

Report

# Danish Presidency of the European Public Administration Network

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**Danish  
Presidency**  
Council of the  
European Union

# Table of contents

<b>Executive summary .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Methodology .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Analysis.....	7
Limitations.....	8
<b>Results .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Countries with formal leadership codes .....	9
Common leadership values .....	10
Core civil service values .....	10
Leadership competencies.....	11
Empowering and motivation employees .....	12
Efficiency and results orientation .....	13
Innovation and foresight.....	14
Cooperation with stakeholders.....	14
Challenges addressed.....	15
Managing complex current issues .....	15
Creating attractive workplaces .....	16
Ensuring integrity and legality .....	16
Strengthening efficiency .....	17
Development processes and stakeholders involved .....	18
Leaders, HR departments, and employees in the ministries .....	18
Academic researchers.....	19
International organizations.....	20
Trade unions .....	21
Implementation methods .....	21
Training and leadership development .....	21
Integration into HR processes.....	23
Internal guidelines and codes of conduct.....	24
Campaigns, communication and tools.....	25
Evaluation of the leadership values .....	25
Evaluation methods .....	25
Evaluation results.....	26

Challenges in implementation .....	27
Uneven local implementation.....	27
Lack of resources .....	28
Difficulties with translation and follow-up .....	28
<b>Discussion .....</b>	<b>30</b>



# **Leadership values across EUPAN countries**

Report

# Executive summary

The Danish EUPAN Presidency has explored two aspects of the theme ‘*Strengthening Public Leadership*’: Leadership values and leadership development programs.

The themes were examined through a survey distributed to EUPAN member and observer countries as well as the European Commission. Of 38 recipients, 32 responded, corresponding to a response rate of 84 %. For leadership values, a qualitative analysis identified the most prevalent types of responses across EUPAN countries. These findings are presented in this report, along with an appendix containing short country profiles.

The key findings are summarised below:

- **Countries with formal leadership codes:** 23 countries have one written set of values at the central level defining good leadership in the central administration. 4 countries have several sets of values at the local levels. 6 countries answer that they do not have written set of written values.
- **Common leadership values:** The most common leadership values identified are core civil service values such as integrity, legality, and public service orientation, along with four categories of leadership competencies: Motivating and empowering employees, efficiency and results orientation, innovation and foresight, and cooperation with stakeholders.
- **Challenges addressed:** The main aims or challenges addressed by the sets of values are managing complex current issues, creating attractive workplaces, ensuring integrity and legality, and strengthening efficiency.
- **Development processes and stakeholders involved:** The development of the leadership values was typically led by working groups from one or more central ministries and often involved leaders, HR departments, and employees in the ministries; academic researchers, international organizations; and/or trade unions.
- **Implementation methods:** The most common implementation methods are training and leadership development, integration into HR processes, internal guidelines and codes of conduct, and campaigns, communication and tools.
- **Evaluation of the leadership values:** Evaluation methods varies and includes periodic reviews, employee feedback, and outcome measures. Some positive results are identified but also an ongoing need for implementation efforts. Several countries has not conducted an evaluation.
- **Challenges in implementation:** Common challenges with implementation include uneven local implementation, lack of resources, and difficulties with translation and follow-up.

# Introduction

In 2025, OECD published the report *Workforce Insights from Central Government*<sup>1</sup>, a survey study with 55.980 central administration employees across ten EU/OECD countries. The report offers a comprehensive overview of factors influencing workplace performance, and one of the factors that stand out is leadership: Of all the factors included, management from line managers is the most important driver for perceived team performance and the second most important driver for wellbeing. Leadership performed by the organizations' senior leaders is the second most important driver for perceived organizational performance and employee engagement.

The findings show that good leadership makes a significant difference and supports the notion that strengthening public leadership should be an enduring priority. This is consistent with the EUPAN Strategy Paper 2025–2028<sup>2</sup>, in which one of the three main strategic objectives is to strengthen leadership and enhance the capacity to develop innovative and efficient public services and human resource policies.

During the Danish EUPAN Presidency in the autumn of 2025, two aspects of strengthening public leadership are explored, facilitated by the Danish Employee and Competence Agency (see box 1): *Leadership values and leadership development programs*. We have collected data on these topics in order to share experiences among EUPAN members. We hope that the results will serve as a useful source of inspiration for countries developing or revising their leadership values or leadership development programs.

This publication presents the results on leadership values – including what the values are, how they were developed and implemented, and the challenges encountered during implementation. The results on leadership development programs is presented in a EUPAN eNews article.

## Box 1

### The Danish Employee and Competence Agency

The survey on leadership values and leadership development programs is carried out by the Danish Employee and Competence Agency, an agency under the Danish Ministry of Finance which is responsible for managing the state's employer functions. This includes negotiating collective agreements within the state sector and handling matters related to leadership, pay, and personnel.

<sup>1</sup> [Workforce Insights from Central Governments | OECD](#)

<sup>2</sup> [European Public Administration Network \(EUPAN\) Strategy Paper – July 2025 - June 2028](#)

# Methodology

The Danish Presidency addresses the two chosen aspects of ‘Strengthening Public Leadership’ in EUPAN countries by posing two research questions:

**Research question 1:** *Do the countries have a code or a set of written values for good leadership in the central administration? If so, what do they consist of, how were they developed, and how have they been implemented? Are they applied in government organizations?*

**Research question 2:** *Which leadership development programs do the countries have that support the development of good leadership in the central administration? Which elements are included in the programs that may contribute to the attraction and retention of employees?*

To answer these questions, we developed a questionnaire divided into two parts: Part 1 on leadership values and part 2 on leadership development programs (see *Appendix 2. Questionnaire*). The questionnaire was sent to the EUPAN member countries, the EUPAN observer countries, and the European Commission, a total of 38 recipients. We received 32 responses, corresponding to a response rate of 84 % (see table 1).

*Table 1. Recipients and responses for the questionnaire*

	Recipients	Responses	Response rate
EUPAN member countries	27	24	89 %
EUPAN observer countries	10	7	70 %
The European Commission	1	1	100 %
Total	38	32	84 %

## Analysis

To identify trends across EUPAN members, we grouped similar responses from each country. Preliminary categories were generated using the Danish Agency for Public Finance and Management’s AI tool, then refined through a manual review linking responses to the most relevant category. This process provides an overview of crosscutting trends in leadership values across EUPAN members.

In addition, each country’s survey responses were translated into country profiles, which can be found in *Appendix 1. Country Profiles*. The method used for creating the country replies was, to a large extent, to copy the questionnaire answers for each question into the profiles to maintain as much of the original answers as possible. However, certain answers has been shortened to secure readability. This process has been qualitatively maintained by the authors.

The purpose of this approach is to help countries seeking to develop or refine their leadership values. They can use the overall trends for inspiration, and then explore in more detail the initiatives of countries they find particularly relevant or whose conditions are comparable.

## **Limitations**

As the questionnaire was primarily qualitative, with open-ended questions, the study cannot fully capture the prevalence of specific values, development processes, implementation methods, or challenges across countries. Some countries may have similar values or processes to those mentioned by others, even if they were not highlighted in this context. In addition, many nuances and less common responses have been excluded in order to condense the findings into broader, general categories.



# Results

The following section presents the findings from the first part of the questionnaire on leadership values and leadership development programs, covering questions 1 to 8. It includes information on how many countries have written values defining good leadership in the central administration, the key values, and the challenges these values aim to address. The section also covers how the values have been implemented, whether they have been evaluated, and any challenges encountered during their implementation.

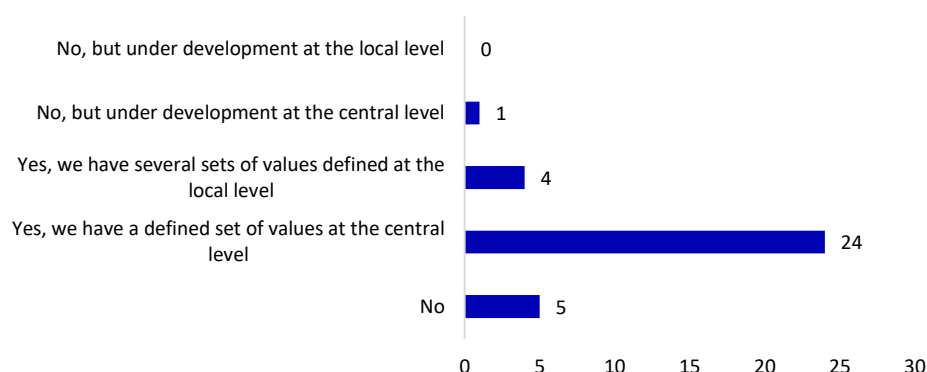
Responses are grouped into categories to highlight the most prominent types of answers. For each question, we have described the overall categories of answers and then provided summaries of the responses from individual countries that form the basis of the category. For full summaries of the individual countries' initiatives, see *Appendix 1. Country profiles*.

## Countries with formal leadership codes

In response to question 1 of the questionnaire, *"Does your country have a set of written values defining good leadership in the central administration - either a centrally defined set encompassing the entire central administration or sets developed and implemented at the local level?"*, the majority of the countries answered that they have a defined set of values at the central level. The distribution of answers is shown in *figure 1*.

Figure 1

**Does your country have a set of written values defining good leadership in the central administration - either a centrally defined set encompassing the entire central administration or sets developed and implemented at the local level**



Note.: N: 32. The numbers in the individual columns exceed the total number of responses, as some respondents selected more than one answer option.

Source: Questionnaire on good leadership

## Common leadership values

In response to Question 2, “If yes or under development, what are the key values?”, we identify two main types of values: Core civil service values and leadership competencies.

Core civil service values are expectations that apply to all civil servants, including leaders. They are often established by law or outlined in codes of conduct. In contrast, leadership competencies refer to the abilities or behaviors expected specifically of leaders. These are frequently defined in competency frameworks, though some countries express them as a leadership vision, leadership principles, or leadership expectations. In certain countries, these competencies are also legally defined, while in others they serve as guiding principles.

Core civil service values and leadership competencies are complementary. Many countries have both, and leadership competencies often build upon the fundamental civil service values. The following section presents the core civil service values and the leadership competencies.

### Core civil service values

The most common civil service values include integrity, legality, public service orientation, political neutrality, impartiality, transparency, accountability, equality, respect for human rights, professionalism, and efficiency.

The survey responses related to core civil service values are summarized in *box 2*.

#### Box 2

##### Core civil service values: The countries’ answers

**Albania:** The key values are integrity, accountability, transparency, public service orientation, ethical and professional leadership, rule of law, equity and inclusiveness, innovation and continuous improvement, and inter-institutional cooperation.

**Belgium:** The five federal values are the public interest, social responsibility, respect, trust, and professionalism.

**Croatia:** Key values are protection of personal reputation and the reputation of the civil service, protection of public interest, preserving citizens’ trust, collegiality, and impartiality

**Cyprus:** Leadership values are included in the Civil Service Law, the performance evaluation system of civil servants, and a Code of Conduct. They include legality, impartiality, objectivity, political neutrality, discretion, confidentiality, effectiveness, avoidance of conflict of interest, and combatting corruption.

**Denmark:** There are seven key duties which sets the frame for public servants, both for leaders and employees. The duties are legality, truthfulness, professionalism, development and cooperation, responsibility and management, openness about errors, and parti-political neutrality.

**Finland:** The key values in the shared foundation for public service leadership include: democracy, public interest, rule of law, justice, equality, transparency, trust, a human-centered approach, independence, and impartiality.

**France:** The key values in the interdepartmental management guidelines for senior executives are as follows: A sense of public interest and public service, neutrality, loyalty, dignity, impartiality and equal treatment, integrity, probity, and secularism

*Iceland:* The absolute core value of the Leadership Competency Framework is integrity. This is defined as always having the best interests of society as a guiding principle, earning trust, being a role model in behavior, taking initiative, and following projects through to completion.

*Greece:* Managers are expected to ensure strict observance of the principle of equal treatment of employees over whom they are headed and that the principle of legality is observed.

*Latvia:* The values of State administration are professionalism and effectiveness, integrity, accountability, acting in the public interest, sustainability of the State and welfare of the society, open State administration that is accessible to the society, and co-operation in State administration.

*Luxembourg:* Good leadership values are laid down in the status of civil servants: Independence, neutrality and availability

*Norway:* One of expectations for good leadership is to 'Know the framework'. This includes adhering to the administrative values of democracy, rule of law, professional integrity and efficiency.

*Poland:* The key values according to the Polish constitution are professionalism, impartiality, political neutrality and reliability. More are specified in the ethical code of conduct for civil service. These apply universally to all members of the civil service, including those in leadership positions.

*Portugal:* The key values outlined in the legal framework for good leadership include pursuing public interest and good administration; respecting legality, impartiality, transparency, good faith, proportionality and justice, to ensure the respect and trust of workers in public functions and society in the Public Administration.

*Poland:* In general, the leadership values are based on the Code of Conduct: Desirable conduct, public interest, impartiality, expertise, proportionality, helpfulness, and economy.

*Romania:* Core values endorsed in the civil service are integrity, transparency, accountability, citizen orientation, impartiality, responsibility, competence, performance, efficiency, legal compliance, and respect of human rights.

*Slovakia:* The civil service act include principles such as impartiality, legality, professionalism, stability, equal treatment and transparent, equal remuneration. The Code of Ethics include values such as integrity, transparency and professionalism

*Slovenia:* Values for all civil servants include the principles of equal access, legality, professionalism, ethical, honorable, and publicly transparent conduct, confidentiality, responsibility for results, good governance, and prohibition of harassment.

*Spain:* Public employees must act in accordance with the principles of objectivity, integrity, neutrality, responsibility, impartiality, confidentiality, dedication to public service, transparency, setting an example, austerity, accessibility, efficacy, honesty, promotion of the environment, and respect for equality between men and women.

*Sweden:* The values and principles for good administration include democracy, rule of law, objectivity, free formation of opinion, respect for equality and human dignity, efficiency, and service orientation. These values derive from the Swedish Constitution and guide all state sector employees, including leaders, in their daily conduct.

*Ukraine:* Ukrainian legislation on civil service defines the principles, by which civil service is conducted: the rule of law, legality, professionalism, patriotism, integrity, efficiency, providing equal access to civil service, political impartiality, transparency, and stability.

## Leadership competencies

A wide range of leadership competencies are highlighted in the responses, illustrating the versatility required of leaders in the central administration. The most frequently mentioned competencies can be grouped into four main categories: empowering and motivating

employees, efficiency and results orientation, innovation and foresight, and cooperation with stakeholders.

### **Empowering and motivation employees**

Many countries mention qualities like positive and motivating communication, trust, cooperation, mutual respect, delegation of responsibility, and constructive feedback, as well as supporting learning, wellbeing and diversity.

The survey responses related to empowering and motivating employees are summarized in *box 3*.

#### **Box 3**

##### **Empowering and motivating employees: The countries' answers**

*Austria:* Key competencies for leaders include context-appropriate, socially communicative and role-flexible behavior with the aim of promoting teamwork and the potential of employees and achieving organizational goals.

*Bulgaria:* Managers are expected to approach others with goodwill and respect; explain goals and necessary changes, mobilizing and encouraging employees to achieve them; demonstrate trust in subordinates by delegating important tasks and authority to them; create and use various opportunities to motivate and develop employees.

*Estonia:* Top managers are expected to support employee well-being, development and achievement of results through the design of challenges, inclusion and trust, and the provision of encouraging feedback.

*European Commission:* A core competency for leaders is the ability to empower members of the team while ensuring that they understand what is expected of them and how their work contributes to the unit's objectives.

*Germany:* Effective leadership is characterized by cooperation, employee focus and situational appropriateness. Mutual respect, reciprocal trust and a spirit of partnership are indispensable. This entails the inclusion of employees in decision-making processes, delegation of responsibilities and establishment of a culture of reciprocal feedback.

*Greece:* Managers must respect, support and motivate the people they manage, so that all together contribute to the achievement of the entity's objectives. They are expected to maintain open channels of communication with employees, ensure that new entrants are integrated smoothly, inspire employees, and resolve conflicts.

*Iceland:* One of the three main leadership competencies is communication skills, which includes human resource development, positive and motivating communication, results-oriented cooperation, and information sharing.

*Latvia:* Managers shall encourage involvement of the employees in the development of the institution, support their professional growth and initiative, interest in the fulfilment of the duties, and performance improvement;

*Norway:* One of the expectations for leaders is to empower employees. This includes showing trust by giving clear responsibilities and room for action; providing recognition and constructive feedback; motivating employee engagement, competence development, and curiosity; and contributing to a diverse and inclusive work community.

*Switzerland:* Trust promotes personal responsibility and esteem. The focus is on reliability and trusting someone to do something.

*Spain:* Competencies for senior and executive officials include leading to the consecution of organizational objectives with the participation of team members; and motivating, effectively communicating and adequately managing teams.

## Efficiency and results orientation

Many countries mention efficiency as a general expectation for civil servants. On top of this, leaders are expected to embody competencies like strategic planning, prioritization and effective project management, and to lead their unit toward the consecution of organizational goals.

The survey responses related to efficiency and results orientation are summarized in *box 4*.

### Box 4

#### Efficiency and results orientation: The countries' answers

*Austria:* Key competencies for leaders include design, management and quality development of the organizational unit in terms of overall administration, organizational goals and productivity, as well as knowledge of budgetary restrictions and the ability to apply them.

*Bulgaria:* Managers are expected to stand by their position and take responsibility for the results; manage performance; systematically monitor and control the execution of tasks; clearly define responsibilities and set realistic deadlines; organize work according to deadlines, resources, and quality requirements.

*Czech:* Strategy and leadership are amongst the key competencies for leaders.

*Cyprus:* Effectiveness is one of the responsibilities of civil servants.

*Denmark:* Civil servants must focus on possible improvements to quality and efficiency in their remit.

*Estonia:* Top managers are expected to set long-term goals for the institution or field together with employees and partners, analyzing the environment and taking into account political will; and to plan a strategy and well-thought-out work plans to achieve the goal.

*European Commission:* A core competency for leaders is the ability to set and revise objectives for the unit within the overall strategic framework of the Directorate-General and the overall objectives and priorities of the Commission.

*Germany:* Effective leadership is characterized by goal orientation.

*Finland:* Leadership values include economic efficiency and the effective use of resources.

*Iceland:* Competencies for managers include leadership competencies (responsibility, foresight, strategic planning, and leadership) and performance management (planning and prioritization, effective project management, innovation, and operational efficiency)

*Latvia:* Managers shall be able to define and turn into action the strategic vision of the institution or area and organize the work of the institution or structural unit in a way to achieve the planned result

*Poland:* Civil service rules include efficient use of public resources

*Romania:* Performance and efficiency are amongst the core values in civil service.

*Slovenia:* The Principle of Responsibility for Results is part of the values and principles for civil servants.

*Spain:* Austerity and efficacy is amongst the principles for public employees. In addition, strategic resource management is a competency area for executive and senior officials.

*Sweden:* Efficiency is amongst the values for good administration.

*Ukraine:* Efficiency is amongst the principles for civil service.

## Innovation and foresight

Many countries mention leadership values like innovation, foresight, improvement, learning, and adaptability. In essence, leaders should anticipate and adapt to changes, and promote continuous learning and improvement.

The survey responses related to innovation and foresight are summarized in *box 5*.

### Box 5

#### **Innovation and foresight: The countries' answers**

*Albania:* Key values include innovation and continuous improvement

*Austria:* Key competencies for managers include quality development of the organizational unit, as well as the recognition of digital requirements and further developments for the relevant work processes, implementation capabilities and impact assessment.

*Czech:* One of the key competencies for leaders is change and innovation.

*Denmark:* Civil servants must at all times strive to improve their advice and assistance to the minister. In their effort to achieve the best results, they must keep up with developments in their field,

*Estonia:* Top managers are expected to design an organization that promotes innovation and efficiency, taking into account technological developments.

*Finland:* Values for leaders include presentation of new ideas and implementation of reforms, as well as anticipating and adapting to changes

*Iceland:* Leadership competencies include innovation and foresight.

*Norway:* One expectation for good leadership is to be innovative. Leaders are expected to explore and adopt technologies and ways of working; promote the responsible use and sharing of data; and build a culture of innovation and continuous learning.

*Spain:* Incorporating innovative processes in public management is amongst the competencies for executive and senior officials.

*Switzerland:* Foresight promotes innovation and shapes the future – the focus is on openness and learning.

## Cooperation with stakeholders

Many countries mention concepts like inter-institutional cooperation, effectively collaborating with other stakeholders, networking, and leading in cooperation with members of the public, partners, personnel, and stakeholders.

The survey responses related to cooperation with stakeholders are summarized in *box 6*.

### Box 6

#### **Cooperation with stakeholders: The countries' answers**

*Albania:* A key value is inter-institutional cooperation.

*Austria:* One of the key competency for managers is development and use of networking and cooperation opportunities and support for the associated processes.

*Czech:* Leadership values include communication and cooperation.

*Denmark:* Civil servants must be open and responsive to the outside world and cooperate with others.

*Estonia:* Top managers are expected to strengthen cooperation networks (including international ones) and have regular substantive discussions with partners. They are also expected to involve various target groups (including politicians) in lawmaking or planning the activities of their institution and increase the commonality of their interests.

*Finland:* A principle for public service leadership is to lead public administration in cooperation and interaction with members of the public, partners, personnel and stakeholders, including on the international level.

*Greece:* Managers are expected to resolve conflict situations that may arise from the transactions with citizens and representatives of organizations and businesses, in cooperation with the employees of the team they manage.

*Latvia:* Cooperation in the state administration is a key value.

*Spain:* Competencies for senior and executive officials include effectively collaborating with other stakeholders.

*European Commission:* A core competency for leaders is the ability to build productive and cooperative working relationships with hierarchy and other units and colleagues.

## Challenges addressed

In response to Question 4, “*Is the set of values aimed at addressing any specific challenges in your central administration? (for example recruitment challenges, high complexity in tasks, compliance issues, etc.)*”, we identify four categories of challenges addressed or aims of developing the leadership values: Managing complex current issues, creating attractive workplaces, ensuring integrity and legality, and strengthening efficiency.

### Managing complex current issues

Many countries state that their leadership values aim to address a high task complexity or complex public issues, which require coordination across departments and sectors. Some countries also mention the importance of modernization, innovation or digitalization.

The survey responses related to managing complex current issues are summarized in *box 7*.

#### Box 7

##### Managing complex current issues: The countries’ answers

*Austria:* The values address the challenges of a highly complex environment and the need for digitalization of the public administration.

*Bulgaria:* The values are expected to achieve synergy through the joint work of people with complementary knowledge and skills; and to develop the necessary competencies to address current and future challenges.

*Estonia:* Boosting innovation leadership is one of the current key challenges.

*Germany:* Given the complexity of tasks and the multitude of interdepartmental interfaces, the leadership principles serve as a robust foundation for effective managerial conduct.

*Greece:* Digital skills is amongst the challenges addressed.

*Iceland:* Public Service Leaders need specific competence and knowledge to react to and initiate changes in an increasingly complex society and work environment.

*Netherlands:* The leadership values respond to the growing complexity of public issues, which require cross-sectoral collaboration and leadership beyond hierarchical structures.

*Norway:* New technology like AI may solve some challenges, but introduce new issues; attention to security is becoming increasingly important; and societal challenges such as climate change require coordination across sectors and agencies.

*Poland:* The set of values address challenges such as task complexity.

*Portugal:* The set of values aim to improve performance in the face of complex tasks and modernization needs, such as digital transformation and PA greening.

*Switzerland:* Transformation processes, the increasing digitalization of the working world, new working time models and mobile and flexible forms of work are challenging traditional behavior patterns and require new forms of cooperation.

### Creating attractive workplaces

Some countries state that their leadership values aim to create a desirable work environment, attract and retain talents, or motivate and engage employees.

The survey responses related to creating attractive workplaces are summarized in *box 8*.

#### Box 8

##### Creating attractive workplaces: The countries' answers

*Austria:* The values address the challenges of high manager turnover, the need for a new workforce because of demographical change, and recruitment challenges due to war for talents.

*Belgium:* Quality leadership contributes to an administration where employees and teams are both fulfilled and efficient.

*Bulgaria:* The values are expected to identify, attract, and retain the necessary talents; and to motivate and engage employees.

*Germany:* The understanding of leadership as a partnership-based process contributes to the sustained motivation and performance of staff.

*Greece:* The values address the topics of motivation, diversity, and inclusion

*Iceland:* The values address the challenge of creating a desirable work environment for managers with opportunities for growth. This address challenges of recruitment, retention and career development of public sector leaders.

*Netherlands:* The values strengthen the profile of public leadership in recruitment and development by appealing to professionals who are motivated to contribute to the public good and thrive in a learning environment.

### Ensuring integrity and legality

Some countries state that their leaderships values aim to ensure legality and compliance, maintain legitimacy and public trust, prevent corruption and misuse of authority, meet



expectations of transparency, avoid arbitrariness and promote the rule of law, or promote professionalism and political neutrality.

The survey responses related to ensuring integrity and legality are summarized in *box 9*.

**Box 9**

**Ensuring integrity and legality: The countries' answers**  
*Belgium:* Quality leadership is essential to fulfilling the societal role of the public service in an ethical way. The leader places the public interest at the heart of their priorities and acts daily with full awareness of this responsibility.

*Cyprus:* The rules and obligations in the relevant laws and regulations are aimed at reinforcing the rule of law and the principles of accountability, transparency, meritocracy, and consequently the public interest.

*Greece:* The values address the challenge of corruption.

*Denmark:* Code VII was published in 2015 to clarify the basic standards for good civil service conduct. The aim of the code is therefore to help employees and managers in central government to be aware of their key duties as civil servants.

*Netherlands:* Moral motivation supports leaders in navigating the value tensions inherent in public service. It helps civil servants to make careful, principled decisions in an environment where values may conflict.

*Poland:* The set of values address challenges such as compliance risks by promoting ethical leadership based on, for example, impartiality, political neutrality and professional conduct.

*Portugal:* The set of values was designed with the aim to guarantee legality and compliance, avoiding arbitrariness and promoting the rule of law.

*Sweden:* The values aim to maintain legitimacy and public trust, to prevent corruption and misuse of authority, and to ensure legal and ethical compliance.

## Strengthening efficiency

Some countries mention that their leadership values address challenges like connecting funding to results, providing better and more effective service to citizens, or dealing with a scarcity of resources.

The survey responses related to strengthening efficiency are summarized in *box 10*.

**Box 10**

**Strengthening efficiency: The countries' answers**

*Belgium:* Quality leadership is essential to fulfilling the societal role of the public service in an efficient way.

*Bulgaria:* The leadership values are expected to build effective teams.

*Cyprus:* The rules and obligations in the relevant laws and regulations are aimed at better and more effective service to citizens.

*Germany:* Given the complexity of tasks, the multitude of interdepartmental interfaces and the high expectations with regard to quality, transparency and efficiency, the leadership principles serve as a robust foundation for effective managerial conduct.

*Iceland:* Connecting Funding to results: A core purpose and vision is "to facilitate a clearer connection in Public Service between funds, performance & results for the quality of life" for citizens.

Norway: An ageing population is leading to increasing scarcity of resources and expertise.

## Development processes and stakeholders involved

In response to Question 5, “*How was or are the leadership values developed? E.g., which actors have been involved (different ministries, NGOs, trade unions etc.), what kind of knowledge has been utilized in the development of the values (Academic research, local practices, political ideas)?*”, we identify a range of different processes.

In some countries, the leadership values were derived directly from the constitution or other existing laws. In some countries, they were adopted through a legislative process. In some countries, the values were developed and accepted at the administrative level.

In most countries, the primary actors responsible for developing leadership values were a working group anchored in one or more central ministries. In the process, they involved and gathered knowledge from a range of other actors: Leaders, HR departments and employees in the ministries, academic researchers, international organizations, and trade unions.

### Leaders, HR departments, and employees in the ministries

Many countries involved leaders, HR departments, or employees from their ministries in the development of leadership values through surveys, interviews or co-creation workshops. Many countries also used existing documents like laws, codes, or earlier investigations.

The survey responses mentioning leaders, HR departments, and employees in the ministries are summarized in *box 11*.

#### Box 11

##### Leaders, HR departments, and employees in the ministries: The countries' answers

*Albania:* Department of Public Administration has played a central coordinating role. Line ministries have contributed to the development and contextualization of leadership principles based on their sector-specific needs.

*Belgium:* The set of values was developed by a working group with representatives of the different ministries (strategic leadership consultants of the HR-departments). It is the result of a process of consultation and co-creation involving many partners.

*Croatia:* Code of Ethics for Civil Servants and Employees was developed in cooperation with all state administration bodies.

*Czech:* The pilot project used a survey with approximately 21,000 respondents (30% of the employees in civil service authorities), semi-structured interviews, and consultations with representatives of the personnel departments of government agencies.

*Estonia:* When creating models, it is customary to involve various parties, from managers themselves and HR managers to academics.

*Finland:* Members of senior management in central government administration, municipalities, wellbeing services counties and research institutions were invited to join The Public Service Leadership Group. Their discussions clarified the view of the mission of public service leadership.

*France:* The values are the result of consultation between the interministerial delegation for senior government officials, attached to the Prime Minister, all ministries, and trade unions.

*Iceland:* The set of values was developed by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs in close cooperation with all ministries and the Association of Directors of Government Institutions.

*Germany:* The personnel development concept is aligned in close coordination with the competent human resources departments.

*Netherlands:* The leadership values were developed through an evidence-informed process, including a national personnel survey among 2,000 public sector managers and employees, focus groups with civil servants, and interviews with over 200 people across the public sector and civil society.

*Norway:* The expectations for good leadership are developed based on insights from a wide range of stakeholders, including state sector leaders, employee representatives, and HR professionals in the ministries and other government agencies,

*Latvia:* The development of the recommendation was based on employee survey results.

*Poland:* The leadership values were developed through a centralized, government-led process. The draft was developed by a 10-member team of experts, including Directors General.

*Portugal:* The values were developed over time, including through specific training for managers.

*Slovakia:* The leadership values specified in the Civil Service Act are the 'principles of the civil service'. The draft law was discussed during an interdepartmental consultation process.

*Spain:* As per competences, the approach included an internal guided participative process amongst civil servants from different Departments and responsibilities.

*Switzerland:* Based on a representative survey, around 130 employees and managers from all departments worked on various management topics under the leadership of the Federal Department of Finance.

## Academic researchers

Many countries included academic knowledge or involved researchers in the development process. The countries have collaborated, consulted or co-created with schools and researchers, or used scientific literature.

The survey responses mentioning academic research are summarized in *box 12*.

### Box 12

#### Academic researchers: The countries' answers

*Albania:* The Albanian School of Public Administration has been instrumental in integrating leadership values into training programs and promoting a culture of ethical and responsible governance.

*Belgium:* The leadership vision is based e.g. on scientific literature, and academics took part in a co-creation day

*Czech Republic:* Experts from academia contributed to the development of their code of conduct and were involved in data collection and hypothesis testing for their pilot of a new competency framework.

*Estonia:* It is customary to involve academics when creating models.

*Finland:* Senior leaders from research institutions were part of the Public Service Leadership Group who clarified the mission of public service leadership.

*Netherlands:* The Dutch Directorate-General for the Senior Civil Service partnered with the Leiden Leadership Centre as its scientific advisor. They did a literature review of 150 academic studies and had an advisory group of scholars who provided feedback throughout the process.

*Norway:* To develop expectations for good leadership, they gathered insights from a wide range of stakeholders including researchers.

*Poland:* Representative of academia were part of the expert team developing the leadership values, and the values were influenced by academic knowledge on ethics, the rule of law, and governance.

*Romania:* The civil service values were defined in consultation with academia.

*Spain:* A self-assessment questionnaire for management competencies has been prepared by INAP and the Complutense University of Madrid.

## International organizations

Many countries took into account international best practices or guidelines from organizations like SIGMA, OECD, EU, UNDP or GRECO.

The survey responses mentioning international organizations are summarized in *box 13*.

### Box 13

#### International organizations: The countries' answers

*Albania:* International organizations and donors, such as SIGMA/OECD, the EU, and UNDP, have supported the process with technical assistance and best practices.

*Belgium:* The leadership vision is based on the analysis of best practices observed in Belgium and abroad,

*Czech Republic:* Consultations with foreign partners within the EUPAN network were part of their pilot project.

*Greece:* The values were developed based on best practices at a European and international level,

*Iceland:* Iceland's Policy for Public Leadership is based on international Best Practice. The methodology is explicitly based on frameworks from the OECD.

*Latvia:* Their recommendation is based on examples of good practice in other countries.

*Poland:* The leadership values are based on international guidelines such as those from the OECD and GRECO, and examples from other EU countries were taken into account.

*Portugal:* The values were developed according to the national ethics framework, which is aligned with European best practice and the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service of the United Nations.

*Romania:* The civil service values were developed based on analyses of international experience.

*Slovak Republic:* The Slovak Republic takes into account the recommendations of international organizations such as the OECD and GRECO.

## Trade unions

Some countries consulted or collaborated with trade unions

The survey responses mentioning trade unions are summarized in *box 14*.

### Box 14

#### Trade unions: The countries' answers

*Belgium:* Trade union representatives were involved in the consultation and co-creation process.

*France:* The values for senior executives are the result of consultation between multiple parties, including trade unions.

*Luxembourg:* The values laid down have been developed by the Ministry of the Civil Servants in consultation with the trade union.

*Poland:* Trade unions were part of the expert team developing the draft for the leadership values.

*Portugal:* The managers' Statute had the participation of the trade unions.

*Romania:* The civil service values were defined in consultation with trade unions.

*Norway:* Gathered insights and experiences from a wide range of stakeholder, including employee representatives and the main trade union confederations.

*Slovenia:* In cooperation with representative trade unions and professional associations of public employees, the Officials' Council adopted a code of ethics of public employees.

## Implementation methods

In response to Question 6, “*How is the set of values implemented in practice? (e.g., training programs, internal guidelines, performance appraisals)?*”, we find that many countries use some of the same methods to implement their leadership values, even though some countries report on values for all civil servants and some on values or competencies for leaders specifically. The most common methods are training and leadership development, integration into HR processes, internal guidelines and codes of conduct, and campaigns, communication and tools.

### Training and leadership development

Many countries use training or leadership programs as part of their implementation. The countries integrate the values in training for top managers, senior managers, junior managers, or employees, or in workshops, seminars, lectures, or onboarding. Some countries also mention that they include mentoring and coaching.

The survey responses training and leadership development are summarized in *box 15*.

#### Box 15

#### **Training and leadership development: The countries' answers**

*Austria:* The relevant article foresees a mandatory training for all relevant managers in order to gain the defined competences.

*Albania:* The Albanian School of Public Administration plays a key role in embedding leadership values through structured training modules such as Ethics and integrity in public service; Strategic leadership and decision-making; Accountability and performance management.

*Belgium:* The leadership vision influence training and is taken into account in learning solutions.

*Cyprus:* The set of values is implemented through training programs for all civil servants organized by the Cyprus Academy for Public Administration.

*Czech:* The set of values is implemented through training.

*Denmark:* A dedicated e-learning course on Code VII was launched in 2017 to raise awareness among civil servants and managers about their roles and responsibilities, and all employees are required to take the online course on the code.

*European Commission:* The competency frameworks are the underlying values used in designing all leadership development activities.

*Germany:* The value framework is implemented through the "Leadership Forum" Program, "Leadership for Junior Managers" Program, and "Leadership Compact" Program, and through individual coaching.

*Greece:* The set of values is implemented through training programs.

*Iceland:* Implementation methods include training programs, such as workshops, a dedicated "Public Service Leaders' Day," and onboarding for new managers. They also include individualized support such as executive counselling and a peer mentoring program.

*Latvia:* For senior managers, the values are implemented through the Senior Management Leadership Program. The program covers different topics, including values and ethics

*Luxembourg:* The status of civil servants, which includes the values, are part of the training curriculum for trainees during their probationary period.

*Netherlands:* The vision also underpins the learning and development, including an e-learning module dedicated to the vision. Training programs promote reflection on one's leadership in light of the core values of shared leadership, responsiveness, and moral motivation.

*Norway:* A pilot leadership development program is currently being designed and implemented for leaders in the civil service, with the Foundations for Good Leadership serving as a key starting point. The framework will also play an important role in the further development of general leadership training offerings.

*Poland:* Training and education plays a central role in promoting values through e.g. full-time education, lifelong learning, seminars, and strategic workshops for current and future civil servants.

*Portugal:* Leadership values are implemented via initial mandatory and continuous training which include ethics and integrity in public service.

*Romania:* The values are integrated in training programs. A pilot of a leadership program for senior civil servants and general directors as accelerator of reforms and results in the public administration is starting in August 2025.

*Slovakia:* The set of values is implemented in areas such as education and training.

*Slovenia:* The set of values is partially covered in mandatory training for top managerial positions.

*Spain:* The Spanish Institute for Public Administration is in charge of the training programs on leadership, with a program specially designed for civil servants in leadership positions.

*Sweden:* Implementation is supported through training and onboarding. The Swedish Agency for Government Employers offers the "Manager in the state" training and guidance through the "The manager's Employer Role".

*Switzerland:* The values and principles are used as a basis in various courses, for example, in the management seminar for managers who are new to their role.

*Ukraine:* The High School of Public Governance develops and implements programs for senior civil servants aimed at developing and fostering responsible and resilient leadership.

## Integration into HR processes

Many countries integrate their leadership values into their HR-processes, letting the values shape job descriptions, recruitment, expected behaviors, KPI's or performance appraisals.

The survey responses mentioning integration into HR processes are summarized in *box 16*.

### Box 16

#### Integration into HR processes: The countries' answers

*Albania:* Performance evaluation criteria for civil servants and senior managers include indicators related to professional behavior, ethics, and responsibility, aligning with leadership values. Merit-based recruitment and promotion systems prioritize ethical standards, leadership competencies, and professional integrity.

*Belgium:* The leadership vision is integrated into several HR processes, notably through behavioral competency profiles, which influence key areas such as recruitment, evaluation, and training.

*Bulgaria:* The competencies required for a position, in accordance with the legally defined frameworks, are included in the relevant job description. They are taken into account in all three stages of the appraisal process.

*Cyprus:* The set of values is implemented by internal guidance and performance appraisal.

*Czech:* The set of values is implemented through performance appraisals.

*Estonia:* Competence models are the basis for various if not all HR Practices starting from recruitment and ending with alumni supporting the newcomers through mentoring at the most senior leadership levels.

*European Commission:* The competency frameworks are used in the assessment centers for selection of leaders and in their yearly appraisal.

*France:* The values have been incorporated into a set of managerial competency standards. During annual appraisals, senior managers are assessed on their performance in relation to these values. Any breach of these values may result in disciplinary action.

*Greece:* The set of values is implemented through performance appraisals. Leadership is one of the skills included in the Single Competency Framework for Greek Public Administration.

*Netherlands:* The Directorate-General for the Senior Civil Service has integrated the leadership values into recruitment and selection processes for senior public leaders. The societal task is central, and the vision provides guidance on desired leadership behaviors and competencies.

*Iceland:* The values are integrated into performance management through a 'Dialogue on Results' and the systemic use of Key Performance Indicators. The Core Leadership Competency Framework is intended for use in recruitment and performance appraisals.

*Latvia:* Ethics is a competency that must be evaluated during performance appraisals for all level employees in central administration.

*Portugal:* Leadership values are implemented via performance appraisals focused on behavioral skills.

*Romania:* The values are included in the definition of general competencies, and are therefore integrated in job descriptions, recruitment procedures, and performance appraisals.

*Ukraine:* Task setting and KPIs are included in the annual assessment for category 'A' civil servants. When selecting candidates for category 'A' positions, the competency requirements include leadership, integrity, compliance with ethical rules of behavior, strategic vision, change and innovation management.

## Internal guidelines and codes of conduct

Many countries have made internal guidelines that leaders are obliged to follow. Some countries also mention that they have institutions who monitor the compliance with the codes.

The survey responses internal guidelines and codes of conduct are summarized in *box 17*.

### Box 17

#### Internal guidelines and codes of conduct: The countries' answers

*Albania:* Institutions follow ethical codes and internal regulations that reflect the core values. These guidelines provide practical instructions on expected leadership behavior. The Department of Public Administration monitors compliance through inspections, reports, and oversight mechanisms

*Croatia:* Code of Ethics for Civil Servants and Employees was adopted by the Croatian Government and its application is mandatory.

*Czech:* The set of values is implemented through internal guidelines.

*European Commission:* The values guiding the Commission administration reflect the values on which the EU was founded on (Article 2 of the Lisbon Treaty and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights). These are implemented in the Staff Regulations, the Code of Conduct for the Members of the European Commission, and the Code of Good Administrative Behaviour and complaints for all staff, including managers and leaders.

*France:* The values are defined in internal guidelines

*Iceland:* The values of responsibility and performance are legally embedded. Each agency head receives a formal mandate from their minister, which outlines their specific responsibilities, in accordance with the Government Employees Act.

*Poland:* The set of values was implemented through internal guidelines and a legal framework, performance monitoring and reporting to the Head of the Civil Service Service, an ethical oversight and support from the Head of the Civil Service.

*Portugal:* Leadership values are implemented via internal codes of ethics and conduct, and via reinforcing transparency and values compliance through internal and external control and auditing mechanisms ( i.e. Court of Auditors).

*Slovakia:* The set of values is applied or implemented in areas such as legislation and internal regulations.

*Sweden:* Implementation is supported through codes of conduct.

*Ukraine:* Compliance with the rules of ethical conduct by civil servants is mandatory to assess in the annual assessment of Category 'A' civil servants.



### Campaigns, communication and tools

Some countries have spread the knowledge of the leadership values through campaigns or communication materials, such as a web publication, an intranet page, articles, cards, posters, a reflection guide, or dialogue tools.

The survey responses mentioning campaigns, communication, and tools are summarized in *box 18*.

#### Box 18

##### **Campaigns, communication, and tools: The countries' answers**

*Albania:* Ongoing reform efforts and public discourse on good governance have contributed to gradually embedding these values into the everyday culture of public administration.

*Czech:* An implementation campaign and methodological guidance accompany the regulation.

*Iceland:* A 'Leaders' Toolbox' provides managers with practical resources.

*Denmark:* Code IIV is openly available online. The Danish Employee and Competence Agency gives presentations on the code upon request.

*Norway:* The Foundations for Good Leadership in the Civil Service have been communicated and implemented through publication on the Government's official website and the State Employer Portal; presentations and discussions in various government agencies and ministries; and a dedicated implementation and reflection guide.

*Sweden:* The State Office promotes dilemma-based tools to link values to real situations and offers workshops with management teams to support internal discussions on values and culture.

*Switzerland:* The implementation of the values and principles were integrated into a campaign that included an intranet page, various articles, a set of cards and a series of posters. In addition, workshop templates were developed that departments and offices could use independently.

## Evaluation of the leadership values

In response to Question 7, "*Has there been any evaluation of the values? If yes, please elaborate results below.*", we identify a range of methods for evaluating the values and a range of findings from the evaluations. However, there are also many countries who has not done an evaluation at this point.

### Evaluation methods

In some countries, the leadership values are evaluated through methods like performance reviews, employee engagement surveys, outcome measures, and annual reviews. However, there is not a very clear a pattern in the responses, and many countries have not carried out an evaluation at this point.

The survey responses mentioning evaluation methods are summarized in *box 19*.

#### Box 19

#### Evaluation methods: The countries' answers

*Albania:* Evaluations have been conducted primarily through periodic performance reviews, feedback from civil servants, and reports by the Department of Public Administration.

*Estonia:* Leadership quality and employee engagement surveys give an indication.

*France:* The inter-ministerial management guidelines for senior executives are subject to an annual review.

*Germany:* Evaluation is carried out through supervisor feedback before permanent assignment of division head position and 270° comprehensive electronic leadership feedback.

*Iceland:* Customer satisfaction, service reliability and employee engagement is measured. In addition, A regular internal analysis is done to evaluate strengths and weaknesses and guide future action.

*Latvia:* In 2025, there was an evaluation study carried out by an NGO of the Recommendation 'Values of State Administration and Fundamental Principles of Ethics'.

*Norway:* HR leaders were asked if they had integrated or planned to integrate the leadership framework

*Poland:* The values guiding the Polish civil service have been the subject to several forms of evaluation and monitoring, e.g. annual reporting of the DGs, annual monitoring of selected civil service principles and a comprehensive diagnosis of the level of the culture of integrity.

*Portugal:* Recently, a competency framework was adopted, which provided the opportunity to assess existing values and establish core behavioral competences for workers and managers aligned with the values and culture of the civil service.

*Sweden:* The implementation and impact of the fundamental values in the Swedish central administration have been evaluated. A 2021 study by the Swedish Agency for Public Management evaluated how agencies apply the common core values.

*Ukraine:* They conduct a study on organizational culture and the values that public servants uphold.

#### Evaluation results

Since the countries measured different outcomes in their evaluations, there is also not a clear pattern in the results. However, the countries both mentioned some positive findings and some areas of improvements.

##### Positive results

Some countries mention a general high commitment to the values, value sets being used in local settings, or improvements in awareness or outcomes.

The survey responses mentioning positive results are summarized in *box 20*.

#### Box 20

##### Positive results: The countries' answers

*Albania:* There was progress in raising awareness about leadership ethics and accountability

*Belgium:* The leadership vision is used by the organizations

*Iceland:* They saw a steady increase in customer satisfaction, service reliability, and employee engagement

*Norway:* Most HR leaders responded that the HR had been addressed in leadership gatherings and will be addressed in leadership development programs

*Poland:* There is a high declared commitment to values such as impartiality and professionalism

*Ukraine:* Public servants name professionalism, responsibility, integrity, respect for human dignity, rights and freedoms, service to the state, team-work/cooperation as values that they uphold.

### *Areas in need of improvement*

Some countries mention that there is still a need for more consistent implementation or ongoing education and support.

The survey responses mentioning areas in need of improvement are summarized in *box 21*.

#### *Box 21*

##### **Areas in need of improvement: The countries' answers**

*Albania:* There is a need to improve consistent enforcement at local levels and greater focus on transparency practices.

*Latvia:* There is a different level of implementations in the ministries and their subordinate institutions

*Poland:* There is a need for ongoing education, engagement of leaders and systemic support for ethical behavior.

*Sweden:* Most agencies work actively with values in onboarding but less so in on-going development. Agencies that integrate values into daily practice through leadership, governance, and dialogue are more successful. Leadership engagement is identified as crucial.

## **Challenges in implementation**

In response to Question 8, *"Has your country faced any challenges in implementing the set of values (Conflicting values, failure to implement locally, lack of resources, changes in priorities etc.?)"*, we identify the following categories of challenges: Uneven local implementation, lack of resources, difficulties with translation and follow-up, and cultural resistance.

### **Uneven local implementation**

Some countries mention that it is challenging to implement the leadership values consistently across different organizations, e.g., due to local differences in organization size, capacity and knowledge level.

The survey responses mentioning uneven local implementation as a challenge are summarized in *box 22*.

#### *Box 22*

##### **Uneven local implementation: The countries' answers**

*Albania:* Variations in local capacity lead to uneven application of the values.

*Belgium:* Bigger organizations have more resources than smaller ones to implement the framework.

*Czech Republic:* There is an inconsistent uptake across ministries.

*European commission:* Implementation has not always been carried out in a coherent way due to partially decentralized HR-services, which have been more centralized through time.

*Iceland:* The public sector's complex structure makes standardized implementation difficult; a focus on top leaders may not trickle down effectively; implementation was easier for ministries with fewer agencies.

*Poland:* Insufficient knowledge and different understandings of values lead to inconsistent implementation.

*Sweden:* Challenges include uneven implementation.

### Lack of resources

Some countries mention that a lack of resources challenges the implementation, for example due to limited capacity for training, monitoring and systematic promotion of the values.

The survey responses mentioning lack of resources as a challenge are summarized in *box 23*.

#### Box 23

##### **Lack of resources: The countries' answers**

*Albania:* There are limited resources to support continuous training and monitoring.

*Austria:* There are challenges due to a tense budget situation.

*Czech Republic:* There is limited capacity for training.

*Cyprus:* Other priorities may delay the systematic promotion of the values.

*Iceland:* Limited funding can strain resources for long-term strategic initiatives.

*Portugal:* There is a lack of staff to meet the needs of monitoring and controlling integrity.

*Romania:* There is limited funding for training programs.

*Sweden:* Challenges include low prioritization.

*Switzerland:* A pressure to save money carries the risk that cultural issues get less priority.

### Difficulties with translation and follow-up

Some countries mention that challenges include translating abstract values into day-to-practice, as well as ensuring follow-up.

The survey responses mentioning challenges related to difficulties with translation and follow-up are summarized in *box 24*.

#### Box 24

##### **Difficulties with translation and follow-up: The countries' answers**

*Austria:* There is no general implementation guideline.

*Iceland:* That ensuring follow-up and accountability remains a challenge.

*Netherlands:* One of the main challenges is how to translate abstract values into day-to-day practice.

*Sweden:* Challenges include lack of follow-up.

*Switzerland:* Decentralized implementation makes it impossible to monitor the extent to which the values are put into practice.

# Discussion

The survey reveals a high degree of overlap in leadership values across the EUPAN countries. Core civil service values is particularly similar, but there is also notable commonalities in leadership competencies and in the methods used for developing and implementing them.

There is a clear link between the content of the leadership values and the challenges addressed. Core civil service values seem particularly relevant for ensuring integrity and legality. Leadership competencies such as innovation, foresight, and cooperation with stakeholders are related to managing complex contemporary issues. The ability to motivate and empower employees seems central to creating attractive workplaces, while efficiency and results orientation is related to strengthening overall effectiveness.

The challenges addressed by the leadership values also have many commonalities with those highlighted in the EUPAN Strategy Paper 2025–2028. The strategy notes that public administrations across Europe face complex and interconnected challenges, making modernization and transformation of the public sector a continued priority. This includes efforts to improve efficiency and promote a culture of innovation.

It also emphasizes that global crises have created a complex and unstable environment for public administrations, underlining the need for investment in integrity and ethics policies. Finally, demographic changes are affecting increasingly competitive labor markets, which calls for initiatives such as employer branding and wide attractiveness strategies.

One of the main differences between the countries concerned whether the values defining good leadership are general civil service values or expectations specific to leaders. This partly seems to reflect differences in the interpretation of the question, as many countries have both. The chosen focus in each country also appears to have influenced other responses – for example, regarding implementation and whether the values are legally binding or primarily guiding. Core civil service values are generally more binding and universal, whereas leadership competencies tend to be more flexible, though in several countries these are also defined by law.

Finally, there is no consistent pattern in the way that the countries have evaluated their leadership values, and it is noticeable that few countries have conducted systematic evaluations. Assessing what works in practice therefore represents an area for further exploration within the EUPAN context.



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