

**2021 NU GSPP CONFERENCE – (GSPPCONF2021)
POLICY CHANGE AND STRUCTURAL REFORMS IN EURASIA**

ACSH PANEL SESSION

**“THE EFFECT OF THE COVID19 PANDEMIC ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION:
LESSONS LEARNT; PERSPECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE”**

CONCEPT NOTE

Context

The coronavirus pandemic has had a strong impact on the global economy, on industrial production and on public and private finance. It has also affected social protection and health care systems and has become a real resilience and effectiveness test for public administration systems, of many countries. Thus, governments around the world, in order to stabilise their countries' economies, and provide adequate support to their population, have implemented various packages of anti-crisis policy measures, including financial support for vulnerable groups of the population, concessional lending for SMEs, tax deferrals, price controls, and others.

Such policy measures have inevitably resulted to increased expansion of public finance outlays – in the short-term at least; ironically portending a greater role of the state in the economic and social spheres, reversing the trend prevalent in recent decades. The rising involvement of the state could also lead to a higher share of employment in the state sector, which may have a possible “boomerang” effect on government finances – in the medium term. This, in turn will directly influence the longer-term development prospects of countries and the accomplishment of their SDG-related objectives. Thus, it is imperative that despite the fact that countries will continue to focus on health and social protection issues, as well as reviving their economies, by devoting a substantial part of public budget resources to economic and social policy areas that they should also devote a considerable part of their attention to public administration (PAR) and civil service development (CSD). This should also be a priority, not only for countries to accomplish their SDG-related objectives, but also to enhance the capacity of their public administration and civil service to cope with the emerging new reality, in the post-COVID19 era.

Admittedly, the coronavirus pandemic has forced public administration systems to become more flexible and responsive, adjust to new realities and undertake urgent tasks to support their countries' economies and societies. It has also accelerated the digitalisation of the public sector, increased the level of digital literacy of civil servants, and introduced changes in working conditions, etc. This transformation process, still in progress, is added to the challenge's governments are already facing due to rapid technological change and advancement of automation in many fronts of economic and social life, or due to environmental degradation, among others.

The capacity of public administration and the civil service to cope with such issues will surely influence the relative performance of countries in responding to the pandemic and to pursuing their SDG-related objectives, e.g., how to tackle rising structural unemployment, and rising inequality due to globalisation, and how to provide opportunities to women, minorities, and low-skilled and poor individuals. Therefore, it is important to analyse the lessons learned from the COVID19 pandemic and identify the critical areas where interventions are needed for

improving public administration to cope with the emerging challenges across a wide spectrum of policy areas.

Objective

Consistent with its mission to contribute to a global exchange of knowledge, experience and good practices aimed at improving the effectiveness of government responses across several policy fields, the Astana Civil Service Hub is organising a panel session titled “The effect of the COVID19 pandemic on public administration: lessons learnt; perspectives for the future”. The objective of this panel session is: [a] discuss the various challenges public administration systems were confronted with during the pandemic; [b] analyse the lessons learnt; and [c] identify critical areas where public administration and civil service systems to need to be improved, so they can effectively cope with the emerging new reality.

The proceedings of this panel session will be used to develop the structure and content of a book scheduled to be published sometime in 2022, as a knowledge product, part of the ACSH research and knowledge management pillar of activities.

Audience

Representatives of governments of ACSH participating countries, professional organisations and associations, academics, representatives of universities and institutes, as well as of international organisations and other interested practitioners from various fields related to the subject matter.

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Date: Friday 15 October

Time: 15:45 – 17:10 (Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan time)

Working language: English (with simultaneous translation provided in Russian)

Zoom Link: <https://nu-edu-kz.zoom.us/j/96385421824>

Confence ID: 963 8542 182

Moderator: *Panos LIVERAKOS, ACSH Knowledge Management Consultant*

15:35 – 15:45	Checking devices to join the Panel Session
	Welcoming Remarks
15:45 – 15:55	Alikhan BAIMENOV , Chairman of the ACSH Steering Committee
	Colin KNOX , Vice Dean for Academic Affairs, Professor, Graduate School of Public Policy, Nazarbayev University
	Main session
15:55 – 16:10	Christine LEITNER , Senior Advisor, Co-founder of the Centre for Economics and Public Administration <i>Charting the course: Covid-19 as a catalyst for digital transformation?</i>
16:10 – 16:25	Rupinder SINGH , Policy Advisor Economics, Budget Support and Aid, and International Affairs <i>The golden trinity in a post-pandemic context: Governance, Public Finance Management and Public Administration</i>
16:25 – 16:40	Yerlan ABIL , Rector, Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan <i>Professionalisation of Civil Servants in a Pandemic: Lessons Learnt</i>
16:40 – 16:55	Admir SAHMANOVICH , PAR expert <i>Post pandemic world: Public administration resilience or post pandemic world: reality vs illusions</i>
16:55 – 17:10	Q&A and closing remarks