

## Trans-European Dialogue TED2020 Conference

# CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

### Politics of Bureaucracy: Roles of Top Public Officials in Turbulent Times

**12-13 February 2020, Bratislava, Slovakia**

The Trans-European Dialogue (TED) is a scholarly conference organized jointly by the two key professional associations of Public Administration in Europe. These are, the **European Group for Public Administration (EGPA)** and the **Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee)**. It is a high-level, focused conference on a timely topic in Public Administration (PA) that will profit from bringing together senior experts from different regions, thereby facilitating interchange and discussion across Europe, including Central Asia and the Caucasus, which also belongs to NISPAcee's area. Participants of TED events consists of high-level and senior researchers and practitioners.

Traditionally, the relationships between politics and public administration has been at the heart of public administration scholarship. Nevertheless, contemporary turbulent times – migration, the rise of populism and democratic backsliding and Brexit and the EU integration fatigue just to name a few factors – put the dichotomy of this relationship into question, with empirical research suggesting that politicization is on the increase. At the same time, complex conditions and external and internal pressures call for elected and recruited leaders that would be able to navigate our political systems through times of change while ensuring the reliability of state institutions; nevertheless, the roles, tasks and values of top public officials have not traditionally been associated with. Participants of TED2020 will therefore address top public officials and the nature of their work: their careers, expertise and experiences; their competencies, values, roles and practices including the interface between politics and public administration; as well as their impact on delivery, public value, and the institutional architecture of the state, especially in the context of policy and management crises.

Partners



# CONFERENCE THEMES

## **Topic 1: Career paths: Who are the top public officials and where do they come from?**

### **Keynote: Tobias Bach (University of Oslo, Norway)**

Some of the issues to be discussed:

- ~ What is the degree of staff mobility within the public sector and between the public, private and NGO sectors?
- ~ To what extent top public officials possess political exposure and/or managerial experience?~How closely are top public officials' careers connected to politicians' careers?

## **Topic 2: Professionalization vs. politicization**

### **Keynote: Jan-Hinrik Meyer-Sahling (University of Nottingham, United Kingdom)**

Some of the issues to be discussed:

- ~ When is politicization compatible with meritocratic principles?
- ~ What relative role play various drivers of professionalization such as HR standards, leadership, organizational culture or competencies/trainings?
- ~ Do the assumed benefits of professionalization translate into organizational outcomes?

## **Topic 3: Tasks and practices: What do we empirically know about what top public officials actually do?**

### **Keynote: Arnošt Veselý (Charles University, Czech Republic)**

Some of the issues to be discussed:

- ~ How do roles, tasks and practices of top public officials and public managers change over time?
- ~ How can individual and organizational capability be measured and what is their relation?
- ~ Can specific managerial styles in relation to accountability mechanisms of public institutions be identified?

## **Topic 4: Accountability and legitimacy: How is the politics-administration dichotomy changing overtime?**

### **Keynote: Külli Sarapuu (Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia)**

Some of the issues to be discussed:

- ~ What changes do we see in the relationship between politicians and top public servants?
- ~ What roles do top public officials play in emerging collaborative structures and decision-making bodies?
- ~ How do the transforming institutional landscape and challenging policy environment influence accountability and legitimacy of top public servants?

## **Topic 5: Policy advice: Where does the policy advice come from?**

### **Keynote: Sylvia Veit (University of Kassel, Germany)**

Some of the issues to be discussed:

- ~ When is policy advice credible and how is 'expertise' constructed in postfactual times?
- ~ How does the mutually legitimating relationship between policy advice and political power change over time?
- ~ How is expertise managed in order to deliver timely inputs for the decision making?

## **Topic 6: Public value: What is the role of top public officials in delivering and communicating public value?**

### **Keynote: Michal Sedláčko (University of Applied Science FH Campus Wien, Austria)**

Some of the issues to be discussed:

- ~ How to articulate and measure public value, public interest and wellbeing in current turbulent times?
- ~ What is the current empirical experience with the role of top public officials in implementing public value concepts and tools?
- ~ How can public value be operationalized into organizational structures and processes?

# FORMAT & HOW TO APPLY

At TED2020, all of the participants are expected to contribute – informed by their research and paper submitted – to the topic of the session’s discussion rather than presenting their research as it is customary in traditional conference formats. Up to 50 researchers and high level practitioners, will be selected as participants for this event, based on their relevant topic and degree of professional recognition in their particular study field. The program (one day and a half) will be structured into thematic sessions, each of them will start with a keynote speech, which will be followed by discussion with the contributors. (papers and/or briefs).

TED welcomes broad contributions from academics and practitioners. We kindly invite participants to develop and submit one or both of the following as the condition for registration:

~ **One or two brief(s)** (100–300 words long) propositions related to a conference theme, along with an explanation of how the propositions reflect their research interests and activities. Practitioners are invited to reflect on the nature of their work within the context of the selected topic. These propositions will be the basis of a brief discussion at the TED2020 event.

~ **A proposal (abstract) of a full paper** (500–750 words long) to be briefly presented during TED2020 in one of the thematic sessions (not as a conventional research paper but rather as part of the debate), underlining key arguments for the discussions of one specific topic chosen by the participant. A proposal/abstract indicates the intent of the participant to develop it further into a full paper after the conference (to be considered for NISPAcee Journal of Public Administration and Policy).

## REGISTRATION AND IMPORTANT DATES

### **Deadline for proposals: September 29, 2019**

- ~ Proposals should be submitted online at [www.ted2020.eu](http://www.ted2020.eu)
- ~ Participants will be notified by 20 October 2019 upon their selection.

### **Deadline for final contributions (briefs and/or papers): January 12, 2020**

- ~ Selected papers will have a publication opportunity in a special issue of the NISPAcee Journal of Public Administration and Policy.

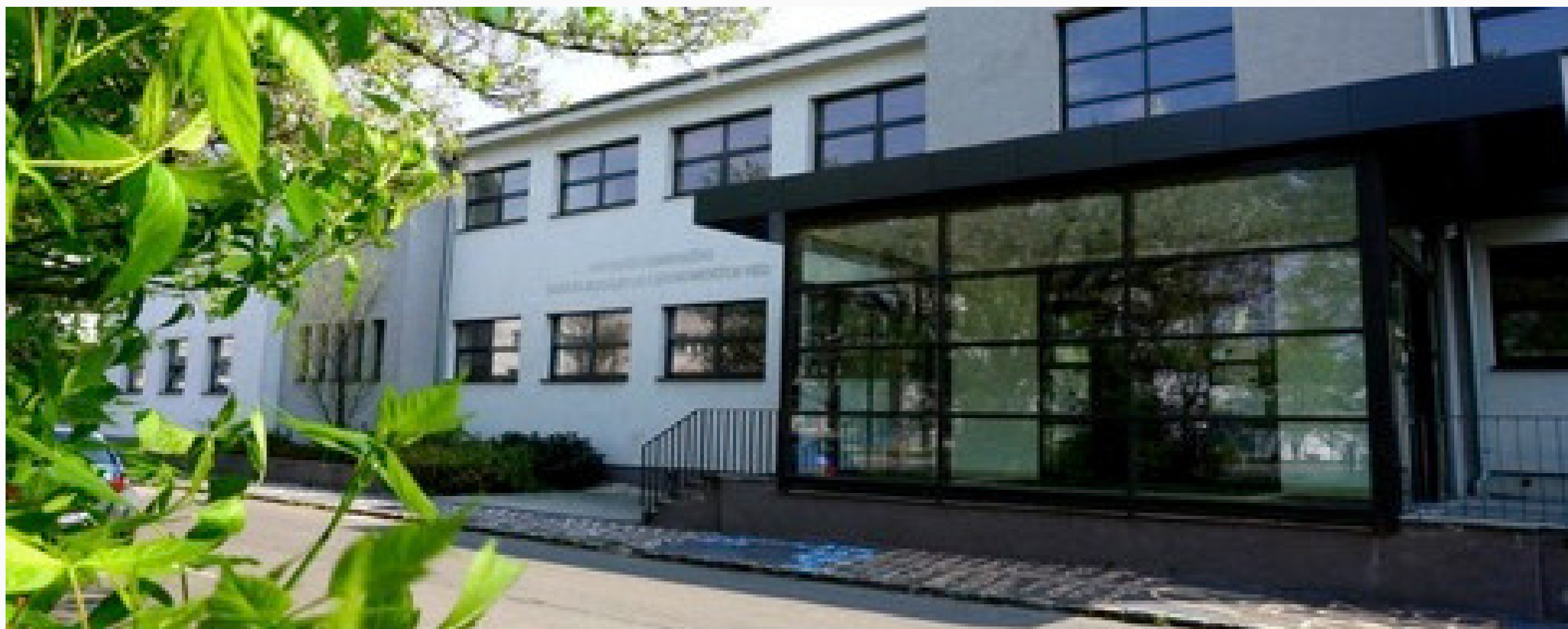
### **Deadline for registering to TED2020: January 26, 2020**

- ~ Please register at: [www.ted2020.eu](http://www.ted2020.eu)

### **Fee for accepted participants**

- ~ The conference fee for accepted participants is 150 EUR. It includes participation in the scientific program, two conference lunches (February 12 and 13, 2020) and social evening (February 12, 2019).

## CONFERENCE VENUE



Institute of Public Policy, Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences  
Comenius University in Bratislava  
Mlynské luhy 4  
821 05 Bratislava  
Slovakia

## ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

**Katarína Staroňová**, local organizer (Institute of Public Policy, Comenius University Bratislava, SK)  
**Emília Sičáková-Beblavá**, local organizer (Institute of Public Policy, Comenius University Bratislava, SK)  
**Jan-Hinrik Meyer-Sahling**, EGPA representative (University of Nottingham, UK)  
**Tobias Bach**, EGPA representative (University of Oslo, NO)  
**Michal Sedlačko**, NISPAcee representative (University of Applied Science FH Campus Wien, AT)  
**Küllli Sarapuu**, NISPAcee representative (Tallinn University of Technology, EE)

More information on the TED 2020 website at: [www.ted2020.eu](http://www.ted2020.eu)