

The Continuous Modernisation of Public Administration in Slovenia

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Abstract

In Slovenia the public administration reform has been a systematic task since 1996 when the strategy of transformation of public administration due to Slovenia becoming a full member of European Union has been adopted. Such a strategy could be developed and implemented regarding the fact that Slovenia has had a functioning system of public administration since 1991 when it became an independent state. In the last few years after 2000 the reform has been built up as constant modernisation based on several pillars such as civil service system, rationalisation of structures, e-government, quality management, all together incorporated in the principles of new public management and good governance, but presented rather legalistically so far. In July 2003 midterm strategy on further development of public sector and later national Strategy on Development of Slovenia till 2013 pointed out the coordinated approach on the modernisation, focusing on an administration as an impetus to a competitive national economy.

1 The Process of the Modernisation of Public Administration in Slovenia and worldwide

The wording “public administration reform” or “public sector reform” has been commonly used (and abused) worldwide since the end of eighties. The most famous reforming country is New Zealand, followed by Great Britain, United States of America, Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, France etc. OECD has identified the majority of radical reforms in the period of 1989-1992. In different countries the politicians and top public managers emphasized different approaches, depending on constitutional and legal system, history, competitiveness of national economy etc. Public administration reforms in Germany are therefore oriented more towards decentralisation and financial management, in USA and GB towards privatisation, users and HRM, in Sweden towards participation and decentralisation (more in Lane, 1995, Flynn and Strehl, 1996, Grell, 2002, OECD, 2004, Peters and Pierre, 2005, regarding SE Europe Kovač, 2007). There are also some other expressions in use, such as development, modernisation, regulatory reform, lean government etc.

Nevertheless all national administrations had the same problems at least till the mid-nineties, most important of all because of the need to cut down the proportion of public expenditure within GDP (in Slovenia from 1992-2006 between 47 and 42%) and the need for user-oriented public administration. There have been other reasons such as globalisation, privatisation, deregulation, IT development, transition, change of values etc.

Primarily the objectives of public administration reforms are increased efficiency and effectiveness (Sigma, 1999). Some argue that we can recognize the new paradigm called New Public Management, since new approaches are based on the principles of private sector as firstly put forward by Hood. Others stress the meaning of European Administrative Space, developed by SIGMA (1999) and European Court of Justice with the following guidelines: reliability and predictability, openness and transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness (Kovač, 2003). If we take those principles into account, we would be talking about developing entrepreneurial public administration, which emphasises the value of people involved. Those general frameworks are valid for Slovenia as well, since New Public Management has been officially defined as a governmental current guideline in national strategies from 1996 on.

It is worth stressing that Slovenia, as well as other countries of course, had to acknowledge, sometimes even painfully, that the public and the private sector function with different missions, so it is not possible to just “copy&paste” the private sector methods. The most important drivers to be put in front of efficiency and orientation toward users are therefore legality and public interest, which have to limit entrepreneurial or lately the so-called neo-liberalistic approaches.

The public administration can be oriented toward users, but there are situations when its quality is not satisfying individual interests. However, one must find it hard to define what public interest is in certain cases. But the principles of legality, political neutrality, objectivity, autonomy are nevertheless still more than valid; they are to be upgraded and not replaced by effectiveness and efficiency (Schuppert, 2000, OECD, 2004). Despite common theoretical dimensions experts identify two major trends of the public sector reforms within the OECD countries: 1- reforms based on privatisation (main goal being free market) and 2- reforms on the basis of de/regulation, but both types aiming to adjust legal framework and the public sector activities to current social environment and

joining-up the public and the private sector (Schuppert, 2000: 277 and 350). **We would presume that the basic objectives of public authorities are the following:**

- 1. To protect public interests and therefore regulate those fields where the market would not function in that respect;**
2. To plan and control the implementation of public policies;
3. To create an enabling environment to stimulate entrepreneurship and investment (and economic progress and sustainable social development in the long run).

The role of the state is therefore changing – from once being just the institution to remove market dysfunctions to the modern state which acts as a promoter of strategic economic and societal development. The authorities must distinguish whether they are dealing with the power - as an institution and regulative power - or with the services for the people - as an organisation and service provider. When an organisation is in question, there is no doubt that efficient public sector is also in the interest of the economy. Consequently,

the public sector reforms are nowadays worldwide focusing from mainly legal approaches towards more sophisticated measures on the fields of Quality Management, deregulation, privatisation, flexible organisation etc. (Flynn, 1996, Scuppert, 2000, Engel, 2003, Pollit and Talbot, 2004).

As the grounds for further public administration reforms the doctrine of good/corporate/new governance has been developed in the last few years on the basis of New Public Management within OECD, putting forward not only efficiency, but mainly participative strategic planning by giving the government of the day the crucial role in stimulating cooperation among societal subsystems (OECD, 2004). The principles of good governance in Slovenia are emerging in theory (and much slower in practice) from 2003 on, being built in the lately passed Strategy of Development of Slovenia till 2013, mainly prepared to put forward the priorities Slovenia has to challenge in the first decade of full membership in the EU. Slovenia has met some major milestones so far by becoming an independent state in 1991 and joining the EU in 2004. If public administration had not responded to new needs of the state and its people, Slovenia could not have been facing new challenges, such as introducing the euro in 2007 or holding the presidency of the EU in 2008.

Furthermore, public administration is just one pillar creating the public sector system in Slovenia. Namely, in accordance with the Civil Servants Act and the Salary System in the Public Sector Act (2002) public sector in Slovenia is regarded as the entirety of government bodies and local self-government units' administrations, public agencies,

public funds, public institutes, public economic institutes and other legal persons of public law, when they are classified as national or local communities' budget spending units, all together about 150.000 employees. Public sector therefore covers systems of public education, public health, social welfare, R&D, judiciary system etc. The public administration is narrower as the entirety of government administration bodies, municipalities' administrations (about 200 of them) and legal persons of public law (public agencies and certain public institutes) performing administrative tasks under public authorisations. There are about 46.000 employees (4% of active population) working in public administration, about 33.000 of them within state administration (police and army included) and about 4.000 within municipalities. It is worth mentioning that in Slovenia there is a great difference between the state administration (in central and local levels) and local self-government (municipalities). The state administration is represented by 15 ministries and 16 supportive common governmental services, about 50 autonomous units within ministries (such as Tax Office) and 58 local administrative units.

2 Periods of the Development in Slovene Public Administration

There are specifics in every state regarding the process of public administration reforms, but one can find common characteristics in politically similar countries. In the group of Southeast European countries Lane (1995, in detail also in Kovač, 2007) introduces similar developmental phases:

- **Transformation** – establishment of new system with several political parties, regular elections, local self-government etc.;
- **Consolidation** – new political system is stabilized, new opportunities for privatisation are opened, there is the process of denationalization and implementing free market elements;
- **Modernisation** – only in this phase the actual reform process is in place, such as in developed countries with changed role of public institutions, their reorganization and gradual deregulation;
- **Adaptation** – measures to establish efficiency and effectiveness are introduced, usually due to EU pressure, demanding a set of changes regarding legislation and regulation.

Some recognize other classification, for instance Trpin (2003) puts forward three major periods, as 1- »revolution« (1990-1994), 2- transition (1995-1997) and 3 – accession to the EU (after 1997). In Slovenia the public administration reform has been a priority task since 1996 when the government adopted the strategy of transformation of public

administration. In the last few years the reform has been built up as a constant development of public administration.

Concerning public administration reform there have been several periods since 1991 in Slovenia specifically:

- From 1991 to 1996

The turning points in 1991 that triggered a comprehensive reform of public administration were the first democratic elections in Slovenia, its independence in June and the adoption of the Constitution at the end of the same year. Due to a completely new environment in which the Slovenian public administration found itself, the reform was first directed into the establishment of institutions in administrative areas assumed by the Republic of Slovenia from the former Yugoslavia (defence, customs, citizenship, personal documents etc.), and later into the adjustment of public administration system with the constitutional concept of the division of authority and local self-government (in 1995).

- From 1996 to 1999

Further development of public administration was related to the process of Slovenia's integration into the European Union. In 1996 the government passed the strategy on integration in the EU, including the partial strategy on public administration reform 1997-1999. The basic goals of the strategy were to increase the efficiency of the Slovene public administration and to adjust its functions and structures according to the European standards. The strategy incorporated over 30 projects, joined up into six fields: state administration, local self-government, public utilities, and the rights of individuals in administration, civil service system and public finances. The reform was not a success, mostly due to the inconsistent political support and lack of ministerial coordination.

- From 1999 to 2003

The periods of 1996-1999 and 1999-2003 have a common denominator: the EU. From 1999 on the basic new laws were prepared and passed later. Within this new context, new legislative framework for public administration had to be developed and harmonized with the standards of the European Administrative Space. Regular reports of the European Commission on the progress of Slovenia in its integration into the European Union (2002, 2003) testify that part of the reform was successfully concluded. The reports give positive evaluation of the administrative capacity on both, ministerial and horizontal levels. The legislative part of public administration reform was concluded with the adopting of the six fundamental legal acts: the Civil Servants Act, the Salary System in the Public Sector Act, the State Administration Act, the Inspection Act, the Public Agencies Act and the Act on the Access to Information of Public Character. In 2001, the Government of the

Republic of Slovenia began the activities to establish the second level of local self-government and adopted the basis for further development of local self-government, founded in constitutional amendments, in June 2002. In addition to the preparation of a new systemic legislation, numerous measures were implemented in years 2002-2003 on the level of implementing regulations and operative level to improve the quality of public administration operations, its services and information, to attain greater satisfaction of customers and better qualification of employees (e-government, governmental programme on removal of administrative barriers, special training for civil servants in the field of European affairs etc.).

- From 2003 onward

In July 2003 a special midterm governmental strategy on further development of public sector and in 2005 a broader strategy on development of Slovenia were passed. They define specific objectives and priority activities relating to public administration development in the areas of human resources management, task restructuring and administration organisation, administration and e-government processes, quality management, open administration and public finances. The activities are analytic, implementing and developmental, defining priority tasks, holders and time limits. The strategy from 2003 was the first one to integrate different parts of public administration operations in one document, based on *“the vision of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia to shape public administration that shall function under the principles of legality, legal protection and predictability, political neutrality, openness and transparency, quality, effectiveness and efficiency; in which doing, it will obtain results comparable with the result of public administrations in the countries of the European Union, under the indicators of imposed measures and satisfaction of citizens, traders and other affected persons and public-financial effects”*. Specific measures in the strategies aim to cover pitfalls of reforms so far, such as too legalistic approach to the reform, too much centralisation or on the other hand too much decentralisation without coordination among ministries, lack of political support on the highest level, too many abstract goals without supporting measures etc. Nevertheless, today the most important is, the awareness that Slovenia has been presently faced with societal and administrative development as a mature member state of the EU, putting forward the role of public administration as an impetus of the competitiveness of national and European economy on the basis of Lisbon Strategy. So, there is significant political support to implement different measures within the programme, named *“The Removal of Administrative Barriers”*, such as connecting public registers, introducing e-services, especially regarding taxes and customs, one-stop-offices for entrepreneurs etc.

3 The Leading Fields and Measures of Slovene Public Administration Reforms

The legislative part of Slovene public administration reform was concluded by implementation of several laws and its secondary legislation from 1997 to 2003:

- the Civil Servants Act (Official Journal of the Republic of Slovenia (OJRS), No 56/02, applied since June 2003),
- the Salary System in the Public Sector Act (OJRS, No 56/02, applied partially since 2004),
- the State Administration Act and the Public Agencies Act (OJRS, No 52/02) and the Inspection Act (Official Journal of the Republic of Slovenia, No 56/02) in force since 2002,
- the Act on the Access to Information of Public Character (OJRS, No 24/03).

Some of these acts have been newly introduced in every day life and work, so it is too early to evaluate the impacts (3-4 years is not enough to evaluate added value of such umbrella laws, not to mention lack of evaluation criteria set in advance). Nevertheless let us take a look over their objectives and concrete activities. Major emphasis in the Civil Servants Act is given to the renewal of the system of personnel planning and employment, enhancement of the strategic centre for human resources management within administration, decentralisation of human resources management, increasing of internal mobility, planning of employees' career development, optimal use of human resources, separation of political functions from officials' positions, establishment of the top-level public managers, establishment of the Council of Officials representing an independent master of objective selection of the top-level administrative managers, professionalism and stability of administration, a more objective system of selection and remunerations, establishment of the policy of horizontal training and advanced training, and enhancement of social partnership. The Act also introduces the mechanisms for attaining greater flexibility, as well as the rationalisation of operations (project work, reorganisation, temporary and permanent transferral). On the basis of Civil Service Act and State Administration Act the government adopted several decrees in June 2003 to regulate bodies within Ministries, internal organisation, systemisation, positions and the titles within public administration bodies and judicial authorities, internal tendering procedure, as well as restrictions and duties of civil servants related to accepting of gifts. The statistical data have already proven that these measures led to greater efficiency, but regarding the limited influence of politics on civil servants some serious doubts have been introduced, also via Constitutional Court of Slovenia which decided in 2005 that

some governmental authorisations on dismissal of top public managers without breaching the law (put in law) to be excessive.

The Salary System in the Public Sector Act (judiciary system included) was adopted in order to establish a uniform salary system in the public sector and ensure a uniform basic salary for comparable positions, motivate and remunerate the above-average work results and effectiveness, ensure the transparency, flexibility and control of the salary system from the point of view of public finance. The Act also stimulates the rationalisation of operations, since it permits that a part of the savings created through rationalisation be directed into the remunerations for employees achieving above-average work results. But the Act itself has not been put in force fully due to some years' negotiation with trade unions regarding collective bargaining, so the goals are still to be reached in practice, probably till the end of 2007.

In the area of training, a special emphasis was given to the implementation of training programmes in the area of European Affairs in accordance with the strategy adopted in 2000. A three-year training programme has been implemented for the elite group of junior officials for the preparation on "*concours*". In 2003 a special training programme for the highest ranking senior employees started comprising 8 modules from the areas of administration management, organisation theory, human resources management, strategic planning and decision-making, mastering of changes, relationships and communication, management methods and team work (set by the Decree on Internal Organisation, Job Systematisation, Positions and Titles within Administration and Judicial Bodies, OJRS, No 58/03). The training is conducted mainly by Administrative Academy, established in 1997 as an internal unit in the Ministry of Public Administration. Academy has so far conducted a lot of programmes, but has not proven itself to be (as planned) a nucleus policy making unit. Instead of preparing annual governmental programmes it focuses only on rather partial execution of certain seminars and exams, so faculties and other organisations on the market take a great share of actual training of civil servants. Academy will have to take a new role within preparation of Slovenia to organise and lead all activities necessary in the EU during the first half of 2008, based on the strategy of training, passed by the government in 2006.

The State Administration Act has, in accordance with the practice of the member states of the European Union, transferred authorisations for the management of the state administration organisation from the parliament to the government, thus ensuring a greater flexibility and minimizing the burdening of the parliament, as well as renovating

the management system in state administration (a clearer distinction between political functions and highest-ranking positions of officials) and regulating more clearly the status of bodies within ministries. The reorganisation of state administration has not been completed, since it is run on several levels using several legal and other instruments. On macro level there is transition of some state functions into public agencies, institutes and funds. Within state administration the number of governmental services and bodies within ministries need to be rationalised, joined-up, the same goes for local administrative units. Slovene State Administration currently incorporates 15 ministries, about 50 bodies within them such as Police and Inspectorates (10 abolished in January 2004), 16 governmental services (5 abolished in April 2004), 58 (local) administrative units (planning to be centralised in about 14 centres in the process of establishing the regions in 2008). Decreasing the number of bodies results in fewer direct budget spending units and a greater integration of administration, and thus a less complex coordination, increased political responsibility and a decrease in the number of heads representing the highest-ranking officials' positions. On mezzo level - within ministries - the new governmental decree in 2003 defined the basis for unified internal structure, building on directorates as basic elements. On micro level there is a reform of civil service system (the systematisations of positions within administration bodies will be essential when shaped as actual, therefore including only the actually employed workers; new/replacement positions, promotions, education and training, departures and others, are covered by the personnel plan of the authority as part of its budget). On the whole there is a demand to consider the type of activities (policy- making, implementation, inspection, public utility etc.), number of employees and procedures/customers and autonomy needed when looking for optimal organisational unit or form. There is, for example, no need to accelerate public agencies without prior analysis of the autonomy needed, growing from internal organisational unit to directorate or autonomous body within the ministry, ministry itself or at least governmental service led by minister portfolio (the latest established at the end of 2005 to carry out the implementation of Strategy on Development of Slovenia) or having an independent public agency or an institute. The Inspection Act from 2002 provided the legal framework that permits a more efficient and more coordinated work of inspections (enlarged authorisations, establishment of the Inspection Council Coordination, a more adequate procedure regulation). The Public Agencies Act provides for the systemic regulation of a public agency, a so far unregulated status form of the person of public law.

By adopting the Act on the access to information of public character in 2003 the first step was made towards an open administration, classifying Slovenia in the big group of

developed countries that are familiar with such legislation (24 of 30 Member States of the OECD). The act allows the citizens to access any information of public character. A procedure is being regulated, under which every individual can acquire any information of public character and which introduces the liability of bodies to actively transfer certain selected information via the World Wide Web. Only confidential information, personal data, professional secrets, etc. are excluded. The access to information of public character is of great importance in the establishment of an overall structure of the open administration: only the citizens that are armed with information will be able to participate in various decision-making procedures and thus effectively realize their right to participate in the adopting of regulations. Amendments to the General Administrative Procedure Act (OJRS, No 52/02 and further) introduced the exchange of information from official databases as a burden of administration and not applicants. A series of measures have been implemented: reengineering of business process, informatisation of registers and providing access to databases (especially the central register of the population and land cadastre), training of employees. Further amendments were set in order to regulate certain unsolved issues of electronic administrative procedure (e-serving, e-submission, and e-file). The Administrative Fees Act (May 2002) was also amended to facilitate the payment of administrative fees by allowing the payment in cash, credit card or other contemporary payment instruments, irrespective of the amount of the fee. The Decree on the dealings of public administration bodies with customers (OJRC, No 22/01, renewed in 2005 and 2007) determined minimal standards for dealings with customers. It regulates the obligation to provide information on administration services in different manners, the system of responsiveness to criticism and remarks from customers, the obligatory identification of the satisfaction level of customers, the obligation of the employees to wear identification tags, the discretion field, minimal extent of official hours and others. In February 2003, the portal of administration units was established, representing a sample of a service portal and containing the information on approximately 140 administrative services, structured in a user-friendly manner (the catalogue of life events), however being rather informative and not enabling full communication and back offices optimisation. The standardized application forms for all types of procedures that are being conducted at administrative units are also available. In 2001 and 2002, the activities of the Government in the area of removal of administrative barriers were directed towards the simplification of procedures for the establishment of companies, influencing the environment and employment of foreigners (a summary decision on the fulfilment of conditions for the performance of activity, for the 50% reduction of court fees, shorter time for company registration, simplified procedures referring to the Spatial Planning Act and the Construction Act, a more rapid

acquisition of the residence permit for aliens, partly associated procedures for the acquisition of the residence permit and work permit, new act on nostrification of university degrees and certificates, respectively, acquired in foreign educational institutions and others). The establishment of the Regulatory Impact Analysis (RIA) project (in development from 2002) is of great importance in relation to both, traders and individual citizens, the same goes for Better Regulation programme, being of special attention in 2007 and on.

The Public Finance Act (OJRS, No 79/99, 110/02) and the Court of Auditors Act (OJRS, No 11/01) were adopted, imposing economical and rational use of budget and other public-financial resources, planning and reporting of the direct and indirect national and municipal spending units on obtained goals and results and, consequently, economy audit, as well as audit of the effectiveness and efficiency of operations. The government of Slovenia takes these goals seriously also by incorporating certain measures in the Framework of economic and social reforms in Slovenia (2006, based on Strategy, 2005). The Framework strives for sustainable budget deficit and lower structural deficit of broader public sector till 2010. It is planned to reduce the proportion of public expenditures in GDP for 2 % in the period 2005-2008 and further 2 % till 2012, to achieve gradual reduction of public deficit and even its total removal in the next 5 years.

In accordance with ISO 9000 standards almost 30 administration organisations (mostly administration units, but also the government services, one ministry, bodies within Ministries, municipalities) acquired the certificate of quality, respectively. Since 2002, the predominant model (about 80 organisations till 2007) in Slovenia, used in accordance with the European trends, has been the European model Common Assessment Framework (CAF, more Staes and Thijs, 2005) for organisations in the public sector, adapted to public administration and developed on the basis of the concept, model and experience of the European excellence model EFQM, as well as national award for quality like Award of the Republic of Slovenia for Business Excellence. Even more, in 2007, the national system of external assessment of public organisations on the basis of CAF model has been established by Ministry of Public Administration, Faculty of Administration and Metrology Office.

The common critic of public administration reform in mid European space is a too legalistic approach, which is the case in Slovenia as well. It is natural that public administration is accurately defined by legislation to ensure legality, objectivity and the rule of law to avoid misuse. So it is a logical consequence to base the majority of

measures on changed regulations, especially those aiming to develop the organisation, functions, civil service system, and management of resources. Nevertheless, initially the legalistic approach should be just one which is later upgraded by process orientation. Within OECD (Anglo-Saxon legal system) there is even an opposite view: functional analysis should be the starting point to begin restructuring and passing amendments to existing acts and new laws. Both views should be combined to assure optimal effects. Functional studies carried out in 2003 and later have analytically proven the problem of rather isolated reforms so far. Mainly there are strong trends within state administration, but rather poor strive for efficiency for example within municipalities (some even talk of public administration being run in two tracks). There are even more drastic differences among systems within the whole of public sector, especially regarding privatisation processes such as those in the area of public health.

4 Further Development of Slovene Public Administration

Further development of Slovene Public administration is inevitably placed within the EU. The EU in general does not include national administration into *acquis*, when it is capable of implementing the sectoral regulations and directives. Nevertheless some trends are to be followed, especially on the fields of HRM and TQM, aiming to higher level of efficiency and effectiveness of public administrations. As OECD is claiming, the same goes for World Bank and IMF, more rapid processes of deregulation, decentralisation and privatisation should take place in Europe as well. As many public tasks as possible is supposed to transfer outside public sector or at least public administration, since public resources only get their "*value for money*" in the market (Grell, 2002). Slovenia is aiming to do so especially by public-private partnerships. Even new law on PPP has been put in force in 2006, enforcing PPP in all forms (institutional, contractual and other arrangements, formed between a public agency and a private company that can include a variety of activities that involves the private company in the development, financing, ownership and/or operation of a public facility or service).

The society and its formal and informal leaders should be aware of economic importance of public sector and administration (framework given by Lisbon Strategy). According to assessments, in the last years public sector contributed a good quarter of the added value, while the actual government's impact in the private sector is still great. In addition to the almost complete covering of non-market activities and economic infrastructure, the government can also seize, particularly through national banks and public funds, the potential opportunity to control a greater part of public sector operating under the

conditions of competition. Since the response time of the organisations under government control is inevitably longer, both for the reasons of differing legal procedures (for instance, public procurements) as well as for the reasons of potential politisation of strategic decisions, the Government has opted for the minimized ownership role of the government within the private sector, as well as for the continuation of privatisation already in the Strategy of Slovenian Economic Development. The quality of institutional environment is a prerequisite for sustainable economic growth. Some international indicators prove that government is supposed to be active contributor in developing national economy competitiveness. Additionally the size of public sector has to be recognised. The number of employees only in Slovene public administration (now from 33.000 in state administration to about 46.000 all together) has increased three times since 1991 due to the objective reasons (independence, establishment of local self-government, integration in the EU), as well as subjective reasons. The growth of public administration and salaries in public administration (and in the entire public sector) represents an increased pressure on the national budget and one of the reasons for the increase of the public-financial deficit. In addition, in Slovenia as well as worldwide almost all measures have been taken to assure more user friendly administration. On the other hand civil servants were rarely systematically motivated and/or awarded at the same time, even though they are the key success factor.

As identified in so far conducted partial functional analyses, Slovene public administration should be strengthened from 2007 on basing on three major development problems:

1. Quality of regulations;
2. Relation to customers and economy;
3. Management of resources and its coordination and rationalisation (Strategy, 2005).

Priority tasks should therefore be connected to ensure optimal results. Some of the key objectives and further tasks to be implemented would be: implementing the strategic human resources planning, a greater possibility for remunerations according to work effectiveness, strengthening the cooperation with civil society and building of partnerships with unions, intensive introduction of electronic services in public administration, elaboration of methodology for the regulatory impact analysis (RIA), expanding and remunerating good practices; developing adequate standards of service quality, elaboration of standards for the measurement of efficiency and effectiveness of institutions and individuals, as well as promotion of competition and benchmarking. The Government of the Republic of Slovenia realizes that good governance represents one of the pillars of social development and prosperity; the other two being the economic growth

and social cohesion. Public administration (should) play(s) a significant role within the framework of good governance, since it provides professional basis for political decision-making and directly enforces the adopted policies. Therefore, the quality of public policies and their actual social value depend to a large extent on the quality, effectiveness and success of its operating.

Let us conclude by emphasizing once again the great importance of government provided consistent political support and pro-active stand. It takes time to modernise public administration, since public administration reform means the change of the mentality. As public administration is functioning within rapidly changing societal environment, public administration reform is, as we all know and hope for, the never-ending story.

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