



The European Public Sector Award
EPSA 2019

***New solutions to complex challenges - a public sector
citizen-centric, sustainable and fit for the future***

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- UK Chartered Accountant - 30+ years working in/with public sector/done business in 25+ European countries
- Public sector expert Deloitte and Touche/KPMG (14 years)
- Seconded National Expert, DG Enterprise
- EIPA expert public sector financial management, performance management, service reform (14 years)
- Expert Adviser, European Cities Economic and Financial Governance Group 2014-2016
- EPSA Theme Leader in 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015 and 2017
- EPSA 2019 Project Leader
- Co-author/editor, EPSA publications 2009-2019 and books on PPP and on Competitive Dialogue



- **Many challenges...**
 - Economic uncertainty/lack of growth
 - Public finance constraints
 - Security threats (including cyber-security threat)
 - Demographic change
 - Climate change
 - Disruptive technologies
 - Promoting social inclusion
- **Happening simultaneously...** (“the polycrisis”)
- **“Perfect storm”** - Budget constraints *and* rising/difficult to control demand for services/social benefits



- Greater downside risk from challenges (e.g. climate-related issues)
- Challenge to sustainability of European social model
- Austerity fatigue/challenge of restoring hope (going beyond “weathering the storm”/timescales to address challenges)
- “Permanent Revolution” fatigue
- Setting priorities and the politics of choice
- Need for economic growth to bring fiscal sustainability
- Challenge of risk taking and (sometimes) falling short in innovating
- Adapting to the age of instant/permanent communication and diversity/multiplicity of social media information sources



- The crisis of European/national identity - From Brexit to ???
- The rise of political insurgency (anti-state and anti-politics, challenge to “one version of the truth”, distrust of “experts”)
- Challenge to belief that politics can be a means of social progress and/or the means of issues in citizens’ lives
- Challenges to social cohesion
- Reduced confidence/trust in institutions (including government) to meet above challenges



- Creative responses at all levels of government to the continuing crisis/appropriate to level
- Overarching trends:
 - Actions to enhance trust in government
 - Actions to deepen/broaden social inclusion
 - “From very good to better” - no complacency from high performers
 - Cross-government action to identify and manage risk
 - Deepening of stakeholder engagement and co-creation
 - Limited recognition of role of auditors in improving public sector performance and as guardians of probity



- Trends in EPSA 2019 continued from earlier EPSA editions:
 - Importance of adaptive innovation
 - Measures to promote economic growth
 - Creative approaches to policing
 - Public servants with the energy to volunteer beyond core role
 - Importance of recognising staff as stakeholders
 - Use of shared services/platforms to realise efficiencies
 - Digitalisation of processes



- Trends in EPSA 2019 not widely observed in earlier EPSA editions or deepened/broadened from them:
 - Systemic approaches to addressing fraud and corruption
 - Use of mobile apps to deliver services
 - Use of big data to support evidence-based policy-making
 - Creation of eco-systems for stakeholder co-creation
 - Integration of UN Sustainable Development Goals into project objectives



- Key role of tools such as data visualisation in evidence-based policy-making
- Importance of systemic cross-entity risk assessment and dynamic scenario planning
- Wider use of new decision tools (e.g. hackathons)
- Ensuring data privacy and security by design
- Using time more effectively - from processing to judgement
- Digital transformation - objective or instrument?
- Wider recognition of the role of auditors as a key element of the process of restoring trust in government
- More effective audit interventions (priorities/timing/scope)



And finally...the lesson of EPSA since 2009



- Innovative policy responses are potentially within the reach of all European public administrations who are open to creating them or ready to follow the example of others who have already succeeded



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