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**PUBLIC MANAGEMENT SERVICE
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 18TH MEETING OF THE PUBLIC
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

28-29 OCTOBER, 1998

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**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 18TH MEETING
OF THE PUBLIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
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Item 1 -- Adoption of the Agenda

PUMA/A(98)2/REV1

1. The agenda was adopted, Item 7 being modified as follows: the statement by Deputy Secretary General Ms Joanna Shelton was moved to Item 5. Ms. Shelton returned for the Committee statement on the second morning session.

Item 2 -- Approval of the Summary Record of the previous meeting

PUMA/M(98)1

2. The summary record of the Committee's 17th session held on 26-27 March 1998 was approved without amendment on condition that it was not to be taken as a reference for the discussions on PUMA's future work because the extent of the cuts had invalidated the expression of priorities.

Item 3 -- Election of a fourth Vice-Chair

3. On the proposal of **United Kingdom** and endorsed by **Sweden**, Dr. Pia Marconi, **Italy**, General Director, Civil Service Department, was elected for one year as fourth Vice-chair of the PUMA Committee. The current chair, Ms. Benita Plesch, announced that she was stepping down after this meeting. The Committee and Secretariat expressed its warmest appreciation her for her service. The next PUMA Chair is scheduled for election at the March 1999 Committee meeting.

Item 4 -- Report by the Head of Service

4. Mr Derry Ormond, Head of Service, provided general remarks on the development of PUMA and briefed the Committee on the results of a consultation process being undertaken by PUMA within the Organisation on the relevance of Governance to the Organisation's work. The overall finding was that there is an opportunity for the OECD to establish an agenda of the Governance issues the world is facing. Among the main outcomes of the discussions, the following points were underlined:

1. The growing importance of coherent decision-taking mechanisms to face increasingly complex and cross-sectoral issues;
2. The need for improved quality of consultation with and mediation amongst interest groups;
3. The need to improve policy effectiveness (policy elaboration, implementation and feedback);
4. Recognition of the inter-connection between changes inside and outside the OECD area.

5. Mr. Ormond updated the Committee on the budget situation and noted the need for the Committee to evolve so as to become more central to the Organisation's policy concerns.

Item 5 -- Revised Programme of Work

PUMA(98)12

6. In reaction to the renewed pressure on its budget and the calls to integrate better with the Organisation, PUMA has launched a process of "reinvention" of its Programme of Work for 1999-2000. This is a transitional programme, preparatory to the development of a new Committee mission and Mandate for the years 2000/6. The document [PUMA(98)12] was presented by the Secretariat to the Committee for discussion and review.

7. **Statement by Deputy Secretary-General:** The review process of the Organisation's Programme of Work for 1999-2000 was introduced by Deputy Secretary-General Ms Joanna Shelton. In her statement, she presented the Secretary-General's strategy for OECD and the budget context in general and for PUMA. Particular focus was laid on the necessity for PUMA to better address governance and demonstrate how it fitted into the OECD corporate strategy within tight financial constraints.

8. The Committee's conclusions on this item are presented in the Statement of the Committee **Annex II**.

Item 6 -- Country Presentation

9. Dr. Pia Marconi, Director-General, Ufficio Procedimenti e Efficienza Amministrativa (UPEA) presented reform in Italy and responded to questions. Details of her remarks are in **Annex II**.

Item 8 -- Review of Selected Projects

PUMA(98)13

- a) **Country Reviews on Budgeting and Management.** The Committee reviewed the suggested implementation of Country Reviews [PUMA(98)13 Annex A]. The questionnaire presented by the Secretariat was agreed upon and it was noted that **Canada** has volunteered to be the first country reviewed. Some adjustments in the methodology may be necessary following the first country study. Delegates underlined that country studies, to be useful, should be completed within a limited time scale and in close consultation with the "target" country.
- b) **Performance Contracting** [PUMA(98)13 Annex B]. This item was postponed.
- c) **Regulatory Reform Country Reviews.** The Committee considered the conclusions of the PUMA chapters for the Netherlands and the United States reviews [PUMA(98)13 Annex C] prior to their incorporation into the full reports for each country. The Secretariat reported on progress achieved on the reviews of Japan and Mexico (considered by the PUMA Regulatory Management and Reform Group, 22-23 October). The Secretariat invited countries to volunteer for review in 2000. Delegates recognised Regulatory Reform Country Reviews as being one of the high priorities of PUMA work..
- d) **Symposium on Strategies for Government Review and Reform.** [PUMA(98)13 Annex D]. This item was postponed.

- e) **Emerging Market Economy Forum Workshop** (10-11 December 1998). As a reaction to the oral report of the Secretariat on this event, the Chair noted the growing interest of Asian Countries for this event and the active involvement of participants from OECD countries.
- f) **Year 2000 Problem.** The Committee Members took note of the positive impact of the Report on "The Year 2000 problem. Impacts and Actions" drawn up in response to the Ministerial Mandate of April 1998. They expressed interest in developing follow-up activities, eventually in co-operation with other directorates of the OECD and monitoring change in this area. This report could be used as a good example for helping countries to address issues that require a quick response.

Item 9 -- Communications

PUMA/RD(98)5

10. Mr Len Early, Vice-Chair of the PUMA Committee responded to the request at the March 1998 Committee meeting to report back on promising practices for ensuring effective communication and co-ordination of PUMA work. As Chairman of the Committee's Communications Group he described the conclusions [Room Document PUMA/RD(98)5]. PUMA Communication consists of three components:

1. Communicating within the central areas of government that are PUMA's main customers. This means capturing information from countries as an input to the PUMA Committee and PUMA work, and reporting back.
2. Communicating from PUMA to the world more generally. Depending on countries' specificities there is a range of different ways of communicating amongst the central areas of government. Countries should take a more active role instead of leaving the communicating fundamentally to PUMA and PUMA products themselves.
3. Communicating within centres of government is clearly important to obtain input, to strengthen the discussions of the Committee, and to raise awareness of PUMA products. Equally important is to ensure that others in governments understand what PUMA is producing and the benefits of it. The Committee should develop communication policy to address group outside the centres of governments.

Item 10 -- Promising Practices

United Kingdom	Creation of a Peoples Panel to know what the public thinks about Public Services
Greece	Establishment of a Citizens Defender (Ombudsman)
Denmark	1998 Survey conducted for the Ministry of Finance on relations between Danish Citizens and the Public sector

Item 11 --Other Business

11. The next Committee meeting will take place on 25-26 March 1999. At this meeting the Committee will need to agree a draft of a new Mandate for 2000/6 to propose to the Council.

ANNEX I

PUMA COMMITTEE STATEMENT

Paris, 29 October, 1998

The Public Management Committee of the OECD met on Wednesday, 28 and Thursday, 29 October to consider the proposed 'reinvented' work programme of the Public Management Committee for 1999 and to seek consensus on further reinvention and activity reductions to assist the OECD in meeting its policy objectives and budgetary targets.

The Committee notes the following:

- systems of governance affect the performance of the state in executing its core functions and through this, the performance of countries in meeting their major economic and social goals;
- the current world financial crisis - emanating in particular from Asia and Russia - has a root cause associated with weaknesses in the institutions of governance and accordingly, durable solutions to this crisis need to address these governance problems;
- central government decision frameworks have considerable influence on the policy performance of sectors and on government as a whole;
- OECD is very well placed to contribute to bolstering governance in Member and non-Member economies, and indeed, would be failing to meet its Members' interests if it proved incapable of meeting this challenge.

The Committee notes that PUMA represents the key OECD centre of expertise for the attainment of 'good governance', which is a policy priority for Member countries.

The Committee heard a presentation from Deputy Secretary General, Ms. Joanna Shelton, on the relationship between the OECD's activities in governance and public management and the core goals of the Organisation. The Committee noted that while the substantive nature of PUMA's work was aligned to the core Organisation goals, PUMA was not seeing its contribution reflected in the major strategic objectives of the Organisation. This was surprising given the use of 'good governance' as one of the points of the triangular paradigm.

DECISION 1: Refocusing the work

A. The Committee called for additional efforts to refocus further the work of PUMA to reflect the key aspects outlined by Ms Shelton - in particular by focusing on tangible outputs, well integrated into the core work of the Organisation, which could be seen to translate into concrete policy actions of their countries. This process could be assisted by closer co-operation between the central OECD administration, PUMA and the other sectoral directorates. The refocusing would also need to consider working methods.

B. In particular, the Committee notes that the proposed outputs on ethics and policy capacities need to be made more tightly focused on influencing government policy decisions, and the working methods re-examined.

Clarifying integration in the OECD

DECISION 2: The Committee will further consider its name and presentation to ensure that it reflects its focus on governance.

DECISION 3:

A. Noting the importance of good governance to the achievement of economic and social goals, the Committee calls on the Secretary-General to establish a fixed term independent high level advisory group on governance.

B. Noting the importance to members of improving governance in non-Member countries, the Committee requests the Secretariat to identify outreach activities separately in its work programme and to make every effort to secure financing to carry out work in this area.

DECISION 4: The Committee proposes to create a document - *Shaping the 21st century: the contribution of good governance* - which would be submitted to the proposed high level group.

The Committee noted that since its previous meeting, an attempt had been made to recast the PUMA programme.

DECISION 5: Information on PUMA's activities and methods -- While acknowledging that aspects of this 'reinvention' had been useful in clarifying the purpose and nature of PUMA's outputs, the Committee calls on PUMA to:

- identify more starkly costs associated with specific outputs, so as to better inform the debate about priorities;
- make clearer the link in resource use from one year to the next;
- set clear milestones for the achievement of the proposed outputs; and
- lead the OECD in developing quality strategic planning, evaluation processes and budgeting information as a pacesetter for the rest of the Organisation.

In discussion the Committee focused on the proposed outputs and working methods of PUMA. The Committee notes the following:

- the PUMA website is being heavily used and now represents a low cost way of disseminating information to member countries and others, and that this had implications for the number of information sharing based networks/working parties being managed through PUMA. The communications group should review these issues further for consideration at the next meeting; and
- PUMA should look to new methods of furthering its policy agenda, including using the APEC approach of meeting management, where appropriate.

The Committee discussed the programme of work, with a budgeted cost of 17.4 million francs, which had been put forward to the budget committee. The Committee notes with regret the need to terminate the survey of public management developments.

DECISION 6: critical mass -- The Committee determined that further cuts to the OECD's work on public governance were contrary to the interests of their countries, and ran the risk of reducing PUMA's critical mass to below a viable level and causing quality failures with resulting reputational loss to the OECD.

However, in the interests of assisting the budget committee reach a view on the PUMA budget, the Committee identified the following measures to make a maximum additional cut of 1 million francs - taking to a total of 3 million francs or 15 per cent - the proposed cut in PUMA's budget baseline. The measures, in order of application were as follows:

<i>Order</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Estimated saving (FF)</i>
1.	Complete cancellation of two working parties - Ethics and Performance Management (proposed as an electronic discussion group)	300,000
2.	Full cost recovery of substantive services provided to single country members and non-members	300,000
3.	Defer commencement of the development of comparative indicators of the use of information technology in service delivery	200,000
4.	Defer the analytical study leading to the creation of advice about the use of agencies to achieve public policy objectives	200,000

DECISION 7: further budget cuts -- The Committee proposed that the additional budget cuts identified above not go forward to the OECD Council.

DECISION 8: carrying forward the process of reinvention --

A. The Committee requests the Secretariat to develop a submission immediately to the OECD's budget committee reflecting the views contained herein.

B. Over the following weeks, the Committee - led by the Bureau and in close contact with Committee members and other interested parties - will work with the Secretariat to deepen the reinvention process to lead to a new programme for 2000 and beyond for consideration at the Committee's next meeting.

ANNEX 2 PUBLIC MANAGEMENT REFORM IN ITALY

1. **Pia Marconi**, Director General of the *Ufficio Procedimenti ed Efficienza Amministrativa*, in the Department of the Public Service, Italy, presented an overview of the recent public management reforms in Italy.

Background

2. The public administration in Italy employs 3 500 000 civil servants and has a total wage bill of about 8% of GDP. Although Italy is a unitarian and not a federal country, the regions have certain powers. The public administration is made up of 20 ministries, 20 regions, with 107 provinces, more than 8 000 cities, 34 000 state schools, 60 universities, 370 health care agencies and 50 000 agencies, operating both at local and national levels.

3. Administrative law rules the Italian administrative system. This is an important point and explains why the reform process implies an important legislative process as well. Reform cannot take place without changing laws, since administrative law regulates the administrative system.

4. Previous attempts have been made to reform the Italian government. The Amato and Ciampi Cabinets made the first relevant and comprehensive attempt at government reform in 1992-1993. As in many other countries, this process was initiated because of budgetary pressures. However, the process was interrupted and then taken up again in 1996 by the Prodi Cabinet. It is interesting to note that since 1992 Italy has had three general elections and five different Cabinets, the current one being the sixth – it is evident that this general institutional framework is not the best one for successfully developing government reform. The Prodi Cabinet's proposal for public administration reform in many areas is a continuation of what was started in 1992-1993.

5. The Prodi reform programme also includes some important new reforms that had not been considered before. Italy's current reform programme is less directly linked to the reduction of the state budget. These direct budget reductions are less relevant now than they were in the previous reform attempts for several reasons. First of all, the fiscal situation in Italy is not so dramatic as compared to 1992-1993. Secondly, Italy has already been through a downsizing process whereby recruitment in the public administration was frozen for quite a long period of time, leaving little flexibility for further downsizing. The current process of reforming public administration aims in the long-term to reduce public administration expenses and to make it more efficient while reshaping the macro-structure of government and using more efficient management tools.

The areas of reform

6. The four most important areas of reform are:

- the decentralisation of tasks and functions and the redesign of the government macro-structure;
- the simplification of administrative decision making and quality of regulation;
- the review of the management system;

- the use of information and communication technology in public administration.

The decentralisation of tasks and functions and the redesign of the government macro-structure

7. The redesign of the government macro-structure is the most important part of the current reform process and constitutes a new part of the programme for reforming government. It involves a programme of government decentralisation. This programme is relevant, and its completion has been planned within a time frame of five years. The process was conceived in the following way.

8. Since the goal was to identify functions and tasks to be decentralised, the first step was to determine which areas did not need to be involved in the decentralisation of government. These included national security, defence, justice, international relations and trade, but also national energy policy, telecommunications, transport, education and R&D policies. These were the most important areas **not** affected by decentralisation.

9. As a second step, areas, tasks and activities that no longer needed to be carried out by the government itself were identified with a view to being eliminated or privatised. To give some examples, this is the case for direct production of commercial goods and services in the defence area or in the control of safety requirements for the installation of elevators.

10. The third step was to identify, within the areas affected by the decentralisation process, those activities that, because of their nature, still had to be carried out by the central government. These include relationships with international organisations and co-ordination of EU relations as well as the setting of national policy objectives and standards in areas such as agriculture, the labour market, public housing, public works, consumer protection and industrial policy.

11. As a fourth step, functions involved in the decentralisation process were allocated to different levels of government (regions, municipalities and provinces) according to the principle of subsidiarity. In most cases, municipalities were identified as the appropriate government level to be given the responsibility because they are in the best position to match citizens' needs. In areas where the National Constitution grants legislative power to regions, the regions are responsible for the allocation of functions to the lower levels (this is the case for instance of urban development, agriculture and forestry). However, if the regions and local authorities do not carry out the tasks and functions transferred to them, the central government must act instead. In all other areas, the functions and activities to be transferred to different government levels were directly identified. Handicraft and industrial development policies have been devolved to the regions, for instance, and permits for new business initiatives are now under the responsibility of municipalities.

12. As a fifth step, financial and human resources related to decentralised functions and activities must be transferred as well.

13. This is the way in which the process of government decentralisation has been conceived, and linked to this process of identification of functions is the reshaping of central government.

14. As the redesign of the government macro-structure has both to identify functions to be decentralised and make the central government more efficient, more attention is focused on functions that must remain within the central government. This implies that ministries will be reduced in number or merged according to their functions. Italy has already started the process by merging the Treasury Ministry and the Budget and Economic Planning Ministry. The central government will reshape its

organisation. Provisions have been introduced making it possible to choose from different organisation models that are consistent with the tasks and functions to be carried out and better suited to missions (these models include operational agencies which can be used for the deconcentration of the central government, departments, independent regulatory agencies, etc). The Prime Minister Cabinet Office (*the Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri*) will be restructured to make the guidance and co-ordination power of the Prime Minister more effective.

Simplification of administration decision making and the quality of regulation.

15. A well-established programme, which has been in existence since 1993 for the simplification of administrative procedures, has recently been made more effective under the current process of reform, as it has now become a permanent programme. In addition, current efforts are being made to introduce rules into the Italian system that should make the regulatory system more efficient, more responsive and able to produce better quality regulations. This is the newest part of the reform process.

16. As for the **simplification of the administrative decision making**, it should be underlined that the aim is to reduce burdens on citizens and companies. This is being done by eliminating certain unnecessary administrative procedures, replacing permits and authorisations with self declarations, and finding ways to unify administrative procedures. Ways have been identified to put in place a more efficient system of granting authorisations for the setting up of new industrial plants or for widening authorisations. This has been done through what is called the “one-stop-shop”, which unifies the forty different procedures previously necessary, involving many different government agencies. Now the responsibility for such authorisations has been given to one authority at the local level. This is expected to reduce the time needed to process authorisations.

17. The second element within this area concerns **better regulation policy** or the management of the quality of regulations. Italy is now launching a programme for the codification of legislation and most important, regulatory impact analysis is beginning to be used.

Review of the management system

18. The third area of reform relates to the review of the management system. This primarily affects the personnel management and performance management systems. **As far as the personnel management system is concerned**, Italy has been proceeding towards what is called “the privatisation of the civil service”. This means that the employment and pay conditions for civil servants are now settled in contracts under civil law, while before they were stated by administrative law. This process started in 1993 and is being put forward under the current programme of reform. Another important part of this process of privatisation of the civil service is to establish a much clearer separation of duties between politicians and managers. A further element is the introduction of performance-related pay for managers. One quite new factor in this area of reform is that managers now have fixed-term contracts (from two to seven years) as compared to the old system where appointment was for life.

19. The **performance management system** has seen a shift from a traditional compliance-based controls system to one that aims to assess performance in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. Management accounting will be introduced alongside the more traditional financial accounting. Strategic planning and measurement of programme and policy effectiveness will also be introduced. Mechanisms by which government is responsive to citizens are being strengthened. Since 1993 the performance management system has been increasingly based on the United Kingdom’s Citizen Charter model.

Information and Communications Technology

20. The use of information and communications technology is seen as an important part of the reform programme because it will contribute considerably to efficiency gains within government as well as to the improvement of the delivery of public services to citizens. **The main project under this part of the reform programme is related to the setting up of what is called a “government unified network”.** A unified information system will be created within the Italian public administration involving both the central government and the local and regional governments. This is being done with the use of telecommunication interconnections. This will allow for a much faster and easier transfer of documents between different agencies and thereby further reduce the burden on citizens and companies.

21. Linked to this is the use of the **digital signature**, which will also contribute to a more efficient relationship among government agencies and between citizens and the government. At the end of 1997, a new regulation was issued which fully recognises the legal validity of signatures and documents that are generated electronically. Italy is now in the process of establishing the authority that will be able to certify a signature in terms of its authenticity.

Status and challenges of the reform process

Adaptation of the legal framework

22. In order to carry out such a reform programme, a dramatic change in the legal framework needs to be undertaken. Italy began this process in 1996 with four framework laws proposed by the government and approved by the Parliament. On the basis of these framework laws, almost forty delegated legislations were issued and most of them have already been enacted - the remainder should be enacted in the first six months of 1999.

Co-ordination, support and monitoring capacities

23. This part of the reform process has therefore almost been completed, with strong co-operation between government and Parliament. The mechanism of the framework law implies that there is this co-operation between government and Parliament, since the Parliament delegates an important part of its legislative powers to the government. And naturally, a mechanism was put in place by which the Parliament was afterwards involved in giving advice on the delegated laws made by the government, by the Executive. So this co-operation has proven to be very positive.

24. Nevertheless, in the first months of 1999, having completed the first part of its reform programme, Italy will have to launch the most important part of the process -- that is the reform implementation. To do this, it is essential to maintain at the central level a strong co-ordination provided by the Department of Public Service and the Cabinet Office and, to some extent, by the Treasury Ministry. It will also be important to support the implementation process by providing the numerous agencies and government bodies affected with substantive help and advice as well as by setting up best practices and benchmarking mechanisms.

The need to maintain strong political leadership

25. Strong political leadership is also important. This made it possible to carry out the first phase linked to the completion of the legal framework. Strong political leadership is even more important now that the implementation is going to take place. It is essential that the new government and new cabinet pursue the same strategy of reform.

Personnel involvement and training

26. One very important factor of success is the involvement of the personnel in the reform process. This reform process has been top-down so far because it started with changing laws and regulations. There is a need, through internal communication, to gain the support of the personnel in the reform process. To help personnel adapt to the radical changes that reform will bring to the public administration, it is essential that the necessary training be provided. In fact, a decision was made in 1997 to devote one per cent of the total actual wage bill to training within government.

27. The reform process in Italy is very complex and also difficult to carry out. In this context the importance of PUMA's work is evident. It can provide Italy with examples of best practice and give support in terms of learning from other countries' experiences, including their mistakes.

COMITÉ DE LA GESTION PUBLIQUE / PUBLIC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
18ÈME SESSION / 18TH SESSION
28-29 OCTOBRE 1998 / 28-29 OCTOBER 1998

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