



## Questions and Answers on the Communication on Enhancing the European Administrative Space (ComPact)

Brussels, 25 October 2023

### What is the Communication about?

- ComPact is the Commission's **first ever comprehensive set of actions** to support the modernisation of public administrations across the EU. The Communication proposes a set of actions aiming to reinforce the capacity and capabilities of the public administrations at national, regional and local level, and to strengthen their cooperation so that they can address common challenges together.
- These actions are consolidated by **a common set of overarching principles**<sup>[1]</sup> that underpin the quality of public administration.
- The ComPact is structured around **three key policy pillars**, critical to the work of the public administrations: skills; digital transformation; and green transition.
- The ComPact is a **direct response to calls** by the [Member States](#), the [European Parliament](#), and the [Committee of the Regions to the Commission](#), to foster cooperation and policy dialogue as well as to help improve the capacity and the quality of public administrations at national, regional and local level in Europe.

### Why is the Commission putting forward an initiative for public administration, a national competence area?

- The ComPact respects the competences and specificities of the Member States. It acknowledges that, despite a large variety of institutional set-ups and legal traditions, **public administrations in Member States share a set of common values** and understanding of how good public administration should look like.
- The ComPact puts forward an overarching framework for actions to help reinforce the capacity of Member States' public administrations to tackle common challenges together.

### How will the Commission help public administrations under ComPact?

- The ComPact is inspired by the experience gained from the Commission's reform support to individual countries, as well as by its knowledge and horizontal work on the trends and needs across the EU.
- ComPact will provide a platform for mutual learning and for finding common approaches to challenges – for example, how do we respond effectively to crisis, how do we put artificial intelligence (AI) to use in the public administration.
- The concrete support focuses on tools, methodologies, exchanges, targeted capacity building and creating communities of practice across Member States. These aspects will help to ensure the implementation of shared public administration principles and will contribute to the development of a European Administrative Space and culture.

### What are the actions that ComPact is proposing?

The ComPact is proposing **25 actions** grouped under **3 pillars**:

#### Pillar 1. The Public Administration Skills Agenda

- Scale up Public Administration Cooperation Exchange (PACE);
- Set up a Network of Centres of Excellence;
- Establish an EU Public Administration Leadership programme;
- Develop a public administration section on the EU Academy platform;
- Expand access of regional and local entities to the TSI;
- Organise annual Local Public Administration Day;

- Carry out targeted studies and surveys;
- Develop a 'Passport of core competences';
- Support to modernise HR policies;
- Update and expand the Quality of Public Administration Toolbox;
- Develop methodologies for relevant public administration indicators.

## **Pillar 2. Capacity for Europe's Digital Decade**

- Support on digital and data-related legislation and AI technologies;
- Promote the sustainable and effective use of emerging technologies;
- Support the delivery of fully accessible online administrative services;
- Develop tools for increased interoperability and provision of seamless services;
- Publish an overview of the funding opportunities;
- Support the federation of cloud capabilities.

## **Pillar 3. Capacity to lead the green transition**

- Support the update of national Climate Adaptation Strategies and plans;
- Promote climate proofing and other environment-relevant guidance;
- Promote tools and methods for climate risk assessments and prevention;
- Support to plan, design and implement ecosystem restoration measures and nature-based solutions;
- Support the implementation of environmental legislation;
- Develop further guidance on the use of the EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme;
- Promote and support methodologies for the assessment of organizational carbon footprint;
- Support and guidance for decarbonization and sustainability of buildings.

## **How can Member States apply to participate in the actions of ComPAct?**

- Actions will be implemented through the [Technical Support Instrument](#) (flagships or multi-country projects), or through other EU funding mechanisms, such as the [Digital Europe Programme](#) or [Horizon Europe](#). The participation of Member States will follow the rules of each programme.
- Actions involving exchange of information and cooperation, such as the passport for competencies, will be carried out in collaboration with the [Expert Group for Public Administration](#), the [European Public Administration Network](#) (EUPAN) and the [network of the public administration schools](#) (DISPA).
- For other actions, Member States will be informed about the way to participate via the Expert Group for Public Administration.

## **Are the actions included in the ComPAct mandatory for Member States?**

- No, uptake of the actions is **voluntary and demand-driven**. Member States can participate in the ComPAct **at their own pace and according to their needs and institutional set-ups**.
- The tools, methodologies, peer support, and good practice exchanges put forward will help the Member States to learn, innovate and improve their performances.

## **How does the Commission plan to fund the actions in the ComPAct?**

- The implementation of the actions will be primarily funded through the **Technical Support Instrument** and other existing EU funding mechanisms, such as the Digital Europe Programme.
- The ComPAct seeks **to boost and amplify the impact of the existing EU programmes and tools** already available by creating stronger synergies, facilitating access to existing initiatives, and promoting knowledge-sharing across the Member States.

## **Will the Commission ensure that public administrations adhere to the principles for quality public administration?**

- Member States already share a set of common values and understanding of public administration best practices.

- The principles put forward are based on this common understanding and observed practices. The actions in ComPact aim **to reinforce the principles of quality public administration** and encourage Member States to adhere to them.

### **How do you plan on helping public administrations in enlargement countries?**

- Developing professional and well-performing public administrations is **one of the fundamental criteria for EU accession**. The enlargement countries look at the national administrations in the EU as a reference point. They share similar challenges such as the demographic change and those posed by the twin transitions.
- The Commission creates **opportunities for enlargement countries interested in participating in peer-to-peer exchanges** and other forums to share good practices and lessons learned. For instance, several enlargement countries, such as Albania and Moldova, are currently participating as observers in the discussions around technical support projects with the Member States.

### **How can a civil servant from a Member State participate in PACE?**

- Applications to participate in the **Public Administration Cooperation Exchange (PACE)** are received once a year, by 31 October, and submissions are coordinated by each **Member State's National Coordinating Authority** for the Technical Support Instrument.
- Applications to participate are therefore not made individually but are organised centrally by the administrations of the civil servants aiming to participate (either to travel or to host) based on the identified needs and priorities.
- PACE works to **reinforce administrations' knowledge** and capacity to implement structural reforms to ensure quality public administrations across the EU. PACE is not an exchange programme for civil servants' personal development.
- **Civil servants from other countries could participate as observers**, with the agreement of both the participating and hosting Member States' administrations, but at their own cost.

### **For more information**

[Communication on Enhancing the European Administrative Space](#) (ComPact)

[ComPact - Press release](#)

[Technical Support Instrument](#) (TSI)

---

[1] Based on the Principles of Public Administration, [SIGMA](#) (EU – OECD collaboration).

QANDA/23/5184

Press contacts:

[Stefan DE KEERSMAECKER](#) (+32 2 298 46 80)

[Laetitia CLOSE](#) (+32 2 296 70 73)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)