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**Survey of senior public sector executives in Europe
(COCOPS)**

- Questionnaire -



Executive Survey on

Public Sector Reform in Europe

—

Views and Experiences from Senior Executives

Partner Institutions



Centre d'études et de recherches de sciences administratives et politiques (CERSA, Université Paris II, CNRS)

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

This questionnaire is central to the project 'Coordinating for Cohesion in the Public Sector of the Future' (COCOPS), the largest comparative public administration research project in Europe. The survey is being sent to more than 30.000 senior public sector executives in twenty-one European countries and targets top-level decision makers and civil servants in central government and the fields of health and employment. COCOPS aims to explore and understand trends in public administration across Europe and their effects and implications for the public sector and society more generally. The project is funded through the European Commission 7th Framework Program and carried out by a team of researchers from eleven universities (for further information see www.cocops.eu).

The questionnaire is addressed at senior executives, like yourself, to enquire about **personal experiences and opinions** on public management, public sector reforms and the impact of the fiscal crisis. It consists of the following four parts:

- Part I: General Information
- Part II: Management and Work Practice of Your Organisation
- Part III: Public Sector Reform and the Fiscal Crisis
- Part IV: Attitudes, Preferences, and Personal Information

The questionnaire should take you around 30 minutes to complete.

Finally, we want to assure you that this survey is **STRICTLY ANONYMOUS**. Your answers will be treated in **COMPLETE CONFIDENCE** and findings will be reported at an aggregate level only.

HOW TO COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Most questions ask you to indicate agreement or disagreement along a 7-point scale. To answer these questions please tick the scale point that best matches your experience or opinion.

You can fill in the survey in printed paper format, or **directly online**, by going to [www.....] In the case of a printed out questionnaire, please return it **via post or fax** to:

University
Address
Name
Fax
email: ...

We would like to thank you for participating and would greatly appreciate receiving your answers by **x**. Should you have any questions regarding the survey, please do not hesitate to contact the above named country coordinator.

Any queries you may have will be treated in strict confidence.

We are very grateful for your support,

The COCOPS research team

The questions in this survey often contain questions on “your organisation” and “your policy area”. These are defined as follows:

- **“Your organisation”** refers to the organisational entity that you work for. Usually, it is a ministry (in the UK this is a ‘Department’) or an agency. It is never only a section, division, or subunit within a ministry or agency. Agencies or other subordinate bodies who have autonomy versus the Ministry should be regarded as own organisation and not part of the Ministry.
- **“Your policy area”** refers to the wider set of policy topics or issues which your own work mainly contributes to. It usually coincides with the policy issue in which your organisation is designing and implementing policy.

Part I. General Information

This section seeks general information about your organisation, and your position. It covers important background information for this research.

1. What type of organisation do you work for?

Ministry at central government level	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agency or subordinate government body at central government level	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ministry at state or regional government level	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agency or subordinate government body at state or regional government level	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ministry or other public sector body at other subnational level	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>please specify</i>):	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Which policy area does your organisation work in?

(*you may select more than one if they are commonly seen as one joint policy area in your country*)

General government	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foreign affairs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic affairs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Infrastructure and transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Defence	<input type="checkbox"/>
Justice, public order & safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other social protection and welfare	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental protection	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recreation, culture, religion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>please specify</i>):	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. What is the approximate overall number of employees (in heads, not FTE) in your organisation?

< 50	<input type="checkbox"/>
50-99	<input type="checkbox"/>
100-499	<input type="checkbox"/>
500-999	<input type="checkbox"/>
1000-5000	<input type="checkbox"/>
> 5000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. What kind of position do you currently hold?

Top hierarchical level in organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Second hierarchical level in organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Third hierarchical level in organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>please specify</i>):	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part II. Management and Work Practice of Your Organisation

In this section we are interested in how you perceive your job and work experience along a number of dimensions. Please base your answers on your own experiences with your current job and observations of your current organisation. We want to know 'how you perceive what is', not 'what you think should be'.

5. I mainly understand my role as public sector executive as

	Strongly disagree							Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Ensuring impartial implementation of laws and rules	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Getting public organisations to work together	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Achieving results	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Providing a voice for societal interests	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Developing new policy agendas	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Providing expertise and technical knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Finding joint solutions to solve problems of public concern	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Ensuring efficient use of resources	<input type="checkbox"/>							

6. In my position, I have the following degree of decision autonomy with regard to

	Very low autonomy					Very high autonomy	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Budget allocations	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Contracting out services	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Promoting staff	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Hiring staff	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Dismissing or removing staff	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Changes in the structure of my organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Policy choice and design	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Policy implementation	<input type="checkbox"/>						

7. To what extent are the following instruments used in your organisation?

	Not at all		To a large extent					Cannot assess
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Business/strategic planning	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Customer/ user surveys	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Service points for customers (e.g. one stop shops)	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Quality management systems	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Codes of conduct	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Internal steering by contract	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Management by objectives and results	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Benchmarking	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Cost accounting systems	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Decentralisation of financial decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Decentralisation of staffing decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Performance related pay	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Staff appraisal talks / performance appraisal	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Risk management	<input type="checkbox"/>							

8. To what extent do the following statements apply to your organisation?

	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Our goals are clearly stated	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Our goals are communicated to all staff	<input type="checkbox"/>						
We have a high number of goals	<input type="checkbox"/>						
It is easy to observe and measure our activities	<input type="checkbox"/>						
We mainly measure inputs and processes	<input type="checkbox"/>						
We mainly measure outputs and outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>						
We are rewarded for achieving our goals	<input type="checkbox"/>						
We face clear sanctions for not achieving our goals	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Our political leaders use indicators to monitor our performance	<input type="checkbox"/>						

9. In my work I use performance indicators to

	Not at all					To a large extent	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Assess whether I reach my targets	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Monitor the performance of my subordinates	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Identify problems that need attention	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Foster learning and improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Satisfy requirements of my superiors	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Communicate what my organisation does to citizens and service users	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Engage with external stakeholders (e.g. interest groups)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Manage the image of my organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>						

10. Please indicate how frequently you typically interact with the following actors or bodies

	Never 1	Rarely 2	Yearly 3	Monthly 4	Weekly 5	Daily 6
My responsible Minister	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Other politicians	<input type="checkbox"/>					
My administrative superiors and higher administrative levels	<input type="checkbox"/>					
My direct staff	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Subordinate agencies and bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Administrative units within my organisation such as budget, personnel, IT etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Audit organisations, inspectorates and regulatory bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Other government departments outside my own organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Local/regional government	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Private sector companies	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Trade union representatives	<input type="checkbox"/>					
European Union institutions	<input type="checkbox"/>					
International bodies (e.g. IMF, OECD, ILO)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Media	<input type="checkbox"/>					

11. How would you characterize the coordination in your own policy field, along the following dimensions:

	Very poor					Very good		Cannot assess
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Coordination among national government bodies within the same policy area	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Coordination among national government bodies from different policy areas	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Coordination with local/regional government bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Coordination with supra-national bodies/international organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Coordination with private sector stakeholders, interest organizations, user groups, and civil society organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>							

12. What is your view on the following statements

	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree		Cannot assess
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Politicians respect the technical expertise of the administration	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Politicians regularly influence senior-level appointments in my organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>							
In my organisation politicians interfere in routine activities	<input type="checkbox"/>							
The administration and not the political level is the initiator of reforms or new policies	<input type="checkbox"/>							
Removing issues and activities from the realms of politics allows for more farsighted policies	<input type="checkbox"/>							

13. When my organisation's responsibility or interests conflict or overlap with that of other organisations, my organisation typically

	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Refers the issue upwards in the hierarchy	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Refers the issue to political actors and bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Sets up special purpose bodies (more permanent)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Sets up a cross-cutting work/project group (ad hoc, temporary)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Sets up a cross-cutting policy arrangement or program	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Decides on one lead organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Consults civil society organisations or interest groups	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Consults relevant experts (e.g. scientists or consultants)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Other, please specify:							

14. People in my organisation

	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Engage in open and honest communication with one another	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Share and accept constructive criticisms without making it personal	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Willingly share information with one another	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Have confidence in one another	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Have a high team spirit	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Are trustworthy	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Share the same ambitions and vision for the organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Enthusiastically pursue collective goals and mission	<input type="checkbox"/>						
View themselves as partners in charting the organisation's direction	<input type="checkbox"/>						

15. When thinking about my work and the organisation I work for

	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I get a sense of satisfaction from my work	<input type="checkbox"/>						
I feel valued for the work I do	<input type="checkbox"/>						
I regularly feel overloaded or unable to cope	<input type="checkbox"/>						
I would recommend it as a good place to work	<input type="checkbox"/>						
I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own	<input type="checkbox"/>						
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>						
It would be very hard for me to leave my organisation right now, even if I wanted to	<input type="checkbox"/>						
I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Things were better in the days when people stayed with one organisation for most of their career	<input type="checkbox"/>						

Part III. Public Sector Reform and the Fiscal Crisis

We are now interested in your views on and experiences with administrative reform in your country, and also how the recent fiscal crisis affected the administration. Some questions are asking you for your personal evaluation of certain phenomena; others are purely interested in your observations. Again, please draw on your personal experience as a senior executive in the public sector.

16. Compared with five years ago, how would you say things have developed when it comes to the way public administration runs in your country?

Worse										Better
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
<input type="checkbox"/>										

17. How important are the following reform trends in your policy area?

	Not at all						To a large extent
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Public sector downsizing	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Citizen participation methods/initiatives	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Creation of autonomous agencies or corporatization	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Contracting out	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Focusing on outcomes and results	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Extending state provision into new areas	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Treatment of service users as customers	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Collaboration and cooperation among different public sector actors	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Internal bureaucracy reduction / cutting red tape	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Flexible employment	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Privatisation	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Digital or e-government	<input type="checkbox"/>						
External partnerships and strategic alliances	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Mergers of government organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Transparency and open government	<input type="checkbox"/>						

18. Please indicate your views on public sector reform using the scales below. Public sector reforms in my policy area tend to be

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Top down	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bottom up									
Consistent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inconsistent									
Comprehensive	<input type="checkbox"/>	Partial									
Driven by politicians	<input type="checkbox"/>	Driven by public officials/administration									
Crisis and incident driven	<input type="checkbox"/>	Planned									
Substantive	<input type="checkbox"/>	Symbolic									
Contested by unions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supported by unions									
About cost-cutting & savings	<input type="checkbox"/>	About service improvement									
No public involvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	High public involvement									
Unsuccessful	<input type="checkbox"/>	Successful									
Too much	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not enough									

19. Thinking about your policy area over the last five years how would you rate the way public administration has performed on the following dimensions

	Deteriorated significantly					Improved significantly	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cost and efficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policy effectiveness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policy coherence and coordination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External transparency and openness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Citizen participation and involvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internal bureaucracy reduction / cutting red tape	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ethical behaviour among public officials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equal access to services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fair treatment of citizens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff motivation and attitudes towards work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attractiveness of the public sector as an employer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Citizen trust in government	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. In response to the fiscal crisis, how would you describe the broader approach to realizing savings in your policy area (tick one only)

Proportional cuts across-the-board over all areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Productivity and efficiency savings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Targeted cuts according to priorities (reducing funding for certain areas, while maintaining it for the prioritized ones)	<input type="checkbox"/>
None / no approach required	<input type="checkbox"/>
(If you tick this answer please proceed directly to question 23)	

21. In response to the fiscal crisis, to what extent has your organisation applied the following cutback measures?

	Not at all					To a great extent	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Staff layoffs	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Hiring freezes	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Pay cuts	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Pay freezes	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Cuts to existing programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Postponing or cancelling new programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Downsizing back offices	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Reducing front office presence	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Increased fees and user charges for users	<input type="checkbox"/>						

22. As result of the fiscal crisis

	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The power of the Ministry of Finance has increased	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Decision making in my organisation has become more centralized	<input type="checkbox"/>						
The unit dealing with budget planning within my organisation has gained power	<input type="checkbox"/>						
The conflict between departments has increased	<input type="checkbox"/>						
The power of politicians (vs. non-elected public officials) in the decision making process has increased	<input type="checkbox"/>						
The relevance of performance information has increased	<input type="checkbox"/>						

Part IV. Attitudes, Preferences and Personal Information

In this last section we are interested in some of your work and public sector-related values and views. Please base your answers on your general opinion and personal values and views, i.e. they should not only relate to your immediate work experience and environment. The section closes with some questions that provide very important background information for the research.

23. Public services often need to balance different priorities. Where would you place your own position?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	Efficiency						
Equity	<input type="checkbox"/>	Efficiency						
Following rules	<input type="checkbox"/>	Achieving results						
Customer focus	<input type="checkbox"/>	Citizen orientation						
State provision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Market provision						
Tax financed services	<input type="checkbox"/>	User charges / fees						

24. How important do you personally think it is in a job to have

	Not important at all					Very important	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Interesting work	<input type="checkbox"/>						
High income	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Opportunities to help other people	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Workplace security	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Room to work independently	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Good opportunities for advancement	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Doing something that is useful to society	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Independence in deciding the times of the day when I work	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Status							

25. Please indicate how far you agree or disagree with the following statements

	Strongly disagree							Strongly agree		Prefer not to answer
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
I believe that success depends on ability rather than luck	<input type="checkbox"/>									
I like taking responsibility for making decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>									
I make decisions and move on	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Being creative and thinking up new ideas are important to me	<input type="checkbox"/>									
I avoid doing anything that might upset the status quo	<input type="checkbox"/>									

Being successful is very important to me	<input type="checkbox"/>							
I like to take risks	<input type="checkbox"/>							
I believe that most people can be trusted	<input type="checkbox"/>							

26. Are you

Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>

27. How old are you?

35 or less	<input type="checkbox"/>
36-45	<input type="checkbox"/>
46-55	<input type="checkbox"/>
56-65	<input type="checkbox"/>
66 or older	<input type="checkbox"/>

28. What is your highest educational qualification?

Graduate degree (BA level)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postgraduate degree (MA level)	<input type="checkbox"/>
PhD/doctoral degree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>please specify</i>):	<input type="checkbox"/>

29. What was the subject of your highest educational qualification? (*please tick two max*)

Law	<input type="checkbox"/>
Business/management/economics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Political science/public administration	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other social sciences and humanities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical science	<input type="checkbox"/>
Natural sciences and engineering	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>please specify</i>):	<input type="checkbox"/>

30. How many years have you been working...

	Less than 1 year	1- 5 years	5-10 years	10-20 years	More than 20 years
...in the public sector	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...in your current organization	<input type="checkbox"/>				
...in your current position	<input type="checkbox"/>				

31. How many years of work experience outside the public sector do you have?

	None	Less than 1 year	1-5 years	5-10 years	10-20 years	More than 20 years
...in the private sector	<input type="checkbox"/>					
...in the non-profit sector	<input type="checkbox"/>					

We thank you very much for completing our questionnaire. Your contribution is extremely important in helping us understand the current trends of the public sector in Europe.