

policy and the public

Involving citizens and civil society
in policy-making



One-week study programme
24 to 28 November 2008

About the programme

As policy problems grow more complex and interdependent, governments are recognising that they can no longer find adequate solutions on their own and are turning for assistance to society at large. Increasingly, governments seek the help of citizens and civil society organisations to obtain broader perspectives, identify alternative approaches, tap wider sources of information, and work out more imaginative solutions in order to maximise policy effectiveness and resource efficiency.

This approach is particularly relevant in countries in transition, where drawing on outside advice can strengthen the development of civil society, increase public participation in decision-making, and help build trust in the national policy process.

However, governments often find it difficult to access the wealth of experience and data available in society at large. They may have trouble in developing satisfactory relationships with organisations that might usefully advise them, in building up citizen participation and in assimilating external advice into the internal working processes of government.

The United Kingdom offers valuable lessons in this sphere. The involvement of civil society in developing national policy is well-established. There is a long tradition of drawing on sources of advice external to government, such as committees of inquiry and interest groups, and on semi-independent bodies, such as government inspectorates. Of particular interest is the development, in the past twenty years, of a much wider range of external advice. In particular:

- Public authorities now consult the public and interested groups before taking any significant decision
- Central and local government is increasingly using new mechanisms to obtain public input into policy making, such as citizens' juries. Multi-disciplinary units have been created at the centre of government to address difficult issues; often these have an explicit remit to draw on external expertise
- A 'policy industry' has developed outside government, with a proliferation of independent think tanks, the development of policy analysis capacities in interest groups, and the closer involvement of academics in the practical concerns of government

Who is it for?

The study programme is designed primarily for:

- Senior leaders in ministries, agencies and public bodies engaged in solving policy problems at national and local level
- Those responsible for civil service reform and development
- Senior representatives from organisations outside government such as non-government organisations (NGOs), interest groups and policy research institutes, who wish to develop a better working relationship with the national policy-making process.

How participants will benefit

The study programme will:

- Broaden participants' knowledge of recent developments and innovations in involving the public in policy-making in the UK
- Expose participants to ways of broadening the range of policy options open to government, both by creating new institutional mechanisms and by examining techniques for drawing on outside expertise and ideas
- Enable participants to examine specific instances in which co-operation between government and external advisers has and has not worked
- Introduce participants to key current and former practitioners in ministries, government advisory bodies and civil society and examine the relationships between them
- Identify aspects of UK experience that can be applied internationally.

What the programme will cover

The programme will consist of briefings, plenary sessions and visits to key practitioners. It will look at the different sources of external advice on which the government can draw, mechanisms and techniques for involving outsiders in policy development, and the complexities of the relationships that can develop.

The programme will concentrate particularly on:

- Analysis of the reasons why governments seek external advice, and its benefits to government and society as a whole
 - The Code adopted by the government in 1997 that requires consultation on all major decisions, and how this has operated in practice
 - The Compact between the government and the "third sector" adopted a decade ago, and its impact on the third sector input into policy decisions
 - The variety of techniques and mechanisms available to elicit contributions from citizens to policy-making, including written consultations, public meetings, citizens' juries and information technology-based consultations
 - Identifying the different types of organisations whose input can be useful to government, and the different types of advice they can provide ('blue skies' thinking, policy review, research, technical advice, providing practical experience)
 - Considering the institutional arrangements possible for involving those outside government: formal structures, such as consultative councils; informal methods, such as meetings with service users; business relationships, such as those between government and its inspectorates and agencies; and processes, such as legal requirements for consultation
 - Examining the significant role of informal arrangements such as 'litmus test' discussion of policy options, and the importance of developing a relationship of trust
 - Exploring the difficulties of the relationship between government and outside bodies: in particular the problems of building trust while allowing each side to safeguard its independence
 - The importance of information: the provision of information by government to citizens; outside organisations' provision of external expertise; and the importance of feedback from government
 - The ways in which government can assimilate external contributions to the development of policy.
- The programme will involve meetings and discussions with those in charge of developing the relationship between the government and civil society, civil servants and local government officials who have worked in such relationships, and those who seek to influence the government from outside (for example, pressure groups, think tanks).
- In order to explore best practice, there will be several problem-solving exercises. Participants will also be invited to share experience by presenting informally examples of public involvement in policy-making in their own countries.
- The programme will focus principally on experience in the UK but will also look at developments in other countries.

Programme outline

	AM	PM
Day 1	<p>Welcome and introduction</p> <p>Involving citizens in decision making: best practice from around the world</p>	<p>Participants' informal presentations</p> <p>Public involvement in urban areas: <i>Visit to a local authority</i></p>
Day 2	<p>Incorporating citizens' input into central government decision-making</p> <p><i>Visit to units in the Cabinet Office and Government departments</i></p>	<p>Techniques for gathering input from the public</p> <p>Practical exercise 1 – devising a public involvement strategy</p>
Day 3	<p>The framework for Government-NGO relations (1) – the Government viewpoint</p> <p>Case study of a public consultancy exercise</p>	<p>The framework for Government-NGO relations (2) – the NGO viewpoint</p> <p>Involving the public in rural areas</p>
Day 4	<p>The impact of think tanks</p> <p><i>Visit to a policy institute</i></p> <p>The influence of the media on policy-making</p>	<p>The role of interest groups</p> <p><i>Meeting with interest group representatives</i></p> <p>Practical exercise 2 – creating a framework for co-operation between NGOs and Government</p>
Day 5	<p>Freedom of information and public involvement</p> <p>Parliamentary committees and evidence from the public</p> <p><i>Visit to the House of Commons</i></p>	<p>Review and evaluation</p>

We reserve the right to change the programme as necessary.

Application form

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24 to 28 November 2008

Please complete this application form and post or fax to:

Clare Walters
Programme Manager
Public Administration International
10 Bayley Street
London WC1B 3HB
UK
T +44 (0)20 7580 3590 F +44 (0)20 7580 4746 pai@public-admin.co.uk

Applications can also be completed online. Please see our website for details.
www.public-admin.co.uk

Please print clearly in black ink and in capital letters

Personal details

First name _____

Family name _____

Title (Prof. Dr. Mr. Mrs. Ms. etc.) _____

Nationality _____

Dietary requirements _____

Disabilities _____

Have you participated in a PAI study programme before? _____

If yes, which programme(s)? _____

Date of programme(s)? _____

Current position

Title of post _____

Employer _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

Brief description of your main role and responsibilities _____

Application form

Education and professional training

Please provide brief details of your education and professional qualifications and training

School/college/university

Relevant professional qualifications or membership of professional bodies

Particular interests

Please indicate which aspects of the programme are of most interest to you

Sponsoring organisation

Who will pay your fees?

Who will pay your other costs such as travel and living costs?

Value Added Tax (VAT)

I certify that I am employed by the Government of
in furtherance of its sovereign activities (please refer to note on VAT under 'Fees and other costs')

Signature

Date

We reserve the right to cancel the programme if there are not enough participants to make it viable. In these circumstances, fees already received will be refunded in full.

Location and arrival arrangements

The study programme will be based mainly in central London. On request, PAI can assist with finding suitable hotel accommodation and can arrange travel to and from the airport.

Language

The programme will be conducted in English. Participants will be expected to have a good working knowledge of the language.

Fees and other costs

The fee for the one-week study programme will be £1,750. This includes tuition, travel to and from the airport in London and travel on scheduled visits¹. The fee also includes all documentation. UK Value Added Tax (VAT) will not be charged if applicants can provide written confirmation from their Government or its accredited representative that they are employed by the Government in furtherance of its sovereign activities. In all other cases, VAT (currently 17.5%) will be charged in addition to the fee. Payment in full must be received by PAI no later than 24 November 2008. Cheques should be made payable to Public Administration International. Alternatively, PAI is able to invoice individuals or government agencies. Payment by bank transfer is also acceptable.

Airfares, accommodation costs, daily travel (other than on visits scheduled in the programme), meals and living expenses are not included. We suggest that approximately £120 per person per day should be allowed for a modest standard of accommodation, local travel in the UK, meals and other incidental expenses. Participants requiring a higher standard of accommodation (for example a 4 star hotel) will need to allow approximately £175 per person per day.

Insurance

Participants are advised to arrange travel and health insurance cover before leaving their home country.

Public Administration International (PAI)

PAI specialises in management consultancy and development services for organisations in and associated with the public sector worldwide. We provide advice and support for governments undergoing political, economic, structural and legislative change. Our extensive network of associates includes practitioners, academics and independent consultants. The promotion of good governance and best practice are our key objectives.

The Director of Studies for the programme will be Simon James, an international consultant in public administration reform and a respected author on the British system of government. After working for some years in UK local and central government, including a period at the Cabinet Office, he worked as an adviser on government reform at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. He is now a freelance consultant and Associate of PAI working mainly in Eastern Europe and the Caribbean.

¹Travel to and from the airport in London and travel on scheduled visits in the programme are provided at cost.

How to apply

Please complete the attached Public Administration International application form and post or fax to:

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10 Bayley Street
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pai@public-admin.co.uk

Applications can also be completed online. Please see our website for details: www.public-admin.co.uk

If you would like to discuss the programme or to find out more about Public Administration International and our services, please contact:

Claire Cameron
Director
Public Administration International
T +44 (0)20 7580 3590
pai@public-admin.co.uk

We also have extensive experience of designing tailor-made programmes which can be run in-country or in the UK to meet the specific needs of groups or individuals. Please contact us if you would like further information.

How to contact us

For further information about our study programmes and seminars, please contact:
Claire Cameron or Donald McGregor
Executive Directors

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