

Training Government  
Purchasing Staff

The Global Legal Context  
for Public Procurement

Latvia Builds on  
UNCITRAL Model

Managing Complaints of  
Dissatisfied Bidders

### Forum Focus

Poland Leads the Way  
in Procurement Reform

Vol. IV - N° 2  
March/April 1998

## *Strengthening Procurement Laws and Systems*

*by Richard Allen*

**R**eform of public procurement laws, administrative structures and procedures is a high priority task for countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Such reform is a precondition both for membership of the European Union and for access to the large amounts of pre-accession aid to which candidate countries are eligible.

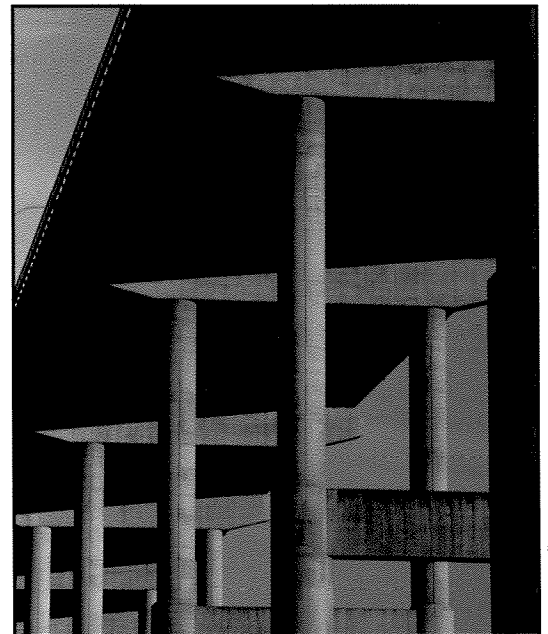
The basic requirements are four-fold: 1) procurement legislation that is compatible with the European Community directives, and other international obligations; 2) effective procedures that include a central public procurement office (PPO) with overall responsibility for the development and implementation of procurement policy, open and transparent tender procedures and a network of skilled professionals in public sector organisations responsible for procurement; 3) efficient exchange of information between the PPO and the hundreds or thousands of public procurement entities; and 4) effective procedures for resolving disputes, financial control and audit.

Within this broad framework there is no national "model" that represents an ideal solution in all cases. The diversity of systems and practice in Europe reflects variations in national cultures and experience.

In Central and Eastern Europe, some countries have made more progress than others in transposing law and building new institutions. The articles by Piotr-Nils Górecki and Edvins Parups provide contrasting experience from one country (Poland) that is well down the road of reform and another (Latvia) at a much earlier stage of development.

### *Diversity in European Practice*

Many countries face a problem because their existing legislation is often based on the United Nations



(UNCITRAL) model, not on the more detailed and specific EC directives. Governments are also expected to comply with World Trade Organisation and World Bank requirements on procurement. Gosta Westring's article provides guidance on interpreting this tangled web of legal requirements. Developing a European Model Law on Procurement may be desirable.

EC directives require that the law is applied without discrimination. Companies that feel they have not been given fair treatment in a public tender should be able to complain to an independent body. The article by Jean-Philippe Nadal describes the wide diversity of European practice in the disputes settlement area.

Finally, training is a crucially important element for countries in the region seeking to raise professional standards of tendering, contract management, control and audit to European levels. George Jadoun describes the main requirements and challenges in this field. ♦

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PMF is published six times a year by SIGMA, the Programme for Support for Improvement in Governance and Management in Central and Eastern European Countries.

Views expressed herein do not represent the official views of the European Commission, OECD Member countries, nor the central and eastern European countries participating in the Programme.

Written submissions are welcome. Story ideas, humour and letters to the editor should be sent to the address below. The editors reserve the right to edit submissions for clarity, style, grammar and space on the basis of, *inter alia*, the OECD *Style Book* and the OECD *Green Book*.



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ISSN Number : 1024-7416  
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## Public Procurement in Brief

Readers interested in the feature topic of this issue may wish to obtain a copy of SIGMA Policy Brief No. 3: Public Procurement. This six-page publication is intended to make public procurement accessible to a wide audience interested in governance in Central and Eastern Europe, including political decision-makers, the media, representatives of non-governmental organisations, and business and labour associations.

This Policy Brief highlights the significance of procurement in EU Member States, where state purchases of goods and services have reached about 10-15 per cent of GNP, equivalent to 25-30 per cent of public expenditure. Public procurement legislation has increased in recent years, and multilateral arrangements like the World Trade Organisation's Government Procurement Agreement and EC procurement directives set legal obligations for national procurement systems and practices.

The publication also spells out the components of building a national procurement system -- putting into practice principles of open competition and transparency, designing the legal and organisational framework, training staff, availability of information and statistics, anti-corruption measures, and mechanisms for resolving disputes. Actions needed to maintain the system and published materials on the procurement are also highlighted.

Copies of SIGMA Policy Brief No. 3 are available in English or French free of charge from SIGMA and on the Internet (see addresses to left).

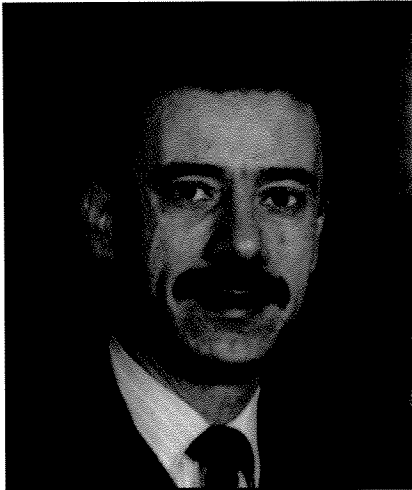
Bart W. Édes, Editor-in-Chief

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# Public Procurement Training in Central and Eastern Europe

by George Jadoun



George Jadoun

Courtesy photo

*Legislative, institutional and market efficiency constraints affect the performance of a public procurement system. Another factor influencing the operation of such a system is the position of highly skilled, motivated staff who have benefited from a national training programme.*

Public procurement training programmes in central and eastern European countries tend to be directed towards the staff of governmental institutions. Yet training should not overlook private sector suppliers, contractors, consultants and the public at large. Indeed, at least three different target groups and types of training can be identified:

- *Private sector suppliers*

A general orientation programme on the legislative and institutional framework of the public procurement system and on how to compete for government contracts can ensure active and informed participation of national providers in public procurement. In addition, private firms need training to develop specific skills such as negotiation, training techniques and contract management.

- *Policy-makers and the general public*

Awareness-raising seminars for policy makers

and mass media campaigns for the general public are necessary to highlight the importance of public procurement to the national economy and in the development of the single European market. The relationship between sound public procurement and good governance can be emphasised to rally political support for an efficient, economic and transparent public procurement system.

- *Public procurement staff*

A training needs assessment should be conducted, and the procurement process broken down into its constituent tasks. These tasks can then be grouped together to form "skill profiles" to correspond to job competencies required for various categories of procurement officers (eg newly recruited staff, middle-level procurement officers with purchasing responsibilities exceeding EU thresholds). Thereafter, the actual skill levels of the staff can be matched against the desired skill profiles and an overall assessment of "skill deficit" can be established.

### *Design and Delivery in National Training*

A difficulty in building a coherent and effective public procurement system is that the procurement process is fragmented amongst hundreds or thousands of procurement "entities" in different government ministries, agencies, local administrations, and other public bodies. Creating a central organisation -- a government public procurement office -- to develop training materials, and to co-ordinate and supervise training delivery, is quite important in light of this fragmentation, the great demand for training and the tight agenda for reforming procurement to prepare for EU accession. Most central and eastern European countries have established public procurement offices, which are spearheading the development and dissemination of national procurement training programmes,

as well as taking responsibility for the development of policy issues.

Variances in training can be expected between countries due to differences in cultural, legal and institutional structures. The constantly changing market conditions -- as well as changes in the legislative and regulatory environment -- call for the establishment of a flexible and competency-based training system. Flexibility is best served by the development of modular training curricula that are based on the "systems approach" to training. Such curricula will suit one or more of the staff categories while accommodating differences in entry-level skills.

Continuous refinement of the curricula and gradual introduction of advanced training courses for senior procurement staff, legal staff and arbitrators of the bidding process are important to keep current with latest knowledge and best practices. The introduction of programmes tailored for various service levels will pave the way for certification of public procurement officers and the beginning of the era of professionalism and accountability in public procurement. Further, the formation of national procurement associations should be encouraged to promote professionalism through training and to exchange innovative purchasing techniques at the leading edge of best practice.

### *Training Network*

As regards training delivery, the public procurement office might consider forming a network of national training institutions (eg universities, governmental centres). In each of these institutions, a core team of trainers will be trained and certified by the office which, for quality assurance purposes, should initially supervise training and licensing of all trainers of the network.

*Continued on p.9* ➤

# The International Legal Context for Public Procurement by Central and Eastern European Countries

by Gosta Westring

Many central and eastern European governments face a problem because their public procurement legislation is based on the United Nations (UNCITRAL) Model, not on the more detailed and specific EC directives. Governments are also expected to comply with World Trade Organisation and World Bank requirements on procurement, where applicable. The article below interprets this tangled web of legal requirements and explains the imperative of procurement reform for European integration.

Most central and eastern European countries have adopted public procurement legislation and in doing so are exposed to influences from the European Union and from international financing institutions and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Two main questions confront these countries in choosing the correct approach to legislation in the public procurement area to meet the dual purpose of satisfying EU requirements and meeting other national or international policy objectives:

1. Do EC directives have to be literally transposed into national law, or is there latitude for adaptation to national practices, concepts and vocabulary?
2. Is compliance with the EC directives sufficient to satisfy other national interests, and, if not, how should provisions based on the EC directives be merged into a single text with those provisions which are drafted primarily to serve other interests, such as conformity with other international obligations or national self-interest (economy, efficiency, environment, employment, etc.)?

To answer these questions, governments need to become acquainted with the international environment for procurement legislation.



## Features of International Models

There is no shortage of legislative texts and legal advisory material to inspire governments of Central and Eastern Europe when they grapple with the challenge of creating a modern public procurement system. The models most frequently advocated, and in some instances even prescribed, are EC procurement directives, the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) concluded in the context of the WTO, the UNCITRAL Model Law, and the World Bank Procurement Guidelines (see box on page 6).

The EC, GPA and World Bank models express policies and concepts supported by countries with different *national* approaches to public procurement. To some extent, they represent the outcome of negotiations between countries with different interests and "clout" in making their own imprint on the final product. The UNCITRAL Model Law also resulted from an international effort. The drafters, however, were individual members of a working group

with no particular national interest, supported by a secretariat in the UN Legal Department. The Model Law can be said to constitute a set of recommendations to legislators, based on the professional experience and judgement of the individuals participating in the working group.

For central and eastern European countries, public procurement regulations came as a novel feature together with other market-oriented legislation when the centrally planned economy was liberalised. Though some countries of the region -- Estonia, Latvia and Poland may be cited as examples -- went back to their pre-communist history in search for model language, most countries could approach the existing international models with an open mind.

## Openness, Equal Treatment & Transparency

Like the EC procurement directives, the GPA and the World Bank Procurement Guidelines rest on the assumption that a country *does* have a national procurement law and/or regulations. Such international regimes

## Eastern European Governments

superimpose upon the national regulations some rules designed to encourage international competition and discourage practices favouring local suppliers over suppliers from a select group of countries, be it EU Member States, signatories to the GPA or members of the World Bank.

EC directives address only contracts above certain monetary thresholds, which means to many smaller procuring entities that the norm to be followed is the national regulation, subject only to those basic provisions in the Treaty of Rome which generally prohibit discriminatory treatment of suppliers and candidates from other Member States. The same statement is true for the GPA and the World Bank Procurement Guidelines: under both of those regimes, there is a threshold below which national procedures apply so long as they do not collide with basic rules of non-discrimination and fairness.

The essence, then, of the European Community, WTO and World Bank procurement regimes is their insistence that major contracts be awarded according to specific procedures designed to ensure:

- *openness*: active advertising and preference for open tendering;
- *equal treatment*: neutral specifications and objective award criteria; and
- *transparency*: a clearly defined set of rules, applied in a predictable manner and subject to public inspection.

While the EC and GPA schemes do not expressly state economy and efficiency in public procurement as an overall objective, spokesmen for those systems generally maintain that the enforcement of openness, equal treatment and transparency leads to economic and efficient results. The World Bank Guidelines are more explicit in

designating economy and efficiency as a primary target. All in all, the public procurement systems *do* suffer from some internal tension between the various policy objectives, and, as a result, the enforcement of the rules tends to be a matter of concern to all interested parties.

### UNCITRAL Model Law

The UNCITRAL Model Law was adopted in 1994, following an eight-year gestation period in which various drafts circulated among the members of a working group with representatives of countries from around the world supported by expertise from the World Bank and a secretariat in the United Nations' Legal Department. The law is accompanied by a guide to assist legislators in evaluating and applying it.

The Model Law summarises general principles applicable to public procurement, descriptions of the various procurement methods, and procedures to be applied in response to complaints. As the title indicates, the Model Law is not in the nature of a treaty and does not aspire to be converted into one; it is a model capable of inspiring national legislation. Thus, while the GPA and the EC procurement directives provide mutual rights and obligations for participating states, and the World Bank Procurement Guidelines have to be followed as a condition for borrowing from the Bank, the UNCITRAL Model Law has no binding effect. Its authority lies in the professional level of work devoted to it and to the general endorsement given to the final product by the UN General Assembly.

As stated in the *Guide to Enactment of the UNCITRAL Model Law*, the recommendations were drafted with the interests in mind, particularly, of those states "whose economic systems are in

transition" and where "reform of the public procurement system is a cornerstone of the law reforms being undertaken to increase the market orientation of the economy".

Many central and eastern European countries have since 1994 used the UNCITRAL Model Law in drafting or amending their national procurement systems, including Albania, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, and Slovenia. In most of these countries, the legislative work has been carried out with financial support from international agencies, such as the World Bank, and this has tended to give the various national laws a common structure and similarity in essential respects. Thus, despite the existing variations, it is generally true to say that procurement legislation in central and eastern European countries is based on the UNCITRAL Model Law, the only legislative framework of its kind. At the time, little attention was paid to future compatibility with EC directives.

### Institutional Arrangements

The 1996 EC Green Paper entitled *Public Procurement in the European Union: Exploring the Way Forward* refers to the need for supervision of the correct application of the existing legal framework for public procurement in Member States. The Green Paper discusses ways to improve the public contract award procedures and adherence to EC advertising requirements. There is no specific instruction in the EC directives, however, for Member States to make specific institutional and administrative arrangements to ensure adherence to the procurement rules. The obligation to secure compliance with the directives rests with the Member States.

The same thing applies under the GPA: Article XXI regarding institutions merely

establishes a committee with representatives of signatory states to afford the parties the opportunity to consult each other on any matters relating to the operation of the agreement. Similarly, World Bank loans are made to governments, and the obligation to secure proper adherence to agreed procurement procedures rests with the borrowing government, not directly with any particular agency. The UNCITRAL Model Law suggests that the state which enacts a public procurement law based on the Model Law should specify the organ or authority authorised to promulgate procurement regulations to fulfil the objectives and carry out the provisions of the law. Otherwise, there are no recommendations in the Model Law as regards institutional and administrative arrangements to secure proper implementation.

Thus, while many central and eastern European countries have chosen to delegate supervisory authority to a particular institution, they are under no obligation to do so. Another issue relating to institutional arrangements concerns the definition of entities obliged to follow the procurement regulations and the authority delegated to such procuring entities. The EC definition extends the notion into the private sector (eg utilities). The GPA negotiations dealt primarily with the extent of coverage and in that respect mainly with an enumeration of entities on the fringe of the public sector that were to be placed under the GPA umbrella.

Coupled with the definition of procuring entities is the question of decision-making authority delegated to each entity. Efficient procurement requires speedy and

professional decision-making, and delegation of authority to, and within, each procuring entity is generally regarded as necessary. Such is the policy expressed in most central and eastern European country laws. Some governments will, however, wish to see major contract awards exposed to prior reviews by a higher authority.

#### *Managing Tensions Between Different International Requirements*

A loan agreement between the World Bank and one of its borrowers will normally include a special annex stating as a main rule that procurement under the loan will be by "international competitive bidding" in accordance with the Bank's guidelines. Exceptionally, the Bank will agree that contracts below an agreed threshold will be

### *International Rules & Guidelines on Public Procurement*

#### *European Union*

97/52/EC of 13 October 1997 amending directives 92/50/EEC, 93/36/EEC, 93/37/EEC concerning the co-ordination of procedures for the award of public service contracts, public supply contracts and public works contracts, respectively;

93/36/EEC of 14 June 1993 co-ordinating procedures for the award of public supply contracts;

93/37/EEC of 14 June 1993 concerning the co-ordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts;

93/38/EEC of 14 June 1993 co-ordinating the procurement procedures of entities operating in the water, energy, transport and telecommunications sectors;

92/50/EEC of 18 June 1992 relating to the co-ordination of procedures for the award of public service contracts;

89/665/EEC of 21 December 1989 on the co-ordination of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions relating to the application of review procedures to the award of public supply and public works contracts; and

92/13/EEC of 25 February 1992 co-ordinating the laws, regulations and administrative provisions relating to the application of Community rules on the procurement procedures of entities operating in the water, energy, transport and telecommunications sectors.

#### *World Trade Organisation*

Agreement on Government Procurement of 15 April 1994.

#### *World Bank*

*Guidelines, Procurement Under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits*. January 1995, rev. January and August 1996.

#### *United Nations*

Model Law on Procurement of Goods, Construction and Services, *Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the Work of its Twenty-Seventh Session*, UN General Assembly Official Record, 49th Session, Supp. No. 17, UN Document A/49/17 (1994).

awarded according to a simpler procedure. This usually means applying the borrower's national regulations, or for very small contracts an even simpler procedure, such as request for quotations.

The international competitive bidding procedure is described in the Bank's guidelines in a language which, at least traditionally, would allow a fair amount of discretion to the borrower. The Bank has gradually become less flexible in its requirements, and has made it mandatory for borrowers to use the Bank's standard documents for procurement whenever the loan agreement prescribes international competitive bidding. The loan agreement also provides that the terms of the agreement are binding irrespective of any contrary provisions in the borrowing country's laws.

There should be no cause for concern that the provisions of a loan agreement with the Bank (or some other international financing institution) would collide with the EC directives, since each EC directive exempts procurement "pursuant to the particular procedure of an international organisation". Consequently, when procuring entities use borrowed money and are under an obligation to follow rules of an international funding agency, the provisions of the loan agreement take precedence over EC directives.

To sum up, the World Bank lending conditions are such as to remove any potential tension between World Bank rules and national regulations by stipulating that the Bank's procurement guidelines prevail over any contrary provisions.

### *The UNCITRAL Model Law Versus EC Directives*

Unlike the UNCITRAL Model Law, EC directives are binding. The former could never take precedence over EC directives in the

manner that procurement procedures agreed with the World Bank could.

Thus, countries with laws built on the UNCITRAL Model Law would need to consider amending their existing legislation in a number of respects when it comes to contracts over EU thresholds. For example, the Model Law envisages that a government may, on grounds specified in EC regulations or otherwise by law, exclude participants from certain countries. Any such exclusion would be in conflict with EC basic norms and directives, if aimed at a Member State, or a GPA participant, but not otherwise.

With regard to methods of procurement, the Model Law defines a bouquet of procedures which differ from EC directives both in name and in criteria for use. Even if the underlying principles are the same -- fair and open competition -- the differences in both language and detailed substance are likely to be regarded by the European Commission as too big to be accepted. Also, the Model Law's criteria for awards are more elaborate but probably not conflicting with EC award criteria. Nevertheless, Article 34 (4) (d) of the Model Law opens up the possibility of a preference for domestic tenderers. Such a preference would clearly violate EC directives and basic treaty provisions.

Due to such discrepancies -- and the fact that the EC directives distinguish procurement in the "classical sectors" from procurement in the utilities sectors in a way which requires further, careful editing -- it would appear difficult to amend a law based on the UNCITRAL Model in a manner satisfying the European Commission.

### *Transposition of EC Directives*

The question of whether EC directives have to be literally transposed will be answered in the

accession negotiations. The experience of other recent entrants, like Sweden, is that the European Commission can be expected to keep pressing for strict adherence to basic norms and minimal editorial changes. This answer needs to be amplified so far as the remedies directives are concerned: here EC requirements are stated more in terms of objectives to be achieved and less by specific prescription. Thus, each prospective EU Member State will want to design complaints mechanisms which rhyme with the country's overall approach to law enforcement.

With respect to procurement procedures in general, the fact remains that the directives concern only the major contracts, which leaves each new Member State free to invent and describe procedures suited for the other -- and more numerous -- contracts according to what it sees fit, so long as basic Treaty of Rome obligations are respected.

Consequently, any new central and eastern European procurement legislation could be of a "two-tier" kind, with major contract regulations closely aligned with EC directives and smaller contracts awarded according to other -- and presumably simpler -- procedures. On the other hand, the EC may choose not to encourage different principles, basic procedures and organisations for procurement above and below the thresholds. Should a two-tier system be adopted, however, legislators will confront another policy decision: should the complaints mechanisms designed to meet EC requirements be open also to complaints regarding the contracts below the thresholds? ♦

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# Development of the Polish Public Procurement System

by Piotr-Nils Górecki

Poland provides an example of a central and eastern European country where, in a relatively short period, a working competitive system for the expenditure of public funds has been implemented. The country's public procurement system is one of the most advanced among prospective EU Member States.

Poland began reform of its public procurement system in 1991 with research into the public procurement system of western democracies and development of a draft law to establish a new national system. After an intense review within the Council of Ministers and by Parliament, the latter enacted the Act on Public Procurement ("the Act") on 10 June 1994. The Act represents a radical change from past practice. It did not amend the existing law, but rather created something entirely new.

Four key elements contributed to the successful creation of Poland's public procurement system: 1) the legal system; 2) the Office of Public Procurement ("the Office"); 3) delivery of information and training; and 4) the establishment of an effective and fast working review mechanism.

## The Legal Framework

The Polish public procurement system has been operating under the Act for nearly four years. It has been amended twice to clarify rules and definitions, broaden its scope, decentralise functions and increase transparency. One other important element of these changes has been to open the public procurement market to small- and medium-sized enterprises.

The Polish system, like those in European Union Member States, is based on a number of transparent principles:



Image Bank/Tim Bieber

- clear definition of procurement and its methods
- applicable legislation
- publication requirements for tenders
- clear contract award criteria
- requirements to publicise information
- the right to review

## Office of Public Procurement

The Polish public procurement system is a decentralised one where the procuring entities are at the very centre of the procurement process. The Office of Public Procurement performs a policy-making and co-ordinating role, and does not procure anything except for its own needs. Its primary function is to prepare and disseminate information about procurement procedures and opportunities. The Office employs 55 persons working in five departments. The Chairman of the Office reports directly to the Prime Minister.

The basic requirement of a transparent system is the assurance of information distribution. The announcements of

public procurements governed by the Act are published in the *Bulletin of Public Procurement* issued by the Chairman of the Office. The *Bulletin* is published four to five times a week. Announcements are published in Polish. In 1997, over 25,000 announcements appeared in the *Bulletin*, which can also be found on the Internet at <http://www.uzp.gov.pl>.

Publishing announcements in the press is totally at the discretion of the media, which may print an item after it has first appeared in the *Bulletin*.

## Training

The Office initiates, organises, co-ordinates and supports training courses provided by the Government and by self-governing institutions, training organisations, and other entities interested in the subject. The Office orients its activities in four general directions:

- formulation and provision of opinions on training programmes, methodological guidelines, and drafting tests;



- organisation and delivery of training courses, and co-ordination and supervision of implementation of training programmes;
- holding of "training of trainers" courses which prepare instructors to give training; and
- creation of a network of training centres.

Most participants in training courses are state employees responsible for spending public funds. In addition, more and more entrepreneurs -- potential bidders -- are expressing interest in attending training courses on public procurement procedures.

At present, the training system is based on two basic training curricula, specialised training courses, and a "training of trainers" programme. The latter includes courses for trainers in the following six subject areas:

- economic and financial aspects of public procurement
- unlimited and limited tendering
- two-stage tendering and competitive negotiations
- contracts for supplies and services and their management
- contracts for construction works and their management
- contracts for provision of IT systems and supporting services and their management

Over 50,000 persons received training in public procurement between 1994 and 1997.

#### *Review Procedures*

A review procedure begins the moment an interested supplier or contractor submits a written protest to the procuring entity. Upon resolution or rejection of the protest, or in the case of

failure to resolve the protest within seven days from the date of filing, the interested supplier or contractor may file an appeal with the Chairman of the Office of Public Procurement.

One of the principal rules of appeals proceedings is speed in processing (the panel of three arbiters reviews the appeal within 14 days). An appeal is reviewed by a panel of three arbiters selected from the list of arbiters maintained by the Chairman of the Office. One of the arbiters is selected by the supplier or contractor who has filed the appeal, one is selected by the procuring entity, and one by the Chairman of the Office.

If a party does not select an arbiter, the Chairman will do so. The Chairman appoints the chairman of the panel of arbiters, who are neutral and do not represent the interests of the nominating party.

As a result of the review, the panel upholds or rejects the appeal and assesses the cost of the proceedings. When upholding an appeal, the panel may order the procuring entity to perform or carry out anew an action. It can also declare an action invalid except the act of signing the public procurement contract, or cancel the public procurement proceeding. The panel may not discontinue the appeal or allow an agreement between parties. Acts of the conciliatory courts established in the Civil Procedure Code are applied to the appeals proceedings.

Since 1995, nearly 2,000 appeals have been heard and decided upon.

#### *Building on Success*

The European Commission *avis* on Poland's application for EU membership

confirms the belief of the Office that the greatest success has been enforcement of a cohesive, transparent and working system. Still, major work in the direction of additional alignment with EC directives and the World Trade Organisation's *Government Procurement Agreement* is needed. Such action is scheduled for 1998. The objective is to fully harmonise the Polish legal framework with regulations applied within the European Union. These actions will concentrate on extending the scope of the law to fully include the utilities sector, harmonising the remedies system, and tending to technical details such as time limits and thresholds. ♦

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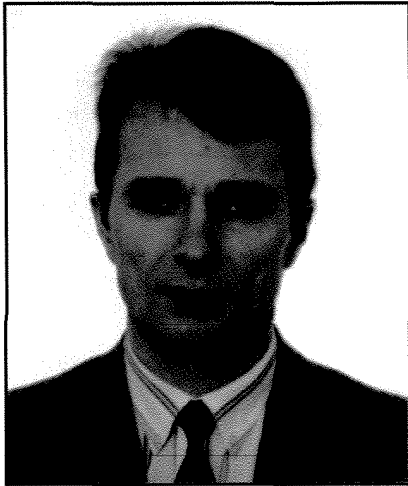
Along with formal training courses, other delivery methods may gradually be introduced like curricula on CD-ROMs, videos, on-the-job training with skilled mentors, and distance learning programmes using the Internet.

Finally, training may be expensive, but it is far cheaper than the lack of it despite any compromises in its extent and form. The returns on investment in training are immense and can be readily measured in terms of public expenditure savings and staff efficiency gains. Training strategies need to be carefully planned and implemented over a period of years. ♦

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# Latvia on the Way to a Modern Procurement System

by Edvins Parups



Courtesy Jhona

Edvins Parups

*Latvia's Law on Government and Municipal Procurement came into force in January 1997, and the Council of Ministers approved regulations two months later. These steps laid the legislative groundwork for Latvia's development of a modern public procurement system.*

The Law on Government and Municipal Procurement ("the Law") and related regulations set the legal context for public procurement in Latvia. They define the "procuring entity"; describe public procurement procedures; specify general contents of procurement contracts and settlement of accounts; provide procedures for resolving disputes; and fix responsibilities of each institution and person involved in procurement procedures.

In 1994, work to establish a new procurement system began (legislation enacted in the mid-1920s had been abolished during Soviet occupation of Latvia). As a first step, the Cabinet adopted regulations "On the Supplies and Services for State Needs". Simultaneously, drafting of the Law began. Since 1997, both central government institutions and local governments must apply procedures for the contract award provided by the Law.

## Early Problems Encountered

The Law is based on the UNCITRAL Model Law. Unfortunately, this approach creates large problems for the country in the process of joining the European Union since the Model Law does not conform strictly to EC directives. Yet Latvia is not alone: we know that most central and eastern European countries face similar problems due to such an approach.

In addition to this problem, the Law has certain weaknesses, the most significant of which is an undeveloped remedies system. In practice, there are limited possibilities for tenderers to seek administrative review of mistaken or illegal decision taken by a public institution. True, losing competitors who claim to have suffered loss or damage due to an infringement of the Law by the procuring entity in procurement proceedings can apply to the court. Yet our experience after one year shows that not a single competitor has done this.

## A System that Works

The State and Municipal Procurement Monitoring Department within the Ministry of Finance was organised to monitor how procuring entities apply the Law. This body collects statistical and other information; provides aid and consultations to procuring entities; and drafts proposals on public procurement policy for the Government. The Department also works as a secretariat for the Complaints Commission, which involves representatives from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economics and Ministry of Justice.

Summarising the results of 1997, one can say that the most important accomplishment has been to put Latvia's public procurement system in decent order. Although the system is in various respects undeveloped, and some critics claim that more bureaucracy has been introduced, it nevertheless works reasonably

well. The main problems are related to peoples' misunderstandings and lack of knowledge about the new system. We consider that our main tasks are to educate the population, provide information, and create a network of professionals in public procurement.

## Phare Contribution to Procurement

Training was the main area in which Latvia benefited from assistance of the EU Phare Programme. The top slice of one hundred public procurement agents were trained in four-day seminars. This created an important base for the training system. With advice and funding from Phare, a training programme and materials were developed, and local trainers were trained.

Phare also provided legal counsel (analysing legislation, proposing further developments). Since harmonisation of the Law with EC directives is one of the main tasks for the near future -- and in light of the large weight of the utilities sector in the Latvian economy -- we now are drafting the Law on Works, Supplies and Services to the Utilities Sector.

Plans for the future include amendments to the existing Law on Government and Municipal Procurement. These amendments should clarify the remedies system. As there is no common existing model in Europe of an independent institution managing these matters, we foresee a long discussion on the subject. In addition, work needs to be done on the preparation of standard documentation.

Latvia has started on the long road of developing a modern procurement system. Public attitudes about public procurement are changing, and state employees operating the system should demonstrate the right direction in which to proceed. ♦

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# Instituting Complaints Procedures for Public Procurement

by Jean-Philippe Nadal

European Community procurement directives require the institution of complaint procedures. This gives bidding firms an opportunity to challenge decisions taken during the procurement process, and it ensures protection of fundamental rights.

EC directives guarantee firms bidding on public procurement contracts certain rights, including:

- the right that a complaint be reviewed by an independent judicial body;
- the right to compliance with EC rules on procurement; and
- the right to effective appeal -- effective because the rule requires judges to render their decisions within a very short amount of time, and because the judge may intervene in respect of procuring entities' decisions (with the power to invalidate all or part of the incriminated decisions) and/or award damages to firms injured by improper decisions.

This system gives suppliers the power to initiate control over the proper application of the rules by government agencies. This is an essential element of public procurement law within the Union insofar as European lawmakers have seen the institution of such procedures as a necessary guarantee that formal procurement procedures are effectively implemented.

It is also a unique feature as compared, for example, with procedures invoked in connection with international financing. There, procedural regularity is ensured primarily by the direct control wielded by the party providing the financing (such as the World Bank or the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development), which has at its disposal the power to halt funding if its procedures are violated.

## Fundamental Principles

The system has its roots in the very bedrock of our democratic free-market societies -- it incorporates the principle of the rule of law into



Illustration: Lucie Quir

public procurement, and a judicial entity fully independent from the executive must be empowered to ensure compliance with public procurement law. It applies free-market, democratic principles: business firms, as the primary players, have the initiative.

By virtue of the principle of subsidiarity -- another pillar of European construction -- the terms of these procedures are up to each Member State and hinge, among other things, on each country's constitutional organisation of judicial power. It is for this reason that appellate procedures differ fairly significantly from one country to another. Aside from certain differences that the European Commission deems are not legally justified, the main differences are as follows:

- Reflecting each country's basic judicial structure, jurisdiction can be single or double (eg France has two types of jurisdiction: courts that hear cases relating to public affairs, and courts that hear other cases). Even when there is a single court of appeal, some countries have specialised their courts of first instance and the chambers of their appeals courts.
- Complaints relating to public procurement may be heard by public- or private-law jurisdictions.
- In some countries (including Belgium, France and the United Kingdom), such complaints are heard by standing jurisdictions, while in others (including Denmark and Germany) jurisdictions are created specially for the occasion.

- Judicial appeal must in some cases be preceded by an administrative appeal to the authority responsible for the procurement, or to an administrative body.

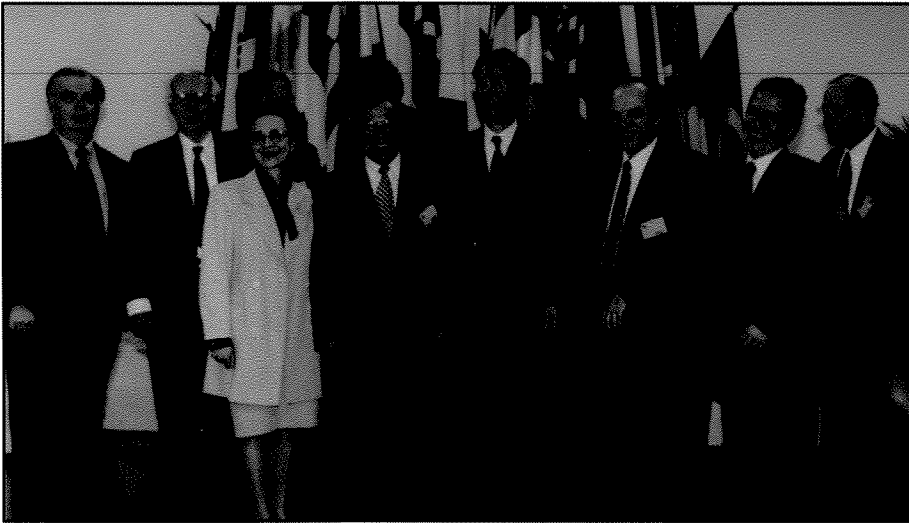
## Managing Appeals in Central and Eastern Europe

Central and eastern European countries are stepping up work to bring their laws more closely in line with the *acquis communautaire*, although progress varies from state to state. In most of these countries, the law on public procurement reflects the general principle that complaints may be lodged with civil courts, although the right to do so is not accompanied by all of the guarantees mentioned at the beginning of this article. In line with an orientation no doubt inspired by the UNCITRAL Model Law -- which inspired much of this legislation -- the emphasis is more on administrative appeals to administrative bodies (commissions) empowered to intervene.

Some countries, including Hungary and Poland, have developed this approach considerably by creating specialised institutions that resemble initiatives taken by certain EU Member States. Further interesting developments in this area can be expected in the coming years. ♦

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## Rule of Law Underpins Market Economy



Photo/OECD/Stina Thompson

The OECD organised a Symposium on "The Rule of Law and the Development of a Market Economy in the Russian Federation" on 23-24 March 1998 in Paris. Veniamin Feodorovich Yakovlev, Chief Justice of the Russian Supreme Arbitration Court, and other Russian officials, exchanged views with international legal specialists on the rule of law, judicial enforcement, corruption and good governance. OECD Deputy Secretary-General Kumiharu Shigehara delivered the Opening Statement, an abridged version of which follows.

The rule of law is of fundamental importance for the transformation of the Russian economy and society. Russia has come a long way since market reforms begun in earnest, less than 10 years ago. The break up of the former USSR

destroyed to a significant degree most of the institutional infrastructure for policy implementation. This has had to be rebuilt from almost scratch.

Today, the first fruits of this slow and hard process are being reaped. The Russian economy is now returning to growth. Inflation has been brought down. On the structural side, the achievements are also impressive. In less than 10 years, Russia managed to turn an entirely state-owned and planned economy to an economy where the private sector is now playing a leading role.

The radical transformation of the Russian economy is at the heart of our discussions today. Russia is a changed country, a large emerging market. But the institutions and legal procedures

that keep any market economy together at the state level have been slow to emerge.

The importance of the principles, institutions and procedures that together constitute the concept of the rule of law is multifaceted. Politically, they are at the heart of a democratic system of government, ensuring fairness and equality of individual citizens.

But the impact of the rule of law reaches much further than the sphere of law and politics. The rule of law fulfils crucial economic functions. In this context, strengthening of the rule of law, especially in the taxation area, was an important element of the policy recommendations of the OECD's second survey of the Russian economy, which were presented to the most senior officials of the Russian government on the occasion of the OECD Secretary-General's mission to Moscow in October last year.

Today's meeting is an important event in the OECD's special programme of dialogue and co-operation with the Russian Federation. The objective of this programme is to help Russia establish a fully-fledged market economy, within a framework of democratic institutions, and to meet and sustain all the conditions for Russia's membership in the OECD, which is the ultimate goal shared by both parties. ♦

### Key Elements of a Sound Legal Framework

World Bank Senior Vice President and General Counsel, Ibrahim F. I. Shihata, made the Symposium's Opening Presentation in which he spoke on the composition of a sound legal framework. "There are basic requirements for the proper functioning of a market economy," he said, including "physical security, a minimum measure of stability and predictability, free competition and fair treatment in a level playing field." A prerequisite for all these concepts, he argued, is the rule of law, which "requires in turn a sound legal framework."

Shihata proposed that a sound legal framework comprises three essential elements: "*legally binding rules... (applying) equally to all those addressed by them;*" "*appropriate processes through which such rules are made and enforced in practice;*" and "*well-functioning public institutions which are staffed by trained individuals, are transparent and accountable to citizens, are bound by and adhere to regulations, and apply such regulations without arbitrariness or corruption.*"

Proper functioning of this legal framework depends, he added, on "understanding by the public at large of the importance of the rule of law and their reliance on it, rather than on interpersonal relations, political or social influence, nepotism or sheer corruption to carry out their transactions." Shihata also noted that "clearly drafted basic rules are needed...and should, where appropriate, be complemented by more detailed regulations formulated and applied by capable regulatory bodies."

## Taking a Sceptical Look at Western Models

*Innovations in Public Management: Perspectives from East and West Europe*, edited by Tony Verheijen and David Coombes

This publication defines the main problems facing public administrations in central and eastern European countries and provides a comparative evaluation of the relevance for these countries of reform measures undertaken in OECD Member countries.

The first part offers an historical perspective on the role of the state in Europe. Parts Two and Three present country case studies which focus on the key areas of public management and the attempts made to address current problems. The case studies

describe the constitutional and political framework in which the system of public management operates and present a critical analysis of ongoing reform processes. They focus on reforms at the central government level, changes in local-central government relations, and the high profile areas of health and education policy.

The authors look at the characteristics of the policy process, financial and human resource management and the accountability system. In conclusion, they question whether modes of

public administration and strategies for reform applied in democracies with advanced market economies can really provide solutions to the particular problems of Central and Eastern Europe, or whether those problems might be aggravated by duplicating such models and the strategies they comprise. ♦

VERHEIJEN, Tony and David COOMBES, eds. *Innovations in Public Management: Perspectives from East and West Europe*, 1998, 432 pages. To order: EE Publishing, 8 Lansdown Pl., Cheltenham Glos GL50 2HU, UK. £ 55.

### INBOX:



### A COMPENDIUM OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS AND ARTICLES

Note: All publications below are available in English unless otherwise noted.

#### From SIGMA

SIGMA Paper No. 22: *Management Challenges at the Centre of Government: Coalition Conditions and Government Transitions*, 1998, 79 pages. Also in French.

SIGMA Paper No. 23 : *Preparing Public Administrations for the European Administrative Space*, 1998, 198 pages. Also in French.

To order: SIGMA Information Services, SIGMA-OECD, 2, rue André-Pascal, 75775 Paris Cedex 16, France. Tel: (33.1) 45.24.13.16; fax (33.1) 45.24.13.00; e-mail: [sigma.contact@oecd.org](mailto:sigma.contact@oecd.org). SIGMA publications also are available free of charge on the Internet at: <http://www.oecd.org/pumalsigmaweb>.

#### From PUMA

*Modern Budgeting*, January 1998, 134 pages. Also in French.

*Occasional Paper No. 19. Putting Markets to Work: The Design and Use of Marketable Permits and Obligations*, January 1998, 48 pages. Also in French.

*Occasional Paper No. 20. Contracting Out Government Services: Best Practice Guidelines and Case*, January 1998, 89 pages. Also in French.

To order: OECD Publications Service, 2, rue André-Pascal, 75775 Paris Cedex 16, France. Tel: (33.1) 49.10.42.83; fax: (33.1) 49.10.42.76; e-mail: [sales@oecd.org](mailto:sales@oecd.org).

#### OTHER PUBLICATIONS

*The Administration and You: Principles of Administrative Law Concerning the Relations Between Administrative Authorities and Private Persons*, 1997, 356 pages. To order: Council of Europe Publishing, 67075 Strasbourg, France.

AVERCH, H. and M. DLUHY. "Teaching Public Administration, Public Management, and Policy Analysis: Some International Comparisons," *International Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1997, pp 497-512.

BARZELAY, Michael. "Central Audit Institutions and Performance Auditing: A Comparative Analysis of Organizational Strategies in the OECD," *Governance*, Vol. 10, No. 3, July 1997, pp 235-260.

## INBOX CONTINUED:



## A COMPENDIUM OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS AND ARTICLES

Note: All publications below are available in English unless otherwise noted.

BOWMAN, James S. and Donald C. MENZEL. *Teaching Ethics and Values in Public Administration Programs: Innovations, Strategies and Issues*, 1998, 352 pages. To order: State University of New York Press, Albany, NY, USA.

CARLSON, Margaret S. "How are We Doing? Evaluating the Performance of the Chief Administrator," *Public Management*, Vol. 79, No. 3, 1997, pp 6-11.

CLAGUE, Christopher. *Institutions and Economic Development: Growth and Governance in Less Developed and Post-Socialist Countries*, 1997, 390 pages.

*Développer la qualité du service: Charte qualité et engagements dans les services publics* (report of the French Ministère de la Fonction publique, de la Réforme de l'Etat et de la Décentralisation), 1997, 108 pages. In French. To order: La Documentation française, Paris, France.

GOLDSMITH, M.J.F. and K. KLAUSEN, eds. *European Integration and Local Government*, 1997, 288 pages. To order: EE Publishing, 8 Lansdown Pl., Cheltenham Glos GL50 2HU, UK. £ 49.95.

HOLZMANN, Robert. "Starting Over in Pensions: The Challenges Facing Central and Eastern Europe," *Journal of Public Policy*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1997, pp 195-222.

"Internet et la Fonction Publique," *Cahiers de la Fonction Publique et de*

*l'Administration*, No. 158, June 1997, pp 4-12. In French. To order: Editions Berger-Levrault, S.A., 5, rue Audguste-Comte, 75006 Paris, France.

JUBERÍAS, Carlos Flores. *Las Nuevas Instituciones Políticas de la Europa Oriental*, 1997, 750 pages. In Spanish. To order: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, Calle Fuencarral 46, 6, 28004 Madrid, Spain.

KRAVCHENKO, Bohdan. *Administrative Reform in Ukraine: Setting the Agenda*, Discussion Paper No. 3, 1997, 11 pages. To order: NISPAce, Hanulova 5/B, 840 02 Bratislava 42, Slovakia; e-mail: nispa@nispa.sk.

"L'Européanisation des Politiques Publique: Politiques Communautaires et Management Public" (Actes du huitième colloque international organisé avec le concours de la Commission Européenne et du Ministère de l'Education Nationale, de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche), *Politiques et Management Public*, Vol. 15, No. 3, 1997, pp 1-231. In French. To order: PMP, 23, rue de la Glacière, 75013 Paris, France.

*Public Sector Productivity in Sweden, Volume 3: Papers on Public Sector Budgeting and Management in Sweden*, 1997, 83 pages. To order: Budget Dept., Ministry of Finance, 103 33 Sweden.

TAIT, J. "A Strong Foundation: Report of the Task Force on Public Sector Values and Ethics," *Canadian*

*Public Administration*, Vol. 40, No. 1, 1997, pp 1-22.

THOMPSON, Kenneth W., ed. *The Presidency and Governance in Poland: Yesterday and Today*, 1997. To order: University Press of America, Lanham, MD, USA.

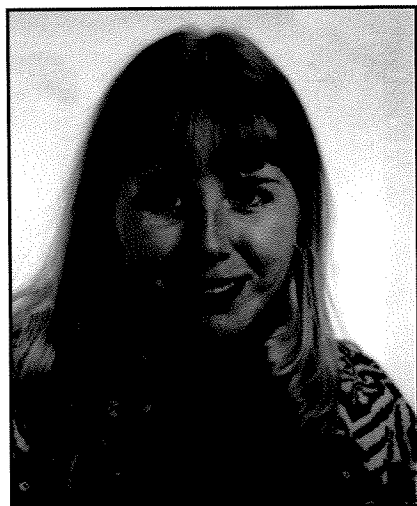
VINTAR, Mirko. "Prenova poslovanja in informatizacija upravnih enot Republike Slovenije" (Modernisation of Operation and Computerization of Administrative Units of the Republic of Slovenia), *Javna Uprava*, Vol. 33, No. 3, 1997, pp 353-369. In Slovene with English summary. To order: Javna Uprava, 1001 Ljubljana, Kongresni trg 12, Slovenia.

WHEELER, Donald J. "The Government Auditor's Role in Investigating Fraud: The U.S. General Accounting Office Experience," *Public Fund Digest* (USA), Vol. III, No. 2, Fall 1997, pp 1-9.

ZALAR, Ales. "Strategija organizacijskega in funkcionalnega prilagajanja splosne sodne funkcije v Republiki Sloveniji pravo Evropske Unije" (The Strategy of Organizational and Functional Adjustment of the Judiciary in the Republic of Slovenia to the Law of the European Union), *Javna Uprava*, Vol. 33, No. 4, 1997, pp 653-670. In Slovene with English summary. To order: Javna Uprava, 1001 Ljubljana, Kongresni trg 12, Slovenia.

# Strengthening Local Government Across Central and Eastern Europe

by Juliet Gole



Country photo

Juliet Gole

*Local governments in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union provide an important base from which open societies may grow. They are an accessible level of the public sector at which citizens may become involved in the democratic process. Strengthening local governments involves decentralisation of the inefficient systems of the past and building new, reliable and responsible government structures.*

Local governments in formerly communist countries face a number of difficulties, such as a lack of support from central governments, a lack of trust from the public, unclear duties and responsibilities, insufficient training, insufficient funds to address their new and growing responsibilities, decaying infrastructure, and poor constituencies with growing demands for services.

The Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative (LGI) seeks to address some of these problems on a regional basis. LGI is a network programme of the Open Society Institute concerned with promoting democratic and effective government at sub-national levels and with the efficient delivery of public services -- issues which are crucial to open societies and economic growth.

The program strives to meet these goals by engaging in four types of endeavours:

1. Helping to build sustainable regional networks of institutions and professionals engaged in policy analysis, reform-oriented training and advocacy.
2. Supporting in-depth policy studies of local government issues which are regional and comparative in nature, and supporting the dissemination of these studies throughout Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.
3. Supporting national projects aimed at reform, providing technical assistance and consultancy to government agencies involved in implementing change, and disseminating the lessons of reform through the LGI Discussion Paper Series.
4. Assisting individual Soros Foundations to develop their own national local government programs.

## Training and Networking

The two most important networks of institutions and professionals supported by LGI are the Network of Institutions and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee), familiar to *PMF's* regular readers, and the newly founded Regional Support Center for Capacity Building in Governance and Local Leadership.

The Center, based in Bucharest, operates a training-of-trainers programme through which professional staff train people to then train local government officials in their own countries in subjects like financial management, participatory planning, public service management, and elected leadership. The Center also offers support for country-specific training programme development, offering advice, expertise and resources to individuals and institutions interested in establishing or expanding their own training centres. Finally, it serves as a centre of information dissemination and expertise exchange.

## Regional Studies

In 1997, LGI initiated a local and regional tax administration study covering five countries. This ongoing work supports the development of a framework for a one-year international research project focusing on the need to introduce modern financial and managerial principles and practices in the region. Highlighting problems with efficiency and customer orientation, the project will also assess the present operation of local and regional tax offices. In addition, the project will analyse the relationship between central and local tax policies. The project's primary beneficiaries are local and regional government financial departments, decentralised (regional) tax offices, national tax policy-makers, and tax administration.

Other important regional studies supported by LGI include the second edition of *Decentralization of the Socialist State* (a study in trends in fiscal decentralisation prepared in co-operation with the World Bank); a five-country research project on urban development and land use; case studies on innovative practices in multicultural and ethnic conflicts, social service delivery to the elderly, and economic development; a region-wide network of indigenous organisations that can collect, process, analyse and disseminate innovative practices in electronic and/or published form; and the second edition of *Local Governments in Central and Eastern Europe and CIS*, a three-volume analysis of local government structures in all countries in the region.

In addition, LGI supports smaller, more local projects in which professionals give technical assistance to government agencies involved in reform; publishes a discussion paper series; and supports local government programmes in a number of national Soros Foundations. ♦

*Juliet Gole is Project Manager for the Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative. She may be reached in Budapest at tel: (36.1) 327.31.04; e-mail: jgole@osi.hu.*

# SIGMA

**S**IGMA -- Support for Improvement in Governance and Management in Central and Eastern European Countries -- is a joint initiative of the OECD Centre for Co-operation with the Economies in Transition and the European Union Phare Programme. The initiative supports public administration reform efforts in thirteen countries in transition, and is principally financed by Phare. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is an intergovernmental organisation of 29 democracies with advanced market economies. The Centre channels the Organisation's advice and assistance over a wide range of economic issues to reforming countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Phare provides grant financing to support its partner countries in Central and Eastern Europe to the stage where they are ready to assume the obligations of membership of the European Union.

Phare and SIGMA serve the same countries: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Established in 1992, SIGMA works within the OECD's Public Management Service, which provides information and expert analysis on public management to policy-makers and facilitates contact and exchange of experience amongst public sector managers. SIGMA offers beneficiary countries access to a network of experienced public administrators, comparative information, and technical knowledge connected with the Public Management Service.

## *SIGMA aims to:*

- assist beneficiary countries in their search for good governance to improve administrative efficiency and promote adherence of public sector staff to democratic values, ethics and respect of the rule of law;
- help build up indigenous capacities at the central governmental level to face the challenges of internationalisation and of European Union integration plans; and
- support initiatives of the European Union and other donors to assist beneficiary countries in public administration reform and contribute to co-ordination of donor activities.

Throughout its work, the initiative places a high priority on facilitating co-operation among governments. This practice includes providing logistical support to the formation of networks of public administration practitioners in Central and Eastern Europe, and between these practitioners and their counterparts in other democracies.

SIGMA works in five technical areas: Public Administration Development Strategies; Policy-Making, Co-ordination and Regulation; Budgeting and Resource Allocation; Public Service Management; Administrative Oversight, Financial Control and Audit. In addition, an Information Services Unit disseminates published and on-line materials on public management topics.

## **ON THE AGENDA**



### *Upcoming Programmes*

14-15 May 1998 (dates changed from 17-18 June), Paris, France. "Ready for Integration? The Coming Enlargement of the EU," international open seminar for experts in the series "Great Debates". Contact: Valerie Cohen, Cicero Foundation. Tel: (33.1) 43.80.18.21; fax: (33.1) 42.67.92.04; e-mail: cifo@compuserve.com; WWW: <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/cifo>. In English.

11-12 June 1998 (new dates), Paris, France. **SIGMA 9th Liaison Group Meeting**. Contact: Jacqueline O'Mahony, SIGMA-OECD, 2, rue André-Pascal, 75775 Paris Cedex 16, France. Tel: (33.1) 45.24.13.04; [sigma.contact@oecd.org](mailto:sigma.contact@oecd.org). In English and French.

15-26 June 1998, Gainesville, FL, USA. **Fourth International Training Program on "Utility Regulation and Strategy" (collaboration between the Public Utility Research Center and the World Bank)**. Contact: Public Utility Research Center, POB 117142, Matherly Hall 205, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611, USA. Tel: (1.352) 392.61.48; e-mail: [purcecon@dale.cba.ufl.edu](mailto:purcecon@dale.cba.ufl.edu). In English.

10-18 July 1998, Cambridge, England, UK. **Conference on "Corruption and its Victims: Business, Government, Society -- The Search for Higher Standards"** (organised by the 21st Century Trust in collaboration with Transparency International). Contact: 21st Century Trust, 10 Storey's Gate, Westminster, London SW1P 3AY, UK. Tel: (44.171) 233.08.35. In English.

26 July - 14 August 1998, Cambridge, MA, USA. **Executive Program for Professional Development: "Senior Managers in Government."** Contact: JFK School of Government, 79 JFK St., Cambridge, MA 02138, USA. Tel: (1.617) 495.13.19; e-mail: [KSG\\_ExecEd@Harvard.edu](mailto:KSG_ExecEd@Harvard.edu); WWW: <http://www.ksg.harvard.edu>. In English.

*Please note that not all of the programmes included in this calendar are open to every public administration practitioner or the general public. Details are provided directly by the organiser, who may be contacted for further information. If your organisation is planning an event, please send details to SIGMA (address on page 2). A more complete calendar of events may be found at: <http://www.oecd.org/pumalsigmaweb>.*