech<br>Dr Martin Sakowicz<br>Prof Dr hab Artur Nowak-Far<br>Dr James Richards | Civil Servants                                  | <p>KSAP School is dedicated to training civil servants to increase administrative capacity. It provides an 18-month initial training for prospective higher civil servants and continuous training for all levels (as a private contractor) including tailored language training in specific subject context. The institute is an independent body within the governmental structure, reporting to the Prime Minister and supported by government funding. It has been in operation for approximately 20 years.</p> <p>Initial training is interdisciplinary based on skills, knowledge and attitude. It is fully funded by government with students supported financially during training. All graduates will be offered a middle ranking position following completion of the initial training course. Although no formal impact evaluation has been carried out most graduates stay in the public service for longer than the required 5 years giving a good return on the government investment.</p> <p>Both initial and continuous training is evolving to respond to changing demands e.g. preparation for taking on Presidency of European Council.</p> <p>Language training is very important, and is tailored to the</p> |

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|   |          |   |                                   |                       | language of public administration using actual examples e.g. European court judgements.  |
| Training as an improvement tool                           | Bulgaria | Ministry of Education and Science<br><a href="http://www.mon.bg">www.mon.bg</a>                                 | Ivan Atanasov                     | Higher Education      | Use of training to lead improvement in specific issue – development, implementation and impact of anticorruption strategy in higher education sector. Elements include considering the view point of students  |
| New legal requirements for recruitment into Civil Service | Poland   | Civil Service Department of the Polish Government<br><a href="http://www.kprm.gov.pl">www.kprm.gov.pl</a>       | Katarzyna Strzeminska             | Civil Servants        | Detailed guidance for recruitment based on 3 principals of openness, transparency and competitiveness to ensure a common approach across all civil service (not provincial/local) to obtain the best candidates.   |
| Integrated Management and Development Training Programme  | Bulgaria | Institute of Public Administration<br><a href="http://www.ipa.government.bg/">http://www.ipa.government.bg/</a> | Rumiana Velinova                  | Senior civil servants | The programme developed as integrated training on managerial skills, consisting of 3 modules and additional practical work at home. The Dutch experience has been used as a benchmark, in particular the Senior Civil Servants candidates Programme, designed to develop leaders at the upper level of the civil service. The core lesson learnt for BG was the need to firstly change the attitudes and mentality of those attending.                 |
| Bank of Talents   | Poland   | National Bank of Poland<br><a href="http://www.nbp.pl">www.nbp.pl</a>   | Izabela Kozlowski                 | All employees         | Competency approach in the particular environment of the Central Bank that is separate from employee appraisal. Consists of a high level of detail to reflect the needs of specialist staff. Involvement of staff throughout the development providing buy in and commitment to process  |
| Promoting staff mobility                                  | Portugal | Camare Municipal do Porto<br><a href="http://www.cm-porto.pt">www.cm-porto.pt</a>                               | Maria Sofia Huet Bacelar Sa Alves | All employees         | Project to promote change and up skill workforce in order to deliver services with reducing staff levels. Central team will match individual profiles to staff needed following requests from individual employee or manager to change role. Utilises external internships (2 weeks or longer) to other agencies or countries to change attitudes and working practices with significant support given to introduction of changes as result of visits. |
| Training to address organisational change                 | France   | Conseil Regional d'Ile de France<br><a href="http://www.iledef.fr">www.iledef.fr</a>                            | Catherine Odin                    |                       | The recent transfer of the school system (support not academic staff) to local government has led to a significant increase in staff with very low skill levels but a 10%  |

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|   |    | <a href="http://rance.fr">rance.fr</a>  |               |  | reduction is needed in the 2010/11 budget. Training is very important in the French public sector and is being used to improve the motivation of this group of staff despite challenging financial circumstances  |
| Focus on the needs of the customer/client | UK | West Midlands Leaders Board<br><a href="http://www.wmleadersboard.gov.uk">www.wmleadersboard.gov.uk</a> | Dagmar Waller | 33 Local Authorities in the West Midlands region | The aim of West Midlands Leaders Board is to reflect the needs of the local authorities not only in the provision of training (based on needs identified by individual authorities) but in influencing national government policy and use of government agency funding to meet regional challenges. |

*We felt it was important to highlight some concerns so have inserted the following additional table*

Have participants identified any areas of concern regarding best practice examples that were not resolved during the study visit.

The autonomy of KSAP – is the balance correct between government control and independence? Funding could also be provided to a structure outside government but this could reduce the ability to attract and place graduates.

Recruitment to KSAP Initial Course - Practically KSAP is not open for marginalized groups; it offers very limited support for the disabled and no additional programmes to support those unable to complete formal education to gain entrance requirements (Masters, good standard of one foreign language and then pass an entrance examination). Both of these groups could contribute significantly to the training programme and the future development of the Civil Service. In addition we had concerns about the discriminatory age restriction of 32 or younger.

KSAP does not yet have systematic impact evaluation (monitoring indicators are currently being developed but these are not systematically applied yet and do not seem to consider impact. The current focus is on the management of training, not its impact.)

2. The study visits programme aims to promote and support policy development and cooperation in lifelong learning. That is why it is important to know what you learnt about such policies and their implementation during your visit. You are invited to describe your findings concerning the following:

2.1. Approaches taken by participating countries (both host and participants') regarding the theme of the visit. Are there any similar approaches/measures in participating countries? What aspects are similar and why? What aspects are different and why?

The aims of public administration training structures and arrangements are similar across all participating countries i.e. to recruit the best and deliver quality public services. But countries have different approaches due primarily to different government structures.

There are national schools of public administration in a number of countries (Poland, France, UK, Bulgaria, Germany, Turkey, Portugal). There is a university faculty dedicated to public administration in Hungary. Some offer both initial and continuous training – Turkey only offers continuous. Some focus only on central civil servants.

There are clear pathways for entry into Public Administration in most countries with clear recruitment procedures. Approaches vary e.g. centralised in Poland and not in Bulgaria, use of examinations in Poland. There are different entry requirements in the different countries, e.g. Bachelors, Master degree which to some extent

depends on functions being recruited for. We felt that recruitment to the Polish Civil service needed flexibility to reflect individuals' experiences and that the requirement for a Masters degree for senior posts is a barrier.

Some countries offer programmes to support minority groups to enter the civil service. E.g. the Bulgarian programme for Roma and for the disabled. In Hungary there is also a drive to recruit the Roma minority group.

There is a general acceptance across all participating countries that training should be based on needs analysis, but approaches vary with some being top down and others bottom up. Portugal uses a system that combines both individual and organisational analysis. There was broad agreement to a competence-based framework approach but in some countries (e.g. Bulgaria) the value of this is underestimated.

The transparency of the relationship between politics and public administration varies between participating countries. In Turkey, according to law, there is a clear distinction between civil service and political positions and in Hungary, civil servants cannot be a member of a political party. In Poland as KSAP is funded by the government, we are concerned that it cannot be truly independent. The reliance on government funding also raises a question regarding the sustainability of the school especially as a consequence of the current economic circumstances.

## 2.2. Challenges faced by participating countries (including host) in their efforts to implement policies related to the theme of the visit. What are the challenges? Are they common challenges? If so, why? If not, why not?

We felt that the major challenge facing all participating countries is the increasing pressures on budgets and we expect this will impact significantly on funding available for training. There is a clear need to do more with less which requires improved efficiency and raises a number of process issues, some of which are outlined below. There is a need to create sustainability in training programmes by planning for the cessation of current funding arrangements e.g. EU funding. A significant proportion of specific funding is related to specific issues, e.g. Anti-corruption training (BG, PL) and perhaps more could be done to utilise these.

Targeting top civil servants for training and development is an issue for many participants with the main challenge being to convince them of the value of training and to take on new methods. Success here will also have a major impact on the maintenance of training budgets. Life long learning should not just be about top managers, upskilling of all levels of staff is crucial to developing and delivering services e.g. in UK, France, Portugal.

Equity of access is a major challenge to all countries, but more so where entrance examinations are used as a key public administration recruitment method. Many countries are developing particular programmes targeting disadvantaged groups.

Lack of continuity in public administration due to political change was raised in relation to Hungary but is a problem across all participating countries.

There are a number of challenges relating to the processes of identification and measurement of training. Although these relate to all participating countries, some appear to be more advanced than others. Identification of training needs, utilising both top down and bottom up approaches, is essential to ensure provision is related to need and that effective and efficient training is provided. Training provided should be of an appropriate standard and therefore the importance of quality assurance needs to be recognised. There are a number of alternatives but individual organisations should select the most appropriate mechanism for their individual circumstances taking into account time and resources required. A major challenge is the move from measuring attendance on training courses to the introduction of effective impact evaluation that can measure the effect of these both on the individual and the provision of services. This will become more important as reducing funding impacts upon training programmes.

We should also consider more carefully how innovative approaches could be developed and best practice shared, both within our own countries and wider within Europe. A key challenge is how opportunities such as this study visit and internships are utilised and consequently how staff are encouraged and supported to introduce different approaches. Mobility of civil servants (from country to country) is not yet a reality in many countries, unlike the

private sector, although there are secondments to European Institutions e.g. European Commission, Cedefop, ETF. (Portugal)

A major challenge raised by Turkey is the need to reform the salary system within public administration to provide internal equity. All participating countries may wish to consider the extent to which salary systems reflect performance.

2.3. Name and describe effective and innovative solutions you have identified that participating countries (both host and participants) apply to address the challenges mentioned in question 2.2. Please mention specific country examples.

Training in itself is part of the solution to most of the challenges identified above, enabling civil service workers to face new challenges and to become innovative. We need less “navel gazing” or focus on our own structures and processes and much more thinking outside the box!

We were impressed by the use of European funding in Poland for example, but this does not provide sustainability. There is a real need to learn from others, for example social partners being involved in France and Porto’s approach to internships. A solution is to find alternative, less costly training methods including action learning and coaching (e.g. German university for counselling training, UK project in the West Midlands to develop coaching/mentoring skills in top level management).

Although we did not discuss in detail how senior managers could be targeted, we were informed of an interesting approach in the Netherlands. We also felt that the involvement of managers in specific projects in Portugal that used training to improve service delivery was a useful mechanism.

The methods used by the National Bank of Poland and the Polish Department of Civil Service to identify training needs appeared to be very effective although driven from the top. This has led to effective language training designed around the requirements of civil servants and the provision of targeted and specialist training for example to support preparation for the EU Presidency.

Both France and Portugal utilise Quality Systems (CAF/ISO9001) and their experiences both in introducing these and their benefits would be of significant use to others considering adopting similar approaches. Similarly Porto’s use of impact evaluation that examines the outcomes of training is of significant interest.

There were some good examples of learning from other countries, in Turkey staff were supported in achieving Master’s degrees in other countries and Portugal utilises European funding to support internships.

2.4. Assessment of the transferability of policies and practices. Could any examples of good practice presented in this report be applied and transferred to other countries? If so, why? If not, why not?

Competency based training models similar to the National Bank of Poland could be introduced elsewhere but would require a significant time and resource commitment.

Performance appraisal is not automatically carried out in all participating countries and could be introduced as a way of identifying training needs from the bottom up but would require commitment at a senior level.

Participation in national / transnational actions for mutual learning and networking could be increased by utilising existing networks and EU funding to learn from others experiences (perhaps this could be considered as a theme for a future study visit).

A National skills strategy demonstrates a clear commitment to driving up the levels of skills but this is a political

decision and may not be considered a priority in all member countries.

The good practice we have seen in targeting training (for example a specific national issue such as preparing for the EU Presidency or in retraining staff to reflecting changing roles and structures) could be easily transferred as long as those responsible for this retain a clear focus on need. The introduction of formal needs analysis is crucial to this.

Processes to recognise and certificate an individual's experience as opposed to qualifications (e.g. UK National Vocational Qualifications) and to record achievements (e.g. using Europass) could be introduced and would go some way to addressing equality of access issues but again would require commitment at a political and senior management level

3. Creating networks of experts, building partnerships for future projects is another important objective of the study visit programme.

Please state whether and which ideas for future cooperation have evolved during meetings and discussions.

A possible cooperation project between Porto and West Midlands/other countries/regions in order to facilitate internships for public servants has been identified but needs further exploration.

Exploring how authorities in Portugal could learn from the French experience of challenges faced by civil servants following changes in education responsibilities at the regional level as similar changes will be introduced in Portugal in the future.

Germany will continue to work with Polish National Agency on a common Leonardo project regarding pupil exchange.

### **TO SUM UP:**

4. What is the most interesting/useful information that the group believes should be communicated to others? To whom, do you think, this information will be of most interest?

**Target group:** Decision makers and top managers with responsibility for budget setting, HR development, strategic development of Public Administration.

**Key Message:** "Keep on Training!" i.e. cutting training isn't a saving, it's a cost!

We felt that the following Chinese proverb quoted by one of the participants summed up the importance of training - *When planning for a year, plant corn, when planning for a decade plant trees, when planning for life, train and educate people.*