

What knowledge is essential for the future civil servants?

Report on participation in the Synergia transnational education program for civil servants

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“Knowledge is power.”

Sir Francis Bacon, (1597)

Religious Meditations, of Heresies

Introduction

The matter of knowledge as a resource in the economy and in the public sector has become one of the most crucial questions in the late 20th century and continues to be so in the 21st century. The conventional theory is that knowledge nowadays is the most significant factor of economic prosperity of the developed countries, which leads to the need of wider access to education. Despite the increased attention focusing on knowledge, less has been given to the question – what type of knowledge should be gained by civil servants in the public sector? Stated another way – what is the powerful knowledge that is valuable and also accessible to civil servants as lifelong learners? It is enough to look back to 2015 alone to experience the growing security risks in Europe, whether it is the migration crisis, health risks or war. Due to these crises both the state and the government face extraordinary tasks, namely those that cannot be handled on the basis of the operating procedures and work processes of the past. It is therefore crucial that the public service that enforces public interest and the government provide stability and security, relying on public servants with adequate scientific knowledge and participation in quality higher education or other training programs.

It is claimed by politicians that we are, or soon will be, part of a knowledge society, and that increasingly more jobs and positions require employees to be “knowledge workers.” At the same time some of the national govern-

ments have not yet developed definite concepts and agendas about what kind of knowledge should be possessed by civil servants as “knowledge workers.” The above-mentioned theoretical problems raise the practical question – which one should be improved, knowledge gained from education or experience? The aim of this report is on the one hand to find the possible answers and on the other hand to introduce the Synergia project, according to my personal experiences as a representative of the Ministry of the Interior of Hungary.

The education program is implemented in a transnational partnership based on Hungarian–Polish–Latvian–Bulgarian cooperation, and it is financed by the Social Fund of the European Union. I participated in the second edition of the Synergia project between September 2021 and January 2022. The aim of the project is to build a network where officials can exchange their management experiences in Central and Eastern Europe and to develop the skills and competences of senior managers working in public administration in the field of management and implementation. In the framework of the training, the participating public administration institutions are involved in preparing proposals and good practices, as well as in comparing best practices of the Central and Eastern European countries, based on their management experience. The Synergia administrative training program was announced for the second time for senior managers working in public administration, in cooperation with the Lech Kaczynski National Institute of Public Administration in Warsaw (KSAP), the National University of Public Service in Budapest (UPS), the Bulgarian Institute of Public Administration in Sofia (IPA), and the Latvian School of Public Administration in Riga (LSPA). A common feature of these institutions is that they all train administrative professionals at the national level and provide them with further professional training as well. Thus, each partnering institution has organized one part of the training at its own headquarters, while KSAP, as the lead-

ing institute of the project, hosted the training several times in Warsaw. The trainings held at different venues also provided an excellent opportunity for the participants to get acquainted with the culture of the host country. It is worth mentioning KSAP, the leading institution of the project, and its role including the determining of the characteristic of the program and the schedule and content of the trainings. The creation of KSAP can be attributed to the President of Poland, Lech Kaczyński as a patron, who already at the time of KSAP's 2016 establishment saw the foundations of the democratic functioning of the state in the efficient and effective functioning of the public sector. The idea of a serving state and the ethos of a successful and safe state administration function has remained not only the *ars poetica* of the current management of the institution, but also a flagship for the organizers of the Synergia program. However, the organizers also demonstrated the idea of a serving state by bringing examples from the private sector, which can be applied and adopted to the public sector as well. This made the training more dynamic and fresh.

The course was divided into five modules, comprising 3–4 days of in-person education, and 6 days of online training. Synergia's stated goal is not only to transfer knowledge and develop the competences of the participants in the field of public administration, but also to strengthen regional relations across countries through professional relations. This has also required great effort from the organizers, given the need to constantly adapt to the travel restrictions affecting the participants in view of the epidemiological situation in Europe. In view of this, in the second part of the Synergia project, in-person education was followed by shorter additional online trainings, whereas in the first edition these were delivered online only. The training program basically intended to strengthen inter-institutional cooperation, since the candidates had been nominated by public sector institutions. As I see it, the participants in the second phase of the training were mainly professional managers, directors, heads of departments and professional senior managers of central state administrations, although there were also a high number of participants representing the local bodies of state administration. The Latvian delegation was represented at the highest level, as secretaries of state from the government attended the training. In general, the process of learning was hallmarked by high expectations and enthusiasm of the participants, which indicates that there is a growing demand by managers working in the public service for the development of specific competencies, such as problem solving and change management. The application for the training was voluntary, thus participants were highly motivated throughout, which contributed even more to the acquisition and integration of knowledge.

The structure of sharing knowledge during the course

The purpose of governments all over the world with regard to the profit-oriented labour market is to develop high value knowledge economies based on well-educated workforce. The main challenge of the developed countries is winning the 'global skills race' and to advance in education and impactful knowledge through the expansion of lifelong learning. On the other hand, the main goal of public administration is to achieve efficiency, error-free operation and, ultimately, the safe and stable functioning of the state organization. This undoubtedly requires highly qualified civil servants and involvement in lifelong learning, just the way it is in the private sector.

According to my experience, Synergia training program builds on tacit knowledge, focusing on expertise gained through professional experience, that are not codified and mostly not educated at universities or in higher education. This gives the possibility to everyone to act as a teacher during the course of the training – in addition to the professors and trainers – since the participants can learn from each other by sharing practical experience.

The highlighted subjects of the project were processed through several filters and were conducted in English. During the program, participants were required to prepare in advance for real or simulated cases on the agenda, so it was made available electronically by the organizers a few days before the session on a dedicated platform. This methodology of learning made it possible to propose practical courses of action to resolve a problem. The cases covered a whole industry, for profit or not-profit organizations or some department of an organization.

The participants' task was to analyze the case and assess the situation, identify the problem and then give appropriate recommendations and suggest steps to be taken. This method guide helped students to determine the aspects of the problem needed to be considered, while analysing a case study. It has also served as a basis for the future to understand how different civil servants or state organizations use the same information to arrive at diverse conclusions, even without reaching consensus.

In turn, the lecturer would summarize and analyze the findings and conclusions made in the cases. They would assist the students in highlighting the significant points and mark the necessary information provided in the case but, at this stage, they would not provide answers to the problems. One of the best exercises thereafter was the discussion carried out in break-out teams, drawing attention to the relevant key performance indicators. During the exercise, the participants were working in close quarters in groups of seven or eight very accomplished peers representing diverse functions and/or different states and organizations, this way they could all observe the many different ways to tackle the problem, which was very expedient regarding the individuals' development. A presentation was then jointly compiled by the

group and introduced to the participants by the team leader, so that the trainer had the opportunity to evaluate the efficiency of the teamwork and participants from other groups could ask questions and add comments. Each training day ended with a wrap-up, which briefly summarized the main messages of the team leaders' presentations.

It also follows from the above that the participants could process the same topic in several different forms, thus they could learn not only from the instructors, but also from one another. The course was highly practice-oriented and aimed not exclusively or not primarily to transfer lexical and theoretical knowledge, but also projected examples from real life and problems arising in the private sector and business life extending over into the public sphere. In his book, *The Effective Executive*, Peter Drucker argues that some basic requirements are essential for the effective functioning of an organization, such as self-development, teamwork, communications, development of others (*Drucker 2002: 66*). In my opinion, the success of the program lies in combining all of these elements. Participants began to perceive the takeaways that they would deliver to their own organization to contribute more values or new ideas in the public service.

Content of the Synergia program

The purpose of this subheading is to briefly present the content of the program, but due to the limitations of its scope, only a shortened oversight of the best practices that the participants can implement at their own institutions can be displayed here. The first meeting took place in Warsaw, hosted by KSAP, from 7 to 10 September 2021 and it began with the opening ceremony of the second part of the Synergia project. The Polish organizers expressed their delight that the face-to-face meeting could take place, as in view of the epidemiological situation, the first part took place exclusively online. It is worth to highlight the importance of the fact that the organizers devoted a full day to encourage engagement between the participants and to present the objectives of the programme and how to achieve individual goals during the course of the project. This presumably contributed to the fact that from the beginning to the end of the program, the participants were able to cooperate in excellent teamwork. Networking took place in an informal setting, one might also say in a playful form, and this activity fostered breaking down the barriers in group communication. The participants could occasionally collect name cards from each other by answering a few simple questions (state, delegating organization, hobby, etc.). Additionally, by hearing each-others' summaries, the attendees could not only get acquainted with their peers' state organizational structures and the functioning of the institutions they represented, but also with the cultural and social characteristics of the countries involved. Nevertheless, the topic of networking remained

a relevant element of the course agenda throughout the program. As Massimo Maoret later pointed out in his presentation titled "Managing informal networks and leading change" on 8 November 2021, networking reduces the time needed for problem solving and provides access to lessons learned and knowledge accumulated by other teams and organizations. Since the civil servants in public administration usually fulfil basic responsibilities at work and the lack of time is constant in the network, Maoret suggested developing weekly routines for connecting with new employees, moreover, organizing monthly team activities to foster networking among other disconnected groups. In his view, the framework of effective networking procedures should include an incentive and an action. This will lead to the creation of procedures that will be automatically triggered and executed over time and the networks will gradually open up. (*Maoret 2021a*)

Government techniques for crisis management caused by the pandemic were raised several times during the training, so that the participants could experience firsthand the responses of the countries participating in the programme to combat health risks or improve their economic situation. From among the best practices revealed in the cases assessed, let me draw attention to the subject of change management and the development of IT skills in public administration due to their timeliness. It is reasonable to discuss these two issues together, since in my experience governments have had to respond to the challenges posed by the epidemiological situation suddenly and inflicting significant changes. Stable and effective public administration with well-educated leadership is in the centre of managing this crisis in all countries, and what they did in order to stabilize the economy stricken by the coronavirus will have longer-term implications. These changes have often manifested in the digitalization of administrative processes and the development of IT capabilities. According to the argumentation of Prof. Massimo Maoret in his lecture on "Leading organizational change - Leading change in the public sector," held in Budapest on 9 November 2021, leading change is one of the most essential activities to improve the performance of the governmental body, however, a failed transformation can be disruptive in any organization. The pandemic situation created a sense of urgency, and conscious leaders took the advantage of the upcoming development opportunity and the chance of gaining new experience. Prof. Maoret stated that an additional advantage can be reached in the motivation of the employees through the participation in change implementation process, if the involved civil servants commit to and understand the remodelling of the public administration body. (*Maoret 2021b*) At this point it is advisable to highlight the link between change management and digital development by a few statements of prof. Daniel Beimborn's presentation, delivered on 1 December 2021 in Warsaw. According to the argumentation in his

lecture titled “The use of IT in the public sector,” the main risk in the state sector seemed to be that IT systems are often built in pieces, which results in the lack of access to some functions. Many departments in a public organization only have access to their own systems and the data stored therein, and in some countries the elimination of the existing redundant system is not completed in the whole public administration, only “island like” development can be experienced. Professor Beimborn underlined that a coherent, rapid, structured digital system, which can help to achieve a higher level of process integration and work automation would at the same time increase the number of paperless workflows and operational excellence by shortening the time of searching for data and documents. (Beimborn 2021)

The training continued with the topic of *Knowledge management*, with the presentation and analysis of cases. One of the most determining and relevant case studies in my opinion was the Mount Everest case. The case, based on a true story, dealt with the Mount Everest disaster in 1996, when eight climbers died in a blizzard during a dangerous expedition on Mount Everest. The disaster was caused by a combination of events, like the sudden arrival of a severe storm that caught the mountaineers by surprise, bottlenecks on the mountain during the climbing, which caused an hour-and-a-half delay in summiting. In addition to the team leader’s decisions to exceed the normal turnaround time and the sudden illness of two climbers, several climbers ran out of oxygen. Through the thorough discussion of the case the trainer, Prof. Radoslaw Koszewski, clearly highlighted the importance of management decisions, the proper assessment of unforeseen circumstances, the bottlenecks in the process and the consequences of disregarding the previously established rules and best practices. He presented the “six-step problem analysis” method, based on the following steps: (1) problem definition, (2) definition of criteria for comparison of available problem-solving options, (3) identification of alternative solution, (4) analysis of available solutions and assessment to the criteria as defined in previous step, (5) making a decision, (6) drawing up an action plan with details of the decision implementation process. This method works ideally in an environment that requires a combination of detailed analysis, but it is not always applicable on urgent decision-making processes in public administration, such as a pandemic or other emergency situations, as it requires more time. (Koszewski 2021)

The case “Benihana” illustrated how a well-designed operational process fits into the competitive strategy of an organization. Through the analysis of the cost advantages resulting from product and process design, the participants observed the connection between disparate pieces of Benihana restaurant chains’ operating process fit together to drive profitability. The trainer, Prof. Adrian Done, demonstrated in his lecture titled “Strategic actions in a changing world” on 9 September 2021 in

Warsaw, that an organization’s financial performance is linked to its operating system and, as a learning outcome, stressed that the framework for assessing the matching of operational strategy and product strategy is of essence, moreover, introduced the process analysis concepts: inventory, process flow diagram, flow time, etc. Identification of problematic areas, so called bottlenecks in the process ensure optimization of time, costs, and employees’ work input as well. A comparative indicator (percentage) shows the productivity of the current employee compared to the optimal or improved capacity at the public institution. Nevertheless, the implementation of this process management can affect several units or departments, or the whole public administration as well, so overall, enormous resource reduction and extensive productivity can be achieved by using this technique. (Done 2021)

To summarize the key elements of the composition of the training, it is clearly visible that the Synergia program focused on the current challenges of public administration, with a vision of a modern, client friendly state structure. Focusing on digitalization is associated with the introduction of a new organizational culture in public administration. It is essential to promote open thinking, to concentrate on technological changes in order to start operating an organization based on digital solutions.

Skills improved by the training

Considering the current curriculum of the universities, there are only a few academic classes in Hungary that help developing practical skills that are frequently used at the workplaces, so employees face the lack of practical skills, rather than lack of scientific knowledge. The aim of this part of the report is to highlight a few examples of the skills civil servants have already used during their work, but not necessarily consciously or not at a high level; the training program highly contributed to developing these transferable skills. According to The University of Exeter’s (UK) Department for Education and Skills, the definition of transferable skills is as follows: “those cognitive and personal skills (application of number, communication, information technology, problem-solving, personal skills, working with others and improving own learning and performance), which are central to occupational competence in all sectors and at all levels.” The skills that a student has used at university seem to be all transferable, but it shall be assessed if there are competences that should be improved during the professional life.

Trainer Ansis Jurgis Stabingis spoke about leadership awareness and the use of this technique, during a training day in Riga on 23 February 2022 (Stabingis 2022). The concept of Conscious Leadership was first outlined by Jim Dethmer, Diana Chapman, and Kaley Waner Klemp in their 2015 book *The 15 commitments of conscious leadership* (Dethmer et al. 2015), which has become a popular basis for several conscious leadership

conferences and training groups. Our coach presented the key characteristics of a conscious leader:

- Taking radical responsibility
- Learning through curiosity
- Feeling all feelings
- Speaking candidly
- Eliminating gossip
- Practicing integrity
- Generating appreciation
- Excelling in your zone of genius
- Living a life of play and rest
- Exploring the opposite
- Sourcing approval, control and security
- Having enough of everything
- Experiencing the world as an ally
- Creating “win for all” solutions

To acquire these qualities, the program was designed to develop a range of skills for the participants. In my perspective, for instance, learning through curiosity as a feature of a conscious leader can be interpreted as good listening skills and openness. Good listening skills are essential at all levels of education, especially in higher education, due to the fact that the most significant parts of knowledge and useful explanations are taught orally in lectures. At this stage of learning large amounts of information have to be summarized and memorized in a limited time for later use, and it is therefore crucial to concentrate on the content of the lecture and not be distracted by others. Knowing what type of information to note down will facilitate learning and recalling. Attention assurance is a key element in the execution of management or state leaders’ instructions in organizations, and it is especially emphasized where the content layout is embodied in legislation, such as codification work in the public sector. Listening skills will certainly be needed in every field of employment, as this will ensure that the employee actually understands the instructions given by their superiors. If the employee fails to listen, information may be lost in the process and the person may not perform the task as instructed, which can jeopardize the safe functioning of the organization. Through the case-based method of the Synergia education program, the participants could discover the key to becoming an active listener and engage in case-based discussions that intensively support thorough individual preparation. In this context I would like to highlight the presentation by Tomasz Cichocki and Krzysztof Gulda on “Peer-learning summary session and introduction to open space technology” in Riga. The essence of the peer learning method, in short, is that anybody can learn from anybody on almost any issue, and accordingly, it is based on the interaction and collaboration of the students. From the point of view of the workplace, it proposes open-minded, self-organized meeting, the agenda of which is set by the employees rather than the management. In this way meetings also have a community-building and social force, furthermore managers can offer an evi-

dence-based constructive process to discuss eventual difficulties or weaknesses in the workflow in smaller groups and detect issues that the management was not even aware of before. (Cichocki–Gulda 2022)

Good verbal communication helps in any team environment within the private or public sector institutions, helping to facilitate communication within a professional team in order to get a point across to an audience orally, clearly and concisely. This skill is used constantly in the workplace and even in education, whether by asking questions in meetings or seminars, participating in group work, or giving individual or group presentations. Good verbal communication is one of the most essential skills to becoming a conscious leader, as it makes it much easier to impress upon senior management the achievements of the organization and upon employees the forward-looking vision, mission and values of the represented organization. As prof. Massimo Maoret argued in the framework of the training of *Managing informal networks and leading change* in Budapest, on 8–9 November 2021, communicating the vision of change in the public administration unit is key to the successful implementation of a change in an organization, as it is identified and understood by the employees. However, a conscious leader must communicate clearly and mediate between the project team and the organization. An efficient communication channel within the organization could be achieved by reorganizing internal meetings and reducing the risk of time-consuming team meetings that can sometimes have a negative impact on workflow. (Maoret 2021a) Professor Luis Huete suggested in the course of the training of *Strategic and managerial perspective of risk management* 5-minute meetings per day, preferably standing, while a group of 5–10 people report to the supervisor. He suggested 45 minutes meetings only once a week, highlighting the unit’s monthly issues and problems, while multi-hour meetings should be held only once a month with appropriate schedule and preparation, and with topics covering the annual scope of the organization’s activities. Introduce open-air meetings 3–4 times a year and develop long-term plans with 30–40 people who play an important role in the unit, Huete concluded. The introduction of “4 types of meetings” will improve mutual communication within teams and make employee feedback quickly available to management. Moreover, the newly developed method of providing information and reporting will contribute to the understanding that the team is working for joint success and that each task is linked to another person’s responsibility, which results in the completion of the assigned tasks in the public administration. This approach of Professor Huete was also very useful and appropriate, because from my perspective, lengthy discussions and the extremely high number of hours-long meetings lead to increased risk of wasting time, missing essential information and reporting deadlines. These do not improve the performance of the unit, but distract civil servants

from their daily tasks, therefore they stand in the way of organizational efficiency and good time management in a unit. As the key challenge to changing this useless way of communication, Huete cited the resistance of civil servants to change the habit of team meetings, however, implementing the new practice does not require a high financial investment and, as the pandemic situation has shown, the appropriate IT tools and skills are essential to ensure the quality of meetings when they are organized online. (Huete 2021)

Communication has a major impact not only within the institution, but also with external stakeholders, as it is through intensive cooperation with them that optimal results can be achieved, said Professor Adrian Done at the *Strategic Action in a Changing World* training course in Warsaw on 9 September 2021. Done focused on the importance of engaging with key stakeholders in the organization's processes and emphasized the importance of effective dialogue with stakeholders. To improve cooperation, it is first necessary to analyze the processes within the organization, which later can be the subject of communication. The next step is to clarify who the real stakeholders are, with whom it is advisable to develop a common functional platform for smooth communication. In order not to undermine the objective of the negotiation by the large number of stakeholders involved, the meetings with them should be held in groups divided by organization or by proximity to each other, Done suggested. (Done 2021) Professor Santiago de la Cierva has dedicated all his professional life to the branches of communications, including corporate communication. Like Done, Professor Cierva also argued for a stakeholder-centric approach in a lecture on "Communication management in big projects," delivered on 6 October 2021 in Sofia, but he also drew attention to the fact that honest and public communication in the form of a power-sharing proposal reduces the number of resisters in a process. As a result, the motivation and involvement of public administration employees could be increased, giving them a sense of security that their views, opinions, ideas are listened to by the management at all levels of the project (Cierva 2021).

The sessions organized in the Synergia program helped leaders to become more confident about sharing their views in discussions, even in professional English. Synergia taught participants to actively express their experiences and challenge others, which is why civil servants with diverse national backgrounds, different levels of leadership and institutional know-how and solutions, with various cultural impacts of knowledge seemed to be able to enrich the discussion in plenary sessions and team work as well.

All of these skills seem useful for an employee and will continue to be effective during their years of leadership. In this section I have explored the different skills used in the Synergia program, and the skills that I have outlined are all useful for civil servants. In conclusion, it is clear

that skills such as good oral communication, time management and ICT-literacy are much more transferable than others and are useful in all areas of employment.

Conclusion

As I have shown in the previous parts of the report on the Synergia training program, the skills that are most important for the 21st century civil servant are largely influenced by the society we live in and the current security situation. In public administration there is an increased emphasis on the importance of practical knowledge and experience, consequently, traditional knowledge acquired in higher education is no longer as useful as it used to be, however, both higher education and continuous administrative training programs may ensure that a civil servant becomes a conscious leader.

The value of a degree and background knowledge is constantly being reassessed by employers in both the public and private sector, and consequently, universities need to adapt to provide an education that can keep pace with the changing needs of today's workforce. A degree may become obsolete only a few years after it has been obtained, which means that lifelong learning will be required for future civil servants to keep pace with the demand for useful knowledge in public administration in the fields of digital development, change management and crisis management. In my view, school-based public administration training (law, public service and other higher education) is mainly based on the transfer of various basic and specialized professional skills, while in the case of further education in public administration this is more focused on skills and attitudes (e.g. communication skills, IT skills). But the Synergia program goes even further: it not only develops skills, but also teaches certain behaviours and workflows, showing us how to work to build a successful, service-minded public administration. Here I would like to emphasize that the training has put the importance of digital development at the centre and "Future bureau – State real estate" presented in Riga also provided a new approach that that can be an example to be followed in all public administration bodies or their subordinated institutions. During our visit to the Future bureau, we were able to experience what a future, modern public administration institution is focusing on, as well as the organization, professionalism, environmental awareness and cost-effectiveness characteristic to such entities.

Modern human resource management increasingly views the human factor as a resource. On the employer side (in public sector, the state and local governments), this is significant in selection, retention and development, whereas the key concept now as regards the performance of employees and civil servants is their strengthening and incentivization through various means. In staff and performance promotion in public administration competences, development needs and rec-

ognition of officials play an increasingly essential role. Public administrations need to be supported as regards staff development, aiding officials in recognizing their own priorities, choosing the right career path, as a result of which not only the officials but also, indirectly through them, the employer's administrative institute becomes a winner. (*Belényesi 2010: 96–98*)

The speed with which the needs of public administration employers can change has come to show that there are three main types of knowledge that will be the most beneficial for the civil servant of the 21st century. First, practical knowledge within the job category of interest to the citizen (such as IT skills) will prove to be a massive asset in the workplace as some of the training required can be reduced or even eliminated. Such a person will be an ideal candidate for an employer in the public administration as they can not only reduce the costs of the institution, but will also provide a person who will reach full productivity and full participation in the work processes almost immediately. Second, the knowledge of “how” to learn during the public service career. The ability of the civil servant to know that their education may be insufficient and seek to rectify this through lifelong learning. This will give them an advantage not only within education but also during their public service-based training, which will give them a head start in employment. Third, transferable skills, whether acquired at university or during other forms of training, give the civil servants the ability to adapt to the diverse needs of different employers through a common knowledge base that they all share. Oral communication techniques and time management have been shown to be in great demand by employers. This knowledge helps not only in learning and training when introduced to new duties but also in the completion of all tasks set out by the employer at the workplace.

With all this in mind, it is crucial for any person who has the aim to serve in the public sector by entering the workforce and remaining competitive within that workforce to observe certain things. As regards the knowledge required, civil servants should ask themselves “is it practical?”, “is it transferable?” and “does it facilitate further lifelong learning?” For those who could participate in the Synergia project all the answers are yes. The topic delivered by the training helps the optimization of the internal processes of state administration bodies, enables creative problem-solving techniques, the development of alternative forms of recognition, focus on speech technology development, modelling procedures, all elements requirement in the vision of current public administration.

Priority will be given to administrative training, further education and the development of individual skills and competences, which have become an essential strate-

gic prerequisite in advanced public service structures. The idea of lifelong learning also requires the strengthening of personal skills and professional knowledge. The development of administrative human resources in the Member States of the European Union has been permeating this gap for several decades by planning and implementation phases. Collecting and sharing best practices, successful, creative solutions to problems, is a possible method of development of human resources in the public administration. Good practice is crucial not only in strategy-making but also in training. A further indicator of the effectiveness of the training is the knowledge acquired, the knowledge of the facts, rules and theory relevant to the field, all of which can be measured in day-to-day work and obviously assessed by the superiors of the officials. Putting the knowledge acquired into practice gives the civil servants an increase in their skills. It was a pleasure for me, as a Hungarian participant, to take part in such a high-quality and high-purpose training. Given the success of the event, the organizers may want to consider organising workshops, conferences or alumni events to discuss the results of the efficiency studies in an organized way, thus to ensure future satisfaction.

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