



Responsive Public Management

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Lithuania: the 7th European Quality Conference

Lithuania, President¹ of the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2013 (the first of the three Baltic States to hold the Presidency), has risen to the challenge of hosting the 7th European Quality Conference for public administrations, which is held every other autumn. Vilnius pulled the mission off with aplomb, welcoming delegations from 23 countries on 3 and 4 October 2013.

The headline chosen by EUPAN² for this new conference was “Towards Responsible Public Administration”. The economic crisis has had a huge impact on public administrations’ behaviour. It has forced them to look for new ways and means of improving efficiency while meeting fast-changing public needs and expectations. The responsible public administration focus was presented using 30 examples of good practices covering three topics (user-centric approaches in public services, the efficient and smart use of public resources, and transparent and open public administration) and nine sub-topics.

User-centric approaches in public services

Making public services responsive:

Administrations need to identify user needs and prioritise the services they deliver in keeping with these needs. Presentations covered the creation of mobile municipal offices in Saxony³ (Germany), training vouchers for greater flexibility in the use of services⁴ (Greece), the opening of a portal for the public to take part in Prahova County Council’s town planning work⁵ (Romania), and the identification of customer needs to improve service quality by the Ministry of Agriculture’s ISO 9001-certified National Paying Agency⁶ (Lithuania).

Co-designing better public services with citizens:

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- 2 <http://www.eu2013.lt/en/>
- 3 European Public Administration Network: <http://www.eupan.eu>
- 4 <http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.760>, <http://www.staatsmodernisierung.sachsen.de/295.html>
- 5 <http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.761>, <http://www.voucher.gov.gr>, <http://www.mou.gr>
- 6 <http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.762>, <https://www.siugrc-cjph.ro>
- <http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.763>, <http://www.nma.lt/index.php/news/national-paying-agency-shared-the-best-practice/4292>

By putting users at the centre of their organisation, administrations can rethink the design and production of their services and incorporate them more into their approach. This was demonstrated by the use of an ethnographic approach to understand taxpayer behaviour⁷ (France), third-generation satisfaction surveys in municipalities⁸ based on the recommendation rate⁹ (Netherlands) and improving social services by hiring “experts by experience”¹⁰ (Belgium). Conference participants met this last good practice with real enthusiasm.

Delivering services in partnership with citizens and agencies:

The next step, which few have taken to date and which is not without its ethical problems, is for the administration to draw on the public’s resources, skills and commitment to build its service supply. Presentations explained the implications of this public service coproduction work with a look at the way in which the Forum for Non-Polish Nationals makes life easier for non-Polish nationals in the Voivodeship of Mazovia¹¹ (Poland), how voluntary jurisdictions uphold the rights of vulnerable citizens at the Court of Monza,¹² and the work by peer tutors to reduce the number of secondary school dropouts in Casarano¹³ (Italy).

Efficient and smart use of public resources

Performance management and other management approaches:

Management plays a key role in running the administrations. Under the authority of the government, which sets the guidelines, it decides on the allocation of resources, management method and appropriate level of participation. There are a number of approaches in use in Europe today, all designed for good governance. The three examples given at the conference were: performance management and management by results – lessons from reform¹⁴ (Sweden), management by objectives in the social security administration¹⁵ (Poland), and the Innovating and Streamlining with Government Employees programme¹⁶ (France).

Use of IT to increase public sector productivity:

As the main tool of a constantly modernising administration, the priority of information and communication technologies is to improve the administration’s productivity. The key elements of this are shared public data, systems interoperability and maximum accessibility for users. This was seen from the presentation of a register-based census¹⁷ (Slovenia), the creation of a public sector staff register¹⁸ (Croatia), a cross-border e-government

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.764>, <http://www.modernisation.gouv.fr/>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.765>, <http://faberklantvriendelijk.nl/>

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The recommendation rate corresponds to the number of people who recommend a product or service compared with the number who use it.

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.766>, <http://www.mi-is.be/be-fr/politique-de-lutte-contre-la-pauvrete/les-experts-de-vecu>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.768>, <http://www.mazowieckie.pl/en>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.767>, <http://www.tribunale.monza.giustizia.it/it/Content/Index/12774>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.769>, <http://www.bottazzi.gov.it/index.asp>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.772>, <http://www.statskontoret.se/in-english/>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.773>, http://www.zus.pl/files/ZUS_Dev_Strat_for_2013_2015.pdf

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<http://www.modernisation.gouv.fr/les-services-publics-se-simplifient-et-innovent/par-la-consultation-et-la-concertation/le-programme-innover-et-simplifier-avec-les-agents-publics>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.775>, <http://www.stat.si/popis2011/eng/Default.aspx?lang=eng>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.774>, <http://www.uprava.hr/default.aspx?id=13658>

project by the Federal Government and the Bavarian State Government¹⁹ (Germany), and the national judiciary information system²⁰ (Turkey).

Service delivery optimisation:

Public service capacity to meet needs and demand is always high on an administration's agenda. Important steps for service delivery optimisation, even more crucial in a recession, are to rethink geographic coverage and step up interdepartmental co-operation while guaranteeing high service quality to users. This growing need was spotlighted by the concept for the improvement of the public service system by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development²¹ (Latvia), the Silkeborg House of Psychiatry²² (Denmark) and the CAF-driven²³ improvements to the social and health care services in Vantaa²⁴ (Finland).

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.779>, <http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.778>, <http://www.x-trans.eu>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.776>, <http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.777>, <http://www.e-justice.gov.tr>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.780>, http://www.varam.gov.lv/eng/darbibas_veidi/e_gov/

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.782>, <http://www.psykiatrienshus.silkeborgkommune.dk/>

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“Common Assessment Framework”: <http://www.eipa.eu/en/topic/show/&tid=191>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.781>, http://www.vantaa.fi/en/social_and_health_care_services

Towards transparent and open public administration

Transparent public administration:

All administrations have a duty to work towards greater transparency with due regard for their legal confidentiality requirements in order to maintain the confidence of the users they serve. Their relations with staff and partners are mirrored in the public's perception of them. This element is an integral part of the continuous improvement approach. So it was rewarding to find out about the promotion of ethical principles and standards of conduct for civil servants²⁵ (Croatia), the establishment of a healthcare organisation accreditation model²⁶ (Slovenia) and the government integrity monitor²⁷ (Netherlands).

Accessible public administration:

Users have high accessibility expectations of the administration, whether for legal and administrative information, secure access to their personal files or real-time information to make their lives easier. Effective, sustainable administrative accessibility often calls for investment in high-cost, long-term technical projects as in the case of the electronic public records gateway²⁸ (Norway), the national administrative simplification project²⁹ (Hungary) and the road traffic information system³⁰ (Lithuania).

Socially responsible and responsive public administration:

Corporate social responsibility is still a fairly new quality concept, doubtless driven by the economic crisis. Yet this is no reason for the administration to skimp on this area. It needs to guarantee equal access to its services and empower everyone, according to their means, to exercise their rights. Four illustrations of this were given by an external audit of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation's corporate social responsibility³¹ (Belgium), co-operation with NGOs to improve the humanitarian side of preventing illegal migration³² (Poland), the Salamanca Province Council's intelligent public administration project³³ (Spain), and a new quality framework for social services³⁴ (Netherlands).

At the end of the conference's presentations and discussions, participants made a date in their diaries for the 8th European Quality Conference to be hosted by Luxembourg³⁵ in the second half of 2015.

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.785>, <http://www.uprava.hr/default.aspx?id=13653>

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http://www.dnv.com/news_events/news/2011/addressing-healthcare-in-slovenia.asp, <http://www.mz.gov.si/en/>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.786>, <http://www.integriteitoverheid.nl/international/international.html>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.790>, <http://www.oep.no>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.789>,
http://magyaryprogram.kormany.hu/admin/download/a/15/50000/Magyary_kozig_fejlesztési_program_2012_A4_eng_%283%29.pdf
<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.791>,

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<http://www.eismo.info.lt>

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<http://www.budget-finances.cfwb.be/index.php?id=5836>, <http://www.vigeo.com/csr-rating-agency/en/3-1-2-entreprises-2>
<http://www.staatsmodernisierung.sachsen.de/295.html>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.792>, <http://www.udsc.gov.pl/index.php?document=264>

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.795>, https://www.regtsa.es/portal/contenedor3.jsp?seccion=menus_navegacion_hijos.jsp&language=es&codResi=1&codMenuPN=1&codMenu=13&layout=contenedor3.jsp&layout=contenedor3.jsp&layout=p_2_final_Contenedor1.jsp

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/get.php?f.793>, <http://www.epr.eu/index.php/equass>

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http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/council-eu/index_en.htm

The example of the “little Baltic tiger”³⁶

Although Lithuania fell victim to one of the deepest recessions (nearly 15%)³⁷ of the 2009 economic crisis, it decided not to call in the IMF or devalue its currency, the litas, which could have really compromised its membership of the eurozone, now slated for 2015.³⁸ Instead, it opted for unprecedented austerity measures, naturally focusing first and foremost on the administration:³⁹ a 5%-to-50% cut in wages for civil servants, depending on their wage scale level, and mass redundancies (20% in the Ministry for the Economy alone, since Lithuanian law does not guarantee lifelong employment to government staff) followed by a 5% cut in pensions. It is worth noting the absence of a fierce staff reaction to these radical measures, which brought the country back up to its pre-crisis GDP level. Even so, Andrius Kubilius, former centre right Prime Minister who lost his majority in the most recent legislative elections in November 2012, believes that, “Demonstrations were held, attended by protesters in their thousands.”

Lithuania, which has lost nearly one-fifth of its population (net negative migration of 700,000 people) since its independence in March 1990, also launched a major structural reform of its local government bodies in July 2010. It axed the county administration in charge of the ten counties (*apskritis*) and its governor positions (appointed by the central government in Vilnius mainly to enforce legislation and the Constitution in the municipalities). The municipality (*savivaldybė*, of which there are 60) is now the upper local administrative unit level (LAU level 1 in the European Union classification). It is divided into “senior councils” (*seniūnijos*, numbering 546), which operate as districts. The country shelved initial reform plans to create four or five sub-divisions defined by the borders of the country’s ethnographic regions⁴⁰ and the locations of towns with over 100,000 inhabitants.

The Lithuanian administration’s founding act, the Law on Public Administration⁴¹ of 17 June 1999, is in a constant state of flux. Parliament (Seimas⁴²) recently amended it for the third time on 2 July 2013 and the Minister of the Interior launched a vast public consultation on 5 August⁴³ on the rights of individuals to access the administration’s services. The invitation is open to all civil society groups and organisations, unions, businesses and government representatives (central and local) as well as anyone interested in improving the quality of the public administration and reducing administrative costs.

Whilst on the subject of public service quality and user satisfaction, Vilnius achieved a world first with the launch of its Happiness Barometer⁴⁴ for inhabitants in July 2013. Residents and visitors with a QR reader app and a smartphone can scan their smiley of the moment (based on a happiness rating of 1-10) at any number of billboards placed throughout Vilnius. Results are displayed and updated every hour in the Internet. Artūras Zuokas, Mayor of the Lithuanian capital, says about the project, “Smiles are a currency that don’t cost anything at all and create much good will both within our own city and elsewhere. Vilnius is full of creative people and often trumps Hong Kong for Internet speed. I’m very glad that our city is the first in the world to implement this

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<http://research.nordeamarkets.com/en/2013/08/14/lithuania-is-a-baltic-tiger-again/>

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<http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/dossiers-pays/lituanie/presentation-de-la-lituanie/>

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The euro became Estonia’s currency on 1 January 2011 and Latvia will join on 1 January 2014.

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Four-fifths of the savings come from a cut in public spending and one-fifth from raising taxes.

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Lithuania’s ethnographic regions (*Aukštaitija*, *Dzūkija*, *Mažoji Lietuva*, *Sūduva* and *Žemaitij*) correspond to the regions inhabited by the five ethnic groups that form the country’s current territory.

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http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_e?p_id=455233

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http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/w2008_home.home?p_kalb_id=4

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<http://vakokybe.vrm.lt/> (in Lithuanian)

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<http://www.vilnius.lt/index.php?2194104970>
[utm_source=iframe&utm_medium=banner&utm_content=vilnius&utm_campaign=iframe](http://www.vilnius.lt/index.php?2194104970&utm_source=iframe&utm_medium=banner&utm_content=vilnius&utm_campaign=iframe)

<http://happybarometer.com/vilnius?>

cutting-edge project. Smiles signify a belief in the good things of today and those of the future. Vilnius is a city that believes in its future and I hope to see more and more smiles in our city every day.”

Jean-François Adrian