

in-touch

Newsletter



PAI registers in Barbados

Claire Cameron, Director, PAI

This Spring has brought an exciting new development for PAI. Following award of a new project for the Government of Barbados we have now registered as a company in Barbados. This will enable us to extend our consultancy and training activities in the Caribbean region and build on the experience we've already gained of managing projects and programmes in Anguilla, Barbados, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Cuba, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago. We're keen to expand our network of consultants and consultancy partners so if you are based in the Caribbean region and are interested in working with us, please get in touch.



Our new consultancy projects

European Commission-funded framework contract: Technical Support Instrument (TSI)

We're very pleased to be part of a consortium, led by KMPG, appointed as a framework contractor for TSI, which is a new funding package to provide technical support to reforms in EU Member States. It has an overall budget of 864 million euros for the period 2021 to 2027. By providing on-the-ground support to overcome reform challenges, TSI helps Member States to recover from the social and economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, to improve the quality of their public services and to reinforce sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

TSI covers a wide range of policy areas, including:

- Governance and public administration
- Digital transformation/e-government
- Revenue administration and public financial management
- Labour market, social protection and migration
- Skills, education and training
- Competitiveness
- Green transition, including climate action and energy transition
- Health and long-term care
- Financial sector development and access to finance

Former civil servants from EU Member States or the UK, as well as consultants with experience of working on consultancy assignments in EU Member States or the UK, are very welcome to contact us to register their interest in assignments under TSI at pai@public-admin.co.uk

Azerbaijan

As part of an EC-funded framework contract led by Proman from Luxembourg, we have begun work on a new two-year project to support civil service reform in Azerbaijan and to contribute to the implementation of "The Strategy for Civil Service Development in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2019-2025". This initiative is funded by the EC at the request of the Azerbaijani Government, represented by the State Examination Centre (SEC). The project aims to address current challenges such as improving and monitoring the implementation of civil service legislation, enhancing the SEC's organisational structure, supporting transition of the country towards a competency-based model in the civil service, improving continuous professional development of civil servants via regular training needs assessment and introducing modern methods of teaching, as well as the variety and quality of training and qualification courses.



In addition, the project will contribute to digitalisation of the human resource management system established in the SEC. This aspect of the assignment will review existing digital tools and suggest necessary improvements to collect more comprehensive data on civil service staff and also streamline and simplify procedures in order to improve e-civil service provision and access for citizens to public services online. Our international team of five experts, coupled with four experts from other consortium partners, are carrying out the project's activities both in Azerbaijan and remotely. We are happy to support the Government of Azerbaijan in its commitment to developing governance reform that will align it with European standards. We believe that successful implementation of this important project will reinforce the capacities of the SEC in recruitment, promotion and performance evaluation of civil servants, as well as on continuous professional development and personal career planning.

Botswana



The low level of productivity of the national labour force is currently of great concern in Botswana. Over the years, the country has made several efforts to address the challenge of low productivity. In 1993, the Botswana National Productivity Centre (BNPC) was established as a parastatal institution with a national mandate to improve productivity across all sectors of the economy. However, the low level of productivity has persisted, with negative effects on the competitiveness of the country.

Several reports by the World Economic Forum (WEF), one of the world's most influential institutional researchers on global competitiveness, continue to single out poor work ethic in the labour force as a major challenge for the economy of Botswana. To understand the challenges further, BNPC commissioned the Botswana Quality Workforce study. The study also identified poor work ethic, confirming it as a continuing challenge that affects the national labour force. From the perspective of policy makers, this is worrisome as work ethic and mindsets are key determinants of productivity. Productivity affects competitiveness, at both the firm level and the national level. At the firm level, it impacts on profitability of businesses and their long-term survival and contribution to the economy. At the national level, it impacts on the attractiveness of the country as a potential destination for investment, which is necessary for sustainable economic growth.

PAI was contracted by UNDP to work with and develop the capacity of BNPC to enable them to develop and effectively roll out capacity development programmes aimed at improving the work ethic and positively impacting mindset change in Botswana. The first stage of the project saw our team undertake a review of the leadership, work ethics and work culture challenges in Botswana. We are now working on developing the capacity development programme, working very closely with BNPC staff. A first draft of the materials will be piloted with a group from the Ministry of Local Government. The pilot will be run jointly by PAI and BNPC facilitators, providing an excellent opportunity for training of trainers so that the programme can be handed over to the BNPC

Croatia

In a consortium with KPMG Croatia, we have been awarded a contract by the World Bank to develop a new, logical and consistent job classification system and grading structure for the public sector in Croatia. This will form a basis for developing a new public sector pay system that is more equitable, transparent, internally consistent and financially sustainable. The pay and grading reform is a part of Croatia's National Recovery and Resilience Plan programme signed with the European Commission.

Our tasks include reviewing relevant policies and legislation, developing a methodology and carrying out a job evaluation for a sample of job titles across 233,000 public employees, designing a new Job Classification System and accompanying job catalogue which will include job requirements and skills, proposing several options for the new grading structure and developing a new grading structure that can accommodate all jobs in the public sector. Our consultants will also draft a manual for job evaluation that will be used by Croatian civil servants as reference for the future.



Daniel Lenardic, KPMG Croatia, and Chris Jones, PAI Consultant

North Macedonia

We have recently been asked by the Centre for Change Management, North Macedonia, to design and implement a special programme of knowledge, experience-sharing and mentoring for newly-appointed Members of the Commission for Prevention and Protection Against Discrimination (CPPD) in North Macedonia.



Nada Dimitrievska, CMM, with Jarlath Kearney, PAI Consultant

the project so as to get to know the Commissioners, CPPD staff and stakeholders, which will enable us to tailor our inputs to CPPD's particular needs and priorities.

The Centre for Change Management (CCM), with which we have worked very happily on consultancy and development projects before, is managing a project of support for CPPD which aims to build the capacity and competence and the CPPD's organisational effectiveness protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens of North Macedonia, contributing to equal opportunities and access to resources for all.

The project is funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and includes a study visit to London and Belfast which we are planning for September this year. Some of the experience-sharing and mentoring sessions will be provided remotely but our lead consultant will be visiting Skopje several times during the course of

Doing 'what works' in public policy-making

Jon Bright, PAI Associate Consultant

One of the biggest problems in public policy has been our failure to learn from 'what works'. As a result, Governments often persist with approaches that don't work. Why is this?

There are several reasons. In many countries, there is no single place to go to for advice. There is too little organisational memory. Knowledge and analysts are undervalued. Managers don't know how to assess evidence and scale up good practice. There is too little guidance on what to do if the evidence is weak. Managers are too busy, and the topic is rarely discussed with politicians.

As a result, Governments fail to make sustained progress on tackling costly social, economic and environmental problems that are a priority for politicians and the public. This is now starting to change. Since 2013, several 'what works' centres have been set up in the UK, each focusing on a specific policy area, for example: educational achievement, crime reduction, local economic growth, homelessness, children's social care, early intervention, and planning for an ageing society. These independent centres are coordinated by a team based in the Cabinet Office. Their aim is to ensure the best available evidence on 'what works' is available to those who make decisions about public services. Where evidence is weak, they support new evaluations to fill gaps in knowledge. Those in national or city governments interested in improving public policy might consider the following:

Creating a 'what works' centre to advise Government and the wider public sector on evidence-based policy.
Connecting with professional centres, universities and local government so key stakeholders are included and their experience drawn on. **Making it easier for practitioners by offering practical advice.** In the UK, the 'What Works' Centre for education assessed 30 school-based interventions in terms of their cost, evidence strength and impact.
Learning how to transfer successful policy from one place to another. The key is to know what made the policy succeed so it can be adapted for a different context without complicating or watering it down. Usually, this will need local knowledge. **Learning to 'scale up'** when policy has been shown to work. This can be difficult. In the US and UK, some prevention programmes have been shown to work well but are still not being rolled out at any scale.

When the evidence isn't strong enough, what's needed is a combination of evidence, professional expertise and local insights as a basis for testing policies in different places to see what will work best. The "what works" movement may well be one of the most important public policy developments of recent years. A final thought. Always consider how evidence-based policy will be implemented. That's often the most difficult part.

This article is taken from Jon Bright's forthcoming book "How to lead and manage – people, places and organisations", University of Buckingham Press. Publication Summer 2022.

¹By 'what works', I refer to policies and interventions that have been evaluated and found to have achieved their objectives cost effectively.



Advancing Political Party Financial Transparency Study Visit to London for Representatives from Political Parties in North Macedonia

Amanda Anderson, PAI Workshop Manager

Back in March this year PAI, in association with IRI (the International Republican Institute), North Macedonia, designed and delivered a one-week study visit on 'Advancing Political Party Financial Transparency' for five representatives from various political parties in North Macedonia. The study visit formed part of IRI's "Advancing Political Party Financial Transparency" Programme.

The one-year programme is being implemented by IRI and funded by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). Through this programme IRI seeks to support the political parties in North Macedonia in enhancing their transparency, especially financial transparency, in order to meet the requirements set out in the new Law on Free Access to Public Information adopted in 2019.

The workshop consisted of visits to the Liberal Democrats Party, the Labour Party and the Conservative Party and key speakers such as Lord Jonathan Evans, Chair of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, Andreas Pavlou and Adna Karamehic-Oates, Senior Research and Programme Officers from the Open Government Partnership, Jim Brooks, a management and financial consultant and Peter Wardle, an independent adviser on elections, democracy and governance and former Chief Executive of the Electoral Commission.



Our North Macedonian group in discussions

The role of small and medium sized firms in Cuba's economy *Matthew Cocks, PAI Associate Consultant*



Matthew Cocks with participants in Havana

In early March 2022 I co-presented a three-day seminar in Havana which looked at the role of micro, small and medium sized firms in Cuba's economic development. The seminar was supported by the British Embassy and organised by PAI and the *Centro de Investigaciones Psicológicas y Sociológicas* (CIPS) – the Centre for Psychological and Sociological Research, part of Cuba's Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment. This was the third such event in which CIPS and PAI have collaborated, the earlier ones being in 2016 and 2019.

Cuba, like many other countries worldwide, has been hit hard by the pandemic. Tourism declined sharply and is only now beginning to recover. Meanwhile last autumn, the Cuban Government introduced a new law which, for the first time, allows entrepreneurs to form micro, small and medium sized firms. The seminar was organised to allow participants to explore the regulatory environment for small firms in Cuba and the role of entrepreneurs in creating and running such firms. There were around 40 participants from a range of organisations, including entrepreneurs, Government officials and academics. The emphasis throughout was on dialogue between representatives of public, private and third sectors in Cuba.

The themes explored included the challenges and opportunities for entrepreneurs in forming small firms under the new law; the regulatory environment; and the concept of social responsibility in the private sector. My role was to describe the UK experience in encouraging the formation and growth of small firms, including the UK regulatory environment, and to take part in the dialogue among participants. Although the UK and Cuban economies are different in many ways, they both face the challenge of encouraging a private sector which helps deliver value to the country as a whole. The CIPS team, led by Patricia Arenas, Head of the *Grupo Cambio Humano* (Human Change Group) at CIPS, facilitated the event very effectively. The Human Change Group encouraged a strongly collaborative approach, with participants putting forward practical ideas for ways to help business growth combined with social responsibility. PAI and CIPS remain in close touch, and we hope to collaborate on similar projects in future as our respective economies continue to develop.