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OECD PROJECT ON MANAGEMENT IN GOVERNMENT: PROGRESS REPORT

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This document provides an overview of progress made so far in the project "Management in Government", aimed at gathering better data on efficient government and public administration. Countries are invited to fill in the table on pages 5-6 indicating which data would be potentially useful for benchmarking and subsequent efficiency studies.

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**OECD PROJECT ON MANAGEMENT IN GOVERNMENT:
PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE PUBLIC GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

Introduction

1. Analysis of public management reforms has been hampered by the lack of good-quality comparative information, resulting in a situation where assessing progress made and learning from other countries' experiences remain limited. Although there is a significant growth in broad measures of "governance", most of these data are based on subjective assessments, and have little relevance for public management. There are few terms and definitions applied consistently, further undermining public administration debate.

2. Against this background, the OECD has launched a project under the working title "Management in Government: Comparative Country Data". A feasibility report was presented to the Public Governance Committee on 29 November 2005. The report recommended a phased approach towards gathering better data on efficient government and public administration. On low cost assumptions, it proposed annual working papers in 2006, 2007 and 2008, and the suggested first publication of *Government at a Glance* in late 2009.

Key features

3. This project will:

- Provide a "suite" of separate datasets across OECD countries (*Government at a Glance*);
- Provide the best information available, enabling governments to compare their systems with others;
- Ensure that existing surveys are focused and better coordinated;
- Offer an opportunity for the Public Governance Committee to provide guidance on the focus areas for data collection.

4. The project will not:

- Provide any single, overall score measure;
- Rank or evaluate countries on the basis of overall government performance;
- Increase the burden of surveys on member countries.

Progress

5. Since the initial feasibility paper and technical materials were presented to the OECD Public Governance Committee meeting on 29 November 2005, much has been achieved:

- There has been **intensive consultation** with country experts in central agencies and in national statistics offices. Three expert editorial groups (overall, output and outcome) have been established to provide guidance on the work, comprising leading government and academic experts drawn from across the OECD. Finally, there has been close collaboration with other OECD Directorates (most particularly the Economics Department and the Statistics Directorate) on data development.
- The data coverage and data classification for the project have been significantly refined.
- The ways in which internationally comparable public management data can assist governments have been set out explicitly for review by policymakers and practitioners.
- Following an extensive assessment, **key OECD and other datasets have been prepared for dissemination** in the November 2006 Working Paper.
- **New OECD software** for managing non-quantitative databases and preparing syntheses for publication is in the final stages of development.
- A significant discussion has been launched between experts and practitioners on the appropriate **methods for classifying output and outcome** data in preparation for expanding the data coverage.

Issues for consideration

6. Public Governance Committee members are invited to comment on:

- The draft of Working Paper 1, "Towards Better Measurement of Government" [GOV/PGC(2006)10] for publication in November 2006 (a short presentation will be made to the Committee).
- Technical Paper 1: How and Why Should Government Activity Be Measured in *Government at a Glance?*
- Technical Paper 2: Issues in Output Measurement for *Government at a Glance*.
- Technical Paper 3: Issues in Outcome Measurement for *Government at a Glance*.

7. The approach proposed will reduce the burden of uncoordinated surveys on member countries. Data efforts will focus on areas where the Public Governance Committee considers that:

- There is intrinsic value in the data for benchmarking purposes. In these areas a simple exposition of the facts will provide some value to governments in illustrating how different systems operate.
- There is a possibility that the data will assist in examining key questions of efficiency or institutional effectiveness. In these areas there is a reasonable hypothesis that the arrangement

being measured can affect efficiency or institutional effectiveness, and collecting data would allow some analysis of whether and to what extent this is in fact the case.

8. In providing guidance on the focus areas for new data collection, Public Governance Committee members are requested to complete the attached form, indicating data that are potentially useful for benchmarking and those that are potentially useful for subsequent efficiency studies.

9. The Committee is invited to note that, currently, the priority areas of new data collection under consideration by OECD's GOV Directorate are:

- Integrity/corruption prevention activities;
- Practices for reporting on very long-term budget issues;
- Fiscal rules that set a permanent constraint on a government's fiscal policy;
- Management of very senior officials;
- Procedures for integrating risk in regulatory impact assessments and *ex post* evaluations;
- The organisational structure of government.

Public Governance Committee member comments on focus areas for data collection

		Potentially useful for benchmarking	Potentially useful for subsequent efficiency studies
REVENUES			
Central government	Revenue structure		
	Fiscal rules		
	Other		
Sub-central government	Revenue structure		
	Tax autonomy		
	Grants		
	Fiscal rules		
	Other		
INPUTS			
Overall input mix	Contracting out and procurement		
	Compensation of employees		
	Gross capital formation		
	Social benefits in kind		
	Subsidies		
Labour	Workforce size		
	Workforce composition		
	Compensation		
	Other		
PROCESSES			
Budget practices and procedures	System overview		
	Budget formulation		
	Budget execution		
	Reporting, review and audit		
	Other		
HRM arrangements	System overview		
	Pay policy		
	Ethical infrastructure and oversight		
	Other		
Internal and external reporting	Open government		
	Performance measurement arrangements		
	Other		
E-government readiness	Infrastructure		
	Legal framework		
	Strategy		
	Other		
Centre of government	Government offices		
	Other		
Management of regulatory quality	Centre of government arrangements		
	Other		

		Potentially useful for benchmarking	Potentially useful for subsequent efficiency studies
OUTPUTS			
Central government	Financial output ¹		
	Non-financial output		
	Other		
Sub-central government	Financial output		
	Non-financial output		
	Other		

¹ Financial output - value of outputs or groups of outputs, measured by input costs