



**MINISTÈRE
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**Final report from the French Presidency of the
European Public Administration Network
(EUPAN)
(1 January to 30 June 2022)**

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Editorial

In the first six months of 2022, the Directorate General for Public Administration and the Civil Service (DGAFP) had the honour of holding the presidency of the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN).

This presidency was taken up in the extraordinary climate of a health crisis with its considerable impacts on EUPAN's work in terms of compromising our meetings in person in the first part of the period at a time that actually spotlighted the decisive role of public administrations in responding to crises and meeting common challenges such as the rapid deployment of new ways of remote working. Our purpose in this context was for our presidency to consider these common challenges in depth and find ways of meeting them.

The improvement in the health situation enabled the Conference of EU Ministers for Public Sector Transformation and the Civil Service to be held in Strasbourg, and the working level meeting and meeting of the Directors General of EUPAN to be held in Paris for the first time since 2019, together with the second edition of the EUPAN Summer School.

Our purpose was to pursue and round out the actions already developed by EUPAN in support of public servant mobility in the EU by encouraging the adoption of a comprehensive roadmap in this area. Particular attention was also paid to the impacts of ongoing changes on the public sector, especially digitalisation and greening, which are central pillars of the new EUPAN strategy paper adopted at the end of the presidency.

At the same time, these last few years have given European dialogue on public administration a key role to play and have strengthened the place of the networks working on these subjects: EUPAN, naturally, but also the European Network of Directors of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration (DISPA), European social dialogue committees, expert groups reporting to the European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) and the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO), the European network of international public expertise practitioners, the Chief Information Officer Network (CIO Network) and, more broadly, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). As with previous presidencies before us, our aim was to encourage dialogue and information-sharing between EUPAN and these networks to guarantee the complementarity of our work and make the most of the actions taken by EUPAN.

Lastly, this presidency also provided an opportunity to share information on reforms underway in the French civil service and our thoughts on major issues for the future of public services such as attractiveness, public servant training, digitalisation, and public sector occupational and organisational developments. We had rich discussions on all these subjects, benefiting from your views, expertise and feedback.

Please accept, once again, my sincere thanks for your work with EUPAN throughout the French Presidency. It is our pleasure to share with you the results of our work and we wish every success to the Czech Presidency and future presidencies of EUPAN.

Nathalie Colin
Director General for the
Administration and the Civil Service

Summary

The French Presidency of EUPAN was organised around the following events:

- **the Conference of EU Ministers for Public Sector Transformation and the Civil Service held at the French National Institute of Public Service (INSP) in Strasbourg on 16 and 17 March**, attended by some one hundred participants representing the Member States of the European Union and the European Commission;
- **the EUPAN working level meeting held in Paris on 4 and 5 April 2022;**
- **the meeting of the Directors General of EUPAN held in Paris on 15 and 16 June 2022**, which tied in with the **European Social Dialogue Committee** for Central Government Administrations meeting held in Paris on 17 June under the French Presidency of employers' association EUPAE;
- **two EUPAN secretariat meetings held by videoconference on 17 January and 24 May 2022;**
- **the second edition of the EUPAN Summer School held in Strasbourg from 9 to 13 May 2022** by the Directorate General for Public Administration and the Civil Service, the French National Institute of Public Service and the Regional Grand Est Interministerial Support Platform for Human Resources Management.

The French Presidency of EUPAN also contributed input and presentations to the work of the DG REFORM Expert Group on Public Administration and Governance, the DISPA and EPSO networks, the network of international public expertise practitioners, and the Council of the European Union's Working Party on Staff Regulations.

The French Presidency built on the work of the previous presidencies, taking forward the work started (exchange programmes, EUPAN Summer School, EUPAN e-News and development of EUPAN's future strategy) and incorporating its work into the troika's rolling programme and EUPAN's 2019-2022 Strategy Paper priorities. Presentations of the main lines of the Czech and Swedish presidencies were also given at EUPAN plenary meetings to guarantee the continuity of work.

Particular attention was paid to four priorities: mobility, public sector transformation, the Common European pillar of public service and resilience.

These priorities were addressed by:

- adoption by the EU Ministers for Public Sector Transformation and the Civil Service of the Strasbourg Declaration on the Common Values and Challenges of European Public Administrations;
- development of a new three-year EUPAN strategy paper to be implemented over the July 2022-June 2025 period and tied in with updating the EUPAN Handbook to include EUPAN's engagement in dialogue with other European networks and mobility in the EU together with the long-term production of a EUPAN contact list;
- development of public worker mobility in the EU with the preparation of pilot exchange projects, a study on including mobility in human resources policies and a Summer School, which informed the adoption by the Directors General of a roadmap to take forward EUPAN's work on the subject;
- thinking on public sector deployment of new ways of working with a study and focus workshops to examine the challenges associated with teleworking and the introduction of the right to disconnect and develop ways forward to establish good digitalisation

conditions; this work ties in with the development by European social dialogue of a European agreement on public sector digitalisation and delivery of the European Pillar of Social Rights;

- publication of two issues of EUPAN e-News on public sector transformation policies and greening;
- a survey of human resources foresight approaches in the public sector;
- the presentation of different reform projects conducted in France.

I. Recap of the French Presidency's priorities

The French Presidency's priorities focused on four main areas: mobility, public sector transformation, the common European pillar of public service and resilience. The preparation of a new strategy paper, adopted at the end of the presidency, also led network members to address the question of its three-year goals.

These priorities were incorporated into the troika's rolling programme in keeping with the objectives of EUPAN's 2019-2022 Strategy Paper and in line with the work of the previous presidencies. These priorities were addressed in turn by the different events held over the six-month period.

Digitalisation and innovation	Ethics and organisational culture	Future-oriented strategic, efficient and effective HRM
<p>Mobility, public sector transformation, the common European pillar of public service and tools for a digital administration.</p> <p><i>Deliverables:</i> Experience-sharing, presentation of best practices/concrete actions.</p>	<p>Mobility, public sector transformation, the common European pillar of public service and resilience by means of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consolidation of the common European pillar of public service; • openness, trust in and transparency of results; • public service resilience. <p><i>Deliverables:</i> Public servant exchanges, EUPAN Summer School, workshops, presentations, and coordination and promotion of European social dialogue.</p>	<p>Mobility, public sector transformation, the common European pillar of public service and resilience by means of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work teams and flexibility following the COVID-19 crisis; • careers and mobility, with a focus on European mobility; • public service recruitment, attractiveness and employer brand. <p><i>Deliverables:</i> Surveys, experience-sharing, workshops, EUPAN Summer School, European public worker mobility initiative, and adoption of a new EUPAN strategy paper.</p>

II. Schedule of meetings

The different EUPAN and EUPAN-associated events held during the French Presidency were as follows:

- 10 January: *Tech for Government: Pitch Session* (public sector digital solutions competition) (Paris);
- 17 January: meeting of the EUPAN Secretariat (working level, videoconference);
- 16 & 17 March: Informal dinner and Conference of EU Ministers for Public Sector Transformation and the Civil Service (French National Institute of Public Service, Strasbourg);
- 31 March & 1 April: Speech by the Presidency of EUPAN to the EPSO network meeting (Paris);
- 4 & 5 April: EUPAN working level meeting (Paris);
- 27 April: Presentation of EUPAN's work to the Council of the European Union's Working Party on Staff Regulations and the meeting of the network of international public expertise practitioners (Brussels);
- 24 May: Meeting of the EUPAN secretariat (DG level) (videoconference);
- 9 to 13 May: EUPAN Summer School on "European Mobility for the Transformation of Public Administrations" (French National Institute of Public Service, Strasbourg);
- 19 & 20 May: Presentation of EUPAN's work to the DISPA meeting (French National Institute of Public Service, Paris);
- 15, 16 & 17 June: Meeting of EUPAN DGs (Paris) followed by the meeting of the Social Dialogue Committee for Central Government Administrations (SDC-CGA);
- 30 June: Presentation of the work of the French Presidency of EUPAN to the High-Level Meeting of the DG REFORM Expert Group on Public Administration and Governance.

The improvement in the health situation meant that all the plenary sessions were able to be held in person. The EUPAN Secretariat meetings were nonetheless held online, since their short format lends itself well to videoconference calls.

Coordination was sought with the different networks addressing public administration issues at European level, and took the form of interactions with these networks throughout the presidency.

The main conclusions of each meeting are detailed in the summary document appended to this report.

III. Main results

The results of the French Presidency are detailed under three headings in accordance with the priorities defined at the start of the presidency:

- definition and implementation of a common European pillar of civil service;
- European mobility;
- public sector transformation and resilience.

III. A. Common European pillar of civil service

The French Presidency's ambition was to contribute to the consolidation of a common pillar for the European public administrations with due regard for their particularities and Member States' prerogatives in the organisation of their own public administrations.

EUPAN plays a key role in dialogue among European public administrations based on:

- A common motto: working together for high-quality public administrations and public services in Europe based on the network's core values of professionalism, collaboration, innovation, engagement, sustainability and transparency;
- Regular meetings held at political and administrative level;
- Common tools to facilitate information-sharing.

Results cover:

- Consolidating the common values and challenges of the EUPAN administrations;
- Adopting a new EUPAN strategy paper;
- Strengthening ties between EUPAN and other relevant public administration networks;
- Consolidating EUPAN information-sharing tools.

III.A.1. Consolidation of the common values and challenges of the EUPAN administrations

The EUPAN public administrations face many common challenges on which discussions focused throughout the French Presidency:

- public policy sustainability and mainstreaming sustainability in the organisation of the public administrations;
- attractiveness of jobs in public administrations;
- knowledge-sharing between generations and intergenerational cooperation;
- digitalisation and the issues it raises (teleworking, right to disconnect, cybersecurity, use of artificial intelligence, interoperability of services and digital solutions, etc.);
- strengthening trust in public action;
- developing the resilience of public administrations;
- efficiency, effectiveness and performance measurement;
- promotion of the common values shared by Member States of the European Union and its institutions.

These values and challenges common to European public administrations were addressed by the Conference of EU Ministers for Public Sector Transformation and the Civil Service held in Strasbourg on 16 and 17 March 2022 under the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union. They are detailed in the declaration adopted by the ministers at this conference, which:

- highlights the contribution of public services and public workers to a new growth model and a humane and inclusive Europe of solidarity, in keeping with the ambitions of the European Pillar of Social Rights, as well as to the promotion of the values of peace and democracy on the European continent;
- stresses the mobilisation and adaptation of public services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic and social repercussions, and in their work for European recovery and public service capacity-building to meet major societal challenges, in particular the green and digital transitions;
- notes the work carried out by the European networks for public sector transformation and the civil service, particularly in the areas of human resources management, public service transformation and support for digital transformation;
- defines the common values and challenges for European public administrations in the form of three work strands to be operationalised by the strategy for EUPAN's remit;
 - attractive, modern and innovative civil services that lead by example;
 - aransparent and resilient public services that meet users' expectations;
 - high-quality, inclusive digital public services that respect European values.

The new EUPAN strategy paper adopted at the end of the presidency was defined on the basis of these guidelines.

III.A.2. Adoption of a new three-year EUPAN strategy paper

The 2019-2022 EUPAN Strategy Paper was evaluated by the Slovenian Presidency of EUPAN (second half of 2021), which presented a generally positive assessment of its implementation with an inventory of challenges to be met mainly in connection with the impacts of the health crisis on public sector organisation and public service delivery in the European Union. The French Presidency of EUPAN factored this evaluation into its work on preparing the future strategy paper to be adopted in late June in keeping with the guidelines defined by the EU Ministers for Public Sector Transformation and the Civil Service in the declaration adopted in Strasbourg on 17 March 2022.

The French Presidency of EUPAN conducted the following actions:

- analysis of the detailed report produced by the Slovenian Presidency;
- launch of an additional survey of future presidencies and the Secretariat;
- analysis of the guidelines in the Strasbourg Declaration adopted by the Conference of EU Ministers for Public Sector Transformation and the Civil Service on 16 and 17 March 2022;
- workshops held at the EUPAN working level meeting in Paris on 4 and 5 April 2022;
- production of guidelines defining the structure of the new strategy paper and submitted to EUPAN experts for consultation prior to validation by the Directors General of the Secretariat at the meeting of 24 May 2022;
- a discussion at DG level on 16 June 2022 based on a working draft submitted previously to the experts for consultation;
- final online validation of the strategy paper on 28 June 2022, endorsing its entry into effect on 1 July 2022.

In accordance with previous strategy papers and the EUPAN Handbook, the new strategy paper defines the strategic areas to be addressed for a three-year period (six presidencies) in line with the challenges encountered by the public administrations at national, European and international level and the guidelines of the Strasbourg Declaration:

- transformation of public services and human resources policies;

- transparent, accessible, resilient and green public services that meet users' needs;
- organisational changes, public innovation, and public sector digitalisation and greening.

The strategy paper calls on future presidencies to:

1. Continue to present their priorities in the form of a rolling work programme (previous and two subsequent presidencies) and regularly evaluate the progress made in the three new strategic areas detailed below;
2. Pay particular attention, in the implementation of this strategy, to at least one of the two following cross-cutting issues:
 - digitalisation and its impact on changing ways of working and public service delivery;
 - green transformation and greening of public administrations.
3. Use the tools at their disposal in accordance with the EUPAN Handbook;
4. Address these three strategic areas in ongoing dialogue with other relevant European and international networks, including at regular meetings, and in keeping with each network's prerogatives;
5. Continue to work on public servant mobility in the EU.

In this way, the strategy paper lays down a framework to guide EUPAN's work for the next three years.

III.A.3. Strengthening ties between EUPAN and other public administration networks

Since its establishment, EUPAN has maintained regular dialogue with other networks to disseminate and share expertise on subjects relevant to public administrations both in Europe and worldwide, including:

- the European Network of Directors of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration (DISPA);
- the DG REFORM's new Expert Group on Public Administration and Governance;
- the EPSO network's expert group;
- the Social Dialogue Committee for Central Government Administrations (SDC-CGA);
- the network of international public expertise practitioners;
- the Chief Information Officer Network (CIO Network).

EUPAN can also call on the expertise of prominent players such as the OECD, the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) and the European Group of Public Administration (EGPA).

The French Presidency drove forward this momentum by:

- holding discussions with DG REFORM on establishing a good link between EUPAN's work and the work of the Expert Group on Public Administration and Governance;
- making contact with the network of international public expertise practitioners;
- speaking at a number of other networks' meetings to present EUPAN's work;
- presenting the work of other networks at EUPAN plenary meetings;
- drawing on the expertise of the OECD, EIPA and EGPA on a number of occasions.

In keeping with EUPAN's ambitions in the 2022-2025 Strategy Paper, the EUPAN Handbook was also updated to include a paragraph on coordination between EUPAN and other networks.

III.A.4. Consolidation of EUPAN information-sharing tools

The French Presidency worked to encourage information-sharing among EUPAN members by:

- pursuing the regular publication of EUPAN e-News with a general issue in March and a special focus issue on greening public administrations in June;
- publishing the content produced on the EUPAN website;
- disseminating a brochure on the French civil service and its main reforms;
- producing a list of EUPAN contacts to smooth presidency handovers: this tool was deemed useful by the network's members and was made a permanent feature at the end of the presidency with an amendment to the EUPAN Handbook.

III. B. Public worker mobility in the EU

European mobility has been a key EUPAN work focus for a number of years and has seen the implementation of new mobility solutions between public administrations.

- The EUPAN summer schools developed under the German Presidency (second half of 2020), the first edition of which was held in November 2021 owing to the current health crisis;
- The pilot EU Leadership Exchange Programme rolled out following the Portuguese Presidency (first half of 2021).

The French Presidency built on the output of the previous presidencies with different tracks working on the:

- Diversification of mobility solutions;
- Inclusion of European and international mobility in human resources management policies;
- Development of a roadmap to consolidate EUPAN's role in support of public worker mobility in the EU.

III.B.1. Diversification of mobility solutions

EUPAN has conducted much work on the diversification of mobility solutions with Member States and European institutions since the end of the Bellevue Programme in 2017. The French Presidency undertook to encourage the consolidation of the initiatives developed under the former German and Portuguese presidencies with two ambitions:

- *Implementation of a sustainable public servant exchange programme associating Member States and the European Commission.*

The French Presidency worked on the implementation and evaluation of the pilot EU Leadership Exchange Programme, the first phase of which was deployed by Portugal, Belgium, France and the European Commission in autumn 2021. The assessment of this first phase, shared with all the members of EUPAN, confirmed the merits of exchanges for the benefit of both public servants and administrations in a flexible set-up combining online preparations and monitoring with an immersion period in person. Although the direct and indirect costs were judged reasonable (approximately €2,000 for a week for the sending administration and €1,000 for the host administration), the evaluation confirmed the need for a sound source of funding guaranteeing access to the programme for all.

These results were presented to the Conference of EU Ministers for Public Sector Transformation and the Civil Service held in Strasbourg on 16 and 17 March 2022. Ministers were asked to define the necessary policy guidelines for the sustainability of these exchanges. The conference's ministers confirmed the utility of sustainably developing public worker mobility in the EU based on the initial initiatives as a way of bringing new solutions to the common challenges and generating knowledge-sharing between Member States and the European Commission. The following timeframe has been set for this consolidation:

- In 2022: Continuation of the EU Leadership Exchange Programme with willing countries in the form of a second pilot phase and launch of a pilot project on green budgeting for the European Commission's Technical Support Instrument;
- In 2023: Launch of a call for projects for exchanges of public servants between willing European countries based on a dedicated initiative (PACE initiative) under the European Commission's 2023 Technical Support Instrument campaign.

Ministers defined three priority areas to be addressed by future discussions regarding public administration issues:

- Ways of working and human resources management: equality and diversity policies, attractiveness and recruitment, training and skills development, smart working methods, and evaluation:
 - Public service adaptation: access to public services for all, simplification, and improvement of public administration efficiency and productivity;
 - Use of digital tools: development of digital portfolios, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and digitalisation of administrative procedures.
- *Perpetuating the EUPAN summer schools to encourage the sharing of experiences and best practices in EUPAN.*

The first edition on integrity, trust and professionalism held near Berlin in November 2021 demonstrated the merits of this format for the development of new ideas and informal discussions. The second EUPAN Summer School was held in Strasbourg from 9 to 13 May 2022 on "European Mobility for the Transformation of Public Administrations". It was attended by some 30 European mobility experts from EUPAN member administrations, the European Commission and other walks of life. Participants took part in plenary sessions, field visits and work in sub-groups to examine the European state of play with public worker mobility, common challenges for public administrations in Europe and the key mobility stages (before, during and after). This work formed the basis for the development of concrete proposals (see points 2 and 3). The evaluation of this second edition again confirmed the suitability of this tool to analyse common issues of importance to the EUPAN administrations and build concrete proposals.

III.B.2. Inclusion of European and international mobility in human resources management policies

Previous EUPAN discussions confirmed the inadequacy of new mobility solutions if they were not accompanied by joint EUPAN administration thinking on the inclusion of European and international mobility in human resources management policies.

The challenges identified concern all mobility stages including mobility preparations, management, financing and career-long returns on skills developed (for both public servants and employers).

The French Presidency of EUPAN examined these difficulties in detail and looked into tools to solve them drawing on:

- *A survey of EUPAN member administration support for public servants' European and international mobility (December 2021-January 2022)*

The 27 responses collected provided information to:

- Find out more about the different programmes in effect in Europe. A total of 16 of the 27 survey respondents said they had made use of mobility programmes specifically designed for public servants. Nevertheless, in the majority of cases, these arrangements only concern a small number of public servants and involve mainly exchanges between EU Member State administrations. The different programmes reported are not geared to a public servant profile in particular, but rather cover a wide range of situations and lengths of time. In most cases, they are open to middle managers and more rarely to senior management. Although no particular participant selection criterion stands out as such, knowledge of foreign languages is the most frequently mentioned criterion ahead of career objectives, career path and position held.
- Further develop European and international mobility arrangements in human resources policies. Mobility support provided by the sending administration can take a number of forms, but is mainly financial. It can also take the form of assistance with moving preparations and administrative assistance from the human resources department (advice, contact point, etc.). Often, it is part of a specific mobility support or promotion policy, which can be actioned at a number of levels, but is generally implemented at interministerial or ministerial level. Moreover, career returns on mobility, which are very rare in themselves, essentially take the form of monitoring and documentation of standard skills.
- *An additional informal survey of delegations at the Conference of Ministers, rolled out more broadly to EUPAN experts, which was used to prepare the Summer School work by detailing the skills developed by mobility together with obstacles encountered and outlining solutions.*
- *The work of Summer School participants who made concrete proposals for actions to be taken for EUPAN administrations, highlighting:*
 - the need to structure an informal European network of European mobility experts from among willing EUPAN administrations drawing on the discussions held at the Summer School;
 - the possibility to develop common EUPAN tools to support mobility: communication tools, tools to on-board new foreign arrivals, training in intercultural understanding, etc.;
 - the shared problem of returning from mobility and providing a return on mobility, which could be addressed by setting up common skills grids for staff returning from mobility;
 - the merits of developing new exchange solutions, based mainly on the Public Administration Cooperation Exchange (PACE) initiative planned by the European Commission for its 2023 Technical Support Instrument campaign to provide technical assistance to structural reforms in the following areas: digitalisation, greening, improvement of public administration performance, professionalisation of public

administration, and management of investment and implementation of EU instruments. Participants proposed that EUPAN develop projects in transformative areas (green administration, attractiveness, crisis management, new ways of working, etc.).

III.B.3. Adoption of a roadmap to take forward EUPAN's work

All of this work was shared with the Directors General of EUPAN at a session on public workers' European and international mobility.

In keeping with the network's ambitions and the new EUPAN strategy paper, the discussion confirmed the merits of pursuing EUPAN's work on the subject.

EUPAN members endorsed the inclusion of public servant mobility (development of exchange programmes and mobility assistance tools, with due consideration for existing programmes) in the focus areas identified in the EUPAN Handbook.

The discussion concluded that EUPAN's work could be taken forward in this area by means of three concrete actions:

- *Creation of an informal expert group on EU mobility made up of willing EUPAN administrations, drawing on the Summer School discussions.* This working group's main brief will be to detail the tools to be developed (communication and exchange tools, training, guides and factsheets) and encourage the sharing of best practices and dissemination of information on the programmes and tools put in place by EUPAN administrations. A first meeting could be held in the form of a videoconference in the autumn.
- *Continuing to consolidate exchange solutions by means of:*
 - collaboration with the network of technical expertise practitioners to promote EUPAN administrations' expertise worldwide;
 - participation of willing EUPAN administrations in the exchanges planned for late 2022 in the second phase of the pilot EU Leadership Exchange Programme. A second evaluation could be conducted at the end of 2022;
 - presentation of exchange projects by a EUPAN administration on the network's work themes for the European Commission's 2022 Technical Support Instrument campaign (PACE initiative);
 - continuation of the EUPAN summer schools focusing on the new EUPAN strategy themes.
- *Close collaboration with the DG REFORM expert group* to facilitate the sharing of expertise on public administration issues and identify other areas and forms of exchange and sharing of expertise. This collaboration will take the shape of a regular dialogue and presentation of the work conducted by the two networks, in connection with the implementation of the PACE initiative in particular.

III. C. Public service transformation and resilience

The health crisis accelerated the changes already underway in the public administrations, especially ways of working and the use of remote working solutions, and brought to the fore their ability to adapt to challenges and major crises.

Previous EUPAN work covered:

- a survey on new ways of working under the Austrian Presidency in 2018;
- a survey on the management of the health crisis by EUPAN administrations under the German Presidency.

The French Presidency took forward this work by:

- encouraging public administration sharing of innovative solutions for public service transformation tools and measures;
- working on a special focus on new ways of working and organisational flexibility, tied in with the current negotiation of a digital transformation agreement by the Social Dialogue Committee for Central Government Administrations (SDC-CGA);
- studying the implementation of an HR foresight function for the EUPAN administrations, key to projecting the trends that will have an impact on human resources management.

III.C.1. Sharing innovative solutions.

The French Presidency encouraged dialogue and sharing of best practices in innovative solutions, in particular to support digitalisation, with:

- further editions of EUPAN's e-News;
- a *Tech for Government: Pitch Session* innovative digital solutions competition on 10 January 2022. Winners were subsequently invited to present their projects to the Conference of EU Ministers for Public Sector Transformation and the Civil Service;
- a focus by the EUPAN experts meeting on public sector transformation policy in France, which addressed the rollout of the Public Services+ programme in the French administrations, deployed by the Interministerial Directorate for Public Sector Transformation (DITP), and the digital transformation policy steered by the Interministerial Directorate for Digital Affairs (DINUM).

III.C.2. New ways of working and organisational flexibility

The French Presidency of EUPAN undertook to examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on EUPAN member administrations while encouraging the sharing of experience and expertise among public administrations in new ways of working and organisational flexibility. This work was based on:

- *A survey of EUPAN member administrations on arrangements for new ways of working and organisational flexibility (December 2021-January 2022).*

This survey expanded on previous EUPAN studies, covering spatial arrangements (workplaces, remote working, etc.), working hours (compressed working week, part-time work, trust-based working hours, etc.) and internal organisation (working methods, recruitment, etc.). Although the different types of flexibility with a potential impact on the ways of working had already been in place for a number of years, the study took an objective measure of the effects of the health crisis in spreading the use of hitherto often-minority, if not marginal, practices that have now become the norm.

All the officials interviewed, representing the EUPAN member administrations, reported that at least one type of flexible arrangement was currently in use in their administration. Two types of flexible arrangements were found to be particularly widespread:

- spatial flexibility (teleworking, remote working, smart working, etc.) in use in virtually all the administrations that participated in the study, generally in a hybrid format where staff alternate between remote and in-office work;
- flexitime arrangements (compressed working week, part-time work, etc.), also in place in virtually all respondent administrations, mainly in the form of part-time work.

In both cases, the use of these flexible arrangements is often provided for in the administrations' official rules of organisation and is generally decided on at local level between managers and staff.

These developments have made disconnection a key issue, to which most administrations have responded with a right to disconnect already in place or in the process of being introduced. Much like the legislation on teleworking, the right to disconnect has been written into laws and regulations, but has also often been included in local agreements between administrations and staff.

- *Workshops at the EUPAN working level meeting (4 and 5 April 2022).*

At the meeting of EUPAN experts in Paris on 4 and 5 April 2022, participants were asked to examine three subjects in depth:

- *Teleworking and the right to disconnect.* The widespread use of teleworking is generally perceived as positive (optimisation of time, less travel, flexibility, etc.), although certain brakes remain (desocialisation and lack of informal conversations, impact on onboarding new staff, impacts on the work-life balance, etc.). Trust, manager training and work team support are key in a hybrid work format to flank these new ways of working and guarantee a work-life balance. Teleworking has also had impacts not yet fully gauged in such areas as property management and public transport. There are disparities in Europe in the legal enforcement of the right to disconnect and in its operational implementation due mainly to differences in working cultures (working week, presenteeism, etc.). Factors for success to guarantee the right to disconnect are: clearly define the ground rules, regulate overtime, set up informal team-building sessions, increase the frequency of assessments/interactions between managers and staff, give precedence to results-based assessments, and propose in-person team meetings.
- *Links between organisational flexibility and equality-in-the-workplace policies.* The EUPAN network administrations have different views of the link between equality in the workplace and flexibility in that flexibility is rarely used as a tool in their equality-in-the-workplace policy. Feedback was positive regarding the impact of the new ways of working and equality in the workplace: creation by remote/online working of new, more open ways of communicating, benefits of more time spent at home, etc. The pandemic has nevertheless highlighted certain inequalities, not only gender-based, but also with respect to those less accustomed to working with IT tools, new staff with less access to interactions with experienced staff, employment status, etc.
- *Occupational developments associated with the change in ways of working.* The majority of the participants felt that occupations had evolved rather than changed. Digitalisation has raised new questions: work premises, use of new communication tools, data security, etc. Working online has reduced the time for informal conversations and

connections among teams in the same departments. This situation calls for an adjustment to managers' roles as they need to manage and steer their team with due consideration for these hybrid ways of working. It also implies taking a different approach to well-being and health and safety at work.

- *The adoption of a roadmap for exemplary implementation of new ways of working and digitalisation support in European public administrations.*

On the basis of this work, the French Presidency proposed a number of flanking measures to EUPAN member administrations for the deployment of these new ways of working, in the form of three courses of action:

- **Assessment:**

- Considering hybrid ways of working as a factor of public service resilience and continuity, as an element of improved work-life balance, and as a factor of attractiveness for public administrations, taking into account the need to evaluate the coherence of the results achieved with the policy.
- Drawing lessons from the health crisis by assessing the overall impact on team activities and the organisation of work teams, as well as changes in management policies and functions, in keeping with the legal and other relevant frameworks.
- Identifying the changes brought about by digitalisation, in terms of both opportunities created and potential risks.

- **Support:**

- Supporting and accompanying the changes by providing efficient IT equipment, but also by training workers and managers in the tools, uses, organisations and positions, as well as thinking up new ways of leading work teams by strengthening management support and making resources and up-to-date information accessible.
- Ensuring equal treatment for all staff in an environment of transformations in ways of working and occupations.
- Paying particular, renewed attention to impacts on the quality of life at work and mental health, including for managers, especially with respect to the right to disconnect and the risks of professional isolation.
- Ensuring that the new ways of working in all their dimensions are the subject of regular, cross-functional dialogue with all the stakeholders, particularly in the context of social dialogue, with full respect for the prerogatives of the social partners.
- Informing human resources professionals, managers and employees about the issues involved in the implementation of new ways of working and digitalisation within the framework of national legislation and practice.

- **Transform:**

- Including consideration of digitalisation and new ways of working in human resources management policies in all their components, in particular policies on attractiveness, training, professional equality, management, and health and safety at work taking into account results and citizens' needs, on the basis of regular assessment.
- Transforming the management function and developing new working methods and practices to build a more efficient public organisation, capable of delivering a simpler, closer and more efficient public service.
- Rethinking the status of the work space, by questioning and reinventing the organisation of the office.

- Highlighting internal innovation in public services in order to underline the resilience of the public sector, promote committed employees, and strengthen the attractiveness of a more agile and innovative public sector.
 - Leveraging good practices to disseminate them, inspire other administrations and initiate continuous change.
 - Perpetuating/working towards the construction of a new frame of reference in the administration's ways of working.
- *Tie-in with the work of the Social Dialogue Committee for Central Government Administrations (SDC-CGA).*

In keeping with this roadmap, the Directors General of EUPAN were informed of the work conducted by the committee at a dedicated session of the meeting held on 15 and 16 June 2022.

Following various projects conducted since 2015, the committee addressed issues surrounding public sector digitalisation. Its work focused on a study and the publication of a list of recommendations in 2017.¹ On this basis, the committee launched negotiations for an agreement based on Article 155 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The text addresses the general challenges of digitalisation in public administrations: teleworking, health and safety at work, skills and training, personal data management and protection, artificial intelligence, access for users, and outsourcing and job protection. It is part of the broader-based guidelines of the action plan to take forward the European Pillar of Social Rights.²

III.C.3. Survey on human resources foresight in EUPAN administrations

Human resources foresight is a key focus of the work conducted by the Directorate General for Public Administration and the Civil Service (DGAFP) in France with four main goals:

- drive forward human resources policy foresight and evaluation;
- enable human resources policy to adapt quickly to projected changes in jobs and skills;
- promote these activities through dedicated publications, holding national PR events and strengthening partnerships;
- develop provision of support for senior managers in ministries with specific HR issues.

In this context, the French Presidency launched a European survey of human resources foresight approaches in March 2022 to identify how the EUPAN member administrations addressed these goals. This survey complements a similar study at national level.

The survey, to which 14 administrations responded, contained four parts:

- A proposed definition of human resources foresight (taken from the definition given by Régine Monti, Associate Professor at the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers):

“The purpose of a foresight approach is to identify the factors of change in the external environment that will have the greatest impact on the human resources of an organisation. The aim is then to identify the possible changes in these key factors in order to better prepare for

¹ Improve the work-life balance: opportunities and threats of digitalisation: field study and recommendations for a list of things “to do” and “not to do” by the Social Dialogue Committee for Central Government Administrations with the support of the European Union, 2017.

²https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/economy-works-people/jobs-growth-and-investment/european-pillar-social-rights/european-pillar-social-rights-action-plan_en

them and to carry out human resources projects. HR foresight approaches differ from workforce planning approaches, which they complement, in that they work on a longer timescale, generally the medium term (five years or more) The three main stages of HR foresight approaches are the constitution of a retrospective database, exploration of possible futures with the construction of scenarios and the link to action through the identification of the main consequences of these scenarios for jobs and skills, organisation and working conditions, and managerial practices.”

79% of respondents (11 states) agree entirely with this definition and 21% (3 states) agree with it in part. For 36% of respondents (5 states), HR foresight also covers other aspects such as “factors of change in the internal environment” (assignments, use of new technologies, etc.) and its human resources (longer working lives, retirement peaks, etc.)”, “public institutions’ financial aspects and political aspects”.

- Structure of HR foresight.

50% of respondents (7 states) have foresight bodies in their central government HR departments, which have been operational for 13 years on average. These bodies average 32 members of staff.

- Best practices in HR foresight.

Only 21% of respondents (3 states) have developed HR foresight methodology. The main HR foresight tools used by respondents are:

- documentary resources by HR topic (64% of respondents);
- a group of HR experts to guide and validate analysis (36% of respondents);
- partnerships with universities, associations and businesses (29% of respondents).

- Priority areas and topics for HR foresight analysis.

The main HR foresight topics are, in order of priority:

- 1- Trends in skills, jobs and careers (all respondents);
- 2- Improvement of employer attractiveness and image (86% of respondents);
- 3- Developments in working methods, working conditions and managerial practice (86% of respondents);
- 4- New social regulations and new bargaining aims (36% of respondents).

In addition, two respondents (Portugal and Switzerland) suggested adding a focus on demographic trends in human resources, and Slovakia has added wage trends.

Details on the different meetings and areas of work are given in the presentation appended to this report.