

# Workshop T48a

## ***The training of civil servants and the training in public affairs***

### *1. General Introduction to European Civil Servant Training: Do civil servant training methods in European countries share resemblances or do they differ greatly from one another?*

As the knowledge, skills and competencies for civil servants and also the wider public service and state employees are similar, the areas for training and development are sometimes generic but with each country context as the main theme. In terms of methods, in Ireland, the frameworks and methods can vary depending on the training needs and whether the training is part of an accredited or professional programme.

*- Do public administration schools in Europe have frequent exchanges and communication (e.g. holding meetings and seminars once or twice a year)?*

Yes there is a process of dialogue and meetings.

*- Do they have a coordination mechanism? Is there a public administration school in every European country?*

The title and position of the schools or institutes may vary from country to country eg part of central government, partially independent or fully autonomous, but all countries do have schools/institutes specialising in public administration

*- Are civil servants in Europe required to attend training in public administration schools every year or every other year?*

In Ireland, there is no compulsory or mandatory element to attend every year but in terms of development and capacity building, there is both a strong tradition and expectation that training and development Activity is undertaken

*- What's the relationship between public administration schools and universities?*

The IPA is a recognised college of the National University of Ireland who oversee the award of certificates, diplomas and degrees to some of our students who undertake these longer term programmes. In addition the IPA is also a recognised provider of professional programmes in areas including Accounting and Financial Management and Human Resource Management

*- Do teachers in public administration schools work full-time or part-time?*

We have a mix of full and part time academic and specialist staff with the part time staff mostly drawn from civil service and public service practitioners

*- Why doesn't ENA appoint any full-time teachers? (This is different from the case of public administration schools in China.)*

### *2. Function and application of Case Study in civil servant training: Where do the case studies for*

*civil servant training come from?*

In recent years, we have started to develop our own bespoke case studies based on good and best practice within Irish public administration and we are seeking to integrate these into training programmes. There are also sources of case study type material from other countries which we may use.

*- What are the criteria for selection of such case studies?*

Appropriateness and relevance to the area and also where the learning outcomes for the training can be achieved

*- In my understanding, case studies are widely applied in the training of civil servants in Europe.*

The use of case studies and scenarios is dependant on the learning outcomes and may not be appropriate in some areas.

*- Why and what are the benefits?*

Depending on the context of case studies and scenarios, it can help with more self directed student learning, with discovery of concepts and with acquisition of knowledge. Learning from practical situations both positive and negative as distinct from academic perspective can be beneficial in some situations.

*- Are case studies welcomed by civil servants?*

Where used and supports the learning outcomes they can be helpful.

*- What's the proportion of case studies versus theoretical teaching?*

Very difficult to indicate as some technical and specialist areas are not amenable to use of case studies. There would be a strong element and integration between the theory and practice in many training and development programme

Case Study examinations and related assessments are a feature of the admission examinations of professional bodies as they require students to display a broad knowledge and understanding of a wide range of subject areas including leadership and management, strategy, financial management, human resource issues as well as technical areas including statistics and accounting.

*- How can one improve the effectiveness of civil servant training?*

This is a very complex question and some relevant factors include good training needs assessment, the identification of skills and knowledge gaps, the specification of learning outcomes, the methods of training and support available, the evaluation of training as well as motivation of individual civil servants to gain and utilise the training material within the workplace

*- How should research on training requirements and needs of civil servants be conducted?*

Effective and appropriate use of training needs analysis including the organisational learning outcomes required.

*- What factors should be taken into consideration when designing curriculums for civil servants in*

*Europe?*

The needs of individual government departments and the competencies, skills and knowledge requirements to ensure the business of government can be conducted. There are many specialisms which government require and the options can include direct recruitment or invest strategically in existing staff to grow the specialisms internally

*- Are civil servants really interested in such curriculums?*

Yes provided they can see the benefits which will accrue and the rationale for the subjects areas, specialisms and curriculums

*- Will their skills be noticeably improved after training?*

Hopefully yes if the quality of training is high and participants are motivated

*- How can one evaluate civil servant training and what are the evaluation methods?*

Again , a broad question where evaluation can range from on the job improvements to more formal assessment with before and after reviews and the contributions of staff who have undertaken the training

*3. Application of internship and experiential teaching. What is the role of internships in civil servant training and their proportion in the overall training process?*

There is currently limited use of this but there can be secondments into different organisations to broaden experience.

*- How are internships arranged for civil servants? How can one evaluate their effectiveness? How do public administration schools organize experiential teaching in civil servant training and how do they incorporate these internships with theoretical teaching?*

In our training we endeavour to ensure an appropriate balance of the theory with the practice and to demonstrate how new techniques, specialist knowledge etc can be integrated into the work of the civil service