

“Making Trust Sustainable”
EUPAN Directors General Meeting
Helsinki
28–29 November 2019

Summary

This is a short summary of the EUPAN DG Meeting held in Helsinki on 28–29 November 2019. All meeting documents and presentations are available for the participants of the meeting in the [Presidency Portal for Informal Events \(PPI\)](#). The themes and questions of the meeting will be examined in detail in the Presidency Report, which will be published by the end of 2019.

The recorded webcast of the panel discussion, keynote and discussions on them are available online **until 3 January 2020** at:

<http://suite.icareus.com/web/bright/player/embed/webcast?eventId=37352404&playerId=37352372>.

Welcome and introduction

Sirpa Paatero, Minister of Local Government and Ownership Steering
Chair of the Meeting Juha Sarkio, Director General, Ministry of Finance

Minister Paatero opened the EUPAN Directors General Meeting in Helsinki. Minister Paatero warmly welcomed all participants, speakers, partners and stakeholders and thanked them for their commitment. She noted that there is a long tradition behind the EUPAN network. The meeting in Helsinki is the 73rd Directors General Meeting, which means the network has gathered for over 30 years to share experiences, create common understanding and discuss solutions to common challenges of public administration. Minister Paatero emphasized that as the world is constantly changing, it is very valuable to keep this dialogue alive with regular meetings.

Minister Paatero noted that the title of Finland’s Presidency Programme is “Sustainable Europe – Sustainable Future”. As the slogan for the EUPAN during the Finnish Presidency is “Making Trust Sustainable”, the network is right in the core of European values. According to the Minister, this is clearly reflected in EUPAN’s Strategy Paper and in the agendas of the upcoming Presidencies.

In his welcoming words, Chair DG Juha Sarkio highlighted that there is an increasing need for open discussion and exchange of ideas – the kind of interaction EUPAN is designed for. DG Sarkio stated that we should take an active role in shaping our future and solving our problems as common concerns. In spite of the differences between our countries, we share same problems and can help each other.

DG Sarkio thanked the whole network and especially the EUPAN 5 for smooth, effective and fruitful cooperation. He noted that although the Presidencies have the main responsibility of organizing the events, it is the network, the collective meetings of friends and colleagues, which make EUPAN a real network and a unique European platform.

Panel discussion: Strategic environment of public administration leaders – the role of trust, artificial intelligence and ethics

Panel chair: Professor Hanna Wass, University of Helsinki

Panelists:

Jenni Airaksinen, Senior Lecturer, Tampere University

Professor Elina Kestilä-Kekkonen, University of Turku

Paul Maassen, Chief of Country Support, Open Government Partnership

The panel discussion laid out the context defined in the EUPAN Strategy Paper, in which European civil servants operate, and provided a basis for the discussions of the afternoon workshops. The panel discussion examined the themes of trust, AI, and ethics in public administration from the internal perspective. The panel addressed the question, what are the main obstacles inside public administrations in the implementation of the EUPAN's motto "Working together for high quality public administrations and public services in Europe." What can be done better in the leadership, organizational culture and administrative processes to overcome these obstacles?

[The recorded webcast of the panel discussion and the following plenary discussion](#) is available online until 3 January 2020.

Keynote: The importance of leadership in building trust – good governance, service innovations and effective HRM

Marcos Bonturi, Director for Public Governance, OECD

The keynote provided views and further understanding of the meaning of trust in the ways we can lead and develop public administration in Europe. Mr Bonturi structured the keynote around the recently published OECD's [Government at a Glance 2019](#). Government at a Glance offers a series of cross-country indicators on a number of governance issues done for many years. Mr Bonturi brought both good and bad news about the levels of trust in the OECD countries. The trust levels have turned up again after a long decline, but "we are not out of the woods yet". Governments are learning to do things right, but there is still much to do. Leadership has a key role. Mr Bonturi gave an overview of the drivers of trust and the comprehensive methodology created by the OECD to understand the reasons for trust and distrust.

Mr Bonturi noted that as Minister Paatero stated in her opening words, Finland has asked OECD to carry out a trust review on Finland, and encouraged other countries to follow Finland's example.

The OECD distributed the following materials to the meeting participants on a USB key:

[Hello, World: Artificial intelligence and its use in the public sector](#)

[OECD Recommendation on Public Service Leadership and Capability](#)

[The Path to Becoming a Data-Driven Public Sector](#)

[Government at a Glance 2019](#)

[The recorded webcast of the keynote and the following plenary discussion](#) is available online until 3 January 2020.

Presentation of ECA's Special report: The ethical frameworks of the audited EU institutions

Mihails Kozlovs, Member of the European Court of Auditors

Mihails Kozlovs from the European Court of Auditors gave a presentation of *ECA's Special Report no 13/2019: The ethical frameworks of the audited EU institutions: scope for improvement*. The presentation of Mr Kozlovs is available for the participants of the EUPAN DG Meeting in the [Presidency Portal for Informal Events \(PPI\)](#). ECA's Special Report no 13/2019 and its executive summary is available online: <https://op.europa.eu/webpub/eca/special-reports/ethics-13-2019/en/>

Launch of the CAF2020

Timo Kuntsi, CAF National Correspondent, Finland
Thomas Prorok, EIPA CAF Expert

[The new CAF2020](#) was launched at the EUPAN DG Meeting on 28 November 2019. The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is the European quality management instrument for the public sector. It is a unique product of the cooperation between European countries. It helps public sector organizations to improve their performance, but it is also a valuable leadership tool.

Chair DG Sarkio noted that the CAF is the most visible product of the EUPAN network and it has a clear impact on how we assess and improve the quality of public administrations in Europe. In 2019, there are about 4100 registered CAF users in European and non-European countries. The current EUPAN 5 Secretariat signed the foreword of the new CAF2020 to highlight its support and commitment to promoting the new CAF model.

The CAF2020 was presented by Timo Kuntsi and Thomas Prorok. The presentation is available for the participants of the EUPAN DG Meeting in the [Presidency Portal for Informal Events \(PPI\)](#).

The CAF2020 Manual is available online: <https://www.eupan.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/20191118-CAF-2020-FINAL.pdf>

The DGs warmly and fully supported and welcomed the CAF2020 and congratulated the CAF network. CAF was highlighted as an excellent, tailor-made tool to evaluate the results of the work of the public sector and its DGs. The new CAF responds to the challenges of today. The DGs agreed to promote the CAF2020 and hoped it will be translated to as many languages as possible. To conclude, the Chair DG Sarkio stated that the CAF2020 is now unanimously approved by the DGs.

Workshops

1. Horizontal cooperation in data-driven decision-making
2. The use of artificial intelligence and robotics in public services
3. Building a culture of integrity and trust
4. Life-long learning in public administration

Meeting participants chose one workshop and participated in the same workshop during both days of the meeting. In the EUPAN Working Level Meeting in September, the aim of the

workshops was to create deeper understanding of the four topics (please see the report of the [EUPAN WL Meeting](#)). In the EUPAN Directors General Meeting, the workshops dove into the themes from the perspective of leadership and goal setting. The workshops weighed which of the findings of the WL were the most crucial and how they can be taken into account in the EUPAN Member States and in the work of EUPAN.

The conclusions of the workshops will be examined in detail in the Presidency Report. The presentations and preliminary conclusions of the workshops are available for the participants of the EUPAN DG Meeting in the [Presidency Portal for Informal Events \(PPI\)](#).

Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between EUPAN and EGPA

Chair DG Juha Sarkio signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between EUPAN and EGPA. The document was signed prior to the meeting by EGPA President Jean-Michel Eymeri-Douzans and IIAS Director General Sofiane Sahraoui. Professor Edoardo Ongaro from The Open University, UK, represented [The European Group for Public Administration \(EGPA\)](#) in the signing. The MoU was approved based on consensus by the DGs. All EUPAN Member States had received the draft Memorandum in advance to the meeting and had been asked to state their possible objections by 8 November 2019 at the latest.

Chair DG Sarkio emphasized that the purpose of the MoU for EUPAN is to ensure the best possible opportunities for interaction with European public administration research. The MoU ensures scientific support for EUPAN and helps to benefit from the competent academic community. The MoU is also in line with the EUPAN Strategy Paper's aim to strengthen communication and partnerships with relevant stakeholders such as universities. The Chair noted that there is a long tradition of cooperation between EGPA and EUPAN. The MoU is a statement of recognizing the value of that relationship. Both EUPAN and EGPA remain free to choose how active they want the relationship to be at different times. The MoU does not exclude any forms of cooperation or MoUs with other stakeholders.

Professor Ongaro highlighted the signing of the MoU as a very important milestone, a moment of symbiosis between the two communities. The closer cooperation is stated in the strategy plan of EGPA. Professor Ongaro emphasized the signing as a point of departure, rather than a point of arrival, in connecting the resources of the profession and the academy. The MoU is of mutual benefit. Professor Ongaro warmly thanked EUPAN for engaging in the cooperation.

Professor Ongaro gave a presentation titled *Forms of Knowledge for the Practice of Public Administration*. In the presentation, Professor Ongaro highlighted three forms of knowledge: enlightening knowledge, problem-oriented knowledge, and practice-embodied knowledge, which can be utilized in the cooperation between EUPAN and EGPA. The presentation is available for the participants of the EUPAN DG Meeting in the [Presidency Portal for Informal Events \(PPI\)](#).

The signed Memorandum of Understanding between EUPAN and EGPA is available for the participants of the EUPAN DG Meeting in the [Presidency Portal for Informal Events \(PPI\)](#). It will be also available online at the EUPAN website.

Current EUPAN network affairs

Clarification of the observer status (List of observers, ReSPA)

The Finnish Presidency inherited the question of **observer role of ReSPA**, the Regional School of Public Administration, in the CAF working group, from the Romanian Presidency. On the role of ReSPA there was no consensus reached because currently the EUPAN Handbook allows only countries as observers. Therefore, Romania proposed that the issue should be further discussed at the EUPAN DG Meeting in Helsinki.

The EUPAN DG Meeting in Helsinki decided that as the [EUPAN Handbook](#) (p. 15) states, only countries can be accepted as *observers* in the EUPAN. The EUPAN DG Meeting thus decided to maintain the current practice. Opening up the observer status for institutions and organizations could cause challenges, as it would be difficult to deny the observer status from other institutions after accepting one. The EUPAN Handbook already states that organizations such as [ReSPA \(Regional School of Public Administration\)](#) can be invited to the meetings based on the decision of a Presidency. For example, in the case of ReSPA, they have already been invited to, and have participated in the CAF Meeting in Helsinki. Furthermore, it was noted that EUPAN can sign Memoranda of Understanding with organizations such as ReSPA, if so wished by both parties.

Regarding the practices of inviting observers to the meetings, Chair DG Sarkio noted that it has occurred that the Handbook text has been interpreted in two different ways. The Chair presented the following citation from the [EUPAN Handbook \(2016\)](#), p. 15:

“The informal nature of EUPAN allows for the admission of observer countries. Observer countries may access the meetings, conferences and other events within the framework of EUPAN, once their observer status has been approved (e.g. Iceland, Norway and Switzerland). The participation of other observer countries together with any relevant EU candidate country shall be subject to approval at the level of Directors General or Ministers. Under certain conditions countries outside the EU can also be invited for collaboration (e.g. accessing countries in line with the DG meetings’ decision).”

1. After a country has been approved as an observer, each Presidency **can decide** whether they invite it to the EUPAN meetings or not.
2. After a country has been approved as an observer, each Presidency **has to invite** it to the EUPAN meetings.

The Chair underlined the need to clarify the interpretation so that everyone has the same understanding.

The EUPAN DG Meeting agreed, in accordance with the interpretation of the EUPAN 5, that the interpretation number 2 is correct. All countries that have been given the *observer* status must be invited to the meetings.¹ Only the observers themselves have the right to decide whether they want to participate in the meetings or not. EUPAN DG Meeting decided that there is no need to update the Handbook text.

¹ The observer countries of the EUPAN after the DG Meeting in Helsinki are: Iceland, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, and Turkey.

Decision on Montenegro's observer status**Decision on Serbia's observer status****The EUPAN DG Meeting made a decision to give Serbia and Montenegro observer statuses in the EUPAN.**

The Finnish Presidency had received an application letter from the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government of the Republic of Serbia and from the Ministry of Public Administration of Montenegro. Finland will inform Serbia and Montenegro about the decision and add them to the EUPAN contact list.

Updating the Rolling Programme

Rolling Programme was updated before the EUPAN DG Meeting in Helsinki. The updated version, which now also includes the preliminary plans of Portugal, is available at [the EUPAN website](#).

EUPAN website

In connection to the EUPAN DG Meeting, AT, DE, FI, EC, and EIPA had a short ad hoc meeting about the future of the EUPAN website, following the initiative of AT. AT is paying for the website until the end of 2019, but not after that. DE emphasized the importance of finding a permanent solution. One option is to use the current service provider of AT in the administration of the website also in the future. In the ad hoc meeting, EC and EIPA were asked to find a permanent solution together. EIPA DG Ongaro promised to make sure that the administration of the website does not stop at the end of 2019 and that the website will stay online until a permanent solution is found. The request to EC and EIPA was repeated also at the plenary of the DG Meeting.

Presentation of the priorities of the Croatian Presidency

Josip Osmann, Head of Service, Ministry of Public Administration, Croatia

Croatia gave a presentation of the priorities of the Croatian Presidency. The presentation is available for the participants of the EUPAN DG Meeting in the [Presidency Portal for Informal Events \(PPI\)](#). All EUPAN meetings will be held in Zagreb.

The dates for the EUPAN meetings during the Croatian Presidency are:

EUPAN 5 WL Secretariat Meeting, 13 March 2020
 EUPAN WL Meeting, 15–16 April 2020
 EUPAN 5 DG Secretariat Meeting, 15 May 2020
 EUPAN DG Meeting, 18–19 June 2020
 CAF National Correspondents Meeting, 16 April 2020 (after the EUPAN WL Meeting)

Germany announced the dates for the EUPAN meetings during the German Presidency:

EUPAN 5 WL Secretariat Meeting in Berlin, 30 July 2020
 EUPAN WL Meeting in Speyer, 17–18 September 2020
 EUPAN 5 DG Secretariat Meeting in Berlin, 8 October 2020
 EUPAN DG Meeting in Bremen, 10–11 November 2020

CAF Speyer, 24–25 September 2020
 DISPA Berlin, 3–4 December 2020

Progress report on Social Dialogue

Nadja Salson, TUNED coordinator and
Héctor Casado López, EUPAE and EU Social Dialogue
Committee for Central Government Administrations Chair

Nadja Salson and Héctor Casado López gave a presentation of the European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for Central Government Administrations, and its achievements and future work. The presentation is available for the participants of the EUPAN DG Meeting in the [Presidency Portal for Informal Events \(PPI\)](#).

For any questions, please contact eupan@vm.fi.