THE ACSH BULLETIN

Insights on civil service and news of the Astana Civil Service Hub

In this issue

Welcome message from Alikhan Baimenov, the Chairman of the ACSH Steering Committee

Dear colleagues and friends,

It is my pleasure to introduce our new product – the ACSH Bulletin, which will be published starting from this year.

Three years have passed since the inception of the ACSH. It is like a 3-year old child – it is still young, but it has overcome the important stage of formation. The ACSH is becoming more mature, serving the interests of its stakeholders.

More and more research publications have been issued, more joint activities have been held, more ideas have been shared. These have made us realise that the ACSH needs a bulletin, through which the most recent news are shared with you.

In this very first issue, you will find the summaries of the latest publications of the Hub, as well as news from our participating countries and events held by the ACSH.

Congratulations to the winners of the Innovative Solutions Scheme 2015!

THE ACSH INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS SCHEME

The ACSH is pleased to conclude the first Innovative Solutions Scheme held in 2015. As a result of evaluation conducted by the International Selection Panel, which included representatives of the Hub's participating countries in the region and partners, the following bidders have been identified as winners:

National Anticorruption Centre (Moldova)
Project: Integrity Testing Mechanism of Civil Servants

Colin Knox, Professor of Ulster University (United Kingdom)
Project: Quality of Life Framework for Public Services in education

Saltanat Akhmetzhanova, Director of Centre of Scientific Economic Expertise, JSC "Economic Research Institute", Ministry of National Economy (Kazakhstan)
Project: Improving the process of preparing professionally competent personnel for public administration through the development and implementation in the educational process of the new discipline of "Evaluation of socio-economic impact of legal acts".

Every year the winners of the Scheme receive funding to cover the costs of preparation of a case study and a manual for potential replication of solutions by other countries.

Call for Applications was launched on 10 August 2015 and closed on 26 October 2015.

21 applications were received:

12 applications on enhancement of service delivery in public education.

9 applications on innovative methods of protecting meritocratic principles in selection and promotion processes of civil servants.

Applications were received from **9** countries: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, FYR of Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Turkmenistan and UK.

8 proposals from individual applicants/groups of individual applicants. All of them are affiliated with public institutions.

13 proposals from public organizations/agencies, at national and sub-national levels, Academies of Public Administration, think tanks, public associations, non-profit organizations.

Global Transformation Forum

When: 21-23 October 2015
Where: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The annual forum brought together world leaders, heads of global businesses, and key decision-makers both in the government and corporate sectors with vested interest in the global transformation agenda. These included major global stakeholders such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which understands the need for and are working towards developing transformation strategies and initiatives to achieve tangible results. The goal of the forum is to promote sharing of the best practices and approaches on how socio-economic transformation can effectively take shape in a global environment.

The Chairman of the ACSH Steering Committee, Alikhan Baimenov, was one of the key speakers at the *Designing the Future* session of the Forum.

For more information: **http://globaltransformation.com/**

AAPA 2016 Annual Conference

When: 19-20 February 2016
Where: Bangsaen, Chonburi Province, Thailand

The annual conference was jointly hosted by the Asian Association for Public Administration, the Public Administration Association of Thailand, and the Faculty of Political Science and Law of Burapha University. This year, the conference was devoted to the Public Administration and Sustainable Development Goals: New Agendas and Major Challenges.

For more information: **http://www.aapa.or.kr/contents/bbspage/xbd/board.php?bo_table=m2_db1&wr_id=15**

ASPA 2016 Annual Conference

When: 18-22 March 2016
Where: Seattle, USA

The theme of this year's annual conference was "New Traditions in Public Administration: Reflecting on Challenges, Harnessing Opportunities," embracing the evolution of the public sector with the development of new skills, practices and traditions while solidifying time-proven approaches.

The Chairman of the ACSH Steering Committee, Alikhan Baimenov, was one of the speakers at the SPALR Symposium "*Enduring Challenges and New Developments in Public Human Resource Management: An International Perspective*".

For more information: **https://www.aspanet.org/public/Conference2016/CONFERENCE_HOME/2016_Conference/Conference/Home2015.aspx**

UNDP's 50th Anniversary

When: 24 February 2016
Where: New York, USA

On 24 February 2016, in in New York, USA, more than 160 Ministers, Heads of Government and other senior officials joined UNDP staff in the Ministerial Meeting to commemorate the Organization's 50th Anniversary. The meeting celebrated five decades of development with Ministers candidly praising UNDP for its vital role in reducing poverty, empowering women, creating jobs, protecting the environment, and lots more in nearly 170 countries.

For more information: **http://50.undp.org/en/**

Familiarization and Experience Exchange Workshop in the framework of capacity development for national South-South Coordination Units

When: 29-31 March 2016
Where: New York, USA

Familiarization and Experience Exchange Workshop brought together the government focal points on South-South cooperation from the countries in the Arab States, Europe and the CIS that have successfully undertaken the national-level stock-taking on trends and opportunities for South-South and Triangular cooperation with the leadership and ownership of their respective countries, representatives of other national level institutions that could potentially contribute to positioning their respective countries as active supporters of South-South and Triangular cooperation, as well as representatives of the Islamic Development Bank, International Fund for Agricultural Development, and the United Nations office for South-South cooperation.

The Head of the ACSH Research team, Yernar Zharkeshov, participated in the workshop and shared the idea and objectives of the ACSH.

For more information: **http://ssc.undp.org/content/ssc.html**

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Meritocracy for Public Service Excellence
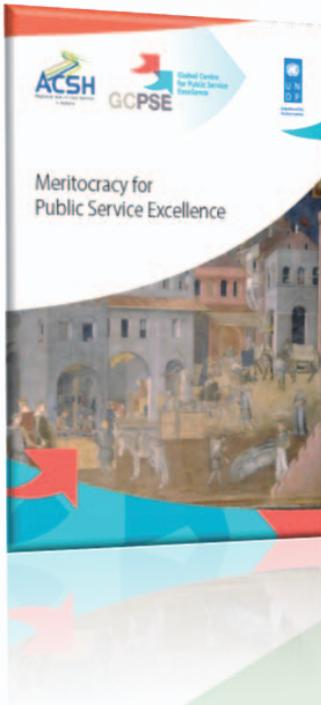
This discussion paper is the product of the shared philosophy of the ACSH and the GCPSE (UNDP Global Centre for public Service Excellence).

This paper examines why development requires meritocracy in public service. We know that research shows that states with a civil service characterised by meritocratic recruitment and predictable, rewarding career paths are associated with higher economic growth rates. Meritocracy in public service also has a significant impact on public servants' motivation; and a motivated and trusted public service will be essential for the successful achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

But what exactly is 'meritocracy'?

To read the full paper: **http://www.regionalhub.org/category/ library/discussion-paper**

Anti-Corruption Drive in Georgia

The anti-corruption efforts in the Georgian Police Force were an important part of the reform drive in the Georgian Civil Service, as the risks for corruption were much higher in the law enforcement entities. Thus, significant initiatives were undertaken over the past ten years transforming the Georgian Police Force into one of the most corruption-free institutions in the country today.

This case study reveals that preventive actions and other measures implemented have considerably reduced the risks in the case of the Georgian Police Force. The positive results achieved are basically attributed to two major factors: [a] implementation of severe disciplinary actions against offenders; and [b] fear of one losing their job in a labour market characterised by chronic high unemployment.

To read the full paper: **http://www.regionalhub.org/category/ library/case-studies**

5th Issue of the International Journal of Civil Service Reform and Practice

The latest issue of the International Journal of Civil Service Reform and Practice containsthe articles of scholars and practitioners in the area of civil service, as well as and commentaries of speakers of the Global conference "*Meritocracy and Professional Ethics as Key Factors for Civil Service Effectiveness*" and presentations of the discussion panel of the ACSH "*International Cooperation on Civil Service Excellence: A Bridge to Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals*".

To learn, what the Chinese concept of "wuwei" means, how South Korean civil servants are trained with a focus on developing critical thinking and creativity, and what Helen Clark thinks about meritocracy and ethics in civil service and more:

http://www.regionalhub.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/ACSH-Journal_Issue-5_October-2015.pdf

Review of Global and Regional Trends in Civil Service

This paper represents an effort of the Regional Hub of Civil Service to provide a critical examination of current civil service reform policies, strategies, programmes, and measures in order to identify trends in the area of civil service reform and development, both at the global, and the regional levels. The paper places emphasis on the substance of reforms, without, however, overlooking the processes affecting the type, degree and pace of reforms. Its ultimate purpose is to inform policy makers and practitioners alike of civil service reform and development trends, which may contribute to making their administrations more responsive, transparent, accountable and free of corruption to their citizens in an era of unprecedented and rapid global change. In particular, this collaborative effort aspires to serve its purpose by informing policy makers and practitioners in the participating countries of the ACSH, on the latest trends in civil service reform and development that will shape the future of the civil service; and provide examples of initiatives taking place around the world, which may illuminate the way forward.

Follow our website's E-library page for the Review of Global and Regional Trends in Civil Service, which will be published at the end of May 2016: http://www.regionalhub.org/international-journal/e-library

Azerbaijan's ASAN won the UN Public Service Award in 2015

Azerbaijan's network of simplified access to government services ASAN (Azerbaijani Service and Assessment Network) service has received the United Nations Public Service Award 2015, the most prestigious international recognition of excellence in public service. The ASAN Service is a 'one-stop shop' for citizens and residents who need to access public services.

The Service was launched in 2012 to make Azerbaijan's state bureaucracy simpler and more accessible. ASAN's central principle is to place representatives of different government departments "under one roof". Many administrative tasks, from tax registration to driving licence renewal, can be performed at an ASAN Service Centre or via the ASAN website.

For more information about ASAN: **http://vxsida.gov.az/**

Georgia adopted a new Law on Civil Service

The Law enters into force on 1st January 2017 and it aims at: establishing a politically neutral and career-based civil service system, clear delimitation of the categories of civil servants, as well as their legal status, institutional strengthening of the Civil Service Bureau for ensuring the success of the reform implementation process, establishment of the performance appraisal system for the professional civil service, development of a functional civil service system that builds on the meritocracy principle and encourages, supports and appreciates professionalism. The new Law on "Civil Service" introduces a new understanding of a civil service system and clearly distinguishes between the civil and state services. Moreover, the Law defines a detailed list of the political positions of persons whose activities are not considered civil service.

Kazakhstan adopted a new Law on Civil Service

The new Law "On Civil Service" entered into force on 1st January 2016. The new law provides a shift from the position to the career model, where admission to the civil service for the first time is made only at the entry-career, low-level positions. For further promotion, a candidate will require specific expertise, work experience in the lower positions and continuous training. The new law has also introduced a three-stage recruitment process.

Other innovations of the new law include the introduction of the performance-based remuneration system for government officials and a permit to work in the civil service for foreign managers.
The new civil service law also pays special attention to the moral principles of civil servants. In view of the changing values and attitudes in the society, a new Ethics Code was introduced on Dec. 29, 2015 which replaced the former Code of Honour of civil servants of Kazakhstan.

Seminar on Public Employment and Management: Independence of the Civil Service

When: 11 November 2015
Where: Astana, Kazakhstan

The event was co-organized with the OECD Division of Reform of the Public Sector Public Governance and Territorial Development, Nazarbayev University and the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana. The conference brought together more than 40 participants, including Executive Secretaries from Ministries of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Heads of Apparatus of regional Akimats and representatives from the Agency for Civil Service Affairs and Anticorruption of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The seminar addressed the following four critical issues: a) towards a high-capacity Autonomous Civil Service: the OECD experience, b) establishing an autonomous civil service; c) Senior Civil Service management and political-administrative interface, d) Civil Service systems and protections.

For more information: **http://www.regionalhub.org/latest-events/2383**

Capacity building training on economic development

When: 1-14 December 2015
Where: Beijing, China

Capacity building training on economic development for the ACSH participating countries' civil servants was held jointly with the Chinese Academy of Governance.

The workshop covered current issues and problems of regional challenges in civil service, their proposed solutions and prospects of development of regional cooperation. The ACSH was noted by the participants as an effective tool for the promotion of state services in the region, which takes into account demands and country-specific development of the participating countries.

In addition, the participants got acquainted with the particularities of China's civil service system and the main reforms in the management of local authorities and state-owned enterprises. "China is a country with rich history and great culture, and it is important to understand the cultural values in order to understand the economic success of the country," - said A. Baimenov, the Chairman of the ACSH Steering Committee.

For more information: **http://www.regionalhub.org/latest-events/2387**

Workshop on Developing Research Capacities of the ACSH participating countries

When: 7-9 December 2015
Where: Astana, Kazakhstan

Hosted by the Academy of Public Administration under the President of Kazakhstan, ACSH's strategic partner, the event attracted around 50 researchers from 10 countries and from 1 international organization that work in the field of civil service. Hailing from as far as FYR Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Azerbaijan, as well as from other ACSH participating countries, the attendants met for three days in Astana.

Guest lecturers of the workshop were Piotr Modzelewski, PhD, Assistant Professor at University of Warsaw on the Evolution of the Pubic Sector; Nicola Bellé, SDA Assistant Professor of Public Management and Policy of the Bocconi School of Management, Bocconi University; Berk Yavuzoglu, PhD, Assistant Professor of Economics, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, Nazarbayev University.

For more information: **http://www.regionalhub.org/latest-events/770**

Roundtable on Motivation and Compensation of Civil Servants

When: 11-12 February 2016
Where: Bangkok, Thailand

The event was co-organized by the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana together with the Office of the Civil Service Commission of the Kingdom of Thailand.
The Roundtable brought together more than 10 participants, including representatives from Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Singapore, Ukraine and Thailand. The distinguishing feature of the event was the participation of six subject-matter experts from ASEAN countries, namely, representatives from Indonesia and Cambodia.

The two-day event consisted of three sessions, where participants from various countries presented their country-specific issues on motivation of civil servants, discussed and exchanged views and experiences on the factors that affect motivation of public officials beyond monetary compensation and their implications for policy-makers and practitioners.

For more information: **http://www.regionalhub.org/latest-events/1038**

Seminar on Promotion of Innovative Environment

When: 22-23 February 2016
Where: Astana, Kazakhstan

The innovative lab sessions of two visiting technical experts, Milica Begovic and Giulio Quaggiotto, were a joint initiative of the Regional Hub for Civil Service in Astana and UNDP in Kazakhstan at the request of national stakeholders. Over thirty representatives of three ministries and two leading educational institutions attended the event hosted at the UN House in Astana. First of its kind, the event is a direct manifestation of the Hub's tailor-made solutions to the increasing demand of several ministries that are undergoing transformations and are in need of fresh ideas and solutions. The lab sessions, purposefully named after laboratories, were designed to encourage participants to use experimental methods to tackle both social and public issues and to draw their own conclusions based on their needs instead of applying an umbrella, or a cluster of blanket solutions for all.

For more information: **http://www.regionalhub.org/latest-events/1029**

Calendar of Forthcoming Events

Dates	Organizer	Meeting	Venue
4-5 April 2016	ACSH	The ACSH Annual Conference and side events	Astana, Kazakhstan
25-26 May 2016	The Government of Kazakhstan	Astana Economic Forum	Astana, Kazakhstan
31 May - 1 June 2016	OECD	OECD Forum	Paris, France
23 June 2016	UN	UN Public Service Day Celebration and UN Public Service Awards	TBD

ACSH Partners

The ACSH has signed Memoranda of Understanding with the following organisations: United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN), American Society for Public Administration (ASPA), Asian Association for Public Administration (AAPA), Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPACEE), Duke University, Chinese Academy of Governance, Nazarbayev University, Bocconi School of Management (Italy), and the Effective Institutions Platform.

Our Story

The Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana (ACSH) was established in March 2013, when representatives of 25 countries, as well as of 5 international organisations, unanimously adopted the ACSH's Founding Declaration. The ACSH is a multilateral institutional platform for the continuous exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of civil service development, aiming to stimulate civil service transformation in the region, through capacity building and peer-to-peer learning development activities, and by disseminating innovative approaches to civil service reform, through evidence-based solutions, informed by a comprehensive research and policy agenda. It has financial and institutional support from the Government of Kazakhstan, and backing of the United Nations Development Programme as the key implementing partner. The geographical range of the participating countries – currently encompassing 32 countries - stretches from the Americas and Europe through Central Asia and Caucasus to ASEAN countries, which demonstrates that effective civil service is a constant and universal need for all nations.

«Kazakhstan is interested in active study of the best international practices and is ready to share its own experience in development of a model of the civil service which was highly appraised by experts »

- Nursultan Nazarbayev
Welcome Letter for the Founding Conference participants

«We are delighted to be working closely with Kazakhstan on civil service excellence. Kazakhstan's strong commitment in this area makes it a logical host of the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana, in which UNDP is proud to be a partner»

- Helen Clark,
Speech on Modernizing Civil Services for the New Sustainable Development Agenda at the Astana Economic Forum

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