

2021 ACSH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

PUBLIC SERVICE DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION

Date: 27-29 October 2021 (Wednesday, Thursday, Friday)

Format: online¹

CONCEPT NOTE

Context

In accordance with its established tradition, the Astana Civil Service Hub (ACSH, Hub) will hold its annual conference, by bringing together a multitude of its stakeholders. The 2021 Annual Conference is devoted to the theme of *“Public Service Development and Cooperation.”*

As known, the ACSH delivers on its mission via three main pillars. The Conference sessions encompass all three directions. In particular, there are sessions devoted to certain aspects of public service development, to capacity-building in public service, on recent research in public administration, and on cooperation and partnerships in public service.

Overall, cooperation at different levels is gaining ever greater importance. The pace of global change and the rapidly changing environment place an unprecedented level of demands on the capacity of governments, public governance systems, and civil service. Cooperation has become even more prominent than before in view of the current health crisis that has influenced political, economic and social aspects of human life, including the functioning of public administration and the civil service.

In light of this, the upcoming Annual Conference encompasses several events and activities aimed at encouraging its participants to exchange their views and experiences in coping with vulnerabilities of public administration and the civil service, exposed during the still on-going health-related crisis, and reinvigorating the Hub’s partnerships of knowledge and experience exchange on improving governance systems and government efforts to better respond to the challenges induced by the current crisis. It is expected that such partnership schemes will play a pivotal role in introducing new opportunities for collective actions contributing towards more inclusive, resilient and peaceful societies by accomplishing their Sustainable Development Goals’ objectives.

Expected Outputs

It is expected that:

- new projects and priorities of the Hub for the upcoming period are presented, in view of the fact that the agreement on the Hub’s support for the 2021-2023 period has been signed by the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and UNDP;
- reflections from the ACSH participating countries and partnering organisations are shared;
- views and experience on the current civil service development are exchanged;

¹ The Joint Meeting of the ACSH Steering Committee, Advisory Board, and the Journal’s Editorial Board, depending on the situation, may be conducted in an offline format. Time slot for this meeting will be determined in agreement with its participants.

- ways of strengthening cooperation in the field of civil service are discussed;
- ACSH experts' network and partnerships are enhanced.

Description of the Annual Conference Events

- **Professionals' Insights and Reflections**

In this session, professionals will share their thoughts on public administration issues, as well as exchange views on current trends in the development of public services.

- **Presentation of the new capacity building programme**

The regional project on *"Capacity Building for Innovation in Governance and Digitalisation of Public Services"* is a joint development cooperation initiative of the Astana Civil Service Hub, the United Nations Development Programme in Kazakhstan, the Ministry of Interior and Safety and the National Information Society Agency of the Republic of Korea. Its main objective is to introduce innovative practices in governance innovation and differentiated modalities in public service delivery across the seven participating countries from Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) and the Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia). The envisioned project activities will be implemented in close work with the respective government counterparts, central and local government agencies, special bodies and institutions, experts, and policy makers of participating countries in the project implementation.

- **Presentation on launching the laboratory on public service innovations**

The Public Service Innovations Accelerator Lab is the joint initiative of the Astana Civil Service Hub and "Zerde" National Infocommunication Holding" JSC. The goal is to create conditions for the support and development of innovations in the field of public services in Kazakhstan. The lab is a platform for finding innovative solutions, approaches and technologies and for their incubations, accelerating and piloting in the relevant state body/institution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The proposed lab seeks to contribute to the transformation of the public administration system of Kazakhstan taking full advantage of digital technologies, the acceleration and introduction of digital solutions nationwide, as well as digitalisation of civil service operations and processes to make it more resilient and capable of coping in crises situations well.

- **Study presentation**

The study *"Public Sector Compensation Systems: a Comparative Review"* entails a comparative review of public sector compensation systems in place around the world. It includes a comprehensive analysis of the essential elements and factors that influence the shape and form, as well as the structure and composition, of public sector remuneration systems across the world. It also includes a description of current trends in public sector compensation.

- **Briefing on new book**

"Public Service Evolution in the 15 Post-Soviet Countries: Diversity in Transformation" is a unique study of public service evolution in the 15 post-Soviet countries from independence to the present date. These countries have transformed in diverse ways, shaped by historical and cultural traditions and the Soviet legacy they inherited, as well as by the impact of the political will of their ruling elites. This book brought together prominent practitioners, who actively participated in the transformation process, and leading scholars representing all 15 post-Soviet countries. It is a valuable addition to the

field of public administration, allowing for improved understanding of the complexity and depth of change that has taken place over the past 30 years, and will be of interest to policymakers, scholars, and journalists.

- Workshop 1 (with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan):

Shifts in Public Administration Reforms for Achieving the SDGs: Imperatives and Lessons from the Covid-19 Pandemic

The Astana Civil Service Hub, UNDESA's Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government, and the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan will hold a virtual workshop to take stock of the lessons engendered by the on-going pandemic and discuss suitable policies, strategies and approaches that may help both political leaders and public administrators to counter the disastrous effects of COVID-19 and successfully continue with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The overall purpose of the webinar is to raise participants' awareness regarding risks and challenges imposed by the pandemic on public institutions and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda to achieve the SDGs. Specifically, it will address the emerging challenges to transparency and accountability, access to information and eroding safeguards, equity in service delivery, respect to diversity and human rights, integrity violations, fraud and corruption and restrictions to participation, as well as the critical role institutions play in providing resilient responses to the crises.

- Workshop 2 (with the South-South Network for Public Service Innovations (SSN4PSI):

Public Service Delivery in the Era of SDG

The South-South Network for Public Service Innovation (SSN4PSI) will organize a side event on "Public Service Delivery in the Era of SDG," the second matchmaking workshop with the ACSH at the annual conference. Since its inception, the network has organized 18 matchmaking events, webinars around the world. The main objective of the event is to develop a deeper understanding and broader exchange in the Global South by identifying vital and novel innovations for scaling-up public service innovation.

- Panel 1 (with the Agency on Civil Service Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan and HR Association Qazaqstan):

The Role of Internal Communications In Human Resource Management. Public Sector Branding. Challenges and Perspectives.

- Panel 2: (with the Agency on Civil Service Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Ministry of the Interior and Safety of the Republic of Korea, and "Zerde" National Infocommunication Holding" JSC):

Digitalization of Public Service Delivery

- Joint Meeting of the ACSH Steering Committee, Advisory Board, and the Journal's Editorial Board²

The joint meeting of the Steering Committee, Advisory Board, and the Journal's Editorial Board is organised to discuss the progress the ACSH has made to date, as well as the

² Time slot for this meeting will be determined in agreement with the members of the ACSH Steering Committee, Advisory Board and of its biannual Journal's Editorial Board

challenges it may face in the future. It is also organised to consider proposals for institutional development and modalities for new cooperation, as well as other issues that fall within the powers of the Steering Committee, the Advisory Board, and the Editorial Board of the Hub's International Journal of Civil Service Reform and Practice.