



ORGANISATION
FOR ECONOMIC
CO-OPERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT



*Ministro per la pubblica
amministrazione e l'innovazione*

Towards recovery and partnership with citizens:
The call for **innovative**
and **open** government

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Isola di San Giorgio Maggiore | Venice

COMMUNIQUÉ

Ministerial meeting of the OECD
Public Governance Committee

Context

Since our 2005 Ministerial meeting in Rotterdam, devoted to strengthening trust in government, the world has lived through a deep financial and economic crisis. As the economic outlook remains characterized by uncertainty, it is clear that improving public sector productivity is crucial to economic recovery. This requires innovation in governance, public management and public service delivery, for which information and communications technology can be an important ally. Trust remains an overarching goal, to be built on openness, integrity and transparency.

Recognising this, we, OECD Ministers and our counterparts from Brazil, Egypt, Estonia, Morocco, Russia, South Africa and Ukraine, acknowledge the importance of certain key principles, including fostering an effective and performance-driven public sector, delivering better public services more efficiently and effectively, and promoting open and transparent government.

Ministers acknowledged the importance of:

Leadership

Our political commitment, leadership and accountability are essential for deciding where, when and how governments can strengthen their strategic capacity and promote public sector innovation and co-ordination. New working methods and skills will be needed to benefit from technological opportunities. They are equally important for establishing partnerships with citizens, civil society (including the social partners) and the business sector to build momentum for change and strengthen the capacity to prevent future crises.

Fostering efficiency and effectiveness through innovation in the public sector

Promoting and enabling an environment conducive to innovation is crucial to generating a dynamic public sector focused on performance and greater productivity at no additional cost. This could entail maximizing the use of new technologies, making things simpler and more transparent for citizens and businesses, preventing corruption, and building human capital. Incentives, new tools to share successful initiatives and the removal of administrative barriers are important considerations in fostering a new environment. The public sector could also draw on the expertise and creativity of the private and not-for-profit sector. The wide sharing of information electronically across sectors and boundaries within the public sector is critical to fostering innovation and reducing administrative burdens.

Openness, integrity and transparency

Open government can help strengthen trust and build indispensable support for reform. Greater engagement with citizens and civil society is a key part of open and transparent government. Open government can also lead to more direct and effective engagement with citizens, civil society and businesses. Reaffirming the core values of the public sector will help improve public sector performance.

Preparedness for future challenges

Public sectors must be forward looking, agile and prepare for the challenges of the future. They should have the capacity to identify and assess these challenges, change strategic direction, and allocate human and financial resources accordingly.

Ministerial guidance to the OECD

We invite the OECD and its Public Governance Committee to support our efforts by:

Providing evidence on government performance

The OECD should continue to collect data, develop comparative analysis, and build indicators on public sector performance and innovation, to better advise us on how public governance policies, practices and arrangements contribute to improved economic performance.

Fostering a more efficient, effective and innovative public sector

The OECD should assess the main current and future challenges and constraints facing governments, and should propose innovative approaches for building a more efficient, effective and well-performing public sector with a focus on identifying best practice. It should draw lessons from country experience and, where possible, develop policy guidance on key levers for agility and performance such as: a) e-government and the use of new technologies; b) human resource management and human capital; c) budgeting and public expenditure; d) cutting red tape and administrative simplification; e) partnerships with citizens, civil society and the private sector, and f) developing evaluation frameworks to measure the effectiveness of government initiatives.

Offering guidance for strengthening trust, openness and integrity

Building on past experience, the OECD should provide guidance on strengthening integrity safeguarding the public interest, and leveling the playing field for the private sector. It should provide guidance for increasing openness and transparency in public policymaking, highlighting how to improve and strengthen citizens' involvement. In this respect, it should explore the possibilities as well as the limits of new technologies and help strengthen the development of instruments for steering relationships with the private sector.

Supporting a whole-of-government perspective through strategic coordination and policy coherence

The OECD should help us foster strategic coordination and proactive capacity, by promoting high-level policy dialogue among peers, and identifying common challenges and solutions based on specific country studies. It should provide comprehensive frameworks for the analysis of public governance policies and practices from a multidisciplinary perspective. Ensuring co-ordination across ministries and levels of government should be a key component of these frameworks.

The Venice Initiative for Dialogue with Civil Society Organisations

The Venice pledge for affordable and effective government underlined government determination to provide high quality public services, while dealing effectively with fiscal pressures and consolidating economic recovery. Ministers agreed that continuing dialogue amongst governments on ways to ensure effective, efficient and affordable government should remain one of the key issues of the agenda of the OECD Public Governance Committee. In this context, Ministers invite the OECD to explore the potential for dialogue on best practices of public sector reform with Civil Society Organisations. The dialogue would allow for an exchange on the challenges, opportunities and implementation of public sector reforms in times of fiscal pressure, and on the search for sources of sustainable growth.

Promoting good public governance globally

In the interest of broadening the level playing field for business, investment and the mobility of people, the OECD should provide a forum for global policy dialogue with non-member economies, and discuss ways to strengthen and improve public governance. This will require pursuing existing partnerships, for example with enhanced engagement countries, or through regional programmes such as MENA and the Latin American Countries (LAC). This work will also support co-operation with low-income and post-conflict countries.

We also agree that sustaining change in the public sector will require careful monitoring and analysis of progress, for example through measuring performance. We invite the OECD to provide us with regular updates.

