

Division for Public Economics and Public Administration

Department of Economic and Social Affairs



www.unpan.org/dpepa.asp

Mission Statement

To assist Member States in ensuring that their governance systems, administrative and financial institutions, human resources and policy development processes function in an effective and participatory manner by fostering dialogue, promoting and sharing information and knowledge and providing technical and advisory services.

Message from the Director: the UN Programme in Public Administration and Development



Today we live in an era unlike any other – a period in history dominated by constant social, political and commercial change. Seldom has the confluence of technology, resources and imagination so dramatically transformed how nations govern, how economies are driven and how cultures interact.

States, regardless of their size or remoteness, are now linked by multiple and extensive social, political and economic networks creating new and demanding challenges for policy makers. Even to the smallest of countries, public policy issues are becoming increasingly transnational in character and management practices increasingly convergent.

The complexities of this new form of interdependence have changed the traditional role of the State. Forward-looking nations recognize that a sound foundation of participatory governance equips them to better respond to the challenges and opportunities created by globalization.

Globalization has led to the development of new roles, relationships and partnerships among government, the civil society and the private sector. This has enhanced the influence of the public on governance systems and administrative institutions. During the decade of the 1990s, public administration evolved into a more holistic discipline, highlighting the interaction of its institutions for the benefit of the civil society.

Managing the public sector in today's environment of constant change has become a demanding challenge for policy makers, service delivery managers and civil servants – a challenge that is especially daunting for those in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. For over 50 years the United Nations, through its **Programme in Public Administration and Development**, has assisted Member States in their efforts to strengthen, improve and reform their governance systems and administrative institutions.

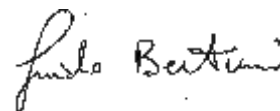
The Division for Public Economics and Public Administration (DPEPA), which currently implements the Programme, has been entrusted with the important responsibility of ensuring that the public economic, administrative and financial institutions of developing countries and countries with economies in transition function in a sound, participatory and transparent manner.

A country's public sector is, arguably, the most important factor in the successful implementation of its national development agenda. DPEPA focuses its knowledge, expertise and professionalism on critical substantive areas that are essential to the successful implementation of national programmes and policies. These include:

- Governance systems and institutions
- Decentralization
- The changing role of the State and civil service reform
- Integrity, transparency and accountability systems
- Public policy and public economics
- Public finance and financial administration
- The use of information technology in government
- The role of the public sector in post-conflict reconstruction

By disseminating information and knowledge, delivering technical assistance and providing an international forum for the exchange of national experiences, DPEPA assists Governments in strengthening their policy-making systems, reinforcing their human resources capacity and improving the overall efficiency of their governance systems and institutions.

DPEPA's primary comparative advantage is its extensive knowledge base and professional expertise. Such resources enable DPEPA to identify emerging challenges and issues quickly and to respond to them effectively. Through its broad global reach and distinct mandate, DPEPA plays a pivotal role in the development process.



Guido Bertucci
Director
DPEPA/UNDESA



WHAT IS THE DIVISION FOR PUBLIC ECONOMICS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION?

Within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations, the Division for Public Economics and Public Administration (DPEPA) is entrusted by the General Assembly to implement the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Development, and serves as a coordinating entity in this area. The Division works in partnership with relevant United Nations departments and agencies and with other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

The Division's comparative advantage lies in its ability to identify and respond to emerging global trends and challenges, such as information technology and knowledge management, while continuously maintaining a strong substantive presence in traditional areas of public administration, governance, policy analysis, public economics, public finance and private sector development.

WHAT ARE OUR MAIN THEMES OF FOCUS?

- **Governance systems and institutions** – capacity of electoral management bodies, parliaments and judicial systems; management of diversity and the management of change; developing legal and institutional frameworks; legal and environmental context of the participation of the civil society; the role of governance institutions in the democratization of global policy debate; promoting international cooperation and regional integration to achieve economic and social objectives.
- **Decentralization** – deconcentration and devolution; capacity of local governments; role of local governments in service delivery; fiscal decentralization; decentralization and central-local relations; the role of civil society in local partnerships for development.
- **The changing role of the State and civil service reform** – new capacities of the State to meet the demands of globalization; process of civil service reform; management of innovation and development in the public sector; human resources management and development; performance monitoring and evaluation; the provision of public services; fostering partnerships between the State, civil society and the private sector; basic data on the public sector.
- **Integrity, transparency and accountability systems** – the role and capacity of oversight institutions; causes and consequences of corruption; reform strategies; civil service professionalism and ethics; domestic and cross-border corruption; the role of civil society and the private sector.
- **Public policy and public economics** – macroeconomic governance; regulatory policies and practices; competitive policies and practices; public-private partnerships; privatization and public enterprise reform.
- **Public finance and financial administration** – public resource mobilization and management; tax policy and administration; international taxation treaties; budgeting and accounting systems; auditing and controls.
- **The use of information technology in government** – e-government as a tool to achieve various goals; information and communication technology (ICT) and knowledge management policies for the public sector; online advisory and training services through the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN).
- **The role of the public sector in post-conflict reconstruction** – capacity of the public sector to design and manage post-conflict reconstruction policies and practices at national and local levels; creating or strengthening appropriate institutions for programme implementation.

WHAT ARE THE SERVICES WE OFFER?

SUPPORT FOR INTERGOVERNMENTAL PROCESSES

The Division assists the United Nations intergovernmental policy deliberations by providing information on and policy-oriented analysis of the role of public administration, public finance and public economics in the development process via the United Nations Committee of Experts in Public Administration. It contributes to the identification of options, mechanisms and practices instrumental in strengthening key governance institutions, in promoting the rule of law, in increasing the participation of citizens in the decision-making process and in creating an enabling environment for public sector effectiveness.

COMPARATIVE POLICY RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

The Division undertakes policy research and analysis on governance systems and institutions, decentralization, the changing role of the State and civil service reform, integrity, transparency and accountability systems, public economics and public policy, public finance and financial administration, the use of information technology in government, and capacity for conflict prevention and managing diversity. The types of publications and outputs include: analytical reports, case studies, country profiles, technical project reports, statistical database, training materials, major development/trend reports and newsletters.

INFORMATION SHARING AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES

The Division assists Governments, through its Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), in improving public administration and finance systems by facilitating access to information, customizing and disseminating good practices and providing an international forum for the exchange of experiences.

TECHNICAL COOPERATION

The Division, upon requests from Member States, assists in providing information, methodologies, assessments and policy proposals concerning governance systems and institutions, decentralization, the changing role of the State and civil service reform, integrity, transparency and accountability systems, public economics and public policy, public finance and financial administration, the use of information technology in government, and capacity for conflict prevention and managing diversity.

It helps strengthen the capacity of Governments of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, at their request, by providing advisory services at the country level in needs assessment, policy analysis and development, implementation programme design and development, capacity-building process and human resources development and training.

WHO ARE OUR PARTNERS?

- National and regional institutions
- UN agencies and programmes and financial institutions, including the World Bank and regional development banks
- Networks of parliamentarians, mayors and civil society organizations
- Other global and regional institutions

What is the *World Public Sector Report*? *Globalization and the State*

The *World Public Sector Report* is an important research and analytical tool that the Division produces every two years. Its purpose is to provide policy makers, scholars and civil society with relevant research findings, information and data on issues related to the public sector. The *Report* reviews the most current issues and trends in public administration and public economics, and analyses the challenges Governments face in reforming particular areas of their public sector. It is also intended to facilitate the discussion of relevant public sector issues on the agenda of United Nations intergovernmental bodies, such as the Economic and Social Council.

The *Report* is presented in two main parts. The first part is devoted to a specific theme of relevance to public administration and development covering different regions and countries. The second part elaborates on the conceptual issues and the measurement of different dimensions of the public sector.

The theme that has been chosen for this inaugural issue is Globalization and the State. The choice has been dictated partly by the controversy that still surrounds this subject, and partly by the need to underscore the importance of strengthening the State and its institutions in a globalizing world. The *Report* is the confluence of inputs from many different sources. It has drawn on the work and views of prominent world personalities and institutions, as well as the reports of Meetings of Experts on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance, which bring together a representative group of eminent practitioners and scholars from every part of the world.

The *Report* analyses what opportunities globalization presents, why some countries have been able to take full advantage of globalization while others have lagged behind, and how to make globalization work for all. This brings to the forefront the role of the State in a globalizing world. How is globalization affecting the role and functions of the nation-State? How should the State be redesigned so that people can benefit from globalization? What State capacities are most needed to respond to the challenges of globalization? Answering these questions entails reviewing three basic dimensions of the State: its institutions, administrative capacity and social policies.

What is UNPAN? www.unpan.org

DPEPA was entrusted by the United Nations General Assembly in late 1999 to develop an important programme entitled the "United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN)" for implementation.

UNPAN is designed to establish an electronic platform linking the regional and national institutions devoted to public administration and finance online for information exchange, experience sharing and on-the-job training in the area of public sector policy and management. Its aim is to build the capacity of these regional and national institutions to access, process and disseminate relevant information via up-to-date information and communication technologies (ICTs) for the promotion of better public administration.



UNPAN is a dynamic process, and not a static outcome, which aims at responding to the needs of its users and addresses their most critical areas of work.

UNPAN's immediate beneficiaries are public administration-related regional and national institutions. Its ultimate clients are government agencies, NGOs, the private sector and academic institutions. Its main focus themes cover: (a) public economic policy; (b) governance and institutional building; (c) civil service and public sector reform; (d) management innovation and development; and (e) public finance. It provides five major online services/products, including: (a) information; (b) training; (c) technical advisory services; (d) conferencing; and (e) worldwide directories.

UNPAN works in close partnership with a group of two international institutions and 14 regional institutions in public administration and finance, representing all regions of the world.

The UNPAN online network serves as a portal for public administration and finance and is the only such network in the world today.



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