

*Honourable Guests,
Dear Professor Czaputowicz,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is my privilege to open the Meeting of the Directors of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration DISPA organized during the Polish Presidency of the EU. I am happy to participate in the first session of the “Leadership in a changing public administration”.

As the head of the Civil Service in Poland I have a great pleasure to take considerable part of the Polish Presidency resulting in our present leadership of the European Union Public Administration Network and other events. EUPAN is, as you know, an informal network of Directors General responsible for Public Administrations in the EU member States and European Commission. Therefore it is a platform for exchange of views, experiences and good practices to improve the performance, competitiveness and quality of the European public administrations. It is my pleasure to inform you, that during our Presidency in the EUPAN, we organized the 6th Quality Conference two weeks ago. The Conference turned out to be very successful. Its topic: “Doing the right things right - towards a more result-oriented public sector in Europe” to some extent corresponds with today’s meeting. During the conference, nearly 300 specialists and policy makers from EUPAN and Eastern Partnership discussed, among other topics, leadership in changing administration.

By the way, last weekend I had a meeting with a group of civil servants from the Netherlands. I was given a book “Thinking about leadership”. So everything revolves around this subject.

It goes without saying that the role of Institutes and Schools of Public Administrations is of crucial importance. In Poland this significant mission is performed by the National School of Public Administration (KSAP). Since 1990 KSAP is in charge of educating, training and preparing members of Poland's Civil Service Corps, as well as more generally the candidates to higher posts in the country's administration. This role of KSAP was particularly important in the 90' when Poland – still young democracy – needed well-qualified, professional and politically neutral civil servants.

But what seems to be very important for us today, is that DISPA, alike EUPAN, provides an effective platform for exchanging ideas useful for public administration. Not only does DISPA exchange views and opinions but also sets up various joint actions like common trainings programmes, and traineeships. I am very glad that KSAP actively participates in DISPA's activities.

In my opinion the theme of today's meeting "Leadership in a changing public administration" is very important and up-to-date. Public administration needs true leaders especially in the time of crisis. Nowadays austerity measures are being implemented in public administrations across the EU, from freezing wages, through reducing recruitment rates to significant jobs cutting. The Polish economy has so far proven to be resilient to the global economic crisis nevertheless some measures have been taken; for example decreasing employment in the ministries to that of 2007 level. On the other hand public administration has to deal with increasingly high expectations of its services. Thus we need to find an answer to the fundamental question: "How to do more and perform better having less?"

As far as I'm concerned this is a true challenge for leaders and I hope a "mission possible".

I am sure that this conference will be helpful for us in dealing with dilemmas concerning leadership in a changing environment of public administrations. The topics selected for this conference are, I think, innovative and interesting.

Having this opportunity, I'd like to wish all DISPA members strengthening cooperation in building effective network in Europe.

For DISPA directors – successes in carrying out your mission.

Have a good time in Warsaw, too.

Thank you.