

# Assessing how the EU budget is used for public sector reform

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The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Brian Hayes (EPP, IRL) on assessing how the EU budget is used for public sector reform.

The report is based on a DG IPOL study published in August 2016 entitled "Public Sector Reform: How the EU budget is used to encourage it". The study shows that, while the EU budget has had a positive impact on public administration reforms in several Member States, there is **considerable potential for the better use of the EU budget** in this area.

Given that responsibilities for public administration are divided between different Commission departments, Members called for the **better coordination** of all technical assistance programmes to avoid duplication and inefficiency of measures, which undermine the Commission's efforts to promote coordination of the Funds in order to take advantage of synergies. Members invited the next President of the Commission to assign responsibility for questions regarding improving public administration and governance to a **single Commissioner**.

The report stressed that **public sector reform** is essential to help Member States adapt to changing circumstances, increase their resilience to prevent future crises, develop eGovernment and improve service delivery across the Union.

Among other **recommendations**, Members suggested:

- ensuring that the financing of **eGovernment** deployment measures should also be envisaged in future programming periods;
- implementing reforms within the Member States to apply the principle of **good administration** in practice with a view to improving the capacity of regions that are lagging behind to access to finance;
- promoting the implementation of programmes supporting the development of **human resource strategies**, in particular through exchanges of good practice between Member States;
- promoting **coordination, complementarity and simplification** in order to avoid overlaps between specific operational programmes and other EU funding;
- encouraging within public administrations **innovative processes** that promote connectivity, digital transition and the provision of quality digital services for citizens, businesses and public authorities, while taking into account the rapid development of new technologies in these areas.

The Commission is invited to:

- work more closely with Member States to support regions lagging behind, by improving their capacity and administrative governance;
- reintroduce a chapter on public administration and governance in the annual growth review; assess in advance the administrative capacity of the structures responsible for implementing development policies in order to encourage, for particularly strategic projects, the use of national structures and agencies capable of defining individual programmes and actions and accelerating their implementation;

- develop, in cooperation with Member States, a specific evaluation framework that takes into account the quantitative and qualitative aspects of high-quality public administration, and to build its own analytical capacities.

Members proposed to set aside time in the parliamentary calendar for a **structured dialogue with national parliaments** on issues related to **improving public administration in the EU**. The **monitoring and evaluation** of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds) should also be improved by defining specific indicators to assess progress towards the objectives and priorities set by the EU for public administration reform.

Noting that the EU budget provided some **EUR 9 billion** to support public administration reform in EU Member States, Members urged the Commission to combine this financial support with a targeted sharing of knowledge, experience and good practice among Member States.