



NAZARBAYEV  
UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL  
OF PUBLIC POLICY

## GSPP DIGEST 05 • 2018

2018  
**GSPP**  
conference  
5-6 October

ON CONTEMPORARY ISSUES  
IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION  
IN POST-SOVIET EURASIA



GOOD GOVERNANCE MATTERS



## **Representatives of more than 30 countries gathered in Astana to discuss contemporary public administration issues in post-Soviet Eurasia**

On 5-6 October 2018, the Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Public Policy (NU GSPP) and the Astana Civil Service Hub held a conference on "Contemporary Issues in Public Administration in post-Soviet Eurasia" at Nazarbayev University.

Researchers, experts and civil service practitioners from more than 30 countries, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Hungary, Singapore, China, the Netherlands, Malaysia, India, Australia, the United Kingdom, Finland and other countries participated in the conference.

The Dean of the NU GSPP Weng Tat Hui said: "We are excited that the conference has brought together academicians and practitioners from more than 30 countries. They shared knowledge and experience in public administration and learnt from each other's work. This should contribute to more evidence-based policy making for the leaders of post-Soviet Eurasia".

In turn, the Chairman of the Steering Committee of the Astana Civil Service Hub Alikhan Baimenov in his opening remarks noted: "The countries of our region have undergone a unique path of social and economic reforms while simultaneously transforming the government's role and developing their own public service models. Understanding the travelled path and the analysis of the achievements and problems are of interest for both researchers and public administration practitioners".

The President of the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee) György Hajnal also gave a welcome speech.

The conference included, among others, sessions on public administration, civil service reforms, interaction between the civil service, business and civil society, where more than 60 research papers were presented. The conference participants shared their research outcomes, knowledge and experience and expanded partnership networks.

The International Conference on Public Policy and Administration has been organized for the second time. This year, along with the main organizers, the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, British Academy and Ulster University (UK) supported the event.

[Link to the Video of the Opening](#)





## **President Nazarbayev announced new Public Sector Leadership Program**

Participants of the GSPP Conference shared their views on executive education of civil servants.

### **Weng Tat Hui, Dean of the Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Public Policy**

"We really welcome President Nazarbayev's announcement that we should collaborate with the Academy of Public Administration and the Agency for Civil Service and Anticorruption in relation to development of the joint programs for top civil servants. We have done this in the past and we look forward to greater collaboration. We believe that at Nazarbayev University's Graduate School of Public Policy we can complement one another in the area of training civil servants not only at the senior level but at all levels. We have extensive expertise amongst our professors who are specialists in various aspects of public policy and administration. We also have our strategic partner, the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, from where we can also draw on resources in training for senior civil servants."

### **Theo Toonen, Dean, Faculty of Behavioral, Management and Social Science, Twente University, Netherlands**

"I think it is an extremely important initiative to create a leadership for developing the country in international perspective. It all depends on the way that you are doing it. I think benchmarking is important to compare yourself with other parts of the world, regions or countries. But it is extremely well if you can take your own challenges. Secondly, it is extremely important that you don't see it as insulated initiative of government or business but you combine it into an effort that people now call triple / quadruple helix model in which education of top civil servants is embedded in defining the challenges at the given moment for any given country and then elaborate this together in a course combining the insights of government, industry, civil society and science. This is a quadruple helix type of concept education. This would be upfront, modernized type of education for the top civil service and policy-makers."

### **György Hajnal, The President of the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee)**

"I agree about the importance of creating educational programs for senior officials. So far I have been experiencing more cases, problems and challenges involving designing of such type of programs. I would like to highlight the importance but also the challenges of such an endeavor.

**Expectations.** There are hugely diverging expectations regarding such training on the part of the trainees themselves and also on the part of those who deliver the training. There are usually very few needs assessment, specificities and the needs of the target group are rarely sufficiently taken into account.

**Time Pressure.** Senior managers work under extreme high time pressure. It is very difficult to engage them under systematic classroom type training activities. This is very serious hindrance for designing and delivering good training for senior people.



**Turnover.** Suppose, you are designing training which is very good. It's a general phenomenon in Central Eastern European countries and, probably, also in post-Soviet Eurasia that there is a very high staff turnover. So you invest a lot into developing training and human resources and then this investment is lost quickly because of the staff turnover.

Keeping this in mind, I would like to emphasize that instead of having a narrow focus on just the training itself (which is important) it is necessary to have the broader view and systemic approach. For this you need to have professional career civil service which is frequently not the case in the countries of our regions."



### **GSPP meet with Renmin University to discuss future collaboration**

Following the Conference on "Contemporary Issues in Public Administration in post-Soviet Eurasia" GSPP leadership held a meeting with representatives of the Renmin University to discuss areas for mutual cooperation including the prospect for a students exchange program.

### **Seminar on future thinking and scenario planning**

GSPP organized a seminar for the Astana International Financial Center (AIFC) team on Futures Thinking and Scenario Planning on 19 – 21 September 2018. The seminar was delivered by Dr Adriaan Kuah from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy. Futures thinking, through scenario planning and other tools, enhance the capacity of policymakers to anticipate change in complex environments, surface hidden assumptions, and to uncover weaknesses and inflexibilities in their organizations. Futures thinking plays an important role in provoking policymakers out of their comfort zones, to consider the bigger systemic context beyond their immediate domains, and to activate the imagination, at both the individual and organizational levels, so that the future is not simply an extrapolation of the present.





### **Harmonization of strategic and budget planning**

GSPP held seminar on Harmonization of Strategic and Budget Planning, 10 - 12 October 2018 for 85 representatives of the Ministry for the Investment and Development, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, Ministry of Defense and Aerospace Industry, Ministry of Education and Science, Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan for Public Service and Anti- corruption and various organizations. The topics discussed included Strategic Planning and Futures Thinking in Singapore, Project Evaluation and Budget Utilization Frameworks and Performance-based Budgeting: Principles and Practices. The seminar was delivered by Lee Kok Fatt and Chen Shian Jan from Singapore.

### **Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Public Policy (GSPP) organized the Guest Lecture on “7 Skills for 21st Century Public Leaders”.**

Increasingly, public managers operate in a VUCA world – characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. Leaders are answerable to multiple stakeholders, including their own organizations, parent and sister agencies, private companies, citizens, and civil society groups, as well as international actors and organizations. At the same time, if they manage to leverage the strengths and expertise offered by stakeholders and harness the benefits of technologies, they may be able to create more value at lower costs. In short: 21st century challenges can be turned into immense opportunities. But how should they tackle this? Clearly, business as usual is not an option. Developing competencies in areas such as strategic planning, operational control, and financial forecasting are no longer sufficient. New skills, competencies, and values will have to be added to existing ones. But which will be most important, and how can managers and their agencies acquire and nurture these skills, competencies, and values? Prof Zeger Van Der Wal of the National University of Singapore LKY School provided cutting-edge insights on complexity, diversity, and resilience in preparation for a VUCA world.

### **Working with generation Z**

Professor Zeger van der Wal also provided training for university and school leaders on working with the generation Z within the Professional Development course organized by the Graduate School of Education. He also gave an interview covering such topics as attracting and keeping Gen Z as academic staff, motivating Gen Z for long-term work commitment with delayed results. Follow the link to view the video





## **Prof Colin Knox visited Khoja Ahmet Yassawi Kazakh-Turkish University in Turkestan, South Kazakhstan, on 7 – 13 October 2018.**

The purpose of the trip was to: share the experience of Nazarbayev University with Yassawi; offer lectures to students on the Bachelors, Masters and PhD in Public Administration; build capacity amongst the Faculty in the School of Governance and Economics; and, provide training to administrative staff (Deans, Vice Deans and Heads of Department). In addition, Professor Knox offered advice on applying for research grants, improving pedagogy through various types of teaching methods, and, in particular, the use of case studies in teaching public administration.

The staff and students at the university were extremely grateful for teaching, consultation and advice offered. They were hugely impressed by the Nazarbayev University experience and many sessions extended well beyond their scheduled times such as the volume of questions and follow-up comments.

### **Governance in Kazakhstan: improvements but could do better**

An upward trend in government effectiveness is hugely commendable and Kazakhstan has worked hard to improve public services through electronic government and one-stop-shops. But there is much more that can be done. Prof Colin Knox and Prof Saltanat Janenova suggest the following 5 concurrent key steps broadly under the theme of Open Government. Follow the link to read the article.

### **Interview with Prof Stefanos Xenarios on water resources in Central Asia**

Water management is inevitably a political issue. The river flows and lake ecosystems have determined to a large extent the economic development of Central Asia up to today. Poor management of water resources as we have experienced in the case of Aral basin entails severe environmental and economic consequences on local and regional level.

Central Asia is so much abided by transboundary water management which demands political consent, will and commitment of all CA parties for the even allocation of resources. Although there is a heterogeneous demand of energy use e.g. hydropower, agriculture, industry, environmental all CA countries perceive water as an essential mean to improve economic development. The economic development can be a major driver to encourage CA countries negotiating on water allocation and quality issues by seriously considering also the environmental aspects of aquatic ecosystems.

Please follow the link to read the interview.





## **GUEST LECTURES FOR MPA STUDENTS**

### **Guest Lecture by Professor Phoebe Koundouri from Athens University of Economics and Business, Greece on 8 September 2018**

Prof. Phoebe Koundouri is a highly cited academic author ranked in the top 1% of all female economists in the world and founder of the of the International Center for Research on the Economy and the Environment (ICRE8). She gave a thorough presentation on the role of socio-economic tools and approaches on the management of major environmental challenges in the globe. She also presented the Sustainable Development Solution Network of which ICRE8 is a member, which was established for the attaining of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and currently performing as a wide cooperation platform among research, academics, business sector and policy makers.

### **Guest Lecture by Dr. Jenniver Sehring from IHE Delft Institute for Water Education, Netherlands on 15 September 2018**

Dr. Jenniver Sehring has an extensive experience in Central Asia on aspects related to water governance and integrated water resources management approaches. Dr Sehring has given illustrative examples on the role of water governance in river basin systems of Central Asia by emphasizing on the performance of Water User Associations in each country.

### **Guest Lecture by Mr Apostolis Tzimas, from EMVIS Water Resources and Environmental Management, Greece on 22 September 2018**

Mr. Tzimas has major experience on water supply and wastewater management services (WWS) in Europe and Mediterranean countries. He explained the role of WWS as major utility operators and the lessons to be learnt from the European practices mainly on the effective performance of wastewater treatment facilities.

### **Participation in Events**

Prof Stefanos Xenarios, is Co-Editor-in-Chief of the Central Asian Journal of Water Research. He participated on the Annual Editorial Board Meeting held in Almaty on 8 October 2018.



# VIDEO ABOUT GSPP SINGAPORE COMPONENT

We are delighted to share with you the video about GSPP Singapore Component at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy.

Please feel free to share it with your friends and colleagues!

