

in-touch

Newsletter



InCiSE The International Civil Service Effectiveness Index – an exciting new performance improvement tool

Pauline Hayes, CBE, International Development Specialist and PAI Advisory Panel Member



An effective civil service can play an important role in determining a country's progress and prosperity. But what constitutes an "effective civil service"?

This has long been the subject of debate. Even when a consensus is reached on definitions, how do civil service leaders know whether their organisations are effective – and how do they know in which areas are they performing more strongly than others?

Previous initiatives have sought to develop reliable civil service effectiveness measurement tools but no other comprehensive set of indicators currently exists. There are, however, many existing data surveys and indices available globally that can be integrated to provide a single snapshot of information on a regular basis. This is what the InCiSE Index aims to do. It brings together a set of indicators, each measuring a different dimension of civil service effectiveness, to produce an overall score for each country. These indicators are also scored separately. Country scores are all relative and the Index is focused on the central government civil service only, not the wider public service.

InCiSE has two main aims:

- to help senior decision makers see which countries are performing well in particular areas and learn from them.
- to help citizens, officials and politicians understand how well their civil service is functioning.

The InCiSE project continues to be a collaboration between the Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford and the Institute for Government. It is supported by the UK Civil Service and has been funded by the Open Society Foundation. The second version of the InCiSE Index was published in April 2019 covering 38 countries. Building on lessons learned during the pilot phase in 2017, the 2019 Index methodology has been refined, while the volume of

metrics, range of data sources and country coverage have all increased.

InCiSE has been welcomed not only by countries which feature in the Index but also by many who do not. These countries remain keen to engage with the project so that they can learn from others and take part in broader discussions on civil service performance issues. The InCiSE team will continue to explore ways of involving them in the project. For example, two country case studies have been completed - in Brazil and Nigeria - to assess the potential for the Index to be used in countries at different stages of economic development and with diverse political structures and traditions.

2019 Index results

The UK is ranked top overall in the 2019 Index, followed by New Zealand and Canada respectively. No single country appears in the top five positions for every indicator, although there are some strong all-round performers. Standout country scores for specific indicators have been highlighted as well. For example, Estonia leads the way on digital services, while Canada is out in front on inclusiveness.

Some interesting trends can be observed. For example, the four Commonwealth countries in the Index (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the UK) rank in the top 5. The Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden) are also placed highly, with all but Iceland in the top 10. Countries from outside Europe are distributed throughout the ranking.

Interested in learning more about InCiSE?

The 2019 Index results report, its technical report and the Brazil and Nigeria case studies are all available on the Blavatnik School of Government website: <https://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk>

PAI partners who would like to engage with the project are encouraged to contact: incise@bsg.ox.ac.uk

Training for the Guyana Police Force

Paul Mathias, PAI Associate Consultant

In February this year, I visited Guyana along with my fellow PAI Consultant, Andrew Odell, where we completed the final phase of a six-month contract to assist the Guyana Police Force (GPF), in designing and developing a major change programme. This final visit involved providing a number of tailored training and coaching programmes to build capacity within key units of the GPF.

The programmes we delivered included training new members of a Corporate Projects Office (CPO) in how to establish the new unit, and the principles of project management which were supported by exercises. We also trained the divisional and HQ branches of the Health and Safety Representatives in managing risk assessments and introducing risk registers. In addition, we provided training for the Audit and Inspection Unit which will be inspecting and measuring the implementation of 82 recommendations contained in new approaches to Human Resource Management and a modern Performance Assessment Framework.

We also conducted a number of capacity building sessions with the Head of Training, the Public Relations Officer, the Officer in charge of the Occupational Health and Safety Unit, the Head of the Strategic Planning Office and



Paul (front row left), with participants from the Guyana Police Force.

members of the Special Branch charged with introducing a new National Intelligence Model (NIM). We produced comprehensive training materials for the Training Branch to use in future training sessions.

We made presentations on the six-month programme at a final event attended by the Minister of Security, diplomats, international donor organisations, representatives of civil society and the media. It was noted that PAI's work was delivered on time and in accordance with the terms of the contract and that the quality of advice provided made it the most successful programme of support to the GPF in recent years.

Integrity in Public Service workshop in Montserrat

Neil McCallum, Workshop Director



Workshop participants in Montserrat.

Montserrat is a 20-minute flight by light aircraft from Antigua. Following the eruption of its volcano in the 1990s, the southern half of the island, including its historic capital, Plymouth, is covered by an Exclusion Zone. Its people, who have to manage all the elements of a public service, with a total population of just 5000, live in the northern half of this 'Emerald Isle of the Caribbean.'

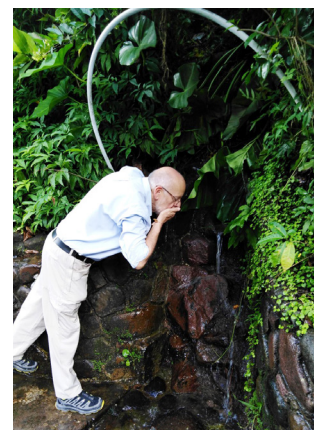
PAI was invited to run two workshops in Montserrat on Integrity in Public Service in November 2018. One, over two days, posed the question 'How important is integrity to my job?' As well as looking at common themes across public life of transparency and accountability, it explored specific challenges such as whose behaviour are the participants

responsible for and where they can look for help if there is a problem. The other event, over three days, was entitled 'Promoting Integrity' and looked in more detail at systems, structures and particular risk areas such as procurement and recruitment.

The workshops were extremely well organised by the Human Resources Management Unit, Government of Montserrat, and each was attended by around 30 public servants. These were tailored versions of the Workshop PAI runs annually in London on 'Combatting Fraud and Corruption,' which is next due to be held in late October 2019.

One of the participants summed up the essence of the workshops superbly in a single question: 'What is a public service if it doesn't have integrity?' That thought, and how impressive I found the people and public services of Montserrat, have remained with me.

There is a legend that, if you drink the water at Runaway Ghaut, you will return to this fascinating place. Needless to say, I did drink the water and now confidently look forward to my next visit to a truly inspiring island!



Neil, ensuring his return to Montserrat!

Better Policies, Better Lives for North Macedonia

Pablo Brañas-Garza, Professor of Behavioural Economics, Loyola University Andalucia, Spain, and PAI Workshop Director



Neda Maleska Sachmaroska, Director, Center for Change Management (first left), with the group of policy makers.

In February this year I was delighted to visit North Macedonia with my colleague, Diego Jorrat, to run a tailor-made workshop on “Better Policies, Better Lives: Using behavioural insights to improve policy making and evaluation”. Run in partnership with the Center for Change Management, North Macedonia, and funded by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the workshop was held in Skopje and was attended by twenty participants from various Government Ministries and Agencies responsible for social policy, strategic management, education and human resources.

Participants were introduced to the topic of behavioural insights, which includes the design of experiments and interventions to improve policy making based on experience

and evidence of what works well in policy development. Some examples of the areas on which we worked during the programme were: an intervention to improve maths skills among teenagers; how to update the current Government management system into an online system; an intervention to “nudge” people to help those members of their family suffering from mental illness; and the development of a system of bonus payments to improve individual performance of public servants. Participants were also given the opportunity to analyse practical cases and learned to apply randomised control trials to very different areas of social policy.

This was a very inspiring workshop and some of these important projects will be implemented soon in North Macedonia.

PAI leads evaluation of Commonwealth Democracy Programme

Rob Watson, PAI Associate Consultant, Governance and Evaluation Expert

PAI recently managed the first external evaluation of the Commonwealth Secretariat’s Democracy Programme for the period 2013 to 2017. The evaluation was extensive involving 117 interviews in over 30 countries.

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the support provided by the Commonwealth Secretariat in meeting the needs of its mem-

ber countries to promote democracy. The study provided an independent opinion on the design, performance and results of the Democracy Programme and made recommendations from both the strategic and operational perspectives.

Recommendations for improved impact

Overall the evaluation found that the democratic governance work of the Commonwealth Secretariat is highly needed and appreciated, as well being a high priority for the Commonwealth’s donors. There is a clear need to improve democratic governance in many member countries and this is as relevant now as it will be going forward.

Our evaluation team recommended putting the values and principles of the Commonwealth at the heart of its democracy work, as these are enshrined in its founding Commonwealth Charter and include transparency, accountability, inclusiveness and responsiveness. The evaluation explored modalities for conducting analysis of the problems to be addressed in Commonwealth countries and facilitating actors at different levels to show results. Recommendations for improving impact, sustainability and reporting of results were set out and broadly well received and are being acted upon.



Left to right, Katalaina Sapolu, Senior Director, Governance and Peace Directorate, Claire Cameron, PAI Director, The Rt Hon Patricia Scotland, QC, Secretary General, Rob Watson, Evelyn Pedersen, Adviser and Head, Evaluation Section.

Back to London

Celeste Vinzon-Balatbat, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Philippines

I rarely get lucky during raffle draws. When I filled out PAI's workshop survey in April 2018, I did so as part of my regular work and did not think much about the draw.

I was therefore pleasantly surprised to learn in May 2018 that my name had been picked and, for my prize, I could attend a one-week workshop, with no charge for tuition. I am grateful to my institution for funding my travel expenses.

In December 2018, I attended a workshop on "The Changing Media Landscape: Key issues for dealing with social media and fake news".

While I was pleased to see familiar faces in PAI (having attended one of their workshops in 2017), make new friends, and revisit London, attending the programme at this time was particularly meaningful. In August 2018 I had been detailed to the Foreign Service Institute as Officer-in-Charge, overseeing the conduct of training programmes for our diplomats and analytical work on foreign policy issues.

Engaging our stakeholders through social media is a tool to help us expand our reach, respond to the needs of the communities we serve, and foster partnerships.



Left to right, Claire Cameron, PAI Director, Celeste Vinzon Balatbat, Ian Cameron, Workshop Director.

Among my key takeaways from this workshop is the importance of incorporating a communications plan and strategy in contingency plans and working closely with other agencies and communities - with or without a crisis - to foster a more co-ordinated, consistent and coherent response to a crisis situation.

Thank you, PAI, for the opportunity to gain insights that will help us develop training programmes for our diplomats and other colleagues who work in our Embassies around the world.

Havana workshop on public administration and public services

Dr Philip Aylett, PAI Advisory Panel Member

In October/November 2018 I led a workshop in Havana, at which 40 senior officials from Cuba's central and provincial government, parliament, other institutions, and the trade union sector discussed UK approaches to public governance and public service issues, and considered how they might be applied in Cuba. Topics ranged widely, from state-citizen relationships and the accountability of public officials to the management of programmes for improving services

There was excellent interaction in both group and plenary sessions. Coordinated by the Ministry of Higher Education and funded by the British Embassy in Havana, we took a practical approach, looking at issues such as transparency of government, how to involve the public in decisions on policy, and relations between central, provincial and local government, where significant changes are being made in some parts of Cuba. A prominent theme was digital government and how it might be used in Cuba to promote citizen involvement and increase transparency. The



Participants working hard during a breakout session at the workshop.

experience of the UK in e-government, where it has been one of the leaders, was also a topic of great interest. We are currently planning more workshops in Cuba, so watch this space!