



# RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION OF THE EUPAN STRATEGY PAPER

DECEMBER 2024

Table of Contents

<b>Summary</b> .....	3
<b>Introduction</b> .....	4
<b>1. Analysis of the reports from the presidencies carried out in the period of the current EUPAN Strategy Paper</b> .....	4
<b>CZECHIA</b> .....	6
<b>SWEDEN</b> .....	9
<b>SPAIN</b> .....	12
<b>BELGIUM</b> .....	14
<b>HUNGARY</b> .....	17
<b>2. Results of the questionnaire on the EUPAN Strategy Paper July 2022– June 2025</b> 20	
<b><i>Strategic domains and topics of interest for the new SP</i></b> .....	21
Transformation of the civil service and HR policies.....	23
Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet users’ expectations.....	24
Organizational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and “greening” of public administrations .....	26
<b><i>Impact of crises (such as Russian-Ukrainian war, economic and energy crises) on EUPAN network</i></b> .....	27
Suitability of topics in the current SP in regard to needs arising from the crisis .....	28
Flexibility of the content of the currently valid SP .....	29
The current SP enables the Presidencies sufficient continuity when designing their Rolling Programmes.....	30
The relations of EUPAN with other networks dedicated to public administration.....	31
Supporting mobility and staff exchanges among the EUPAN member states .....	31
<b><i>Tools in the EUPAN network</i></b> .....	32
Indicators for measuring the impact of the EUPAN network.....	32
The use of EUPAN results .....	33
<b>Attachment</b> .....	1

## Summary

The period of present Strategy Paper (hereinafter: SP) can be characterised by a short relief after the shock of the pandemic, which was followed almost immediately by the Russian–Ukrainian war and the resulting refugee and energy crises, and we are facing a future shadowed by serious sustainability problems of our planet. However, even in these extraordinary circumstances, European public administrations proved to be resilient, innovative and efficient in governing the emergency situations and responding to the needs of their citizens. Indeed, they will have to continue to do so in the future, too.

The objective of this paper is to provide an evaluation of the SP in the light of the last two and a half years of its implementation, as a first step towards the development of the EUPAN strategy for the period between July 2025 and June 2028. For this purpose, an analysis of the presidency reports is presented in the first chapter, and the results of the questionnaire on the subject are introduced in the second.

In 2021, the Slovenian Presidency carried out an in depth evaluation of the previous SP, and the conclusion was drawn that it was flexible enough and the topics were set broadly enough to address the issues deriving the changed situation from different angles. The evaluation was followed by an update of the SP which was carried out by the WL 5 Secretariat of the French Presidency in cooperation with the Directors General.

Based upon the present evaluation, it can be stated that as a result of the excellent work of the French Presidency the SP of the current period proved to be sufficient in providing the strategic framework for the network activities. According to the analysis of the presidency reports there were numerous and valuable activities under each redefined strategic domains, and attention was given also to the cross-cutting issues such as digital and green transformation. This is underlined by the results of the questionnaire. While admitting that there might be methods leading to more differentiated results than the applied 6-point Likert-scale, no doubt that most of the examples given under the strategic domains indicated as important or very important, are still very relevant and advised to be taken forward when developing the next SP.

However, responses indicating ambiguity or less interest on behalf of the members in certain areas should also be taken into consideration and discussed. Is this a result of having paid enough attention to it during the present period or a signal of changing national priorities or capacities?

Under each strategic domain, comments were written by respondents on the experiences and challenges providing valuable guidance for designing the new SP. In addition, responses to the questions on the impact of crises, the tools of the network and the use of EUPAN results offer a lot of thoughts for consideration as well.

## Introduction

The EUPAN Strategy Paper is a short, focused statement document providing continuity and consistency of actions between presidencies and equipping network members with the necessary material on topics of common interest, while providing the flexibility required to take into account new challenges. The present SP is the result of a collaborative effort that began with the evaluation of the previous strategy under the Slovenian Presidency, continued in workshops during the EUPAN Working Level meeting, was consulted with all the working level experts and validated at the EUPAN Directors General meeting in Paris on June 15 and 16th, 2022.

As a result of this collaborative work there were three major strategic domains set: *Transformation of the civil service and HR policies, Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet users' expectations, and Organizational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and "greening" of public administrations.* In addition, attention was drawn also to cross-cutting issues such as *Digital transformation and its impact in transforming both the organization of work and the delivery of public services, and The green transformation and the "greening" of public services.* Under each domain various examples were given for themes to be addressed by the EUPAN presidencies by using tools in accordance with the EUPAN Handbook. Such a tool is the rolling program which constitutes the coherence with the SP and the successive presidency programs. The importance of dialogue with other networks at European and international level is also stressed, and special emphasis is given to the European mobility of civil servants.

As we are approaching the last (Polish) Presidency of the current SP, according to the EUPAN Handbook it is the task of the WL 5 Secretariat under the Hungarian Presidency to carry out the evaluation of the document, and hand it over to the Polish Presidency which latter is responsible for the development of the new SP for the next period of three years. In addition, an updated trend analysis and SWOT, a stakeholder' analysis and an updated playing field overview is going to be carried out by the Polish colleagues.

### 1. Analysis of the reports from the presidencies carried out in the period of the current EUPAN Strategy Paper

The present SP that is set for the period of July 2022 – July 2025, contains three specific strategic domains that were agreed by EUPAN members:

- Transformation of the civil service and HR policies;
- Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet users' expectations;
- Organizational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and "greening" of public administrations.

Furthermore, there are two cross-cutting issues identified that have to be payed a particular attention to when implementing the SP:

- Digital transformation and its impact in transforming both the organization of work and the delivery of public services;
- The green transformation and the "greening" of public administrations.

In the period of July 2022 to June 2025 the countries presiding over the EUPAN network are the following: Czechia (1<sup>st</sup> of July 2022 – 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2022), Sweden (1<sup>st</sup> of January –

30<sup>th</sup> of June 2023), Spain (1<sup>st</sup> of July – 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2023), Belgium (1<sup>st</sup> of January – 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2024), Hungary (1<sup>st</sup> of July – 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2024) and Poland (1<sup>st</sup> of January – 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2025)<sup>1</sup>.

This chapter is going to focus on the analysis of the presidency reports, in particular the activities of each presidency and the correlation between the strategic domains and two areas: presidency deliverables and workshop topics.

### General observations

The EUPAN presidency reports of the given period vary a great deal according to their format, length and content. The most detailed report was delivered by the Czech Presidency including the survey responses on political leadership in the ministries, while others provided rather a summary or conclusion of their term, and produced additional deliverables during their presidencies. It should be noted here, that there is no reference in the EUPAN Handbook concerning the presidency report.

However, the Handbook is very concrete on the Rolling Programme, which “operates in a fluid 18-month programming perspective and is designed within a perspective of 3 active Presidencies (the present Presidency and the upcoming two Presidencies), the previous Presidency and together with the EC to ensure continuity.” Although the programmes of the presidencies were presented within the framework of the Rolling Programme during the term of the previous SP, this was done only in rare cases in the period of our analysis. Since the Rolling Programme is constituting the close link of the successive EUPAN Presidencies with the SP, its more visible application is recommended.

During the evaluation, the Presidency Programmes provided guidance in establishing correlation between the topics tackled at the EUPAN events and the strategic domains of the SP. Indeed, in some cases this would have been difficult in their absence, because some of the topics were related to more than one domain or cross-cutting issue.

When looking at the following table it can be observed that the Czech and the Belgian presidencies organised more meetings and related events than the others, and the EUPAN community is very thankful to them for that. This is not to say that the others are falling behind as to their professional outcomes, but it is rather a result of the differences between the resources available for the host organisations.

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<sup>1</sup> The analysis of the Polish Presidency will be supplemented at the end of their presidency, taking place in the first half of 2025.

**EUPAN meetings and related events**

	Czech Republic	Sweden	Spain	Belgium	Hungary
<b>EUPAN 5 WL Secretariat</b>	Online, 5 September 2022	Online, 28 February 2023	Online, 12 September 2023	Online, 9 January 2024	Online, 17 September 2024
<b>EUPAN 5 DG Secretariat</b>	Online, 31 October 2022	May 2023	Online, 13 November	Online, 16 January 2024 30 April, 2024	Online, 4 November 2024
<b>EUPAN Meeting WL</b>	Prague, 26-27 September 2022	Stockholm, 27-28 March 2023	Madrid, 4-5 October 2023	La Hulpe, 27-28 March 2024	Budapest, 7-8 October 2024
<b>EUPAN Meeting DG</b>	Prague, 24-25 November 2022	Uppsala, 1-2 June 2023	Madrid, 27-28 November 2023	Online 16 January 2024 Bruges, 28-29 May 2024	Budapest, 28-29 November
<b>EUPAN Ministerial meeting</b>	-	-	-	Ghent, 26-27 February 2024	-
<b>European CAF Users Event</b>	Prague, 19 October, 2022	-	-	-	-
<b>CAF National Correspondents Meeting</b>	Online, 29 September 2022	-	Madrid, 6 October 2023	-	Budapest, 9 October, 2024, (organised by EIPA)
<b>EUPAN Summer School</b>	-	-	Barcelona, 6-8 November 2023	Brussels, 13-16 May 2024	-

In the following sub-chapters, short abstracts are provided of the successive EUPAN presidency programmes during the given time period.

**CZECHIA**
**1<sup>st</sup> of July – 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2022**
**Czech Programme**

I. Transformation of the civil service and HR policies	II. Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations	III. Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
<p>Top public managers in transparent, effective and professional civil service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relation of top public management to political leadership of a public organisation</li> <li>• Terms and conditions of employment</li> <li>• Skills, competencies, learning culture and development</li> </ul>	<p>Ethical values in civil service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New trends in training in ethics for civil servants</li> <li>• Relationship between academia and public administration practitioners</li> <li>• Civil service values</li> <li>• Ethical infrastructure</li> </ul>	<p>Support of innovation in public administration with the use of digital technologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovative use of Big data for strategic development of public administration</li> </ul>

Under the first strategic domain **Transformation of the Civil Service and HR policies**, the issue of top public managers in a transparent, effective and professional civil service, two points were addressed: 1) relations between top senior civil servants and the political leadership of the Ministry, and 2) the international mobility of civil servants. Regarding the first point, a questionnaire was sent out aiming at mapping the situation in the EUPAN countries in terms of the organization of the political and civil service leadership, as well as the nature of their relationship, and it also touched upon the existence and functioning of other bodies supporting the political leadership. As to the second point, it can be concluded that the main benefits of an exchange lie in broadening civil servants' horizons and professional expertise. The exchange can be viewed as a factor increasing the prestige and attractiveness of the Civil Service as a vocation. Exchanges are also beneficial for organizations, because they provide inspiration for applying a different approach to find solutions to similar issues and problems across the countries.

Regarding the second strategic domain (**Transparent, Accessible, Resilient and Green Public Services that Meet Users' Expectations**), the topics of integrity and ethics in civil service were addressed in workshops on Civil Service Ethics Training and Education, Civil Service Ethics - Between Theory and Practice, and Ethics in Times of Crises. There were a good number of examples shared concerning training ethics and applying research results. Many delegates responded that there was no grave conflict between top civil servants and politicians, since the civil servants have clearly defined competences, which they complied with even during the time of crisis. Moreover, continuity plans, crisis teams and other institutes guiding the public administration processes during the crisis were activated as well. Although regular procedures could not be followed due to the speed of legislative processes or the extent of consultations, no serious problems were mentioned. It was also noted that during a crisis there is less time to think about ethics, because "the things need to be done quickly". The introduction of working from home on massive scale was mentioned as an issue which brought many new questions. Some of the problems which emerged were often connected to the



challenging communication styles and interpersonal relations among civil servants, less social contact and increased symptoms of burnout.

As concerning the third dimension (**Organizational Changes, Public Innovation, Digital Transformation and “Greening” of Public Administration Bodies**) various subtopics were discussed such as the services of the European Institute for Public Services (EIPA), the OECD project on the lessons learned from CAF users concerning the COVID-19 pandemic, and the HR Strategy of the European Commission. In addition the Czech reforms of implementing Quality Management in Service Authorities, training programme for analysts and the use of geolocation data were introduced.

Topics tackled in the Presidency Programme and EUPAN events organized	Link with the strategic domains in the SP identified during analysis
Relations between top senior civil servants and the political leadership (survey, presentation, round table discussion)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
International mobility of civil servants (informal online meeting, WL and DG sessions and discussion)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
Civil Service Ethics Education (workshop)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user’s expectations
Civil Service Ethics - Between Theory and Practice and Crisis (workshop)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user’s expectations
Public Administration and Civil Service Ethics (workshop)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user’s expectations
EIPA Services for EU Member States and EU Institutions (presentation)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
Strengthening the Resilience of the Public Administration Sector: Lessons Learned from CAF Users from the COVID-19 Pandemic, OECD (presentation)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
Implementing Quality Management in Service Authorities (presentation)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
Training Programme for Analysts in Public Administration (presentation)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations



Geolocation Data as a Tool for the Public Administration Spatial Structure Adjustment (presentation)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
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## SWEDEN

1<sup>st</sup> of January – 30<sup>st</sup> of June 2023

### Swedish Programme

I. Transformation of the civil service and HR policies	II. Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user’s expectations	III. Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
Threats and violence against civil servants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sound administrative culture</li> <li>• Work against corruption</li> </ul>	Governance of cross sectoral issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital infrastructure</li> <li>• Resilience and crisis management</li> <li>• Training programme for analysts</li> </ul>

The Swedish Presidency of EUPAN has aimed at aligning its main themes with the priorities of the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, and in this context the main themes of the Swedish Presidency of EUPAN were:

#### 1. A good administrative culture and work against corruption

The concept of good administration is grounded on a fundamental right on the level of the European Union and has equivalents in member states of the network. In preparation for the presidency, a study was conducted on this notion based on a survey sent out to all EUPAN members and interviews with a sample of members. The results of the study were presented in the report ‘Good administration in European countries’, available on the EUPAN website: <https://www.eupan.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Annex-1.-Good-administration-in-European-countries.pdf>. The report served as a basis for plenary and workshop presentations and discussions on both the Working Level meeting in Stockholm and the Directors General meeting in Uppsala.

Defining corruption and organising work against it was another underlining theme of the Swedish EUPAN Presidency. Well-functioning and non-corrupt public administrations are held as more significant than other commonly adopted indicators, such as electoral democracy and democracy indexes that show weak significance in terms of the well-being of citizens. The interconnectedness of corruption, integrity, and democratic values was emphasised as well as the importance of managing ethics in organisations for good administration along four key functions: defining what is ethical, guiding, monitoring and enforcing such ethical conduct. The presentations of the DG-meeting were followed by two rounds of workshops in which meeting attendees were able to discuss and learn from work conducted in Italy on the matter.

## 2. Threats and violence against civil servants

Civil servants' ability to perform their duties in a safe working environment is also a cornerstone of a democratic system. The issue of threats and violence against civil servants has gained great attention in Sweden but has not before been emphasised in the context of EUPAN. The aim of the presidency has been to elaborate on common challenges that civil servants across public administrations face when dealing with direct contacts with the public.

As a first attempt on this theme a questionnaire was sent out to the EUPAN network, and the results were distributed in the form of a EUPAN newsletter. At the WL-meeting in March, the Swedish EUPAN team presented the initial findings from the questionnaire, which were discussed by the delegates in smaller groups and experiences were shared concerning the ways in which the participating countries were combating it. This topic was continued during the DG meeting as well. The Swedish Presidency is pleased with the outcome of the activities regarding threats and violence as they hope that this priority has lifted concrete measures, shared experiences and increased the awareness among those who were not previously in touch with these problems.

## 3. Governance of cross sectoral issues

On the topic of cross-sectorial issues the Swedish Presidency held two sessions at the DG-meeting: about crisis management and coordination of capacities in EU countries and resilient public administration – strengthening public management in times of crisis. The latter aimed to provide the perspective and example of public management action and innovation in Ukraine during Russia's attempted full scale invasion of the country. At the WL-meeting the presentation of the Rule of law in digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence served as a starting point of a discussion on the possibilities and threats of using artificial intelligence in public administration, including decision-making, and especially the risks this poses to the overarching principle of rule of law.

Topics tackled in the Presidency Programme and EUPAN events organized	Link with the strategic domains in the SP identified during analysis
The Swedish model of public administration and work to promote anti-corruption (presentation)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
Good administration in European countries (presentation)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
Rule of law in digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence (presentation)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
Application of European principles of good administration in a national context (workshop)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
Tools to promote a good administration in public administrations (workshop)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations

Service and accessibility at the National Government Service Centre (workshop)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
Ways forward of the Expert Group on Public Administration and Governance and Common methodologies for comparative public employment data production and building capacity for evidence informed people management. (presentation)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
Crisis Management & European Public Administrations (presentation)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
Defining corruption and organising work against it (workshop)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
Risk analyses in Sweden (presentation)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
Safe working in the Netherland (presentation)	Threats and violence against civil servants
Creating and managing a common digital administrative infrastructure (workshop)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations

## SPAIN

1<sup>st</sup> of July – 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2023

### Spanish Programme

I. Transformation of the civil service and HR policies	II. Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations	III. Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender equality in the civil service</li> <li>• The role of the civil service expertise as a tool for international technical cooperation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting a culture of openness in government</li> <li>• New trends on inclusive and innovative public participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing inclusive digital public services, accessible to all.</li> <li>• Improving resilience and executive capacity in the context of telework through implementation of the Common European Framework (CAF).</li> </ul>

The Spanish EUPAN Presidency decided to focus on the following priority themes:

#### 1. Promoting gender equality in the civil service

This topic has been covered through a special survey and specific workshops in WL and DG meetings.

#### 2. Civil service expertise as a tool for international technical cooperation

The 2022 Strasbourg Declaration on the Common Values and Challenges of European Public Administrations underlined the importance of enhancing the expertise of European public services at the international level to promote shared values and the strengthening of public administrations beyond the European Union. In 2023, first results from the Public Administration Cooperation Exchange (PACE) and the presentation of ComPAct by the European Commission have proved important steps to re-consider possibilities of exchanges and cooperation among EUPAN members.

The special edition of the EUPAN eNews, available at the EUPAN website, was devoted to the subject “Fostering mobility of public employees in international projects for technical cooperation between public administrations”.

#### 3. Building trust through open government and innovative public participation

This topic has been covered through specific workshops in WL and DG meetings i.e. open government as a tool to promote citizen trust: transparency and accountability, public policy evaluation, integrity and participation. The final products are the Conclusions of the EUPAN Summer School and the constitution of a European open government community of practice. A workshop to promote and embed Open Government in Public Administrations on this subject allowed active participation and open debate, using the open software tool called mentimeter. There were five questions provided to reflect on the participants' own ideas and approaches to the concept and measures leading to Open Government.

#### 4. Developing inclusive digital public services

Innovative, inclusive, and ethical practices that ensure that no one is left behind in the digital transition were highlighted during the Spanish Presidency. A questionnaire was launched to EUPAN members and observers, with the aim to share good practices and learn from their organizations. 3 topics were dealt with in this survey: E-government, digital divide and older people. 24 answers to the survey were received, including the ones from Spain. During the plenary session of the Working Level meeting, that took place on October 4th, 2023, and also during the plenary session of the Directors General meeting, held on November 27th, 2023, the preliminary results of the survey were presented. This panel ended successfully with a fruitful debate, which highlighted the relevance of this topic for EUPAN countries and the European Commission.

#### 5. Implementing CAF in the context of telework as a way of improving resilience and executive capacity

According to the programme of the one-day meeting, the plenary sessions presented the priorities of the Spanish Presidency of EUPAN, and the Spanish General Framework for Quality Improvement, with a particular focus on the implementation of the CAF model. A special space was also dedicated to share the importance of recognition to promote quality management in public administration, giving voice to the EPSA Awards and the national awards, which have a track record of XVI editions. In addition, two workshops were held: one on the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework, the CAF model, in the context of teleworking, as a tool that facilitates planning and performance management of public organizations, and one focused on how to make the model more attractive and pass on the message, based on the recommendations derived from the international project on "Strengthening the resilience of Public Administration after the Covid-19 crisis with CAF 2020".

Topics tackled in the Presidency Programme and EUPAN events organized	Link with the strategic domains in the SP identified during analysis
Public Administration for Next Generation (presentation)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
Promotion of Gender Equality in the Civil Service in the EU (presentation and workshop)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
Innovative practices in Inclusive Digital Public Services (presentation and workshop) National Traditions in Public Administration & Common Frameworks (panel discussion)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
Building Trust through Open Government and Innovative Public Participation (workshop)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user’s expectations

Implementing CAF in the context of Telework as a way of Improving Resilience and Executive Capacity (workshop)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
Enhancing the European Administrative Space (presentation)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user’s expectations
Public Sector Expertise in International Technical Cooperation and Regional Cooperation (panel discussion)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
PACE initiatives (presentations)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies

## BELGIUM

1<sup>st</sup> of January – 30<sup>st</sup> of June 2024

### Belgian Programme

I. Transformation of the civil service and HR policies	II. Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user’s expectations	III. Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future perspectives</li> <li>• Evidence informed policy-making</li> <li>• Wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethics and Integrity</li> <li>• Equity, Inclusion and Diversity / Attractiveness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transnational European collaboration</li> <li>• Sustainable government</li> <li>• AI and technology</li> </ul>

The European Ministers responsible for public administration, public transformation and the civil service, with the support of the European Commission as part of the European Network for Public Administration (EUPAN) under the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union met and signed the Ghent Declaration on 27 February 2024. Based on a consensus, this agreement was reached and the document was signed by all 27 EU Member States, Norway and Montenegro as observer countries and by Commissioners Elisa Ferreira and Johannes Hahn.

During the working and directors general level meetings the following themes were addressed:

#### 1. Future perspectives

The presidency emphasised the need to build a resilient and people-centred public service. Discussions were centred on the balance between insourcing and outsourcing and the strategic importance of maintaining quality work in a tight labour market. These efforts underlined the necessity of preparing civil services for future challenges. Issues of healthy work were also discussed.

#### 2. Evidence informed policy-making

The presidency highlighted the need for trust between scientists, policymakers, and citizens. Creating ecosystems that integrate science and policy was deemed crucial, alongside



capacity-building efforts for policymakers and scientists. Sharing information and data across Member States was also emphasised as a means of supporting evidence-informed decisions.

The presidency stressed the importance of good data collection practices and ethical guidelines. Data should be contextualised and it is necessary to exercise caution in order to avoid overly sophisticated data and data collection methods. Data-driven decision-making was identified as an emerging leadership skill.

Specifics of the collection and the use of data were put at the centre of the Summer School as well, of which the main conclusion was that better data leads to better science which latter results in better informed decisions/policies.

### 3. Wellbeing for public agents

It was a key theme, in which the presidency advocated the need for a balance between job demands and resources. Wellbeing programmes should address physical, mental and emotional aspects and operate on an individual, team, leadership and organisational level. Disconnection from work was also highlighted as important for wellbeing.

There was an agreement among the participants that wellbeing should form an integral part of a people-centred HR strategy, and such programmes should take place on an individual, team, leadership and organisational level, while it is important to seek a balance between job demands and job resources. Wellbeing has a physical, mental and emotional aspect, and the right of disconnection is an important lever for wellbeing.

### 4. Ethics and Integrity

The presidency emphasised the implementation of a culture of integrity, which might be even more important than regulations. Transparency and risk analysis were seen as vital for citizen trust, along with balancing compliance and the benefits of public-private sector transfers. The role of an independent authority was also highlighted, and scientific research was conducted on revolving doors.

### 5. Equity, Inclusion and Diversity

The presidency stressed the importance of ethical leadership and of creating an inclusive workplace culture. An intersectional approach was recommended, with a focus on transparent procedures and inclusive language in order to ensure equal treatment. The role of leadership, accessibility and inclusion by design were emphasised.

### 6. Attractiveness of the civil service

The 'attractiveness of the civil service' was addressed by stressing the importance of an authentic employee value proposition and continuous employer branding. The shift from traditional qualifications to a focus on competencies and mindset in recruitment was encouraged, along with the use of targeted and original communication messages. Attracting the necessary skills is a key challenge in all Member States, and therefore the civil service must invest in employer branding.

### 7. Sustainable government

'Sustainability' formed an additional focus, with discussions on integrating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into public administration. Strategic planning, project management and communication skills were deemed necessary to promote sustainability. In addition to the great number of initiatives the need for a holistic approach and planning was highlighted.



#### 8. AI and technology

The presidency emphasised ethical considerations and transparency in the use of AI. Collaboration opportunities with the European AI Act were noted, and the importance of guidelines for using generative AI was stressed. Technology should serve as a means to an end, not as an end in itself.

#### 9. Transnational European collaboration and dissemination of public sector expertise

The theme of 'European collaboration' was underscored by the willingness of Member States to work on common HR benchmarks as well as take advantage of support from the European Commission.

The dynamic within the EUPAN network was seen as crucial, and new demands for observer status from Ukraine and Moldova were positively received, highlighting the network's inclusive and collaborative spirit.

Topics tackled in the Presidency Programme and EUPAN events organized	Link with the strategic domains in the SP identified during analysis
HR Scorecard (presentation and working session)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
EU central government survey (presentation)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
Evidence based policy making (TSI) (presentation)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
Wellbeing for public agents (workshop)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
Employer branding (workshop)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
Inclusion (workshop)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
Future challenges in civil service (presentation)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
Future challenges in HR (presentation)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
Green and sustainable development (presentation)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
The Principles of Public Administration: a policy guide and measurement framework (presentation)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations

HR at the Helm: Steering organisations towards sustainable ESG Goals (presentation)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
Sustainable government and the role of HR (presentation and workshop)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
The future of HR: in search for greater impact in organisations (presentation)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
Attractive government (workshop)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user’s expectations
Use of technology in HR (presentation)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
Capacity building (presentation)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies

## HUNGARY

1<sup>st</sup> of July – 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2024

### Hungarian Programme

I. Transformation of the civil service and HR policies	II. Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user’s expectations	III. Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
Legal and structural development of HR policy and generational research	User friendly digital public services on mobile devices and the future use of AI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greening of public administration</li> <li>• Government decision-making support in the field of HR</li> </ul>

In its presidency programme, Hungary focused on the legal and structural development of HR policy and generational research, user friendly digital public services including the future use of AI, greening of public administration and government decision-making support in the field of HR. For this, the Ministry of Public Administration and Regional Development formed close cooperation with the Ministry of Interior and the Ludovika University of Public Service, and invited distinguished experts from other Hungarian universities as well as related agencies. In addition, DG HR, DG Reform, the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology contributed to the programme, too.

#### 1. Legal and structural development of HR policy and generational research

This topic was elaborated by the Ministry of Interior in collaboration with the Ludovika University of Public Service. To set the scene, the Hungarian public administration system was

introduced, followed by the presentation on the results of the generational research carried out as part of the presidency programme. There were two workshops organised related to this dimension, one on HR decision support system, and one during which participants had the opportunity to overview the findings of the generation research and exchange good practices, ideas, and perspectives.

## 2. User friendly digital public services on mobile devices and the future use of AI

At the working Level Meeting the topic was framed by the introduction of the EU policies and the Hungarian Digital Citizenship Programme, and followed by the presentation of Hungarian digital public services such as the HealthWindow application, the HR decision making support system, and the Customer Service Bus providing on the spot administration. In the workshop, the Irish Life Events Programme was introduced, and participants had the opportunity to exchange on their experience and practice in this area.

At the DG Level Meeting, more focus was given to the use of AI in public administration, with special regard to the regulatory framework, but also to the possible impact of adversarial attacks on governmental AI applications. Albania, whose observer status was approved at the same event, provided a valuable presentation on the digital transformation and AI integration of its administration. In the workshop, the Hungarian challenges and good practices were introduced, and the representative of the EC Joint Research Centre gave a European outlook on the recent developments and future perspectives of the use of AI by public administrations.

## 3. Greening of public administration

This topic was elaborated first in a workshop of the Working Level Meeting where the Hungarian, Dutch and Danish approaches were presented, and participants had the opportunity to exchange their good practices. By focusing on this theme, the Hungarian Presidency aimed at establishing some guiding principles and goals to help member states navigate the green transition.

At the plenary session of the DG Level Meeting a presentation on the decarbonisation effects of digital solutions highlighted an important link between digital and green transition. To provide a comprehensive academic background to the work on greening public administration, the Ludovika University of Public Service was commissioned to carry out a study, which was presented in a workshop at the DG Level Meeting. The workshop participants discussed the ways in which the proposed goals and principles can be made actionable and suggested that they might be taken into consideration when developing the new EUPAN Strategy Paper.

## 4. Government decision-making support in the field of HR

This topic was handled partly within the framework of the research carried out by the Ludovika University of Public Service, as there were questions included into the survey regarding this issue as well. According to research results, personnel decision support is mentioned in 21 cases, mostly involving data tables, reporting on personnel, and data used for workforce planning.

The Hungarian Governmental Personnel Decision Support System was introduced within the framework of a workshop as one of the most important development projects in the field of HR policy since 2010. Public sector organisations required by law to join include public healthcare institutions, government offices, law enforcement agencies, ministries, and educational district

centres, with local government offices still in progress. The system contains accessible personal data for over 260,000 individuals.

During the discussion, many participants noted that their member states do not have such a comprehensive, multi-system solution, even though it would be a great help for HR policy. However, some member states face IT challenges hindering the development of such a solution.

Topics tackled in the Presidency Programme and EUPAN events organized	Link with the strategic domains in the SP identified during analysis
The Hungarian public administration system (presentation)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
Legal and structural development of HR policy and generational research (presentation and workshop)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
Digital Outlook, new EU digital policies (presentation)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
National Digital Citizenship Program (presentation)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
Digital Healthcare (presentation)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
HR decision making support system (workshop and presentation)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
Challenges and solutions for digital citizenship applications (workshop)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
Omnichannel Customer Service Delivery (workshops)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
Greening public administration (workshops)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
Challenges and good practices of AI (workshop)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user's expectations
The implementation of the EC HR Strategy (presentations)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies

Skills development in public administration related to digital services (presentation)	Transformation of the civil service and HR policies
Leveraging Digital Tools for Better Governance with CAF (presentation)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
The decarbonisation effects of digital solutions (presentation)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
The possible impact of adversarial attacks on governmental AI applications (presentation)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user’s expectations
GreenComp - Developing sustainability competences (presentation)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
Greening at EU Agencies (presentation)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
Public administration capacity building with ComPAct in the EU (presentation)	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations
Albania’s Digital Transformation and AI Integration (presentation)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user’s expectations
Challenges and good practices of AI (workshop)	Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user’s expectations
Innovation ecosystems in public administration	Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations

## 2. Results of the questionnaire on the EUPAN Strategy Paper July 2022– June 2025

The questionnaire for the evaluation of the EUPAN SP for the period July 2022– June 2025 was prepared in collaboration with the EUPAN 5 WL Secretariat (BE, HU, PL, DK, EC). The request for answering the questionnaire was distributed among the MS on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July, 2024, and all Members responded. In this sense the results are 100 % representative, and mirror the strong commitment of the participating countries.

The main sections of the questionnaire were:

- Strategic domains and topics of interests for the new Strategy Paper where we asked MS to indicate the importance of each individual strategic domain and topic of interest for the period of the next SP.
- Impact of crises (such as Russian-Ukrainian war, economic and energy crises) on EUPAN network
- Tools (presidency reports, organization of meetings, results)

### Methodological considerations

There were two types of questions used in the questionnaire: a 6-point Likert-scale and open questions. Some of the comments pointed to the limits of using the Likert scale for prioritizing, because most of the respondents would write “important” or “very important” on everything. However, according to the present experience, even if only three choices (“neutral”, “important” and “very important”) are used out of the five, this provides enough information for the analyses.

The following analysis will serve as a basis for the update of the current SP. The updated SP will be in force from 1 July 2025 until 30 June 2028.

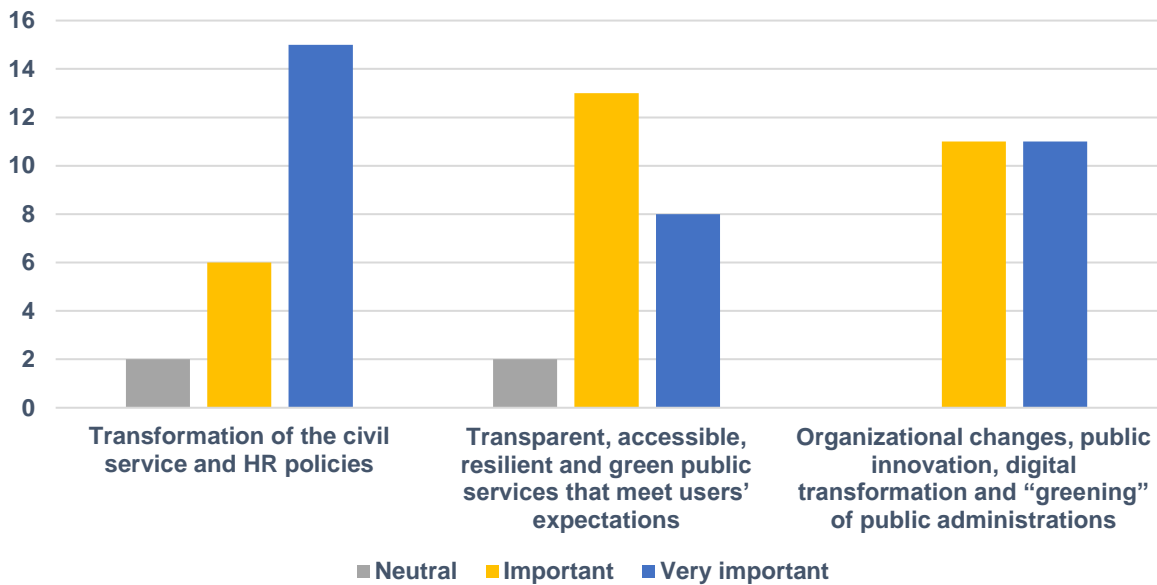
### **Strategic domains and topics of interest for the new SP**

In the current SP three strategic domains were agreed: I. Transformation of the civil service and HR policies II. Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet user’s expectations and III. Organisational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and „greening” of public administrations. There were examples listed under each strategic domain in order to orientate the planning of actions.

Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of each strategic domain in order to evaluate their significance. The questionnaire might not have been clear enough on the objective of this particular exercise, because 7 respondents did not fill in these cells. However, setting this aside, and based upon the remaining answers it can be stated, that all of the three strategic domains are considered to be “very important” or “important”.



### Importance of the strategic domains



The assessment of the main strategic domains was followed by the evaluation of the relevance of the listed topics of interest. In addition, the respondents were asked to write any experiences or lessons learnt during given period relevant for the individual strategic domain and suggest additional topics to be included into the next SP.

The numerous comments received on the lessons learnt underlined the genuine interest of the Members in the work of EUPAN, and it was thought to be a loss of information only to conclude them here. Therefore, it was decided to summarise them content wise in an attachment to this report, and more focus is given here to the suggested topics for the next SP, some of them new, and some indicating the need to continue on that particular subject.

General comments on the strategic domains and topics of interest

The field of HR has been a topic of special importance during the examined time frame, which facilitated intense and effective discussions between member states. Thus, they were able to learn from each other and form their HR policies in certain directions which include lessons learnt from shared experiences.

As respondents pointed out, the previous and current crises, reorganising institutional structures together with quick, flexible and effective HR management based on IT HR decision support has become the base in the central administration. Temporary crises management practices as managing remote teams and teleworking are becoming the new norm in organisations, both public and private. The ability to adapt to rapidly evolving contexts became an essential requirement of the future public administration.

Reference was given to the Ghent declaration showing the way forward and covering most of the issues to be focused on and explored further under domains and topics of the current SP. More specified examples would restrain member-states to decide how they want to address several topics under their presidency.



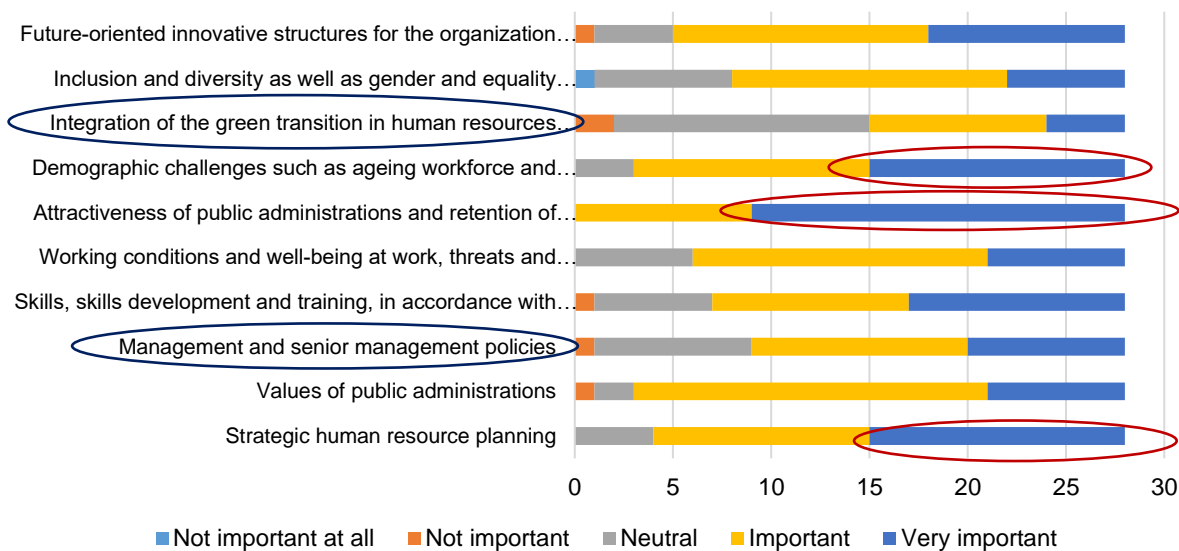
Emphasis was given to the value of the informal nature of the network. Even though scale and approach vary among the EUPAN members, they deal for a large part with similar issues and challenges. The ‘simple’ fact that they are put on the table in a ‘safe environment’ and can be discussed – not only the ‘wins’ but especially where something did not go as hoped or planned, is a huge learning experience.

EUPAN’s informal and practical character is unique – and can be of large value in discussing and identifying future trends and their possible success rate, as in the network not only good examples are shared but also what went wrong and why.

It was also articulated that the new SP might continue to seek synergies with other related strategies at EU level, and synergies with the activity of other relevant groups, also to avoid duplication of efforts.

Transformation of the civil service and HR policies

### Topics of interest under the first strategic domain Transformation of the civil service and HR policies



When looking at the diagram it can be stated that due to the **demographic challenges**, the need to increase the **attractiveness of public service, the retention of talents and generational solidarity** was considered by the respondents of the highest importance, and comments highlighted the role of **active branding** in this regard. Strategic human resource planning stays also at the centre of Members’ interest.

However, even though comments pointed at the significance of skills development in the age of fast evolving technologies and the implementation of digital and green transformation, the integration of green transition into human resource policies did not receive as high score as the question on attractiveness. The significance of management and senior management policies received also relatively less support by the respondents.

Given the historic development of the network, this strategic domain is at the centre of member states’ interest, as it is demonstrated by the comments concerning topics for the future SP.

*Future oriented public administration*

As the work of public servants may change to include tasks/skills that are not known yet, governments need employees whose are flexible to perform new tasks and learn new skills. This largely depends upon attitudes and personal characteristics such as resilience and adaptability. In order to be able to align with new realities such as mis- and disinformation, disasters, etc., new competency frameworks are to be developed. In this regard foresight and anticipation were also mentioned as to be focused on. Managers need to be prepared to identify, select and manage this 'new' workforce. Focus should be given to innovative collaborations as well.

Although data-driven (evidence informed) policy making in public administrations in order to improve decision making processes is a strongly supported topic under domain 3 of the current SP, it is suggested that it might be more relevant under domain 1. In this respect, comments urging to focus at the more strategic use of data, the use of digitalisation and AI in HR for central administrations should be also mentioned.

#### *Training and skills*

The issue of central internal training system for civil servants was also mentioned, and the sharing of training material and internet courses between countries should be advanced. In addition, knowledge transfer between different generations should be also focused at.

#### *The way of working*

It is suggested to focus on the issue of how to balance the increased need for security measures with a trust based and open management. The wellbeing at work is a topic that needs further elaboration both the physical and the mental component, and how we gather data on the status of this. Definitions vary for what is included under 'wellbeing' – insights in how/with what aim this is measured/quantified. The topics of flexible work arrangements and remote work should be further explored.

More emphasis should be given to mobility and careers, with a specific concern for career development including European and international mobility. However, as some of the respondents pointed out, the opportunity for internal mobility is as much important, including the creation of expert pools in public administration.

The need for merit-based career development and performance appraisal should be mentioned here as well. In this relation, attention is drawn also to the theme of performance management with special regard to underperformance.

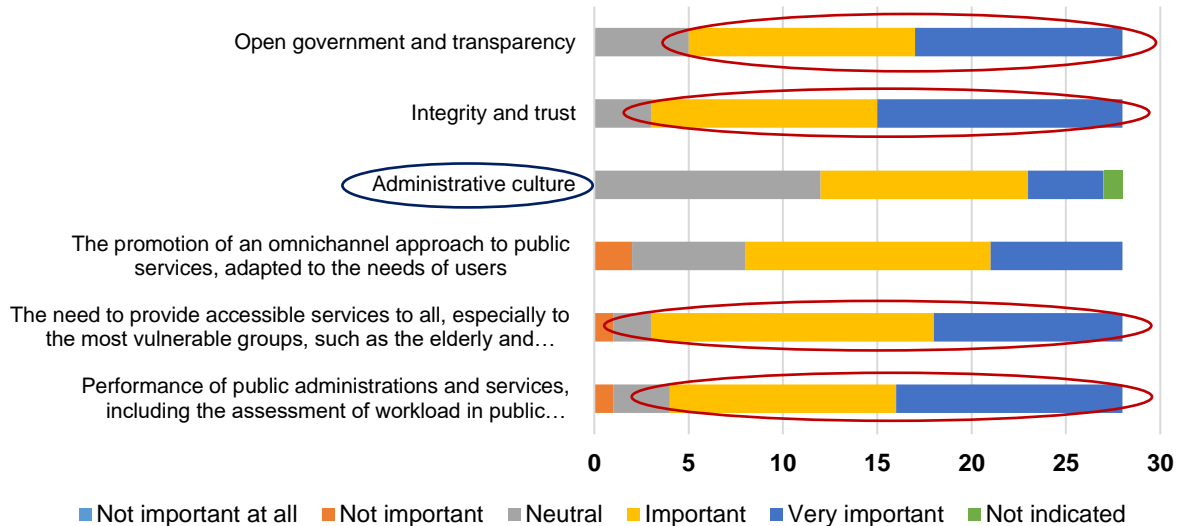
#### *The use of AI*

Even though the use of AI in public service provision was not an issue specified in the current SP, it was dealt with during the previous presidencies and it continues to be an important topic during the upcoming years. The potentials and risks of the application of this emerging technology have to be evaluated, for example its effect on the labour market, and measurements have to be worked out in order to minimise adverse effects.

#### **Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet users' expectations**

The overall evaluation of this this strategic domain was considered by the respondents rather "important" (13) than "very important" (8) and only 2 marked it as "neutral".

## Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet users' expectations



The topics under this domain are quite broad and some of them might be further explored. When looking at the diagram it can be observed that the highest preference (very important and important) was given to the topics *The need to provide accessible services to all, especially to the most vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and people with disabilities*, and also *Integrity and Trust* were greatly valued. On the other hand, *Administrative culture* was found neutral by 12 respondents as opposed to 15, whose latter were evaluating this topic positively.

The pandemic has pushed forward public administration to meet user's expectations through alternative means, faster than under "normal conditions". Different services needed to be provided on the same level of excellence as before, despite lack of resources or the possibility of in person administration. Furthermore, it highlighted the importance of digitalisation which was a great help in administrating cases during the crises situations. At the same time, an increase of the citizens' expectations can be witnessed as well, drawing the attention to the importance of user centred design and building this capacity across public administration and public services – to achieve seamless user experience across public services.

Public services should not only be effective and efficient but also equitable and sustainable, meeting the diverse needs of all users. To strengthen administrative culture, it is essential to invest in ongoing training and development of public servants to improve service quality and job satisfaction. Integrity and trust in addition to open government and transparency should definitely be included into the new strategy as well.

Developing administrative culture should include good practices like ensuring participation and transparency of administrative practice. Tools of participation should be more explored, as well as the use of new technologies for accessible public services.

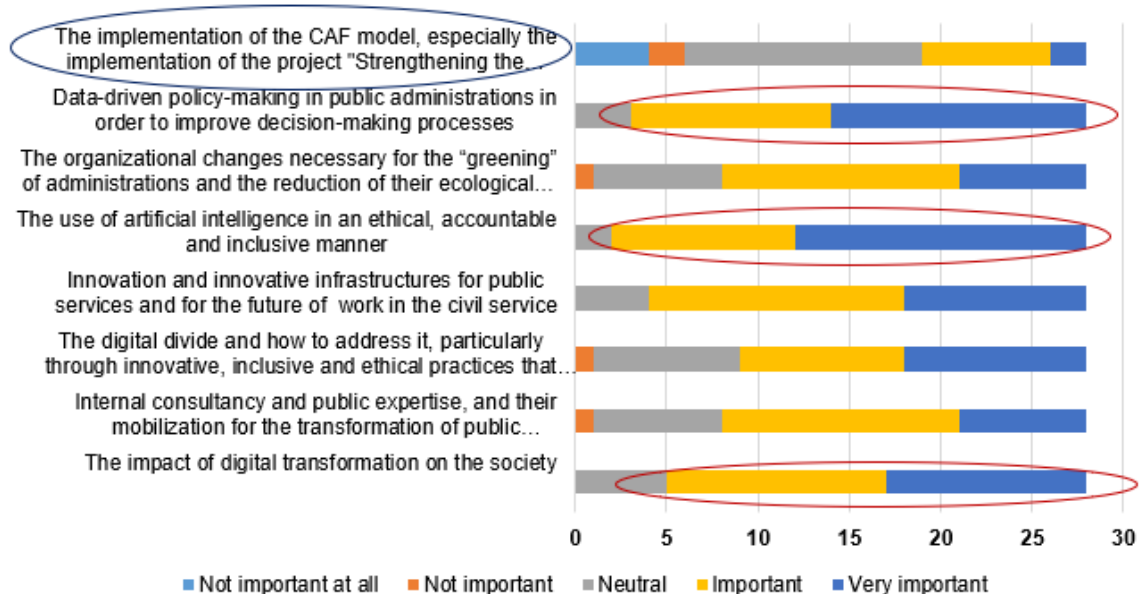
Quality public services also require balanced attention to both citizens and employees, who are the key to success. So, when transforming the relationship between the user and the public service, one has to think about public employees, not only in terms of improving their working conditions, but also in terms of changing managerial methods and attitudes, with special regard to responsibility. The need for service-based management was also articulated.

Efforts of taking into account outcomes and assessing impacts should be continued. More attention should be given to the resilience of public services: what constitutes a resilient service provision, what are its key elements, characteristics.

Work should be continued on greening public administration, and also mobility should be an important item of the next SP. Also the use of AI and open data in public administration should remain at the centre of attention.

Organizational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and “greening” of public administrations

### Organizational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and “greening” of public administrations



The overall evaluation of this this strategic domain was considered by 10 respondents “important”, 11 “very important” while 7 respondents did not evaluate the strategic domain itself.

The strategic domain raised awareness that effective organizational change requires a holistic approach integrating public innovation, digital transformation, and environmental sustainability. As it is indicated by the responses, the use of artificial intelligence in an ethical, accountable and inclusive manner is very much at the centre of interests, as well as data-driven policy making in public administrations in order to improve decision-making processes. The impact of digital transformation on the society was not touched upon explicitly by any of the workshops during the term of the present SP, but it was evaluated also as important or very important.

However, the use of digitalisation, new technologies with special regard to the use of artificial intelligence (AI) require specialisations in order to achieve right and secure results. Therefore, acquiring and retaining sufficient technical expertise in order to make good policy decisions has to be put at the centre of attention during the upcoming years as well.

Members pointed out in their comments that activities and efforts related to data driven/evidence informed policy making and the evaluation and comparison of human resources management in public administrations on a regular and voluntary basis are going to

be appreciated also in the future. Related to this, focus should be given on the ways in which HR data can be used to provide strategic insights to the organisation.

Sustainability and long-term orientation is suggested to be an overarching aspect when discussing the topics under this domain – public administration’s need to consider social, environmental and economic impact in their policy making.

Even though several MSs are prioritizing greening of their public administrations, within the EUPAN Network the discussion of these issues has just started, and their importance is going to become greater each year. Exploration of what constitutes greening of public administration, and whether a common shared definition can be given should be continued, and good, innovative examples are welcomed, touching upon also the issue of corporate social return.

The continuous significance of public sector leadership was also mentioned to be added to proposed action areas.

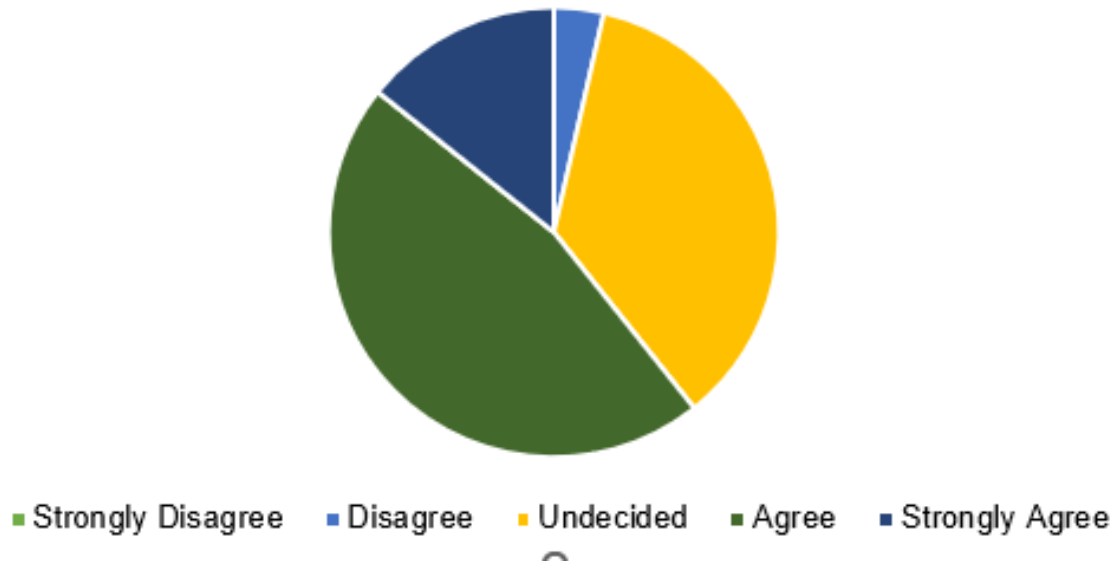
Finally but at least, attention should be given to the questionnaire results on *The implementation of the CAF model, especially the implementation of the project "Strengthening the resilience of public administration after the COVID-19 crisis"*, which was evaluated by only 9 respondents as important or very important, while 13 indicated as neutral, 2 not important, and 4 not important at all. This can be explained by the fact, that many MS are not applying CAF. Nevertheless, the future of this topic on the strategic level might be considered when developing the next SP.

#### ***Impact of crises (such as Russian-Ukrainian war, economic and energy crises) on EUPAN network***

The title of this section was kept from the questionnaire on the evaluation of the previous SP, because the effects of Russian-Ukrainian war, economic and energy crises had a decisive impact on public administrations during the period of the present SP. However, as one comment pointed out, one should be cautious of using the word “crisis” in the future EUPAN strategy, as it may create the impression that public administrations are battling one disaster after another, almost an excuse for not achieving full potential.

Suitability of topics in the current SP in regard to needs arising from the crisis<sup>2</sup>

**The topics, set in the current SP, meet the needs that emerged from the crisis during this period.**



As it is demonstrated on the diagram 60% of the respondents agree or strongly agree that the topics, set in the current SP, meet the needs that emerged from the crisis during this period. However, the percentage of those who disagree (4) or undecided (36) is seemingly higher than it was in the evaluation of the previous period.

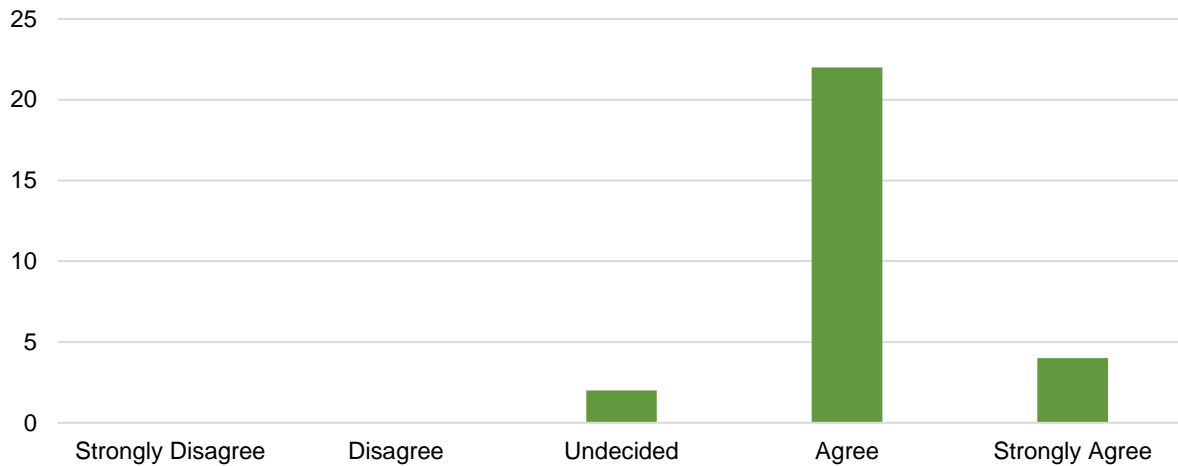
Nevertheless, it is still a significant majority who believe that the suggested topics allow EUPAN members to deal with relevant topics. A focus on future opportunities and challenges and building capacity to address them should be further developed in the next strategy, and as one comment pointed out, the EUPAN network has not covered yet subjects that have been of specific value in dealing with the effects of the energy crises or economic challenges.

<sup>2</sup> Circle diagram is used in this case for the sake of comparison with the previous strategy paper evaluation, in which data was presented in percentages, and in this form.



Flexibility of the content of the currently valid SP

**The current Strategy Paper is by its content flexible enough that the content can be adapted to emerging topics in relation to existing crisis and ones that may occur in the future.**

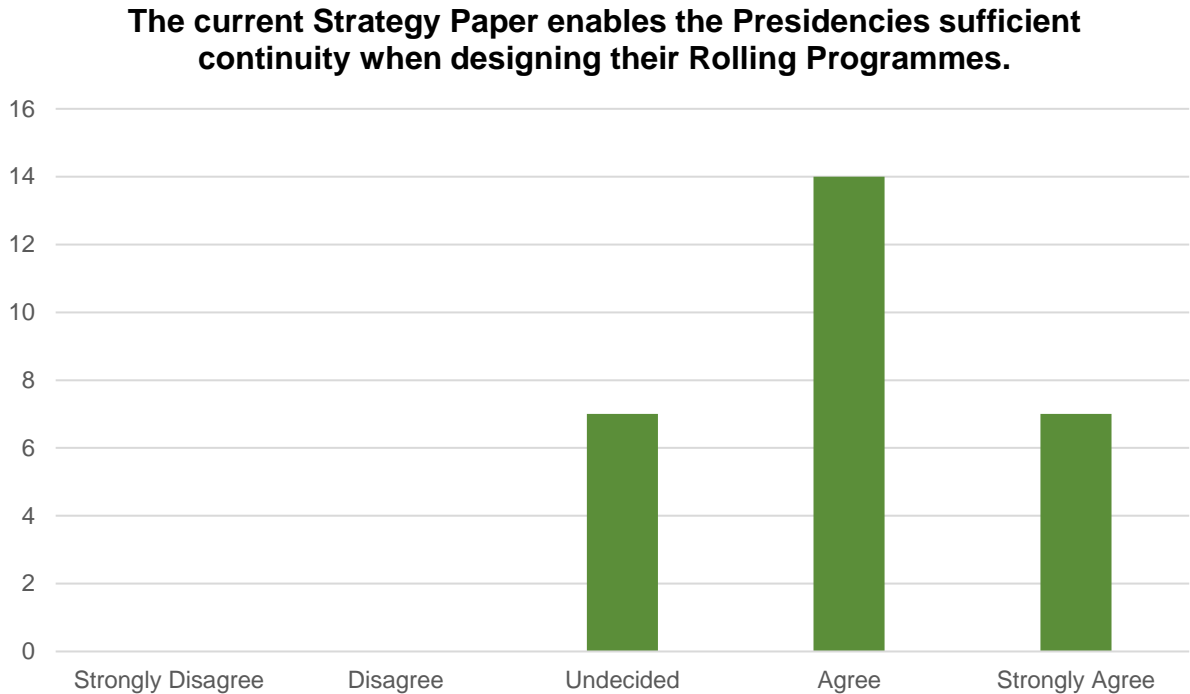


The diagram above reveals that the large majority of the respondents agree that the current SP is by its content flexible enough, i.e. the content can be adapted to emerging topics in relation to existing crisis and ones that may occur in the future.

One comment suggested that similarly to ComPAct, the term pillar might be used in the new SP as well, and the list of potential themes under each pillar is a good solution. The structure should stay the same, however, the ambitions of the strategy (chapter 2 in current strategy) should be re-evaluated.



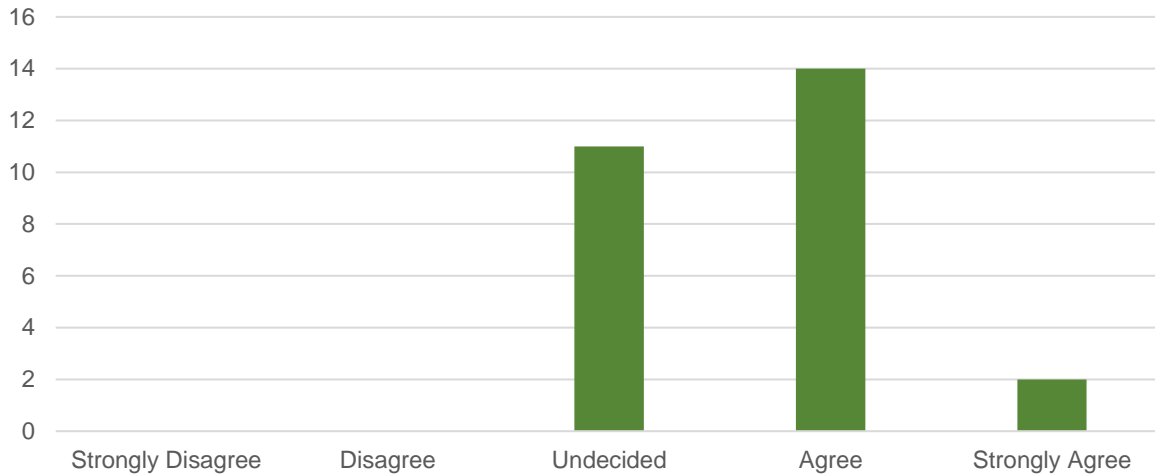
The current SP enables the Presidencies sufficient continuity when designing their Rolling Programmes.



The vast majority (21) of the respondent either agrees or strongly agrees that the current SP enables the Presidencies sufficient continuity when designing their Rolling Programmes. However, as it was mentioned in the General observations of chapter 1, while the programmes of the presidencies were presented within the framework of the Rolling Programme during the term of the previous SP, this was done only in rare cases in the period of the present analysis. Given the here demonstrated strong support for the Rolling Programme it is advised to return to this practice.

The relations of EUPAN with other networks dedicated to public administration

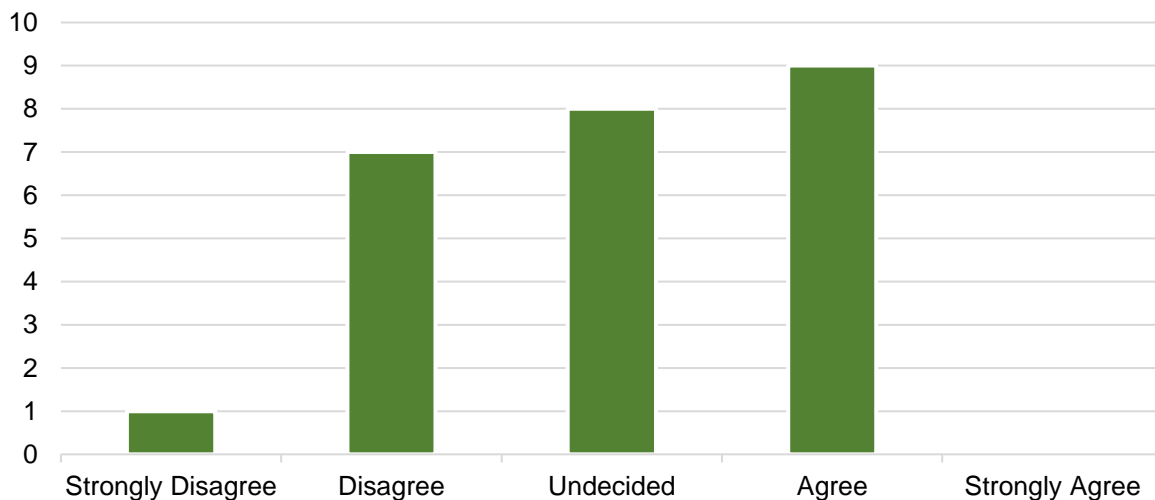
**The current Strategy Paper is specific enough on the relations of EUPAN with other networks dedicated to public administration.**



13 out of the 28 respondents are on the opinion that the current Strategy Paper is specific enough on the relations of EUPAN with other networks dedicated to public administration. However, the fact that 11 MSs answered “Undecided” indicates that the next strategy could expand on this further in terms of clarifying roles, and practical ways of engaging or working together. It should be made more specific as to the scope and expected outcomes of cooperation with the other Networks within the timeframe of the next 3 years.

Supporting mobility and staff exchanges among the EUPAN member states

**The current Strategy Paper is specific enough on supporting mobility and staff exchanges among the EUPAN member states.**

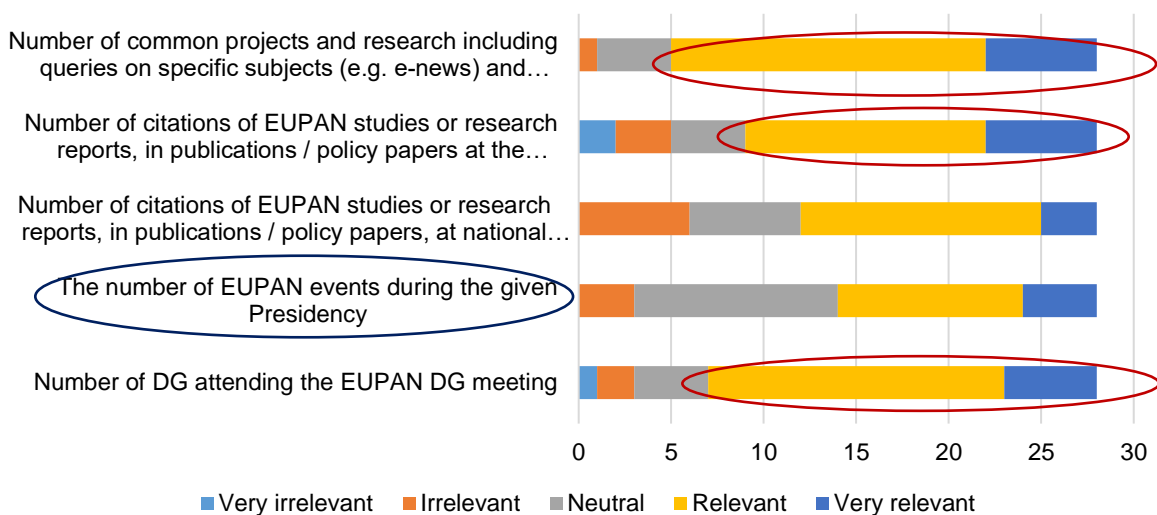


As concerning the current SP supporting mobility and staff exchanges among the EUPAN member states, the diagram demonstrates ambiguity among the members. Only 9 of them agree with the statement, 8 of them are undecided, and another 8 disagree or strongly disagree. This can be interpreted as a stronger wish on behalf of the participants that the next SP should be more specific on that, especially in the context of PACE, including the role of EUPAN in this area, and the assessment of the initial feedback on PACE. However, as one comment suggested, this may also indicate that the relevance of the topic is dwindling.

**Tools in the EUPAN network**

Indicators for measuring the impact of the EUPAN network

**Indicators for measuring the impact of the EUPAN network**

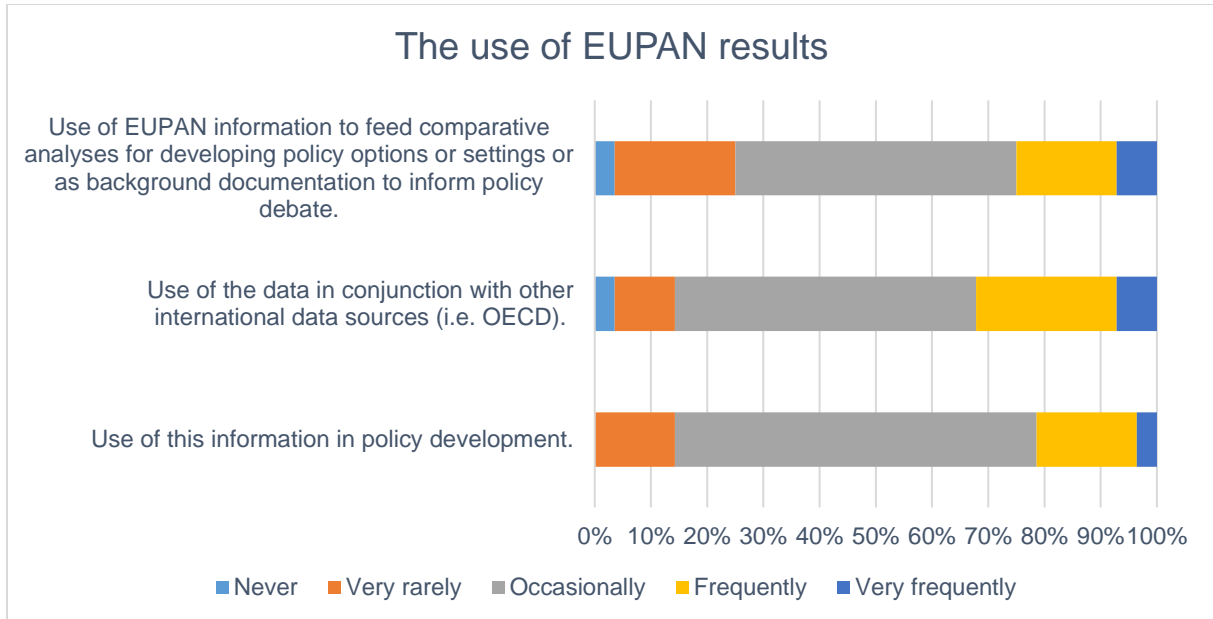


As concerning the indicators for measuring the impact of the EUPAN network 23 of the respondents marked the number of common projects and research including queries on specific subjects (e.g. e-news) and sharing their results relevant or very relevant. However, it was noted by a respondent, that it would be important to have a repository of the queries and the evaluations of responses in order to support research and avoid repeating questions to the network community. The number of DGs attending the EUPAN DG meeting was considered by 21 of the respondents relevant or very relevant as well.

The biggest ambiguity was shown related to the number of EUPAN events during the given presidency, which 11 respondent assessed neutral and 3 irrelevant as opposed to 10 relevant and 4 very relevant.

It is acknowledged that given the informal nature of EUPAN, it is not easy to set the right indicators for catching the real value of the network. However, in order to preserve and increase the relevance of the organisation, some sort of instruments of measurements are necessary. Therefore, to have a closer look at this subject is suggested when developing the next SP.

The use of EUPAN results



The results on this section show that only 32% of the respondents use data in conjunction with other international data sources frequently or very frequently, and even less use EUPAN information to feed comparative analyses for developing policy options or settings or as background documentation to inform policy debate. Moreover, there is a significant decline when compared to the diagram presented in Results of the Evaluation of the EUPAN Strategy Paper July 2019 – June 2022 carried out by the Slovenian Presidency.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Results of the Evaluation of the EUPAN Strategy Paper, July 2019 – June 2022

## Attachment

### Lessons learnt<sup>4</sup>

#### Transformation of the civil service and HR policies

Due to the **demographic challenges**, the need to increase the **attractiveness of public service and the retention of talents** was considered by the respondents of the highest importance, and comments highlighted the role of **active branding** in this regard.

- Creating the image of the public administration as a great place to work, engaging employees throughout their careers and strengthening a value-based culture are very relevant topics in these years.
- When building an employer brand, it is important that the main ambassadors are the employees themselves.
- Wellbeing of civil servants, flexible workplaces and working time contribute to increasing the productivity, as well as employee satisfaction and work-life balance. Threats and violence against public servants is an underestimated topic that has a large influence on the ability of government to be an attractive employer. Collective action by the employer is necessary in our current society that is increasingly polarising and hardening.
- In the light of public sector transformation, gaining insights into the ongoing reforms of other member states is of a special value, as it contributes to the easier formulation of national development strategies. It also opens up opportunities to incorporate digital tools, not only to streamline processes but also aid in anticipating future needs and addressing skill gaps.

Good practices presented at the meetings received special resonance by the respondents. Only to mention some of them,

- the Czech example of how to use data from open sources to promote better decision-making,
- the Swedish model of public administration and work to promote anti-corruption,
- the Spanish public administration on the field of inclusion and diversity as well as equality,
- the Maltese Public Service offers various types of work-life balance measures and other work practices.

However, it was also mentioned, that topics highlighting common challenges in broader terms are as much important as structural/organisational perspectives concerning specific policies.

- In the age of fast developing technologies, and the implementation of digital and green transformation comments pointed at the significance of skills development even though it did not receive as strong support as the question on attractiveness.
- The need for evidence based working and benchmarking was also stressed.
- According to several responses the development of the civil servant's exchange programs, such as the PACE, is a very important result in the period of the current

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<sup>4</sup> In some cases the comments were related to more than one strategic domain,. Therefore, in order to avoid unnecessary repetition and allow an easier processing of the responses an effort was made to present them in a more structured way below. As a consequence of this, comments given to the 1st domain but touching the 2nd or the 3rd as well, were not repeated later, and this technical solution is not intended to diminish the relevance of the latter two.

Strategy Paper. However, it was also mentioned, that the PACE pilot in the EUPAN network was a heavy exercise versus the benefits gained.

- Emphasis was given to the need of mixed approaches including the local, national and European level.
- Attention was drawn to the importance of defining the respective roles of HR professionals, workers, managers and leaders.
- The need to follow up on the issue of the green transformation was also articulated.
- Another suggestion was made according to which efforts should be made within EUPAN to cover more topics in the 3 years' span.

#### Transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet users' expectations

For the question of lessons learnt under this strategic domain, respondents stressed again the value of sharing good examples.

- The evaluation of public services by their users has contributed to their improvement.
- Providing public services through multiple channels meets the different needs of citizens.
- An opinion was also articulated that measuring public administrations/HR data, especially in a quantitative way, is difficult, time-consuming and of limited value. National governments are too different to compare effectively, and other organisations, such as the OECD have longer experience and good resources to do this. It was suggested to tap into existing sources in case hard data is needed.
- The valuable and useful lessons on open government were mentioned, including topics of citizen participation, public consultation, transparency, access to information, whistle-blower protection, etc., through interactive exchange of experiences during the EUPAN Summer School in Barcelona. Also, the meetings and workshops provided an interesting insight into the delivery of digitized public services and overcoming difficulties in terms of digital divide.
- Strengthening integrity and trust in public institutions is fundamental to a solid and healthy democracy, and to ensure a service of excellence towards citizens. (training programme targeting public officers in Headship and senior management positions on ethics and integrity.) It was also advised that the best way to improve citizens' trust in public service is to improve public services and demonstrate trustworthiness in our actions.
- The reference to promoting green public services was not a subject high on the agenda. It is an important subject however, and therefore it should be worded in a way that resonates with something actionable during the coming presidencies.
- The principles of public administration reforms such as institutionalization, participation, innovation, transparency, evaluation and alignment are stressed.
- It is suggested to follow up the EUPAN study on 'good administrative culture', and further elaboration is needed on caring management.
- The topics of administrative culture, transparency and integrity have been discussed frequently during the period of the current SP. The adaptation of the Ghent declaration points to the conclusion that these topics are going to remain relevant for the coming years and that further discussions should be held within EUPAN on these topics.

- It was also observed that not all topics could be given adequate focus within the 3 years' span, for example the workload in public administrations was not touched upon.

### Organizational changes, public innovation, digital transformation and “greening” of public administrations

For the question of lessons learnt under this strategic domain, respondents made the following comments.

- It was expressed that the strategic domain raised awareness that effective organizational change requires a holistic approach integrating public innovation, digital transformation and environmental sustainability. Responding to crisis and challenges requires more flexible and agile organisations.
- Digitalisation in itself is maturing – we have insights into what new opportunities it offers, but the ways in which it can be incorporated effectively still have to be explored. Data driven / evidence informed policy making is a prerequisite for good, solid policy making. Activities and efforts related to the data-driven policymaking and the evaluation and comparison of human resources management in public administrations (HR trend watching) on a regular and voluntary basis are appreciated. Data-driven policy making in PA increases the transparency of the process, facilitates accountability and the monitoring of results, and impacts on citizen confidence.
- Modern data-driven policy-making approaches were demonstrated through examples from member states, providing valuable guidance for future reforms, such as
  - the Czech example of how to use data from open sources to promote better decision-making,
  - the study conducted and shared by Spanish Presidency focusing on inclusive digital public services,
  - and the Hungarian example of using a governmental decision support system.
- It was noted, that the use of digitalisation, new technologies and specifically the use of artificial intelligence (AI) are challenging matters that require a number of specialisations involved in order to achieve right and secure results in an ethical manner without interfering with the wellbeing of the employees. Ethical use of AI in HR and impacts of AI for HR were topics of special interest.
- The problem of acquiring and retaining sufficient technical expertise in order to make good policy decisions has to be solved. For example, data-literacy was mentioned as a competency that everyone should develop.
- Digitalization and greening both need time, careful planning and financial investment to be implemented. Both transitions assume having the right infrastructure already in place. It was suggested that public administration should play a pioneer role in the area of sustainability and ESG approach. Public administrations need to consider long-term social, environmental and economic impacts in their policy making as well.
- It was noted that the growing digitalisation of public services and ways of working raises the issue of cybersecurity, essential in the defence against increasingly frequent cyber-attacks.
- It was argued that the use of internal consultants and experts within the PA is more advantageous and represents a lower cost, because they have specific knowledge of the subjects, processes, regulations and organisational culture compared to external consultants (multinationals, law firms).