Trans-European Dialogue TED2020 Conference

PROGRAM

Theme: Politics of Bureaucracy: The Roles of Top Public Officials in Turbulent Times

Date: 11-13 February 2020

Venue: The University Library in Bratislava, Michalská 1 (old city centre), Bratislava, Slovakia

TUESDAY 11th FEBRUARY
Venue: Primate’s Palace, Primate’s Square 2 (old city centre), Bratislava

19.00 – 21.00 Drinks Reception at The City Hall Bratislava, Primate’s Palace
Welcome by Emília Sičáková-Beblavá, head of the Institute of Public Policy, Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences, Comenius University Bratislava and
Juraj Droba, President of the Bratislava Self-Governing region,
Speech by Matúš Vallo, Bratislava mayor on “The roles of civil servants in the reform oriented administration: Perspective of a politician”.

Messages of NISPAceee and EGPA Presidents
Some of the issues to be discussed:

- Where do top officials come from and has this changed over time?
- What are the consequences of different career backgrounds?
- How has the ascension of populist governments and 'democratic backsliding' affected top officials?
- What are subtle and less subtle forms of politicization of top officials?
- How can we study the politicization of top officials across countries and over time?

11:30-12:45 Session 2: Tasks and practices: What do we empirically know about what top public officials actually do?

- Some of the issues to be discussed:
  - What do we empirically know about the main tasks and practices of top public officials and public managers? Do theoretical accounts of their work reflect the reality of actual practice?
  - How do tasks and practices differ across contexts and change over time? How these differences (if any) can be explained?
  - How is empirical evidence and analysis used by top public officials for sound public policies and good management?
  - How tasks and practices can be best theoretically conceptualized and empirically studied?
  - What are the implications for training and education of current and future top public officials?

12:45-13:45 Lunch

13:45-16:00 Session 3: Professionalization vs. Politicization

- Some of the issues to be discussed:
  - Is politicization (still) a feature of post-communist executive governance? Or can we identify different worlds of politicization?
  - How does politicization meaningfully vary within countries? Across sectors, hierarchies and/or jobs? What is the experience from post-communist Europe?
  - How has the rise of populism and the weakening of democracy in some countries influenced the politicization of public administration?
  - Does politicization actually matter for government performance and integrity?
  - Can – if it comes at a cost – politicization be overcome? Are there lessons from history how to curb politicization?

16:00-16:15 Coffee/Tea Break

16:15-17.30 Session 4: Policy advice: Where does policy advice come from?

- Some of the issues to be discussed:
  - What are the sources of policy advice?
  - What characterizes the science-policy interface? What are the main challenges?
  - How does better regulation influence the quality of policy-making? What are the limitations of rational policy-making and better regulation measures (e.g. Regulatory Impact Assessments)?
  - How, why and with which consequences is the role of the permanent bureaucracy in policy-making and advice changing?
  - How and why does the power interplay between different actors providing policy advice at ministerial level (e.g., senior civil servants, ministerial advisers, policy units in ministries) vary across countries?
Session 5: Accountability and legitimacy: How is the politics-administration dichotomy changing?

Key Note Speaker: Külli Sarapuu (Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia)
Moderator: Edoardo Ongaro (The Open University, UK)

Some of the issues to be discussed:
- What changes do we see in the relationship between politicians and top public servants?
- What are the accountability relations surrounding top officials? What are the sources of legitimacy for their decision-making?
- How do top officials deal with the 'primacy of politics' as the key legitimizing mechanism in democracy?
- How do the populist and authoritarian tendencies in politics influence accountability and legitimacy of top public servants?
- What roles do top public officials play in emerging collaborative structures, decision-making bodies and governance networks?

Coffee/Tea Break

Session 6: Public value: What is the role of top public officials in delivering and communicating public value?

Key Note Speaker: Michal Sedláčko (University of Applied Science FH Campus Wien, Austria)
Moderator: Jean-Michel Eymeri Douzans (Sciences Po Toulouse)

Some of the issues to be discussed:
- What is the role of top public officials in identifying, delivering and communicating public values?
- How do top public officials take on the role of public value managers and participate in defining public interest?
- Who and how identifies public value in controversial issues, adversarial policy contexts and multi-actor settings?
- How is public value management conducted across administrative traditions and systems of government?
- What are the possibilities for structuring and measuring public value(s)?

Closing Session “Where do we go from here”
Guy Peters (Pittsburgh University) and Tony Verheijen (World Bank)
Katarína Staroňová (Comenius University Bratislava)

13:00–14:00 Farewell Lunch

END