

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Workshop on Human Resources Management and Training

12-14 September 2018, Oslo, Norway

REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP

1. The Workshop on Human Resources Management and Training, Building Resilience in Statistical Organisations was held in Oslo, Norway, from 12 to 14 September 2018. It was attended by representatives from 36 statistical offices of Albania, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Uzbekistan as well as by representatives from the Eurostat, European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and United Nations Mission in Kosovo.
2. The workshop was opened by remarks from Mr. Torstein Bye, Director, Department of social statistics, Statistics Norway. He highlighted importance of building resilience in Statistical Organisations, and presented Strategic Platform of Statistics Norway. He advised participants to align HR and training activities to business needs of the Organisation.
3. Anna Borowska from Statistics Poland acted as chair of the workshop.
4. The workshop consisted of five sessions and covered the following substantive topics:
 - (a) Measuring progress and performance
 - (b) Encouraging Innovation
 - (c) Developing skills and capability
 - (d) Approaches to learning and development
 - (e) Leadership of change
5. The workshop also had a special session for the East European Caucasus and Central Asian (EECCA) countries in the afternoon of 14 September.
6. Most of the sessions consisted of presentations and concluded with general discussions. The outcomes of these discussions are documented in Annex 1. For Session 2, participants were divided into groups to work together on the tasks assigned for the #Reimagine workshop and Ideas generation for the ‘bottom-up’ innovation. Group discussions were also organised for the Session 3, to work on the ideas for the Statistical Training Framework. At the end of the workshop participants were again divided into groups to identify priorities for their NSOs for the next years and proposals for future work.
7. All papers and presentations from the workshop are available at:
<https://www.unece.org/index.php?id=47800>

8. Key items identified for future work include (see Annex 1 for more details):
- Innovations in human resources management
 - Leadership of change, moving from management to leadership
 - Methods for measuring outcomes
 - Mechanisms for the transfer of knowledge and expertise between staff, and new techniques and methods for working in the times of change
 - Re-branding of the Statistical organisations to be more interesting to the potential employees
 - Staying agile and keeping a holistic view
 - Capability development
 - Design of NSO's, and software for human resources management
 - Well-being improvement

Participants were also interested in the follow-up presentations on the projects and ideas presented during this workshop.

Annex 1: Summary of discussions

Session 1: Measuring progress and performance

1. The session was organized by Fabrizio Rotundi (ISTAT) and included the following presentations:

- European Free Trade Association (EFTA): How do you measure a man?
- Australian Bureau of Statistics: Measuring culture change progress and leadership performance in the ABS during Transformation
- Office for National Statistics, UK: Developing Corporate Analytics in ONS United Kingdom
- Statistics Portugal: Short Inventory of Stress and Well Being (S-ISW) - Preliminary Report of Statistics Portugal 2017 application
- Statistics Norway: Can we afford not investing in working environment?
- ISTAT, Italy: Managing Performance System towards integration with planning and controls

2. The following points were raised during the discussions:

- The way to deal with the people, who don't want to change, is to help people to leave, offer redundancy packages, and to be proactive with coaching and support for those who stay.
- NSO's should focus both on external and internal stakeholders, to make decisions across government and not just NSO
- New Zealand shared example of redefining the measurement system, they used to be economic focused and not people focused.

Session 2: Encouraging innovation

3. The session was organized by Laura Tolley (ONS UK) and Remco Paulussen (Statistics Netherlands) and included the following presentation:

- Statistics Norway: Establishing an Innovation lab for new data sources and techniques at Statistics Norway – experiences so far

Afterwards all participants were divided into groups for the #Reimagine Workshop, followed by the work on “Ideas generation – Exploration of different mechanisms and tools for generating ‘bottom-up’ innovation”, and the end of the session participants shared examples of Fantastic Failures and what they learned from them.

4. The following points were raised in the small group discussions during the #Reimagine Workshop:

- Participants were divided into 6 groups, and 3 groups were asked to work in groups to Reimagine a City and remaining 3 groups were asked to Reinvent statistical organisation. If we could reinvent them, what would it: Look like?; Sound like?; Feel like?
- Most of the participants agreed that their new cities will be: green smart city, with renewable energy, with transport for disabled, ecological, clean, with sport, recreation and health facilities, protected heritage, with small local shops, with public entertainment space, safe, family friendly.

- Participants also proposed that their statistical offices should have: open space, flexible working place and hours, modern and welcoming building, up to date software and tools, more international mobility of staff, improved informal sharing, rebranding statistical profile, more independent institutional setting, more funds, focus more on stakeholder requirements, to have relevant competencies (cross-cutting, practical, based on lessons learned), motivation for innovation, create an environment for retaining the best people, least possible number of top managers.
- Afterwards all participants were asked to provide feedback on the group work and discuss how it felt to think differently and innovate.

5. The following points were raised in the small group discussions during the part of the session on ‘Ideas generation – Exploration of different mechanisms and tools for generating bottom up innovation’:

- Participants were divided into groups and asked the following questions: Do you have a route for staff ideas within your organisation? Do you have a budget set aside for ideas/innovation? Would they like to find out more about the benefits of idea generation routes in business? Do they have ideas on how to encourage bottom up innovation.
- During the discussion, participants proposed the following solutions:
 - o How to motivate: to reduce uncertainty, have clear target, involvement of staff, special budget, bonus, best practices in international cooperation; ask for ideas, prepare polls to vote, new people encouraged to ask questions why?, new activities/goals in development plan, all ideas are good ideas, informal coffee/tea meetings, idea box or poll (physical or virtual), define problem and bring all people together – team building, collaborate across, locations/departments/backgrounds/experiences/disciplines, bring people together even if there is no problem, open short idea sessions, idea room, open minded feedback, equal/competitive/fun environment, innovation prize, create networks, equal opportunities, learn from mistakes, additional funds.
 - o Not helpful for innovation (to discourage): no time, no priorities, do nothing with the ideas (no action), fear of failure culture, management taking credit, ‘it’s always been done this way’, ‘never tried it before’, too formal – with too many layers of permission, lack of respect for ideas from junior staff, criticism, punishment for failures, financial implications, high workload/no time, authoritarian approach.

Session 3: Developing skills and capability

6. This session was organized by Marie Creedon and Eilish O’Sullivan (CSO Ireland) and Angela Leonetti (ISTAT) and it included the following presentations:

- Statistics Norway: Competencies based on capability framework
- CSO Ireland: Practical application of the Statistical Training Framework
- ISTAT, Italy: Team building: as a successful training experience may support a changing organization
- National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic: Strengthening the statistical intellectual and human capacity at the Kyrgyz Republic in the ISTAT and NSC cooperation
- ISTAT, Italy: A learning opportunity in transparency implementation
- Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic: Knowledge Capital Building - Investment in the Future

7. The following points were raised during the group discussions:
- A) Taking into consideration the environment in which NSO's currently operate, what new statistical/analytical skills do we require over the next 3/5 years to ensure we stay relevant:
 - IT and digital skills
 - Communication and marketing
 - Knowledge of different languages
 - Development of analytical skills
 - Leadership
 - How to provide these?
 - Trainings, use of best practices
 - Revision of planning strategies and legislation
 - Allocation of funds
 - Mobility of staff, bank of ideas
 - B) What non statistical skills are emerging as key skills for the NSO's over the next 3/5 years?
 - Hybrid roles (IT skills to become standard, data collection/production)
 - Change management
 - Understanding user needs
 - Communication
 - Goal oriented
 - Team working and collaboration
 - Commercial awareness
 - Creativity
 - Project management
 - How to provide these?
 - Meetings with users
 - Learning from other countries
 - Experts from outside
 - Informal hackathon
 - Leaders role model
 - Cooperation with academics
 - C) How can we embed an innovative culture in our NSO's?
 - Multi discipline teams
 - Experiment a lot
 - Management support (open minded, supportive)
 - Become more competitive
 - Encourage people to gain the knowledge
 - Get familiar with new tools and techniques (agile, lean, blockchain)
 - What can NSO do to support this innovative culture?
 - Change people culture, embed innovation
 - Support systems
 - Recruitment systems
 - Create conditions, time, tools
 - D) How do you see leadership evolving in the NSO's over the next 3/5 years?:
 - Innovative, embracing new technologies like AI
 - Creative
 - motivational

- Prioritise leadership skills
 - o Planning
 - o Communication
 - o Integration/collaboration
 - o Externally focused
 - o Decisive
 - o Flexible/agile
 - o Customer focus

Session 4: Approaches to learning and development

8. This session was organized by Tine Pestaj (Republic of Slovenia Statistical Office) and it included the following presentations:
 - ONS UK: Centralising Learning and Development within Office for National Statistics
 - Hungarian Central Statistical Office: Onboarding and staying on board: Career-orientation program and retention interviews in HCSO
 - Statistics Poland: Internal Coach Programme
 - Statistics Poland, Regional Statistical Office in Gdansk: Building team resilience by strengthening self-esteem
 - ISTAT, Italy: Change management through training methods of tutoring and mentoring

9. The following points were raised during the discussion:
 - How to motivate trainers? To provide training is an additional task which is not paid separately, trainers are prepared by other experienced staff to become lecturers.
 - External partners for training are students and government.

Session 5: Leadership of change

10. This session was organized by Anne Trolie (Statistics Norway) and Inga Hanna Gudmundsdottir (EFTA) and it included the following presentations:
 - Statistics Norway: How leaders take on the challenge of leading change while being changed themselves
 - Statistics Netherlands: Lessons learned on change management during a large change project
 - Statistics New Zealand: The resilient, high performance culture. The Statistics NZ experience.
 - Statistics Norway: Pros and cons of using a Target Operating Model (TOM) in Statistics Norway's Modernization Program

11. The following points were raised during the discussion:
 - How is knowledge transferred in the organisation – It is done by colleagues themselves. They set up time and plan and sit down to discuss how it will be implemented.
 - LEAN Six Sigma is applied everywhere in organisation, to all processes. 80% of staff have a daily stand up meetings, and measure their performance; it applies to all staff and all activities
 - Is Statistics New Zealand is measuring results of the project? – There are several measures: new IT environment, new office environment and a tool to measure main cultural norm called 'ask your team'.

12. Afterwards participants were asked to discuss in groups the following:

- a. Lessons learned to take away from sessions
- b. General priorities for their NSO's for the next 3/5 years, and
- c. What kind of workshop they would like to have next time
- d. Proposals for future work

13. The following points were raised during the group discussions:

- It is important to change organisation structures, with less hierarchy. Key to this is a move from management to leadership.
- Many countries are starting from a system where initiative was punished, so it is very difficult to get staff to propose innovations. Failures provide experience, and should not be punished.
- More training is needed, particularly for managers, and in areas such as behaviours, attitudes, communication and change management.
- Motivation must take account of culture and traditions. What works in one country may not work in another.
- To change culture, it is necessary to understand the current culture, and be realistic about what can be changed and how soon.
- It is important to accept failures and learn from them.
- It is necessary to create a sense of urgency to drive changes.
- The "Lean" approach is very useful.
- Be brave and have the courage to change – and learn not to be afraid of failure.
- Activity-based working is an interesting approach.
- New approaches to pricing of statistical services are interesting.
- The people aspect of change management is important, and it is important to have a sense of urgency to drive through changes.
- It is important to invest in developing the right skills to enable staff to be successful in new roles.
- The support of middle-management is important for any change.
- Leadership is key. Leaders should be charismatic, and should share their vision and support staff during changes.

14. Priorities for future work:

- More on methods for measuring outcomes, innovations in human resources management, and leadership of change.
- Moving from management to leadership, mechanisms for the transfer of knowledge and expertise between staff, and new techniques and methods for working in times of change.
- Capability development, re-branding to be more interesting to potential employees, staying agile and keeping a holistic view. The input of some non-statistical organisations would be interesting.
- Design of organisations, software for human resources management, leadership and engaging staff, and improving well-being. Follow-up presentations on the projects and ideas presented at this workshop would be useful.