



'LabX – Experimentation Lab for Public Administration'

**Case study of Portuguese ESF project under the
study 'Progress Assessment of the ESF Support to
Public Administration' (PAPA)**

*Written by Mr Paulo Teixeira
November 2019*

PPMi

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
Directorate F — Investment
Unit F1: ESF and FEAD Policy and Legislation

*Contact: DG EMPL F1
E-mail: EMPL-F1-UNIT@ec.europa.eu*

*European Commission
B-1049 Brussels*

Implemented by PPMI

PPMI Group
Gedimino av. 50
LT-01110 Vilnius, Lithuania
www.ppmi.lt

Contact:
Dr Vitalis Nakrošis, thematic expert (Programme Manager at PPMI)
vitalis@ppmi.lt

Case study written by country expert Mr Paulo Teixeira

Specific contract No VC/2018/0771 under the Multiple Framework Contract No VC/2017/0376 for the provision of services related to the implementation of Better Regulation Guidelines

'LabX - Experimentation Lab for Public Administration'

**Case study of Portuguese ESF project under the
study 'Progress Assessment of the ESF Support to
Public Administration' (PAPA)**

***Europe Direct is a service to help you find answers
to your questions about the European Union.***

Freephone number (*):

00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11

(*) The information given is free, as are most calls (though some operators, phone boxes or hotels may charge you).

LEGAL NOTICE

This document has been prepared for the European Commission however it reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

More information on the European Union is available on the Internet (<http://www.europa.eu>).

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2020

© European Union, 2020

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.

CONTENTS

Project background.....	7
LabX - experimentation lab for public administration.....	8
Introduction: the context of the project.....	8
Design and execution of the ESF-funded projects	11
ESF-supported project 'LabX - Public Administration Experimentation Laboratory'.....	11
Conclusion: results, lessons learned and the role of ESF financial support.....	19
Main results.....	19
Lessons learned	20
Role of ESF support	22
References	23

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Comic strip that caricature the laboratory of ideas of the state	9
Figure 2. Seven assumptions of the participatory approach.....	10
Figure 3. Phases of LabX methodology	13
Figure 4. The guiding principles of LabX	13
Figure 5. LabX team	15

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. LabX projects	16
------------------------------	----

PROJECT BACKGROUND

LabX - Experimentation Lab for Public Administration

Operational Programme	The project is supported under the priority axis 5: 'Improve the institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and the efficiency of public administration' under priority 11 of the Operational Programme Competitiveness and Internationalisation
Beneficiary organisation	Administrative Modernisation Agency (AMA)
Target groups	Entities of Public Administration
Project duration	01/09/2017 - 31/08/2020
Budget	EUR 1,000,000.00 (ESF contribution: EUR 569,500.00)
Project manager (email address)	Bruno Monteiro, LabX Coordinator (bruno.j.monteiro@ama.pt)
Partners	Entities of Public Administration and public and private entities
Project/ organisation website	http://www.ama.gov.pt http://labx.gov.pt

This case study was produced during the 'Progress Assessment of the ESF Support to Public Administration - PAPA' project that was contracted by DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission. The purpose of this project was to present specific cases of ESF-funded public administration reform and capacity building initiatives, as well as to show the role of ESF financial support to public administration for accountability purposes. This report provides a story on the project '**LabX - Experimentation Lab for Public Administration**', which discusses its context and purpose; characteristics of the team implementing it; main challenges faced and difficulties encountered during implementation; key developments during the implementation process; results and impacts achieved; as well as lessons learnt and the contribution of ESF.

LABX - EXPERIMENTATION LAB FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Introduction: the context of the project

Experiment! Innovate! Transform! These were the concepts that, in 2016, energised the creation of LabX. Maria Manuel Leitão Marques, at the time Minister of the Presidency and Administrative Modernisation, launched the challenge of generating an experimental project, focused on innovation and with the objective of transforming public administration.

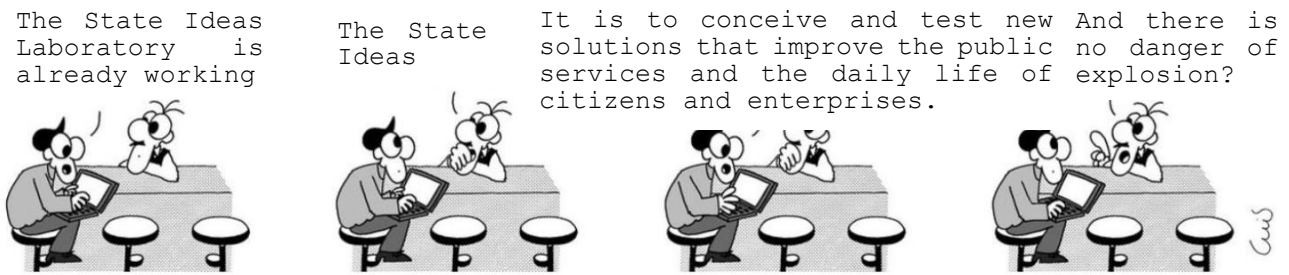
The public administration in general can be characterised as a vast and complex reality, which is materialised through a system of organs, services and agents of the State and other public entities, and at the same time is itself the activity developed by them. This context can be defined as extremely bureaucratic and hierarchical.

Since 1978, there has been a Ministry of Public Administration in the Portuguese Government, initially designated as the Ministry of Administrative Reform and currently as the Ministry of Presidency and Administrative Modernisation. According to Sara Carrasqueiro, a member of the Board of Directors of the Administrative Modernisation Agency (AMA)¹, 'a path has been made in the last 20 years regarding administrative modernisation, in particular through simplification and modernisation projects, but there is a need for a greater focus on innovation, cultural innovation, innovation of practices and focus public administration on its utilities, citizens and companies'. Innovating in public administration is a challenge - 'there is a perception that it is difficult to innovate within the public administration due to lack of human resources skills, lack of funding, the existence of an overregulated, hierarchical and silos culture'. At the same time, there is a rigidity in the performance of procedures, which are rooted in public entities and services, and there is no culture of questioning and reflection on them. Another aspect that stands out in the public administration is that there is no margin to waste money poorly spent, which on the one hand protects the system, but on the other hand is a threat to error, innovation, experimentation and risk taking.

It is in this context that LabX emerged. On October 25, 2016, the concept of the State having an ideas laboratory was exposed in a comic strip in a daily newspaper (Figure 1). This message caricatured the sense of doubt, mistrust and fear that a laboratory causes in citizens (the traditional idea of public administration is that it is not supposed to experiment).

¹ The Administrative Modernisation Agency, I.P. (AMA) is the public institute that continues the attributions of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers in the areas of modernisation and administrative simplification and electronic administration, under the oversight and tutelage of the Assistant Secretary of State and Administrative Modernisation, under the terms of Decree-Law no. 43/2012 of February 23, with the amendments contained in Decree-Laws no. 126/2012, of June 21 and 20/2018, of March 23.

Figure 1. Comic strip that caricature the laboratory of ideas of the state²



Source: Presentation by the LabX, Newspaper *Publico*, «Bartoon»

But LabX was (and is!) anything but an unthinking concept. It carried a risk, but a framed and contextualised one, lined with a strategic intent, arising directly from the Office of the Ministry of the Presidency and Administrative Modernisation, and which is based on the 21st Government Programme 2015 – 2019 (Chapter 6 – Strengthen, simplify and digitise Public Administration³).

It was then that the possibility arose to apply for ESF funding for the constitution of the team and implementation of the LabX⁴. The project was designed to meet the following objectives:

- 1) Create a network of innovators, specialists in the specific technical areas and necessary for the modernisation of public administration services;
- 2) Create a physical space (the laboratory) where the team can receive and hold working sessions with the agents involved in the various projects and where new ideas and/or solutions can be tested and prototyped;
- 3) Make the laboratory a space to test and prototype quickly and inexpensively, thus stimulating a culture of creativity and experimentation;
- 4) Design new public services, redesign existing services, realise where there are bottlenecks and promote the use of currently complex and difficult-to-use electronic services, based on the real needs of users (citizens and companies) and the technological and economic viability of projects;
- 5) Involve citizens, businesses and decision-makers (Government) in the process of interpreting real needs/opportunities for the design of new services (co-creation);
- 6) Empower the public administration with methodologies that promote innovation through design;

² Available at: <http://www.publico.pt/bartoon/25-10-2016>

³ Available at: <https://www.portugal.gov.pt/ficheiros-geral/programa-do-governo-pdf.aspx>

⁴ The project schedule was designed for the period between 3 November 2016 and 1 November 2019. However, approval was given on May 16, 2017, which required a reprogramming of project implementation, beginning on 1 September, 2017 and scheduled to end on 31 August, 2020.

7) Boost the development of transversal solutions, focused on citizens and businesses, and not on the organisation of public administration, thus enhancing the elimination of 'organisational silos'.

And to implement the 14 projects (that are described in table 1).

The LabX team says that 'they exist for public administration to stop guessing what citizens want and to provide public services that respond to their needs and expectations!'. To this end, it is essential to involve and encourage the participation of both citizens and public officials. Their accumulated experience and knowledge will enable them to redesign public services so that they can respond to the needs of their users in a more efficient, effective and satisfactory way.

The participatory approach is one that is found in LabX's DNA. This is understandable if we take into account the essence of the project – 'investigate, design and experiment with innovative solutions to improve public services, focusing on the needs and expectations of citizens and companies' (LabX team).

Thus, to better conceive possible solutions, the philosophy of LabX is that Public Administration must learn about and with citizens/companies. The most appropriate way to do it is assigning them a prominent role in designing the solutions to their own problems/challenges. This approach gives actors and public administration entities the notion of being 'competent' in solving the problems that are posed to them. The concept underlying LabX is to trigger and enhance a process of participation during which it is possible to observe, question, reflect, conceive, experiment, and ultimately change or transform. Marina San-Bento (Institute of Registries and Notaries), Carlos Brito (Institute of Employment and Training) and Idalina Ferreira (Tributary and Customs Authority) described this concept very well, they felt 'that doubt was beginning to set in... wondering why we are doing this, wondering if we are really giving the citizen/companies what they need, or what we think they need. And there is nothing worse than uncertainty'.

This participation process / participatory approach is based on seven assumptions, which are fundamental for the achievement of the objectives defined for LabX (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Seven assumptions of the participatory approach



Design and execution of the ESF-funded projects

ESF-supported project 'LabX - Public Administration Experimentation Laboratory'

On 1 September, 2017 the LabX team, consisting of a Sociologist, two Service Designers, one Content Designer and one Public Services Specialist, began its activity. However, building the team was the project's first challenge.

One of the crucial steps in the creation of LabX was the hiring of the necessary staff to constitute a team. According to Sara Carrasqueiro, 'human resources were scarce, did not exist within the public administration, there was a need to hire a good part of this team, and most of them were not in Portugal'. Two of the five team members were working in the UK. The contracting phase was the most difficult of the whole process for two reasons: the need and demand to hire the right people to function and the slowness and bureaucratisation of the public procurement system.

At the beginning of the project, the first group started working directly with the Office of the Ministry of the Presidency and Administrative Modernisation, on the development of the strategy for the laboratory. However, it was quickly concluded that it was necessary to accommodate the team in some state organisation, which would better allow for its sustainability, security and continuity. In this way, LabX was inserted as an organic entity of AMA. This agency has allowed LabX to have a broader framework, since it is the public institute responsible for promoting and developing administrative modernisation in Portugal, as well as fostering the creation of greater synergies, since its action is transversal across the whole public administration, which has facilitated access to many entities and allowed the expansion of LabX.

After completing two years of implementation, LabX has shown results in all its objectives, having proved their feasibility and potential in the Portuguese Public Administration through materialized outcomes, such as the 'Innovator's Network', the use of prototyping and other experimental solutions, the dissemination and capacitation of public managers and servants, or the promotion of citizen-centric approaches in its projects and initiatives. Of the 12 projects defined as goal in the application, LabX has already completed eleven and is carrying on another three projects (see table 1).

The LabX project is part of one of the investment priorities associated with the improvement of public administration, defined as 'investment in institutional capacities and efficiency of public administrations and public services at national, regional and local level, in order to carry out reforms, better regulation and rule well'. This investment priority is included in thematic objective 11 (to improve the institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and the efficiency of Public Administration) and priority axis 5⁵ of the Operational Programme for Competitiveness and Internationalisation.

LabX has been contributing to the implementation of its Operational Programme and the thematic objective where, through its role as an agent of change in the culture of public administration, it is constituted as a safe space for testing, failure and learning and a facilitating agent in the Portuguese innovation ecosystem.

⁵ Strengthening the institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and the efficiency of Public Administration

The fact that it is focused on improving public administration services has enabled LabX to intervene in a diverse spectrum of contexts, from public service in 'Lojas do Cidadão' (Citizen Shops) and in the Tax Authority, in access to digital platforms (namely Electronic Official Journal and Online Job Portal) and within the scope of education (with the project 'Education for Citizenship'). However, despite the multiplicity of contexts, LabX applies common denominators in its intervention:

- 1) It exposes public service employees to citizen-centred approaches, which allow for breaking down existing barriers between services and citizens;
- 2) It multiplies opportunities for active citizen participation throughout the cycle of defining public services;
- 3) It promotes work in collaboration with partners;
- 4) It potentiates the co-creation of possible solutions and allows their experimentation;
- 5) It is concerned with demonstrating results, measuring impact and sharing knowledge.

In this way, the LabX team has been transforming some entities of the public administration. This course, considered extremely rewarding, has not been tackled without challenges. These challenges are in themselves catalysts for change (were it not the somewhat disruptive approach to the current scenario in public administration).

Implementation of the ESF project: main developments and challenges

How do public services improve? LabX has its own methodology, guided by the principles of service design and comprising three sequential phases: investigate, design and experiment. These principles have been put into practice in all projects developed by LabX.

The first phase (investigate) allows the perception and understanding of the specific problem felt by the citizen, from different perspectives ('what is intended is to solve the correct problem', 'to understand who the actors are involved and what their needs are, motivations, frustrations and constraints'). It is important to 'not assume that we know what people need'. At the end of this phase there is a set of valid information to properly design and calibrate the solutions in the next phase.

The second phase (design) implies an analysis of the information collected in the previous phase, as it may be necessary to redefine the problem(s) to be solved. At this stage, opportunities are also identified for the actors involved, as well as ideas are generated in a collective and collaborative way among the various actors (citizens, employees and other interested parties, who may be experts) who can contribute to the potential resolution of the challenge(s).

Finally, in the third phase (experiment), the ideas that were selected in the previous phase (hypotheses) are materialised in prototypes, so that they are then tested with users (e.g. citizens), preferably in real context. According to the LabX team, 'prototype validation and enhancement enable decision makers to deploy the most efficient, risk-less, user-centric solution', thereby solving the problem correctly.

Figure 3. Phases of LabX methodology



Source: Presentation by the LabX.

Stakeholders and participants interviewed stated that the 'methodology used makes a lot of sense in public administration' and that it would be beneficial even if the laws were conceived in this way. LabX has five guiding principles in its DNA that allow the team to focus on both solving the problem and solving it correctly (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. The guiding principles of LabX



As mentioned previously, it is fundamental to immerse in the problem, to perceive the associated needs, behaviours and motivations, 'learning with and about the citizens'. This principle is valid throughout the three phases of the methodology, but it assumes the main emphasis in the 'investigate' stage.

It was exactly at this stage that the team encountered the initial moment of implementation of the project with one of its main difficulties/challenges. Taking into account the aspects mentioned above, which characterise the functioning of the public administration, together with the lack of knowledge about the scope of the project, the team affirms that at first 'it was not easy to find entities of the public administration that wanted to join'. Civil servants were rarely called upon to participate, and when they did, there was a notion that they saw no improvement, which enhanced the feeling of disbelief and hopelessness with the current project ('What am I going to do? They probably will come here to say that I do everything wrong'). This situation had been overcome because of the political support that the project had from the Office of the Ministry of the Presidency and the Administrative Modernisation (in particular, Minister Maria

Manuel Leitão Marques). Bruno Monteiro, LabX coordinator, agrees that the political support was decisive for the success of the project, enabling the first projects to appear from its tutelage.

Apart from these factors, and as noted above, public administration is too bureaucratic, formal and is very conservative in how it solves problems. According to Marina San-Bento, the civil servants are also, in general, 'very specialized people, convinced of their knowledge, but also very crystallized in their duties'. In addition, she thinks that, 'as the LabX team was very young, a feeling of distrust arose and was even perceived as an affront to the public administration'.

Another challenge for LabX's projects was to have several public administration entities collaborate towards a common goal, working as a team. According to Hélder Lima, Senior Technician in a Public Administration Service, 'State entities are very distant and creating common meeting points is a challenge'. In the concrete example of the 'Espaço Óbito' (Death and Bereavement Services) three large entities of public administration were involved - Institute of Social Security, Tax and Customs Authority and the Institute of Registries and Notary (acting as project owner). These entities have different internal organizations, different understandings and visions, and difficult and complicated processes to implement, which in itself is a major challenge.

Two of the three initial projects were integrated into the Simplex programme⁶ and focused on service design and usability ('Espaço Óbito' and 'Balcão Único de Emprego'). Due to the experimental character of LabX, the demonstrating effect of the development of these projects was quickly verified, which led to the creation of other projects, as well as restoring the trust and credibility that it is possible to change within the public administration.

The strengthening of this trust and credibility was largely due to the high professionalism and the human, motivating and contagious nature of the LabX team. The fact that they base their work, share information about what is being done and how it is being done, but also because they welcome all contributions and, essentially, incite the questioning, makes this team the 'best suited' to promote change in public administration. Marina San-Bento felt that the team was crucial in making a difference, 'they understood what our idiosyncrasies were, our beliefs, what was wrong (with reasoning and consistency). They confronted me with my reality and its shortcomings, but they also gave me the conviction that we are able to change it, but we must want it'.

⁶ Simplex is an administrative and legislative simplification programme that aims to make life easier for citizens and companies in their relationship with the administration and, at the same time, contribute to increasing the internal efficiency of public services. The initiatives proposed under this programme aim to change processes and simplify or eliminate procedures in existing laws and regulations, based on a negative assessment of their impacts or their relevance.

Figure 5. LabX team



Source: LabX

The Pro'LabX was also an initial project, but transversal to all the other projects, that allowed to combat the ignorance regarding innovation within the public administration. During the Pro'LabX sessions (lasting 3.5 hours each), it was possible to sensitise and expose public administration employees to the LabX methodology (investigate, design and experiment). These sessions were crucial in starting to instigate a new way of thinking about public administration, as according to Idalina Ferreira 'people start to have a common vocabulary'.

Another goal that has been achieved by the 'Pro'LabX' is the identification of 'champions of innovation' (people who demonstrate to perform a differentiating work in their entity or who show motivation and openness to the change), who are later recruited to the 'Innovators' Network'. Hélder Lima referred to the importance of this initiative by saying that 'we have the perception of common problems to the different services of the public administration and we can focus on a common resolution attempt. We have a contact with methodologies and networking with colleagues, which is crucial!'

LabX also has a strong training component, since it has been identified by Sara Carrasqueiro that one of the 'main barriers to innovation in public administration is the lack of skills to innovate, which differ from the competencies to provide a service on an ongoing basis'. Empowering to innovate in the public administration implies combating a rigidity of thought, which results from the fulfilment of 'mechanised procedures, norms, regulations', implying awareness and critical thinking about the adequacy of procedures to the needs of the people and how this can be improved.

The training is transversal to all projects, however it is even more visible in the 'Innovators' Network'. This project consists of encouraging collaborative sessions with public officials, in the form of workshops and also of mentoring sessions. Currently, the network has more than 300 participants. Its main objective is that they can be catalysts in their own entities, and scale innovation in the public sector. As a result of the various projects that have been conducted by LabX and the collaborative work developed in the 'Innovators' Network', a methodological document has been produced that brings together a set of service design tools and techniques


already tested and validated in the context of the Portuguese public administration - the 'Toolkit'. Still, in the scope of the training it is important to emphasise that the laboratory is qualified to carry out certificated training in service design and experimental methods applied to public sector, and some courses have already been implemented.

LabX is a project that lives from people, with people, to people, so alignment and good articulation between them is crucial. This alignment has been a challenge, as well as an achievement, in different phases of the project. Initially, a process of double acculturation was observed between public administration entities and LabX. Later, in a phase of presentation and discussion of the results of the investigation in different projects, resistance to change has been observed. According to Bruno Monteiro, 'People have to be in the same boat and realise that what we want is to improve. To improve we must understand the problems well and know how to receive the problems coming from other people'. The fact that the project itself has an experimental method and being innovative sometimes implies a change of plans, which interferes with the timetable. Therefore, it is essential that the project partners are extremely aligned to be able to withstand these oscillations, which has been verified.

Another challenge that the LabX team has been facing is, once again, the slowness of public procurement processes, which negatively affects the course of the projects. The research cycles of the projects are short (one to two months) and when completed, there is a wish to prototype the initiatives soon, which is not in line with the months of waiting that the public administration takes to decide on the recruitment of goods and services.


LabX has been progressively gaining its place within the public administration and is increasingly recognised as an effective resource for improving and transforming public services. If at the outset the political support, leadership and follow-up of the Minister of the Presidency and Administrative Modernisation was fundamental to the success of the project, the continuation of this success would have been lost if 'the team was not exceptional, technically and humanly' (Sara Carrasqueiro). Another factor that is highlighted as relevant to the success of LabX is its location in AMA. The fact that AMA is integrated in national and international networks, in close collaboration with similar laboratories worldwide and with an involvement in all the governmental areas of the Portuguese public administration, allowed LabX to not only gain a different scope and dimension, but also the projects that have taken place have been made easier. Here is a summary of the projects and the main results achieved in each:

Table 1. LabX projects

PROJECT	PRODUCTS	PRINCIPAL RESULTS	IMPACTS
<p>Death and Bereavement Services</p> 	<p>Project Video: https://vimeo.com/212100811</p> <p>Online Guide: https://justica.gov.pt/Guias/guia-do-espaco-obito</p> <p>Online simulator: https://justica.gov.pt/Servicos/Simulador-Espaco-Obito</p>	<p>Research and co-creation activities: LabX Roadmap template for creating an integrated and transversal Public Administration Service based on empirical evidence - 'Espaço Óbito'.</p> <p>Pilot of integrated service: 23 recommendations for improvement of the 2nd</p>	<p>For citizens and other agents involved in a death process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Centralization of services/entities to act in a death process; - Streamlined the process; - Clarification of information;

PROJECT	PRODUCTS	PRINCIPAL RESULTS	IMPACTS
	3 Reports and 2 flyers 1 Prototype & 2 pilots	pilot and future 'Espaços Óbito' in the country.	- More careful service, private and human.
Online Job Portal 	3 Analysis reports/recommendations: Online IEFP Portal	New Online IEFP Portal	- Increase in the number of new users in the Portal; - Increase in applications for professional internships; - Elimination of situations that triggered support requests related to the portal experience.
Methodological monitoring of the Business Spot 	Report with lessons learned and recommendations from the methodological follow-up given to the teams involved in this project.	Business Spot (digital) incorporated in the new Portal https://eportugal.gov.pt	A public service, made available on a digital channel, that in a more integrated, easy and efficient way, can support entrepreneurs in the creation and management of their business.
Land registration service 	Research report on motivations and obstacles to cadastral initiatives in Portugal	- A listing of practical intervention recommendations; - A compilation of case studies from previous cadastral initiatives.	More complete diagnosis through research and fieldwork that underpins future interventions.
Attendance at Citizens Shops 	Report with 40 findings; Value propositions; Experimentation phase report.	10 prototypes were developed for the 4 problem areas: Orientation system; Play area; Charging points; Work space; Reading space; Separating panels; Bounding ranges; Ticket screen lifestream; physical ticket; Ticket machine.	Developed prototypes are expected to improve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The orientation in the Citizens Shops; - The use of the ticket machine; - The long wait; - Privacy in attendance.
Electronic Official Journal 	Report with recommendations and learnings on how to improve the process of submission and publication of acts in Electronic Official Gazette of the Republic of Portugal (EOGRP)	Compendium of recommendations on how to improve the process of submission and publication of acts in the EOGRP; Identification of critical points in the submission and publication acts.	It is expected that it will contribute to the adoption of specific improvements to the Portal that will allow easier, clearer and faster use of the Portal, thereby improving the submission and publication processes of acts in the EOGRP
Electronic Invoice 	Report with Roadmap of the spending process and identification of 7 intervention areas; Report with impact assessment of e-invoice process.	Impact assessment on e-invoice implementation.	For LabX: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consolidation of a quantitative project impact assessment methodology for value proposition definition and results reporting;

PROJECT	PRODUCTS	PRINCIPAL RESULTS	IMPACTS
<p>Pro'LabX - LabX methodology training sessions for public administration</p> 	<p>16 working sessions on LabX methodology; Project report.</p>	<p>Pro'LabX model meets objective (to be a stable model to raise awareness of the LabX methodology); The workshops have enhanced the sharing of practices and experiences and peer dialogue itself, creating a more real understanding of the work done by other entities and the challenges they face in their daily lives promoting empathy and the sense of public service among participants; Sessions end with something tangible</p>	<p>- Promotion of an evaluation culture within Public Administration.</p> <p>- Sensitizes participants to LabX methodology in a short time (3.5h) and with good results; - Power a more open public administration and break down silos with real case sharing; - It promotes a culture of experimentation in the public sector.</p>
<p>Education for Citizenship</p> 	<p>Game Kit «Agora Falo Eu!» (650 units) Board game prototype «Stars of Citizenship»</p>	<p>The participatory diagnostic methodology and the generated evidence that it is possible to apply this methodology in the redefinition of pedagogical models. Confirmation of the fact that it is possible to place the student at the center of the teaching-learning process.</p>	<p>Identify alternative ways of teaching citizenship and civic participation to children and youth; Distribution of kits «Agora Falo Eu!» throughout the country: until now were sent kits to 250 schools or associations for testing in context.</p>
<p>Participatory approach to user-centered design - National Security Office (NSO)</p> 	<p>Project Report: Advantages of a Participatory Approach</p>	<p>7 Lessons learned about the advantages of a collaborative approach</p>	<p>Contribute to the support of a participatory approach in public administration; For NSO: new approach that allowed the dematerialization of the Security Accreditation process provided by NSO</p>
<p>Attendance at Tax Authority</p> 	<p>Diagnosis by intervention areas, where opportunities for service improvement are detected from field research</p>	<p>Diagnosis of current relationship between taxpayers and Tax Authority; Detection of intervention areas for improvement; Development of fiscal literacy tool (quizat.gov.pt), which had 2912 participants until now.</p>	<p>Development of a rapid prototyping cycle for the two selected intervention areas.</p>

PROJECT	PRODUCTS	PRINCIPAL RESULTS	IMPACTS
Innovators' Network 	3 Bimonthly sessions «OficinaLabX» attended by 73 colleagues from the public administration; 3 immersive training action performed + 1 scheduled until the end of 2019 3 mentoring actions in ongoing project context 4 bimonthly newsletters sent: 405 Pro'LabX newsletter subscribers	Project still in progress: Promote the proactive participation of different specialists within the public administration to collaboratively solve problems identified within the public administration itself; Dissemination of good practice and efficient approaches to problem solving in public administration.	Dissemination of people-centered approach by different public entities; Creation of a space for sharing and collaboration between PA colleagues.
Public Service as Living Lab	High fidelity prototypes; Ignition session with the University of Aveiro for the generation of ideas; Fieldtrip with 34 public managers from 7 entities to show the Living Lab at the citizen-shop in Aveiro Report on the prototype performance and their user experience	Transforming a public service (Citizen-shop) into a living lab, where public entities can test their innovation in real context; 1º Phase: testing high fidelity prototypes in collaboration with units from the scientific system (a product design lab from the University of Lisbon and a design factory from the University of Aveiro) with the participation of 500 citizens.	Promoting an experimentation culture and evidence-based evaluation methods.
Promotion of Behavioral Sciences applied to Public Policy	Creation of an Expert Panel with 14 members to advise and follow projects of this nature	1 Capacitation session on Behavioral Sciences applied to public policy with 26 public managers; Report/Guidance on how to implement experimental projects.	Presentation of proposals for possible BI interventions on public policy in the Simplex 2019 programme: https://www.simplex.gov.pt/app/files/e61c1def5c1fdbff7425ff29a592191a.pdf

Conclusion: results, lessons learned and the role of ESF financial support

Main results

The main result obtained by LabX is its demonstrating effect. According to Sara Carrasqueiro, it has proved that 'it is possible to do things differently, it is possible for the Public Administration to transform itself into something that is more responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizen and that does not often mean too much money or too much technology'. The demonstration effect of the project is based on the performance results achieved in each project and that are included in the evaluation reports of each one, but essentially in the perception of the impact that LabX has generated in the entities of the public administration with whom it has been working.

According to Marina San-Bento, the Public Administration realized that the future is going through an integrated functioning of its entities. Hélder Lima and Carlos Brito report greater efficiency and effectiveness of services, largely because they are involved in problem solving.

According to Sara Carrasqueiro, there is 'a clear mark of transformation of culture in all the entities that worked with LabX'. The cultural transformation within the public administration is considered as 'the greatest result and possibly the most abstract', but also the most impactful, since 'they realised that it is possible to question and to do mistakes' (which was highly disruptive with the procedural standard established for years in the public administration – 'we do it because we have always done it, because it is the procedure, because it is the regulation'). The transformation is also perceived through the testimonies they collect in each project, officials of the National Security Office said that the sessions 'positively contributed to transform the mentality of the public officials'. Idalina Ferreira also said that 'if there are other projects in this entity, they will no longer be understood in the same way' and Marina San-Bento reinforced this by saying that 'there was something that settled in, something fracturing. We started thinking about things we had never thought of, and now I can't help but wonder - are we responding to what people want?'

For those citizens who have already had contact with the projects developed by LabX, the impacts are also visible. Consider, for example, the 'Espaço Óbito' (Death and Bereavement Service), which has allowed people who are at a more vulnerable stage of their lives, because of the death of a person, to benefit from faster, personalised, efficient, integrated and humane service (which was not previously the case because public services were not articulated in this regard). Another example is the 'Educação para a Cidadania' (Education for Citizenship) project, which has allowed children of some school groups to rethink citizenship differently and who, because of the contact with the project, already carry out projects aligned with their ideas.

All projects have a direct or indirect impact on citizens and companies. However, such impact is not yet widespread. This is an important issue regarding the positioning of LabX. The laboratory empowers teams and builds, in collaboration with public entities, solutions and tools that best respond to the needs and expectations of its users, but does not implement them. The responsibility for the implementation of these solutions lies at the public entities, as Bruno Monteiro notes that 'the projects are completed and delivered to the entities, who can then decide whether or not to extend their implementation'. The innovation should be assimilated by the 'owner' of the service itself; otherwise, there is the risk of rejecting or neglecting it. As an example of the demonstrative effect and impact of the 'Education for Citizenship' project, just during the testing phase there were more than 250 Portuguese schools and associations that applied to use this methodology (alternative ways of teaching citizenship and civic participation to children and young people), which will have a resounding replicating effect.

Lessons learned

According to Bruno Monteiro, the main lesson learned by the project team is that 'it is possible to transform public administration to make it more responsive to evidence-based decisions, more sensitive to drawing its end users (citizens and companies), to questioning, investigating and co-creating their processes, and then adopting risk and expressing that something may not work'.

But this lesson was only possible because of the process of constant learning through the projects that have been conducted by LabX. One of the main lessons learned is the importance of recognising that there are no identical solutions to similar problems. The solutions have to be calibrated according to the different contexts and realities (of the citizens themselves, of the companies themselves, of the very functioning of public entities). As Marina San-Bento said 'they do not think they have a generalist model, they are open to changing the model to the sociocultural reality of all contexts'. Here are other key lessons for the success of the project, reported by LabX team and the interviewed parties:

- 1) The process of recruiting the participants is crucial, 'it was realised that through an open submission model people and teams are more motivated to work differently in the public administration'.
- 2) The recruitment of teams and not only of individuals from the public administration is valued, since 'by exposing several people from the same team to these methodologies, the impact of the initiative is boosted and it is easier to leverage processes of organisational change'.
- 3) The participation of managers can be a facilitator or inhibitor of the process, 'if on the one hand it guarantees the alignment of the management of the entity with the new practices that are intended to implement, on the other hand, it can be a factor inhibiting the exposure of problems and presentation of possible solutions'. In this way, it is important to be aware of this reality, so that the work dynamics of the team can be adjusted more effectively.
- 4) The participation of teams from different public entities promotes a more open administration, a sharing of practices and experiences, allows a more real understanding of the work and difficulties experienced, and 'promotes empathy and a sense of public service among the participants'.
- 5) The existence of a practical and tangible component allows a materialisation and visualisation of the possible solution, which 'is highly valued by the participants'.

In a rapidly changing reality, a constant search for solutions that fit the needs of citizens and companies efficiently and effectively is very important. The LabX team, in addition to basing its practice on evidence, participatory mechanisms, collaborative exchanges, experimentation and measurement, seeks to go beyond these, broadening its knowledge and seeking resources in different areas, from the design of services or up to the behavioural sciences and participation techniques.

This is simultaneously an issue that is related to the future of LabX. One of the objectives of the project, which lags behind the others, concerns the creation and strengthening of an ecosystem of innovation in public administration. According to Sara Carrasqueiro, 'innovating is not only done with the public administration, it is done with the citizens, with companies but also with partners who are more skilled and empowered in certain areas'. In other words, if potential solutions go through resources and know-how that public administration does not have, for example, emerging technologies, 'we must continue to diversify, invest and strengthen/consolidate our system-wide network of partnerships national scientific and start-ups', explains Bruno Monteiro. In the future, it is fundamental that there should be a mediator between public administration entities and this network of partners, which serves as an ignition or matchmaker between the entities and the most appropriate strategies. This might be a future function of LabX.

The innovation ecosystem will be increasingly needed. The laboratory has capacity limits, so its future must be to, in the words of Bruno Monteiro, to 'transform the lab limits into the centre of its action, creating more partnerships to scale its capacity and opening channels between the public administration and the surrounding environment', in order to be able to define priorities and to promote a greater work in collaboration. This will be a possible way to ensure the sustainability of the changes produced and the constant alignment with the needs of citizens and companies.

Role of ESF support

Despite the fact that LabX was assumed as a project proposed directly by the Office of the Ministry of the Presidency and Administrative Modernisation, with a political intention and already with support for its implementation, the support of the ESF was essential for the success of its action.

The ESF was very important at an early stage to build an exclusive team (100% dedicated to the project) with the resources needed to develop the proposed projects. The effect of funding has also been 'felt' along this path. The fact that the project itself is an experience has generated an initial mistrust (as mentioned previously), 'an Innovation Lab?'. We already know that the perception is that 'there should be no play with public money...', so the funding, according Sara Carrasqueiro, provided an incentive to 'demonstrate that it is possible to experiment within the public administration and that this has advantages'.

The third reason that external funding has provided added value to LabX is reflected in the requirement for rigorous planning and control underlying any ESF-funded project. The requirement of a work plan with specific objectives, resources and identification of expected results has allowed a strategic orientation and a discipline in the management of the project. This control and guidance has enabled the sub-projects cycles to be met so far, fighting the team's temptation to remain to the point of exhaustion in a project until the best solution is found.

Evaluating and communicating results are both LabX team's concerns and requirements. The fact that it is a funded project reinforces this need and may allow further dissemination of the project. Currently, it is possible to state that LabX has already had its demonstrative effect on public administration entities that had contact with the project. LabX is recognised as a project that is 'transformative', since these entities 'started to work in a different way, they began to listen to the citizen, to gather information and to look at the data'. Public administration services are increasingly becoming infected with the LabX methodology. Thinking differently about public administration could go viral and, as said by Sara Carraqueiro, become an 'Epidemic'!

REFERENCES

LabX (2017), Diário da República Eletrónico – Relatório de Recomendações. AMA [presentation] [Electronic Official Journal - Recommendations report].

LabX (2018), *LabX - Laboratório de Experimentação da Administração Pública*. [LabX – Experimentation Lab for Public Administration]. Available at: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/labx-laborat%C3%B3rio-de-experimenta%C3%A7%C3%A3o-da-administra%C3%A7%C3%A3o-filipa-costa/>

LabX (2018), *Investigar, conceber, experimentar*. [Investigate, design, experiment] Available at: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/investigar-conceber-experimentar-daniel-santos/>

LabX (2019), Podemos mudar a Administração Pública? Um espaço seguro para (re)desenhar serviços públicos centrados no cidadão. AMA [presentation] [Can we change the Public Administration? A safe space to (re) design citizen-centric public services].

LabX. As vantagens da colaboração – Sete razões para adotar uma abordagem participativa dentro da Administração Pública. AMA [presentation] [The advantages of collaboration - Seven reasons to take a participatory approach within Public Administration].

LabX. Atendimento 2.0 – Melhorar o relacionamento entre contribuintes e autoridade tributária. AMA [presentation] [Customer Service 2.0 - Improve relationship between taxpayers and tax Authorities].

LabX. Espaço Óbito – Modelo de atendimento integrado, mais próximo e humano. AMA [presentation] [Death and Bereavement Services - Closer, humane integrated care model].

LabX. Portal *IEFPonline* – Desenho de Experiência de Utilizador num portal público. AMA [presentation] [Online Job Portal - User experience design in a public portal].

LabX. Pro'LabX – Principais lições e notas de encerramento. AMA [presentation] [Pro'LabX - Key lessons and closing remarks].

LabX. Toolkit – Para serviços públicos centrados nos cidadãos. AMA [presentation] [Toolkit - For citizen-centric public services].

Monteiro, B. & Carrasqueiro, S. (2019), *LabX: Innovation is impossible without a change in culture*. Available at: https://apolitical.co/solution_article/labx-innovation-is-impossible-without-a-change-in-culture/?fbclid=IwAR26sVNWm_xZA6xhyGLckAyI2WTFv9PbsxfeabOVXzNWcR_hFRGOsqhcie (accessed: 29 June 2019).

Programa do XXI Governo Constitucional 2015-2019. Available at: <https://www.portugal.gov.pt/ficheiros-geral/programa-do-governo-pdf.aspx> (accessed: 30 July 2019) [Programme of the 21st Constitutional Government 2015-2019].

HOW TO OBTAIN EU PUBLICATIONS

Free publications:

- one copy:
via EU Bookshop (<http://bookshop.europa.eu>);
- more than one copy or posters/maps:
from the European Union's representations (http://ec.europa.eu/represent_en.htm);
from the delegations in non-EU countries (http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/index_en.htm);
by contacting the Europe Direct service (http://europa.eu/europedirect/index_en.htm) or
calling 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (freephone number from anywhere in the EU) (*).

(*). The information given is free, as are most calls (though some operators, phone boxes or hotels may charge you).

Priced publications:

- via EU Bookshop (<http://bookshop.europa.eu>).

Priced subscriptions:

- via one of the sales agents of the Publications Office of the European Union (http://publications.europa.eu/others/agents/index_en.htm).



■ Publications Office