

in-touch

Newsletter



Making North Macedonia fairer

Jarlath Kearney, Equality Commissioner in Northern Ireland, Strategy Consultant and PAI Associate Consultant



Delegation at the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

PAI has recently concluded its involvement in a major FCDO/UK Embassy project to support the Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination (CPPD) in North Macedonia. Partnering with our long-standing colleagues, the Centre for Change Management (CCM), Skopje, PAI commissioned me to provide strategic advice and mentoring for the CPPD.

During the past 12 months, I have worked intensively with Commissioners and staff at the CPPD to identify and improve significant areas for organisational reform. This included a focus on the CPPD's mission and vision; the importance of strategic alliances; the Commission's leadership voice in wider society; creative use of legal remedies; and technical service improvements, including areas for legal reform. The project involved an innovative combination of working visits and online mentoring, along with a study visit to the UK that engaged key government and public agencies in London and Northern Ireland.

My role in the project culminated at the end of February with a major conference in Skopje addressed by President Stevo Pendarovski, UK Ambassador Matthew Lawson and North Macedonia's Minister for Labour and Social Policy. Other attendees and speakers included international diplomats, public sector partners, senior jurists and academics, and external stakeholders such as the EU Delegation and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Commenting on the success of the project, PAI Director Claire Cameron said:

"PAI is delighted to have played a key role in the development of the CPPD, alongside our colleagues in CCM and FCDO. Over the last couple of years, the Commission has been reconstituting its status and role after a previous decade of organisational decline. The current Commission has an array of energy, experience and talent. We were able to bring in



President Stevo Pendarovski, Jarlath Kearney and UK Ambassador Matthew Lawson

Jarlath Kearney’s substantial strategic direction to this agenda, alongside his international expertise in the anti-discrimination and equality arena and his previous experience of working in North Macedonia. It was particularly important for PAI to see the high level of political and policy interest in the CPPD’s recent conference in Skopje. The personal commitment of leaders such as President Pendarovski and British Ambassador Lawson (and his predecessor, Ambassador Rachel Galloway) is an important indicator of the priority that must continue to be placed on anti-discrimination and equality”.

The Balkans region, and North Macedonia in particular, faces potentially transformative accession discussions with the EU. PAI will continue to support domestic governments and agencies – and the UK and the EU – in the region to assist in equipping Western Balkan countries with the appropriate strategic, technical, and governmental requirements.

Taking “Biosecurity St Helena” into the future

Jill Key, Biosecurity Expert and PAI Associate Consultant

One of PAI’s current consultancy projects is to review and revise the Biosecurity Policy for St Helena to ensure that it provides a suitable basis for the effective delivery of the island’s biosecurity programme and that it is fit for purpose into the future. Biosecurity protects St Helena from the risk of introducing potentially harmful new pests, weeds and diseases. As a remote island, St Helena relies heavily on imported goods. The opening of the airport in 2018 meant an increase of movement of both residents and visitors. Increased arrivals require increased imports to support them, and this leads to increased biosecurity risk. Imported goods and arriving passengers are all potential pathways to introduce new species. In addition, climate change results in new and emerging invasive species entering, often in unexpected ways. This is recognised as a major issue globally for biosecurity and is very relevant to St Helena.

After five years’ experience of airport operation, the changes in biosecurity risks associated with air access and pathways of entry for new potentially harmful pests and diseases can now be understood and evaluated. The project is being undertaken on behalf of the UK Government’s GB Non-Native Species Secretariat and the Government of St Helena and is financed by the UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. St Helena is recognised among the UK Overseas Territories as having one of the best biosecurity programmes and is a model for others with regard to the protocols and procedures in use.

This April I visited St Helena to discuss with their biosecurity team what changes to the policy were needed. As part of my review, I held consultations with Government departments, the major importers, the National Trust, St Helena Research Institute, Port Control, Customs and Airport Operation. All stakeholders consulted considered that the biosecurity team are doing an excellent job in delivering a high standard of biosecurity to protect the island against new pests and weeds but are under-resourced in terms of staffing. This limits what they can do, particularly regarding new and emerging invasive species on the island and it makes the biosecurity system vulnerable in the longer term. The lack of dedicated biosecurity legislation was noted to be a major weakness of the system.

I would like to extend a big thank you to the St Helena biosecurity team and the wider community for their warm welcome and valuable contributions to the new Biosecurity Policy.



Government building, St Helena

Exploring new business opportunities in Barbados

Slava Gromlyuk, Director, PAI

I was delighted to join a UK Trade Mission to Barbados last November. It was organised by the Renfrewshire Business Network in collaboration with Invest Barbados and the UK Department for International Trade.

It was a unique opportunity to meet key officials from the Government of Barbados and the international development organisations operating in the Eastern Caribbean and to learn about their policy priorities and procurement plans. The speakers included representatives from the British High Commission, UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, European Union Delegation, Inter-American Development Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank. Many spoke of a favourable investment climate and business opportunities in the many different sectors in Barbados and other countries in the region.



UK Trade Mission to Barbados (Slava Gromlyuk front row, far left)

It was also a great opportunity to meet participants from other UK businesses who came on the Trade Mission and learn about their experience of doing business in the region or prospects that they identified. The programme included several social events too. A cocktail reception hosted by the British High Commission was a particularly memorable occasion, where a Scottish multi-award-winning chef, Gary Maclean, prepared a five-course meal for all to enjoy.

My visit to Barbados coincided with PAI starting work on a project to support the Government in developing a Human Resources Transformation Strategy, a new Human Resources Model and a Strategic Workforce Plan for the public sector. I paid a courtesy visit to our main counterpart, the Ministry of Public Service, to assure them of our commitment to successful delivery of the project's objectives.

I was sad to leave sunny Barbados and return to the rainy autumn weather in UK, but I am certain that it will not be my last visit. The contacts I made in Barbados and opportunities that the country presents means that I will be back soon enough. If you are interested in discussing business opportunities in Barbados and the wider Eastern Caribbean region, please get in touch with me on slava.gromlyuk@public-admin.co.uk.

Inspirational leadership

Ann Hall, PAI Workshop Director

As a leader, we have great responsibilities and many challenges. This is a fast-paced world that we live in and leaders need to inspire their staff to ensure success for their organisations.

An inspirational leader will have a positive influence on those in the organisation and look to identify what motivates each individual to get the best from them so that they can use their full potential.

Inspirational leaders recognise the need to empower their staff and to develop a passion for their work, so that others around them can aspire to the same level of commitment.

You may be keen as a leader to invest in developing your leadership skills. PAI offers Inspirational Leadership professional development workshops each year that focus on these areas as well as on tools and techniques to assist you in your future challenging role.



Ann Hall, PAI Workshop Director

New workshops at PAI

Denise Smart, Relationship Manager

Over the past decades, digital technologies have been profoundly transforming all sectors of the economy and – even more broadly - whole societies. As new technologies emerge, the public sector has the opportunity to be innovative in its interaction with citizens and businesses. To address the needs of our clients we have introduced three new workshops this year for policy makers and leaders who need to plan and implement strategies for transforming the work of the public sector.

Innovating in the Public Sector runs from 4 to 8 September 2023 in London and is designed as an integrated experiential one week “Policy/Innovation Laboratory, where the latest theories, models, innovation tools, processes and best practices are presented and immediately applied to “real life” situations (brought by you, the participants) in order to develop new perspectives, insights and possibilities.

Digital Transformation of Public Services runs in London from 13 to 17 November 2023. The ultimate goal of this workshop is to support public administrations in adopting cost-effective and flexible digital solutions and strategies. During the week, we will focus on using and analysing digital transformation solutions and strategies to transform decision making and service delivery practices at all levels of government.

Our third new workshop, **Smart Cities: Digital and technological solutions**, will run from 25 to 29 September 2023 in Marrakesh. This workshop will look at smart city solutions and how to adopt, implement and evaluate them. It will explore the philosophy behind the smart city paradigm and consider existing smart city solutions and best practices.

You can find full details of these new workshops, and our full programme, on our website. Alternatively, please contact denise.smart@public-admin.co.uk or WhatsApp +44 7518 934 368.