

# **PUBLIC LEADERSHIP FOR A RESILIENT STATE**

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**Report of the Meeting of the Directors  
of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration (DISPA)**

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**National School of Public Administration (KSAP)  
Warsaw, Poland**

**21–23 May 2025**



*Public Leadership for a Resilient State*

Report of the Meeting of the Directors of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration (DISPA), 21-23 May 2025, Warsaw, Poland

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# DISPA THEME AND CONTEXT

## Date, Place And Theme

As part of the Polish presidency of the Council of the European Union, the National School of Public Administration (ksap) hosted a meeting of Directors of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration from European Union Member States and candidate countries (DISPA). The meeting took place at KSAP headquarters in Warsaw, from May 21-23, 2025.

The theme of the meeting was: **“Public Leadership for a Resilient State”** and referred to the motto of the Polish presidency, which was “Security, Europe!”, reflecting the challenges our continent is currently facing.

## The Polish presidency of the council of the EU

**During the first half of 2025, Poland held the presidency of the Council of the European Union** at a time of serious challenges for Europe: the Russian aggression against Ukraine, growing geopolitical tensions, hybrid attacks, and the erosion of the international order. Faced with these threats, the European Union must act decisively to support the citizens of its Member States, strengthen security, and promote development – both internally and in its immediate neighborhood. An effective response to these challenges requires unity, cooperation with partners sharing common values, and the defense of the foundations of the Community: democracy, freedom, and the rule of law.

**The Polish presidency focused on strengthening European security in seven key dimensions:**

1. Defence and security
2. Protection of people and borders
3. Resistance to foreign interference and disinformation
4. Ensuring security and freedom of business
5. Energy transition
6. Competitive and resilient agriculture
7. Health security<sup>1</sup>



## Polish presidency logo

The design of the logo of the Polish presidency was inspired by Poland's recent history. It symbolises the rebirth of Polish democracy and civil society, hearkens back to the best traditions of the Solidarity trade union and marks Poland's return to the mainstream of European debate.

<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/en/programme/priorities/>

The logo was designed by **Jerzy Janiszewski**, author of the Solidarity symbol created in 1980, as well as the logo of the 2011 Polish presidency. The Polish flag at the centre of the European Union symbolises the present, highlighting the overwhelming enthusiasm of Poles towards the EU as well as Poland's leadership in terms of European integration.<sup>2</sup>

**This logo reflects:**

- Commitment to European affairs;
- The ambition to set the course of EU policies, in particular concerning the security of the continent,

**as well as**

emphasises the ability to tackle internal and external issues, as well as to build EU cohesion and strengthen international alliances, based on **fundamental values**, including:

- **Rule of law**, which entails ensuring a transparent, democratic and pluralistic legal system, which enshrines citizens' fundamental rights and freedoms;
- **Democracy**, seen as a type of political system, which involves society in the process of running the state to the greatest possible extent;
- **Freedom**, which is a key concept of Western civilisation and a key theme in the Polish and European history; this value is particularly relevant today, given the authoritarian threats, both internal and beyond the borders of the EU;
- **Security** in the broadest sense of the word, concerning citizens of Poland and the EU as a whole;
- **Inclusion**, which is understood as sensitivity to the needs of different social groups and gender equality, especially for women;
- **Openness** towards countries and societies that share the European values and aspire to join the process of European integration, in particular in the context of the EU enlargement process with the countries of Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans;
- **Unity**, as geopolitical challenges, both global and local, require a joint response from the EU, which is contingent on strengthening internal political, economic and social cohesion; What is more, unity is a value that underpins Poland's heritage, as well as its original contribution to the European heritage, complementing the desire for freedom and the efforts which transformed Europe in the late 20th century, which remain relevant today – in the world of wars and crises, in particular the ongoing aggression against Ukraine.

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<sup>2</sup> Source: <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/en/presidency/visual-identity/>

## The Apple

### Pride of Polish orchards is the official fruit of the Polish presidency

For Poland, the apple is a special fruit and a source of national pride. As the largest apple producer in Europe and the fourth-largest globally, Poland's apples are renowned for their flavour and quality, appreciated by international consumers. That is why the apple was designated as the official fruit of Poland's presidency of the Council of the European Union. The choice of an apple as a symbol was also intended to emphasise the importance of Polish agriculture and its products, as well as to promote a healthy lifestyle.<sup>3</sup>

In the context of the theme of the DISPA meeting in Warsaw, the apple, a symbol of health, emphasizes the key role of physical resilience in effective leadership.



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<sup>3</sup> Source: <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/en/news/the-apple-pride-of-polish-orchards-and-the-official-fruit-of-the-polish-presidency/>

# THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (KSAP)

**The host institution of Warsaw DISPA Meeting – the National School of Public Administration (KSAP) was established in 1990. It played an important role in the reform of public administration, building an independent and professional civil service in the democratic Poland.**

## KSAP's mission

KSAP's mission is to train public administration employees including civil servants who will take responsibility for their country's affairs, be sensitive to what matters to citizens, act in a professional manner and be up to the task of working in an international environment.

**The above mission is served by way of:**

**1. Intramural and dual training (*full-time*)**

**The development of “hard skills” – knowledge**

The education programme is implemented in blocks including administration and governance, economics and public finances, the European Union and foreign policy, foreign languages – language teaching at the School is of a specialist, administration-related profile and IT training. Students/participants also take part in tutorials, conferences, national and foreign internships and study visits in the institutions of public administration.

**The development of “soft skills” – Building attitudes and personal competencies programme**

These courses are associated with key skills necessary for the effective professional functioning of KSAP graduates in various positions in public administration, and constitute the entire block of classes, collectively referred to as building attitudes and personal competencies.

**2. Continuous training**

The main task in this area of KSAP activity is to support the professional development of public administration employees. This goal is served by a varied offer that includes short and longer training as well as education programs **to supplement knowledge and help with the development of soft skills**. In each case, we seek to cater to the needs of public administration institutions.

**3. Support for administration**

A key aspect of KSAP's mission is support for the improvement and development of public administration through creating the place and conditions by which valuable exchange of experience can take place and good practices can be identified and propagated, and through the checking and confirmation of qualifications. We offer a “platform” in which relevant knowledge and experience can be passed on to both Polish and foreign administration, pursue ambitious development projects, organise international study visits, training courses and internships, as well as conferences and seminars on public administration innovative issues.

In all our activities, we focus on creating an appropriate environment for the exchange of experiences and mutual inspiration. Our goal is to create a network of practitioners who also maintain working contact between training courses, creating communities of practitioners that facilitate more effective cooperation between public administration institutions.

[ksap.gov.pl/ksap/en](http://ksap.gov.pl/ksap/en)



KSAP seat, 56 Wawelska Street, Warsaw, Poland

# WHAT IS DISPA?

DISPA is an informal network that brings together directors and representatives of institutes and schools of public administration of EU Member States, candidate countries and the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA). The network is coordinated by the European School of Administration (EuSA).

The directors meet regularly twice a year in the country that holds the rotating presidency of the Council of the EU. The previous DISPA network meeting in Poland took place during Poland's first presidency, in October 2011.

## DISPA Mission and Purpose

The main mission and purpose of DISPA is the creation of an informal network to modernise public administrations across Europe and to strengthen their cross-country collaboration in the domain of learning and professional development between schools/institutes of European public administration.



## WELCOME ADDRESS

### Małgorzata Bywanis-Jodlińska, Director of KSAP

Good morning.

I warmly welcome you on the first day of our conference. Although many of us had the opportunity to meet yesterday evening, new participants have joined us this morning – so once again, a very warm welcome to all of you.

As I mentioned yesterday, the DISPA meeting takes place at the National School of Public Administration. The school was established 35 years ago with the aim of creating a modern public administration for the new Poland after the 1989 transformation. So far, over 1,400 people have completed the full-time education program, while around 15,000 participants annually benefit from other forms of continuing training – and these numbers continue to grow. Despite its relatively young age, the School boasts a significant body of achievements, knowledge, and experience, which make it a mature and dynamic institution.



Małgorzata Bywanis-Jodlińska, Director of KSAP

During DISPA meeting in Budapest in October last year, I had the pleasure of inviting you to Warsaw and announcing the theme of our conference: “Public Leadership for a Resilient State.” At the time, I did not anticipate just how timely and relevant this topic would become in today’s challenging circumstances.

Faced with numerous challenges – both global and local – we need strong, responsible leadership and the ability to build resilience.

*For years, our National School of Public Administration has played a key role in training public administration leaders, with leadership being a central element of our curriculum.*

However, being a leader in times of uncertainty requires new competencies and a new approach.

*Resilience, as I understand it, is a combination of strength and flexibility. It is the ability to adapt, an openness to change, and the skill to combine expert knowledge with soft skills – such as people management, communication, persuasion, and leading change. It also means taking care of one's own mental well-being and inner balance, which are essential for effectively leading others.*

As for today the question we face is whether a government school is able to manage to teach all those soft skills, whether there is rather a natural gift or we can teach those skills? Are we ready to develop them and if so, by what means?

I hope this conference will give us the opportunity to make some reflection and maybe to give some answers to our questions.



## WELCOME ADDRESS

### Anita Noskowska-Piątkowska, Head of the Civil Service in Poland

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and honour to open this important meeting of the Directors of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Director of KSAP Ms. Małgorzata Bywanis-Jodlińska for the kind invitation and to warmly welcome all our distinguished guests.

Welcome to Warsaw, and welcome to the Polish National School of Public Administration – known as KSAP. Hosting DISPA at KSAP is both symbolic for Poland and deeply personal for me. I am a proud graduate of this institution – a member of Robert Schuman's 8th cohort, class of 2000.

*KSAP lies at the heart of Poland's system for training public administration leaders.*

It is a unique institution operating under the authority of the Prime Minister, founded in May 1990 by the government of Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki. As the first institution of its kind in post-communist Europe, inspired by France's École Nationale d'Administration, KSAP has become a national centre of excellence. It has played a crucial role in shaping and transforming Polish public administration, developing managerial and leadership competencies, and promoting a strong ethos of public service.

Today, KSAP graduates hold key positions across central administration, local government, diplomacy, and international institutions. Among them are Directors General, Ministers, Secretaries of State, Heads of Central Offices, Ambassadors, and senior officials in international organisations – including the former EU Commissioner Ms. Elżbieta Bieńkowska. Their careers are the best possible evidence that investing in the professional preparation of public administration leaders brings long-term benefits to the state.

This brings us to the core mission of public administration schools: to prepare ethical and competent leaders for the challenges of tomorrow.

*DISPA unites leading public administration schools across Europe, and these institutions play a vital role in strengthening state resilience. They do so by preparing leaders who are capable of acting in conditions of uncertainty and crisis. Our mission goes beyond the transmission of knowledge – it is about shaping attitudes and competencies that enhance responsiveness and prepare leaders to act under pressure, in volatile and unpredictable environments.*

As societal expectations evolve, public administration schools must adapt. Citizens demand greater transparency, accessibility, and services tailored to their needs. This calls for value-based education rooted in dialogue, integrity, and responsibility. In the face of transnational challenges – such as war, climate change, demographic shifts, and the digital and green transitions – collaboration among public administration schools is not optional, but essential.

The theme of this meeting – “*Public Leadership for a Resilient State*” – is both timely and highly relevant. Effectively addressing geopolitical tensions, cyber threats, demographic changes, and climate challenges requires a resilient state.

*And resilience is not a luxury – it is a necessity. It can only be achieved through responsible, competent, and ethical leadership.*

Resilient states need strong public leaders – individuals who lead by example, inspire trust, and make informed, ethical decisions under pressure.

New challenges demand new leadership competencies. The continuous development of leadership skills is critical. Modern public leadership requires a blend of expert knowledge and soft skills – including change management, communication, empathy, and cross-sector collaboration. To prepare future-ready leaders, we must embrace innovative teaching methods such as data-driven learning, crisis simulations, artificial intelligence, and experiential learning.

Educational programmes should not only teach management but also inspire. They should foster a genuine spirit of public service and help build a lasting public trust. Because investing in leadership development means investing in the future of democratic governance.

European public administrations face common challenges – and they require shared solutions. Networks like DISPA provide a vital platform for cooperation, knowledge exchange, and the joint creation of resilient, modern models of public service across Europe. This meeting is an opportunity to exchange bold ideas and build lasting partnerships.

We are not only shaping the next generation of public leaders – we are contributing to the future of European governance.

I wish you all a productive, inspiring, and collegial meeting here in Warsaw – and a pleasant and memorable stay in Poland.

Thank you.



Anita Noskowska-Piątkowska,  
Head of the Civil  
Service in Poland

# PUBLIC LEADERSHIP FOR A RESILIENT STATE

## Warsaw DISPA Programme

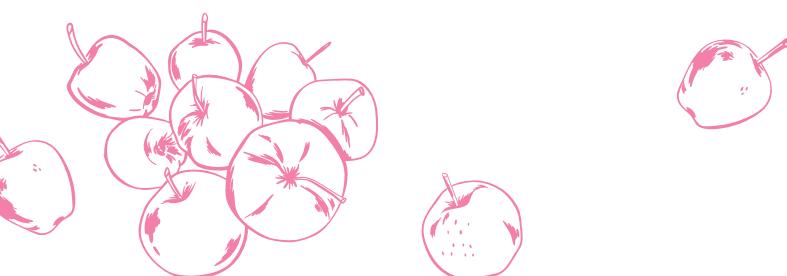
The topic of leadership in times of crisis is gaining importance in the context of contemporary threats such as potential armed conflicts, global health crises, climate change, and the growing risk of cyberattacks.

*Leaders in public administration must possess the skills to anticipate threats, respond quickly, adapt to change, make sound decisions, and mobilise teams to act.*

The conference programme was designed to foster collaboration among experienced experts involved in designing and delivering leadership training. It aimed to create a space for sharing knowledge, experiences, and best practices, as well as jointly seeking effective solutions to support leadership competence development. With well-planned facilitation, participants had the opportunity for in-depth discussion and workshop-based work, resulting in concrete recommendations for training institutions. In this context, participants reflected together on key issues related to leadership resilience, such as

- Which qualities define a resilient leader?
- How can leadership resilience be developed?
- Whether and how does a leader's resilience translate into the resilience of the entire institution?

Diverse and engaging meeting formats—such as keynote speeches, panels, workshops, and study visits—enabled participants to analyse the needs of leaders, teams, and organisations in terms of resilience in the public sector. The programme was structured to guide participants through subsequent stages—from individual reflection, through small group work, to joint summaries and reports. This approach not only gathered diverse perspectives but also allowed for an in-depth diagnosis of the challenges and needs related to building resilience in public leadership—both at the individual and organisational levels.





## Public Leadership for a Resilient State Meeting of the Directors of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration (DISPA)

### 21.05.2025      Agenda

**18:00–20:00**      **Welcome cocktail party**

Venue: KSAP, 56, Wawelska Street

### 22.05.2025      Agenda

**8:30–9:00**      Registration and welcome coffee

**9:00–9:30**      **Opening of the event**

- Katarzyna Woś, Head of Public Administration Development Center, KSAP

#### **Welcome addresses**

- Małgorzata Bywanis-Jodlińska, Director of KSAP
- Anita Noskowska-Piątkowska, Head of the Polish Civil Service
- Anna Mitelman, Head of the European School of Administration;  
Christiane Keutgens, Deputy Head of the European School of Administration

**9:30–10:00**      **Go beyond your limits! Welcome inspiring speech**

Special guest: Marek Kamiński, explorer, entrepreneur, and social innovator

**10:00–10:30**      Coffee break

**10:30–11:45**      **Does a resilient leader make a resilient institution?**

*Discussion panel*

#### **Participants:**

- Alana Baker, Policy Analyst, OECD Network of Schools of Government (NSG)
- Brian Cawley, Senior Expert in Public Sector Strategy and Reform and Public Sector Leadership Development
- Kirsi Aaltola, Director, Development and International Programs, Finnish Institute of Public Management (HAUS)
- Pamela Krzypkowska, Director of the Department of Research and Innovation, Ministry of Digital Affairs, Poland
- Marcin Sakowicz, Advisor to the Director of KSAP

Moderator: Anna Mitelman, Head of the European School of Administration (EuSA)

**11:45–12:00**      Family photo

**12:00–12:45**      Lunch

**12:45–15:30 Leadership Resilience in Public Administration (Open Space Technology)****15 minutes** **Tomasz Cichocki and Krzysztof Gulda**

*coffee break  
will take place  
during the OST  
session.*

Our conversations will focus on building resilience among leaders working in public administration – exploring both resilience in the face of potential conflicts and preparedness for unexpected events in times of peace. In today's rapidly changing environment, developing robust leadership capabilities has become more critical than ever.

**Open Space Technology (OST) – What is this?, part 1**

Open Space Technology is a dynamic and participant-driven approach that allows for meaningful discussions on topics that matter most to you. Unlike traditional conference presentations, OST creates space for organic conversations in smaller groups, where every voice can be heard and every perspective valued. The beauty of this format lies in its flexibility and the opportunity it offers for genuine exchange of ideas and experiences.

**15:30–16:00 Open Space Technology – sum up****16:00 End of the first day session****16:30–18:30 Guided tour of Warsaw**

Warsaw is a city whose architecture combines centuries of history with contemporary business city look – and a city which had been almost wiped off the face of the earth and yet was brought back to life! We invite you for a short bus trip (2,5 hours with a guide and an opportunity to walk) around the highlights of Warsaw.

**19:00–22:00 Gala Dinner**

Venue: Ale Gloria Restaurant, Plac Trzech Krzyży 3, [alegloria.pl/home-eng](http://alegloria.pl/home-eng)

**23.05.2025 Agenda****9:30–10:00 Morning coffee****10:00–12:30 Three parallel workshops****Leadership Walk  
by Christiane Keutgens****Leader  
under pressure****Mentor for mentor  
Agnieszka Wilczyńska-Strawa****Areas around KSAP**

Take a step back, put things into perspective, and experience a new, pedagogical, and innovative approach to learning. In today's fast-paced world, the ability to resource ourselves has been identified as a critical competence for the future professional. Taking care of oneself is not just in our interest, but also in the interest of the people around us and the mission we serve.

**Polish Air Navigation Services****Agency - study visit: 8, Wieża  
street, Warsaw**

Let's immerse ourselves into the fascinating world of the air navigation exploring all the challenges it imposes on the people responsible for the Polish air control. Why should we? Because we want to see how people, for whom a scheduled stress is a normal part of the working day, are prepared to work under high-pressure circumstances.

During the visit we will discuss the methods of enabling the air

**Workshop at KSAP, room 224**

Mentoring is crucial for senior officials in public administration because it supports their professional and personal development. It helps to transfer knowledge and experience, which increases work efficiency and facilitates team management. It builds trust and strengthens relationships between employees, fostering cooperation.

Through mentoring, leaders can better handle challenges and make more informed decisions. Additionally, mentoring supports continuous skill improvement,

navigators act effectively in the most difficult external conditions. We will also sneak peek on the training room. Our guides through this journey will be people responsible for creating the training programme for the navigators.

which is essential in the changing environment of public administration.

A team leader who is a mentor can better support their mentees by sharing the latest management methods and strategies and tailoring their approach to their needs. Mentoring at various organisational levels creates a culture of continuous development and improvement.

### Benefits

Leadership Walks offer a unique opportunity to engage with peers in meaningful conversations, reflect on leadership challenges, and draw inspiration from nature.

At the heart of these walks is a deepening of listening capacity—to yourself, to others, and to the environment—allowing new insights and solutions to emerge.

These walks also foster resilience, helping you cultivate key leadership skills such as self-awareness, empathy, self-compassion, and appreciation—all essential for sustainable leadership in an evolving world.

During the visit, participants will learn how air traffic controllers manage stress and make decisions in difficult situations. They will get to know advanced navigation systems, see the training room, and meet experts responsible for training. This will help them develop stress management skills, decision-making abilities, increase their technical knowledge and safety awareness, and improve interpersonal skills.

Workshop participants will better understand what mentoring is in the context of managing teams and tasks, and how it improves leaders' work efficiency. They will reflect on the importance of developing interpersonal skills and awareness of strengths and areas for improvement in leaders. Together, they will discuss how better self-awareness and conscious decision-making by leaders contribute to creating a culture of continuous development and improvement in organisations.

### Report on morning activities.

**12:30–13:15**

**My own Warsaw DISPA takeaway**

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### Words of Upcoming Presidency

**13:15–13:25**

- Maja Handjiska-Trendafilova, Director of ReSPA

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### Farewell from KSAP

**13:25–13:30**

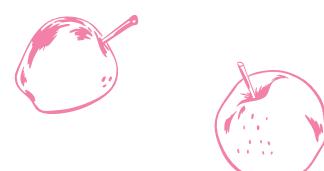
- Małgorzata Bywanis-Jodlińska, Director of KSAP

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**13:30–14:30**

**Lunch**

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## DISPA SPEAKERS



**Marek  
Kamiński**

A globally renowned explorer, entrepreneur, and social innovator, celebrated as the first person to reach both the North and South Poles in a single year without external support. This extraordinary achievement, recognized by the Guinness World Records, shaped his understanding of resilience—not merely as physical endurance but as a mental strength that can be cultivated to overcome life's challenges.

During his expeditions, Marek realised that “it’s not the legs that conquer the poles, but the mind.” This profound insight inspired him to dedicate his life to promoting mental resilience as a cornerstone of prevention in mental health and as a foundation for individual and societal well-being. As the founder of the Marek Kamiński Foundation and the Kamiński Academy, he has pioneered transformative programmes such as Life Plan Academy, which equips young people with tools to build mental resilience, overcome adversity, and develop leadership skills.



**Alana Baker**

Senior policy analyst,  
OECD Network  
of Schools of  
Government (NSG)

Alana Baker leads the Network of Schools of Government (NSG) and plays a central role in advancing public service reform across member countries. Her work focuses on leadership development, skills and capacity building, learning systems, and workforce and performance management, among other areas. In this role, she provides strategic direction to international policy networks, oversees global meetings and webinars, and contributes to flagship publications and global country projects. Her efforts underpin key OECD workstreams, notably the Public Employment and Management Working Party under the Public Governance Committee, and the Public Service Leadership and Capability (PSLC) agenda.



**Brian Cawley**

Senior Expert in Public  
Sector Strategy and  
Reform and Public  
Sector Leadership  
Development

Brian Cawley served as Director General of the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) in Ireland from 2009 – 2015 and prior to that had over 20 years of experience as a senior manager, training specialist, and expert in leadership development. He now works as an independent consultant and senior expert and has been engaged on a wide range of public sector development, capacity building and leadership development projects with several international organisations, including the World Bank, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, Public Administration International and Helvetas, the Swiss Development Corporation.

Recent projects have included the development of a Local Government Academy, the design of a leadership development programme for top public servants, lessons from the pandemic to inform future public sector reform and the development of a national public services training strategy.



**Pamela Krzypkowska**

Director of the Department of Research and Innovation, Ministry of Digital Affairs, Poland

Pamela Krzypkowska leads Poland's strategy for responsible digital transformation in the era of artificial intelligence. Previously, she worked as an AI Cloud Solution Architect at Microsoft, where she managed flagship AI projects for some of Poland's largest clients. She has a strong background in AI and data science, holding a Master of Engineering in AI from the Warsaw University of Technology and multiple Microsoft certifications in Azure AI and Data Science. She also earned a degree in Philosophy from the University of Warsaw, offering her a unique perspective on the ethical and social implications of AI technologies.



**Kirsī Aaltola**

Responsible for business development at HAUS, Finnish Institute of Public Administration

Kirsī Aaltola holds a PhD in Information Technology and Cognitive Science, as well as a Master's degree in Adult Education. Her doctoral research focused on the development of expertise in digital environments in the field on conflict prevention and crisis management.

Throughout her career, her central themes have been resilience, competence development and international cooperation. She worked in government administration, the private sector, research and higher education, gaining extensive experience in national and international network-based projects. During COVID-19 she led the resilience task force in VTT Technical Research Centre.



**Marcin Sakowicz**

Adviser to the Director, National School of Public Administration (KSAP)

A project leader and recognized expert in leadership development within public administration, with over 20 years of experience designing and implementing modernisation initiatives for civil services in the EU, Eastern Partnership countries, Africa, and Asia. At KSAP, Marcin managed flagship projects such as the Argonauts (international study visits for public servants), the Academy of Management in Public Administration, and the Public Management Forum, all focused on building leadership capacity, fostering organisational resilience, and promoting a culture of knowledge sharing in the public sector.

He holds a PhD in Economics and has extensive academic experience as a lecturer at the Warsaw School of Economics, specialising in public policy and administration. He is committed to advancing modern leadership standards and supporting the development of resilient, adaptive public institutions.



**Anna Mitelman**

Head of the European School of Administration (EUSA)

Anna Mitelman took up the function as Head of the European School of Administration early in 2023 after a long career in various functions within the European Committee of the Regions, most recently as HR Head of Unit responsible for talent management, HR transformation after the pandemic, medico-social services, Diversity and Inclusion, etc.

She is fully committed to the School as the Centre of excellence and innovation and with a strong belief in effective leadership structures. She works hand in hand with Deputy Christiane Keutgens in a true spirit of co-leadership to maximise the managerial capacity, performance, and outreach of the School as well as the general growth and well-being of its staff.



**Tomasz  
Cichocki**

Consultant, trainer, facilitator, coach and innovation expert. With a background in physics from the University of Warsaw and over 20 years of experience, Tomasz has developed deep expertise in facilitation, organisational development, and innovation management. Since 2003, he has specialized in organisational culture transformation and innovation implementation, working extensively in international environments.

He is particularly skilled in collaborative methodologies, including Open Space Technology and has delivered over 5,000 hours of training in management skills. Since 2012, he has supported international research consortia with the European Commission in developing exploitation strategies for innovations.



**Krzysztof  
Gulda**

Entrepreneur, researcher, strategist in public and private sector, international consultant. Expert in innovation strategies with focus on links between innovation and policies such as research, entrepreneurship, human development, IP and sustainable industry. Specialises in academic entrepreneurship (start-ups, VC, incubators), business-academia cooperation, innovation systems (national, regional, clusters), and open innovation.

Former vice chair of the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC), member of OECD CSTP and CIIE, and former chair of the UN ECE Team on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies. Recently, Council Member of Poland's National Centre for Research and Development.



**Christiane  
Keutgens**

The Deputy Head of EuSA since 2020 in a spirit of co-leadership

Christiane Keutgens joined the EU Institutions in 1994 and has held several roles in learning and professional development, capacity building, policy coordination, and strategic communication across various services, including the Cabinet, DG COMM, DG Connect, and the Spokespersons' Service. With a background in Economics and Marketing, she recently became an accredited coach, further strengthening her commitment to leadership and people development. Passionate about Europe and lifelong learning, she is dedicated to fostering talent and driving professional growth.



**Agnieszka  
Wilczyńska-  
Strawa**

Researcher and lecturer in the discipline of management and quality studies

Agnieszka Wilczyńska-Strawa works as an analyst at the Student Training Centre at KSAP and as a coordinator of mentoring cooperation within the mentoring and coaching programme at KSAP. Agnieszka has a Ph.D. in social sciences in the discipline of defence science, specialising in aviation (National Defence University in Warsaw, Poland), 2015 and is an assistant professor at the Institute of Civil Aviation Management, Faculty of Management and Command, War Studies University in Warsaw, Poland.

**Marek Kamiński**

# GO BEYOND YOUR LIMITS!

## Inspirational Speech as a Tool for Leadership Development

### Summary of the speech

**Inspirational speeches** are powerful tools for the professional development of leaders, serving to motivate and foster a growth mindset. They help leaders connect with their purpose and vision, encouraging them to overcome challenges and embrace continuous learning. Through compelling stories, insightful reflections, and calls to action, such speeches renew leaders' energy and clarify their goals, strengthening their commitment to both personal and organisational growth. Moreover, these speeches highlight core values and ethical principles, guiding leaders toward authentic and impactful leadership.

Beyond motivation, inspirational speeches act as catalysts for self-reflection and behavioral change. They encourage leaders to critically evaluate their strengths, weaknesses, and leadership styles, prompting the pursuit of new skills and perspectives. This emotional engagement builds resilience, improves communication, and fosters empathy—essential qualities for navigating complexity and uncertainty with confidence. By inspiring leaders to look beyond immediate tasks and envision broader possibilities, inspirational speeches help shape visionary leaders who can effectively guide their teams through dynamic environments.

### Why Marek Kamiński?

Marek Kamiński, an acclaimed explorer and a philosopher, excellently shares his passion for authentically building resilience within society. As the first person to reach both the North and South Poles solo, and having overcome numerous extreme challenges, Marek Kamiński exemplifies pushing the boundaries of human potential. His real passion lies in helping others discover and harness their own inner strength, especially amidst uncertainty and change.

At the DISPA meeting at KSAP, Marek Kamiński delivered an inspiring speech that drew extensively from his travels and philosophical insights.

*He illustrated how conquering extreme challenges cultivates inner strength, self-awareness, and purposeful determination—qualities vital for leaders in complex, unpredictable environments such as public administration.*

His presentation blended vivid expedition stories with philosophical reflections on mental and emotional resilience, urging leaders to develop courage, mindful self-management, and authentic leadership to inspire their teams effectively.

### Pole Method to practice resilience and growth

Kamiński also introduced the Pole Method, a five-step process designed to support personal and professional growth through self-discovery, planning, embracing both success and failure, and intentional action. This method helps leaders define clear, motivating “poles”



Marek Kamiński, DISPA Guest speaker

(goals) and tailor the strategies to reach them, using the principles tested in extreme expeditions. Key features such as visualisation and self-awareness help maintain focus and enable adaptive decision-making. By valuing the journey alongside the goal, the Pole Method fosters persistence and resilience—critical for navigating the complexities and uncertainties typical of the public sector. Its holistic approach, addressing emotional, mental, relational, and physical dimensions, supports leaders in maintaining calm, perspective, and sustained motivation through crises and organisational change.

Kamiński further emphasised the strategic dimension of resilience, encouraging leaders to deeply understand their own and their teams' strengths to improve adaptability and delegation. He advocated for fostering psychological safety, transparent communication, and a culture of openness as foundations for collective resilience. Importantly, he highlighted that resilience must be nurtured individually and embedded into organisational cultures and leadership training, noting KSAP's role in equipping senior civil servants with these essential capacities.

Recommendations supporting the development of resilient, authentic leaders capable of effectively responding to challenges, based on Marek Kamiński's speech:

### **1. Invest in Developing Leaders' Inner Resilience and Self-awareness**

Support leaders in building mental toughness, emotional intelligence, and self-reflection. These qualities help them manage stress, remain adaptable during crises, and lead authentically—thereby cultivating trust and motivation within their teams.

### **2. Promote Psychological Safety and Strength-Based Team Development**

Foster organisational cultures of openness and transparency, where individual strengths are recognised and leveraged. This approach enables effective delegation, collaboration, and collective problem-solving, enhancing overall resilience.

### **3. Integrate Resilience Training at Organisational and Systemic Levels**

Extend resilience development beyond individuals by implementing formal programmes and strategic approaches to leadership development and institutional management. Include anticipatory governance, scenario planning, and embed resilience principles into public administration training curricula, as exemplified by KSAP's initiatives for senior civil servants ministry leaders.

# “DOES A RESILIENT LEADER MAKE A RESILIENT INSTITUTION?” PANEL DISCUSSION

## Panel Participants:

- Alana Baker, OECD Network of Schools of Government (NSG)
- Brian Cawley, Senior Expert in Public Sector Strategy and Leadership Development
- Kirsī Aaltola, Finnish Institute of Public Management (HAUS)
- Pamela Krzypkowska, Ministry of Digital Affairs, Poland
- Marcin Sakowicz, Advisor to the Director of KSAP
- Moderator: Anna Mitelman, Head of the European School of Administration (EuSA)

## Summary of the panel

### Holistic approach to institutional resilience and crucial challenges

The panel highlighted the multidimensional and systemic nature of resilience in public administration. While leadership and workforce management are fundamental, resilience depends crucially on an adaptive organisational culture and the collective mindset of all employees.

*Leaders set the tone by shaping culture and influencing the internal team dynamics as well as the external stakeholder relationships. Diagnosing and leveraging individual strengths across the entire workforce, not just among leaders, helps build resilience through effective delegation and empowerment.*

Core cultural enablers include psychological safety, transparent communication, and openness to feedback.

Alana Baker stressed that a well-integrated competency framework is vital for establishing a leadership pipeline, though it requires a significant, long-term effort to develop and fully implement it. Canada’s example shows successful use of such frameworks, which include tailored leadership levels, transparent promotion criteria, and a strong organisational learning culture.

Speakers acknowledged that political interference and restrictive regulatory frameworks often limit leaders’ ability to provide impartial, evidence-based advice and stifle innovation. An OECD study revealed that fewer than half of civil service leaders feel comfortable advising ministers when their evidence contradicts political agendas, undermining institutional resilience. Excessive bureaucracy similarly hampers adaptability, underscoring the need for reform that balances oversight with operational flexibility.

### How Practice Shapes Resilience

Examples from Ireland, Finland, and Ukraine illustrated how resilient organisations anticipate crises by embedding key practices beforehand or rapidly adapting during crises. Kirsī Aaltola emphasised the importance of mental preparedness rather than solely focusing

on risk prediction. Finland's anticipatory governance and cybersecurity drills exemplify proactive and multi-scenario risk management, fostering continuous learning and adaptive leadership able to respond effectively under pressure.

*She stressed that in crises, fast decision-making often outweighs perfect decisions, and leaders must be adaptive, reallocating roles based on available capacity and resources.*

She underscored the significance of leadership vulnerability during crises. Contrary to the notion that leaders must always appear strong, showing vulnerability helps build trust and encourages open communication, which is vital for effective leadership in challenging times.

Brian Cawley shared five leadership insights critical for resilience:

- **Clarity of Purpose:** Strong alignment around mission enables swift, coordinated crisis response.
- **Empowerment:** Delegating authority unlocks potential and flexibility, avoiding rigid hierarchies.
- **Risk Management:** Fear of change often obstructs necessary action; leaders must appropriately assess and embrace risk.
- **Addressing Real Challenges:** True leadership confronts underlying adaptive challenges beyond formal processes.
- **Leadership Presence:** Visible, humble, self-aware leaders who engage authentically inspire trust and stability.

## Technology, Change Management, and Leadership

Pamela Krzypkowska highlighted that rapid technological change and overwhelming digital information create uncertainty among civil servants regarding tool use and security. Poland's Ministry of Digital Affairs responded by issuing flexible, regularly updated generative AI guidelines to offer clear, non-restrictive support. She stressed that building resilience requires fostering a culture of trust and clarity, where employees feel safe experimenting with new technologies. Effective leadership today prioritises governance, values, and cultural fit over mastery of every tool. Leaders need humility and openness, learning from younger, tech-savvy staff, and embracing innovation.

Pamela Krzypkowska identified also managing change as a vital leadership skill, encouraging a mindset that views novelty as opportunity rather than threat—forming the foundation of resilience for both individuals and institutions.

## Building Resilience Through Competency Development

Marcin Sakowicz emphasised leadership's pivotal role in nurturing resilience by shaping culture and influencing relationships at all levels. True resilience requires recognising and leveraging the diverse strengths of the entire workforce. Investing in people is the most effective long-term resilience strategy.

KSAP and peer institutions support resilience development by equipping senior civil servants and ministry leaders with the mindset and skills required to embed resilience across public agencies. Resilience is a continuous, dynamic process spanning individual, organisational, and national levels.

Resilient organisations foster psychological safety, transparent communication, and openness to feedback—forming the cultural foundation for withstanding crises. Moreover, resilience is increasingly viewed as a strategic competence, not just a reactive capability. Anticipatory governance, advocated by Finland and the OECD, exemplifies the importance of proactive, forward-looking resilience at the state level.



## **Conclusions and recommendations for strengthening institutional resilience in public administration**

Building institutional resilience is a complex systemic endeavor that demands alignment across individual, organisational, and systemic levels. It requires cultivating a culture supportive of innovation, trust, and adaptability, reinforced by flexible and effective leadership, sound risk management, and enabling environments.

While leaders influence organisational culture, set the tone for transparency, trust, and psychological safety, and drive strategic adaptability, true institutional resilience emerges from a collective approach that includes empowering the entire workforce, embedding flexible risk management practices, and cultivating an environment of continuous learning and innovation. Effective resilience is therefore a systemic capability built through strong leadership aligned with supportive structures, clear communication, and shared responsibility throughout the organisation.

Institutional resilience is a continuous journey that requires integrated efforts in leadership, culture, workforce development, risk management, and governance reform. When effectively aligned, the following actions enable public administration to thrive amid increasing complexity and uncertainty:

### **1. Institutionalise Competency Frameworks and Foster a Learning Culture**

Design and implement comprehensive competency frameworks covering the entire workforce, not only the leaders. Establish platforms for best practice sharing, joint training, and continuous skill evaluation to align organisational capabilities with evolving demands and foster ongoing learning from both crises and daily operations.

### **2. Reduce Political and Regulatory Constraints That Limit Innovation**

Reform excessive political oversight and bureaucratic procedures that hinder evidence-based decision-making and adaptability. Ensure leaders and civil servants have psychological safety and operational flexibility to provide candid advice and pursue innovative solutions, even when politically sensitive.

### **3. Embed Systemic Risk Management and Scenario Planning as Standard Practice**

Institutionalise anticipatory governance by adopting systemic approaches to risk management. Learn from best practices such as Finland's regular cybersecurity drills and multi-scenario preparations. Move beyond focusing solely on worst-case scenarios; prepare comprehensively with clearly defined roles rehearsed in advance.

### **4. Prioritise Transparent Communication and Build Trust Internally and Externally**

Create a culture of candor and openness with honest, timely communication across all levels and partners. Encourage continuous feedback and dialogue, which are essential for innovation, learning, and countering public distrust through demonstrated responsiveness and transparency.

### **5. Promote Collective Ownership of Resilience Across the Organisation**

Embed resilience as a shared institution value and collective mindset rather than solely a leadership responsibility. Empower all employees to take initiative, contribute ideas, and engage in problem-solving to enhance adaptability.

## 6. Support Leader Well-being, Vulnerability, and Psychological Safety

Recognise the importance of leader vulnerability and self-care in sustaining resilient leadership. Promote support systems that help leaders and staff manage stress, model openness about challenges, and build trusting, psychologically safe teams.

## 7. Invest Continuously in Leadership Development Focused on Culture and Strengths

Prioritise ongoing leadership development that enables leaders to cultivate organisational culture, trust, and recognition of individual strengths. Encourage peer exchanges and learning networks (e.g. DISPA) to enhance capabilities systematically.

## 8. Leverage Insights from Countries with Recent Crisis Experience

Incorporate lessons from nations like Ukraine and other European countries, especially regarding digital transformation and crisis preparedness, to improve adaptive capacity.

*Prepared by Marcin Sakowicz, Advisor to the Director of KSAP*

1.



2.



1. Panel discussion: from the left: Kirs Aaltola, Marcin Sakowicz, Pamela Krzypkowska, Alana Baker Brian Cawley, Anna Mitelman (moderator).

2. Panel discussion: from the left: Kirs Aaltola, Marcin Sakowicz, Pamela Krzypkowska.

# RESILIENT LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

## A Perspective from DISPA Meeting Participants Open Space Technology Session

### Why did we choose this topic?

As KSAP, we proposed the topic of resilient leadership in public administration for the OST session because we believe that in the face of increasing uncertainty and the complexity of challenges faced by public institutions, strengthening leadership competencies—especially in crisis situations—has become essential. In a rapidly changing environment, developing strong leadership skills is more important than ever.

*We view resilient leadership not only as the ability to survive difficult crisis situations, but also as the capacity to inspire others, make sound decisions, and build lasting foundations for the future of public administration.*

### Why did we choose the OST format?

Open Space Technology is a dynamic, participant-driven approach that enables meaningful discussions on topics that matter most to participants within the context of the main theme. Unlike traditional conference presentations, OST creates space for natural conversations in smaller groups, where every voice can be heard and every perspective valued. It allows participants to propose their own discussion topics and focus on what is most relevant to them. The effectiveness of this format lies in its flexibility and the opportunity for authentic exchange of ideas and experiences.



Open Space Technology run by Tomasz Cichocki and Krzysztof Gulda

## Topics proposed by participants for discussion during the session

At the beginning of the session, each participant could propose a topic they wished to discuss with others in the context of building resilient leadership. From the submitted topics, a group discussion plan was created:

Session 1 Topics	Session 2 Topics
Various pedagogical methods used in schools	What does resilience mean to us?
How to set boundaries for leaders showing excessive resilience and how to support them?	How to co-create content? Shared intelligence with the help of AI.
How to adapt programmes to the context?	How to stay competitive in the market?
How to develop an innovation policy?	Onboarding for Generation Z (and beyond)
How can training programmes contribute to increasing the resilience of public administration?	“Push” or “pull” approach in learning?

## Key Insights from the Discussion

### 1. Resilience as a multidimensional concept

Resilience is a multidimensional concept that takes on particular significance in the context of leadership in public administration.

*It encompasses both the individual and organisational levels, and its development is based on experience, reflection, and systematic training activities.*

It is defined as the ability to solve problems, adapt to changing conditions, and return to equilibrium after crisis situations—while maintaining the institution’s core values and mission.

However, psychological and emotional resilience is not a skill that can be acquired solely through training—it is a complex process shaped by challenging life experiences, conscious reflection, and access to stable support systems. What matters is not only the individual’s ability to adapt, but also the social environment, relationships with others, organisational culture, and access to mentors and support networks. Resilience develops through action, in confrontation with uncertainty and change, and its foundation lies in the ability to learn from failure, maintain a sense of purpose and meaning, and build inner balance despite external difficulties. Strengthening the resilience of leaders thus translates into greater stability and flexibility of entire public institutions, enabling them to function effectively under conditions of uncertainty and pressure.

### 2. Building a development offer for leaders in times of crisis

Strategic alignment of context, policy, and training design for leaders is crucial for building a competent and efficient public administration that effectively responds to the challenges faced by the state.

*This means that development programmes must be designed in close connection with public policy priorities, citizens’ needs, and the specific functioning of administrative institutions.*



Training must be not only substantively relevant but also flexible, up-to-date, and adapted to changing socio-economic realities. Only then is it possible to shape a workforce that not only possesses the right competencies but can also apply them effectively in practice—with the common good, operational efficiency, and public trust in state institutions in mind.

Modern approaches to designing and delivering development offers for public administration leaders require a profound transformation—moving away from the traditional classroom model toward more engaging, practical, and individualised methods. Learning through action becomes key – implemented in real-world contexts using crisis simulations, role-playing, project work, or mentoring. This approach allows participants to better understand the complexity of situations, develop competencies in dynamic environments, and adapt more effectively to changing conditions.

Training institutions should increasingly embrace digital tools—learning management systems, AI-supported collaboration platforms, or micro-courses—that enable flexible and personalised learning. A hybrid approach is also recommended, combining the “push” model (initiated by the institution) with the “pull” model (driven by participants’ individual needs), to effectively balance organisational goals with the personal development of conscious leaders.

At the same time, soft skills are gaining importance—such as emotional intelligence, empathy, self-awareness, and the ability to build relationships—which are essential for team management and leading organisations through change. Modern leadership is not just about knowledge, but above all about the ability to adapt, communicate, and inspire others in a complex world.



Fig 1. Key elements in designing a development offer for leaders

### 3. Strengthening leadership in difficult times

The development of leadership in public administration should be based on creating conditions that enable leaders not only to act effectively but also to reflect and think strategically.

*Leaders need time and space to analyse challenges, make informed decisions, and develop their vision. A key competence in this context is the ability to delegate tasks with appropriate authority—that is, with responsibility—entrusting tasks in a way that builds trust and strengthens team engagement.*

Mentoring and coaching also play an important role in leadership development and should be systematically utilised, especially in the process of onboarding new generations of employees. This approach enables not only the transfer of knowledge and experience but also the building of a leadership culture based on dialogue, empathy, and continuous learning.

### 4. Innovations counteract crisis situations

Supporting innovation in public administration should be based on creating an organisational culture that promotes openness, experimentation, and the acceptance of failure as a natural part of the learning and improvement process. Innovation should not be treated as isolated actions—it must be embedded in ecosystem thinking, which includes inter-institutional cooperation, diversity of perspectives, and integrated systems that support the implementation of new solutions.

*Crucial to this is leadership that creates a safe space for testing ideas, encourages learning from mistakes, and builds trust within the team. Only in such an environment do people feel free to propose new ideas, test unconventional solutions, and grow in an authentic way.*

A helpful approach in this process may be the so-called “Saturn Ring” model, which assumes a sequential design of public policies—from a deep understanding of the context, through precise identification of the target group, to the development of coherent solutions and the adaptation of training for public administration leaders who support their implementation. This approach fosters the creation of solutions that are not only innovative but also genuinely responsive to citizens’ needs and implemented by well-prepared leaders. As a result, an organisational culture emerges that not only supports innovation but also builds engagement, resilience, and the capacity of the administration to operate effectively in a changing environment.

### **5. Generational Integration as support for leaders in difficult times**

Multigenerational teams are becoming a vital asset for organisations today, especially during times of crisis. A leader’s conscious approach to the diversity of experiences, values, and work styles across generations can significantly enhance the team’s resilience, flexibility, and cohesion. Mutual mentoring plays a key role here—senior employees share their knowledge and experience, while younger colleagues bring fresh perspectives and familiarity with new technologies. This exchange supports skill development, builds trust and a sense of community, and fosters innovation and adaptability throughout the organisation.

Intergenerational engagement also holds strategic importance in attracting and retaining talent—individuals who seek workplaces that offer not only professional development but also opportunities for collaboration, learning from more experienced colleagues, and making a real impact on their environment. Creating space for dialogue, joint decision-making, and mutual learning builds bridges between generations and fosters a culture of mutual respect and responsibility.

*For a leader, generational integration thus becomes not only a challenge but also an effective tool for building resilient, sustainable, and enduring organisations.*

### **6. Challenges in implementing the new training products**

Implementing new solutions, programmes, or initiatives offered to leaders by training institutions involves a number of challenges. Among the most significant are the duplication of content across leadership training programmes and the need to optimise the use of available resources—both human and technological. For this process to be effective, it is essential to build a sense of co-ownership among stakeholders, which means including leaders’ voices in the design of offerings intended for them, as well as introducing transparent validation and certification mechanisms, preferably with international reach, to enhance the credibility and recognition of the product.

*In the context of increasing market competitiveness, it is also crucial to ensure the exclusivity and prestige of the educational solutions offered, while maintaining their relevance and alignment with the real needs of the target audience.*





## Together in change

In a world of constant change, effective action requires moving away from universal templates in favor of tailored content and forms of communication that take into account the audience and context. Building a culture of collaboration becomes essential—not only within institutions but also at the inter-institutional and international levels—for enabling effective resource sharing and the co-creation of valuable content.

This process requires continuous reflection and a readiness to adapt, as leaders and organisations must respond flexibly to change, learning in real time and adjusting their approaches.

*However, the foundation of effective action remains trust—both among leaders and in relationships with participants in the process—as well as building a sense of community, which strengthens engagement and the durability of the solutions developed.*

## Summary

In the session summary, participants emphasised that in the face of growing complexity and uncertainty, a crisis is not only a challenge but also an opportunity for growth, innovation, and strengthening of public institutions. However, this requires leaders who are capable of acting under difficult conditions, inspiring others, and building an organisational culture based on trust, openness, and learning from failure.

The discussions held in the Open Space Technology format enabled deep reflection on the role of psychological resilience, the importance of intergenerational integration, the implementation of innovation, and the design of modern, flexible development programmes. Participants agreed that effective leadership in public administration today is not only a matter of competencies, but above all the ability to adapt, collaborate, and use crises as a catalyst for positive change.

*Prepared by Katarzyna Woś, Head of the Public Administration Development Centre, KSAP*



Open Space Technology session

# LEADERSHIP WALK

## Run by Christiane Keutgens and Célia Pessaud, EuSA

The Leadership Walk was organised on 23 May 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., in cooperation with the European School of Administration (EuSA).

### Leadership Walk, an innovative training tool

Walking, as a form of physical and intellectual activity, has a long tradition in philosophy, particularly in the context of ancient Greece. Philosophers often walked while engaging in discussions and reflections, which influenced their views and the way they conveyed ideas.

More recently, also great leaders and thinkers as Mahatma Gandhi, Albert Einstein or the founding fathers of the European Union: Jean Monnet and Robert Schumann found their inspiration in regular walks in nature.

Walking is increasingly being seen as a catalyst for creativity, reflection, and deeper understanding. Walking encourages open communication and the exchange of views, which can lead to the emergence of new ideas.

*Based on this idea, the European School of Administration developed and introduced in 2018 the new innovative training tool - the Leadership Walk, as a part of EuSA learning offer for staff and managers in the EU institutions.*

Designed initially for senior and middle managers, since 2018 this activity has been developed and is offered now in various formats and durations:

- Leadership Walk for Middle and Senior Managers – 1 day walking
- Resilience Walk – 1 day walking
- Way back to work after burnout – 0,5 day
- Walking Seminar – Purpose driven Leadership – 3 days

To encourage others to organise a team walk by themselves EuSA Team developed:

1. Team walks in EU institutions. Practice Guide.
2. Tools for Walking Facilitators.

These two manuals, available at EuSA, provide detailed information and advice on how to prepare and organise a Walk and include a catalogue of questions/exercises/tasks proposed to the participants, depending on the intention of the Walk.

### Method – what is the Leadership Walk?

The idea of Leadership Walk is to gather a group of people to discuss various issues, share experiences and inspire each other walking together, preferably in nature. The discussion/exercises may be organised in pairs, in groups, may include the individual reflection or joint discussion of participants.

*The topics/exercises/questions proposed by the organisers/facilitators are diverse and aim to stimulate or develop leadership skills as deep listening, openness, empathy, self-awareness, to encourage deeper reflection or concentration, to shape positive attitudes.*

### How the Leadership Walk is organised?

- The rules of the walk are clearly defined, including safety rules.
- The route is carefully planned, with sequences adapted to the proposed exercise (individual reflection, discussion in groups, debriefs, pauses).
- Suggested questions or exercises for discussion are adapted to the number of participants, length of the sequence of the walk, and route.

The Leadership Walk can be organised even during rain. The rain may have a very positive effect on the group, bringing the participants closer to hear each other well and enhancing the group's solidarity in this way.

The Leadership Walk can be done as a city walk but it is challenging due to the noisy environment which interferes with the joint discussion and safety rules to be observed - participants are more focused on the surroundings than on the topic and the depth of the discussion.



Leadership Walk in Pole Mokotowskie Park

### Leadership Walk during DISPA Meeting

During DISPA meeting in Warsaw, two-hours Leadership Walk was run by Christiane Keutgens and Célia Pessaud from EUSA. The Walk took place in the Ochota district around KSAP (square around Ministry of Climate and Pole Mokotowskie Park).

Participants experienced various forms of questions and exercises from Leadership Walk catalogue: one-on-one discussions, individual reflection, group exercises in threes, and a debriefing session.

Example questions the participants discussed included: "What values led you to take up work in public administration?" and "How did you build your own resilience, based on your professional experiences?". The latter was a part of the exercise called "Positive gossip".

## Leadership Walk recommendations

Walking in nature has a positive impact on our health, on our body, on the way we think. It opens minds, stimulates creativity, it allows going in depth into discussion and in the own reflection. In the case of a group of colleagues/coworkers, it helps to strengthen team spirit and cohesion of the group, to discover people's talents and resources and enrich everyday work together. Participating in the Leadership Walk in nature provides a break from the city and daily work pressure to resource ourselves and recharge with positive energy. But Leadership Walks are much more than just a stroll through a forest or park.

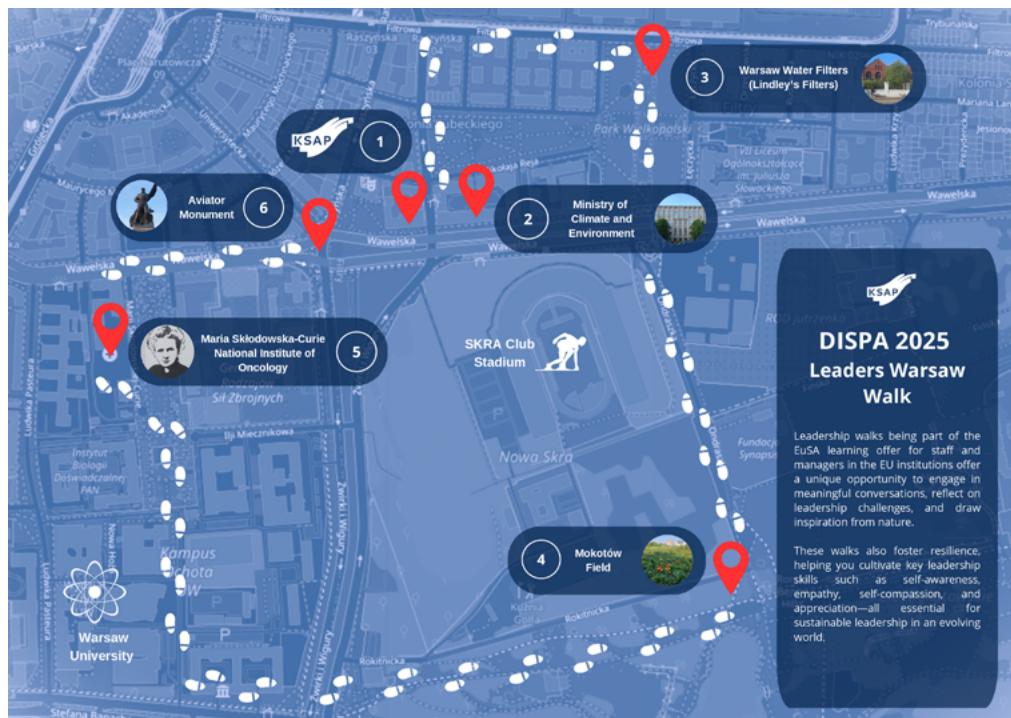
*They are carefully designed and intentional experiences aimed at deepening reflection, building trust within the team, and developing leadership competencies. By combining movement, connection with nature, and meaningful reflection, Leadership Walks create a space for personal and team growth, supporting leaders in making more conscious, empathetic, and effective decisions.*

## The map of KSAP District

As a side product for DISPA participants, a map of the district was developed by the KSAP Team with descriptions of the most interesting monuments, buildings and places near KSAP.

*Prepared by Aleksandra Orłowska, Public Administration Development Centre, KSAP*





**ROUTE**

1

**National School of Public Administration (KSAP)**

The KSAP headquarters is housed in a modernist building designed by one of the most prominent Polish architects of the interwar period, Professor Romuald Gutt, as the headquarters of the Social Institute, whose task was to run the elite School of Political Sciences. The project was awarded first prize in an architectural competition in 1926 and was implemented in stages from 1926 to 1932.

Initially a three-story building, it was extended in 1949-1950, gaining a fourth story. Inside, one can notice the characteristic minimalism of modernism. Some architectural elements from the 1930s have also been preserved.

2

**Ministry of Climate and Environment**

The building of the Ministry of Climate and Environment building, completed in 1938 as the headquarters of the State Forests Directorate, is the largest structure of the unrealized representative district.

Noteworthy is the art déco bas-relief on the building's facade, depicting Polish national emblem - the White Eagle.

3

**Warsaw Water Filters**

Warsaw Filters is one of the most important technical monuments in Warsaw. They were designed by the eminent British engineer William Lindley and his son.

The construction was completed in 1886. W. Lindley had previously designed sewage systems in other major European cities, including Hamburg, Budapest, and St. Petersburg.

Upon completion, Warsaw became one of the six cities in Europe with a modern water supply system in the 19th century.

4

**Mokotów Field**

This is the largest of Warsaw's numerous parks, covering 70 hectares. In the 19th century, Pole Mokotowskie served as a training ground for the Russian Tsarist cavalry stationed in Warsaw.

In 1841, the first horse racing track in the Kingdom of Poland was established here, and in 1910, Warsaw's first airport, aviation workshops, and a pilot school were opened. It was a place from which planes took off for demonstration and sports flights, and eventually for passenger flights.

During the interwar period, military parades were also held at Pole Mokotowskie, symbolizing the rebirth of the Polish army after the period of partitions.

5

**Maria Skłodowska-Curie National Institute of Oncology**

The institute was founded on May 29, 1932, at the initiative and request of Maria Skłodowska-Curie\* as the Radium Institute - the first modern cancer treatment center in Poland.

Today, you can admire a mural with Maria's image and the quote, "My most fervent wish is the establishment of the Radium Institute in Warsaw." Maria donated a gram of radium, which was her property, to the new facility. It was the foundation for the institute's activities.

The institute remains a crucial cancer treatment facility.

6

**Aviator's Monument**

The Aviator Monument is a memorial dedicated to Polish aviators, designed in 1923 by Edward Wittig. The monument was unveiled in 1932 and was one of the first monuments in Europe dedicated to aviation.

More information available on: [www.ksap.pl](http://www.ksap.pl)

All pictures used in the publication have been taken by KSAP team: Aleksandra Orłowska and Agnieszka Gumińska





# LEADER UNDER PRESSURE – STUDY VISIT TO POLISH AIR NAVIGATION SERVICES AGENCY

On May 23, 2025, from 10:00 to 12:30, as part of the DISPA meeting organised by KSAP, the study visit to Polish Air Navigation Services Agency took place.

## The origins of the idea

When thinking about resilience in a public service our first thought was PANSA (Polish Air Navigation Services Agency). We thought about the unique task of the agency which is the air traffic control - a highly demanding responsibility requiring a sharp mind, constant focus and quick decision-making abilities. During the study visit we wanted to present not only the specific, outer space-like environment of the institution, but also its simple and easy-to-adapt ways of preparing traffic air controllers to work efficiently in the conditions of a permanent pressure.

We asked the agency to provide us answers for several questions regarding the training process the candidates for the controllers are undergoing:

- what are the main competences the candidates must present,
- how the recruitment of the air traffic control officers is organised,
- what the evaluation of the skills and performance looks like.
- We were also looking for the best practices of the agency that can be transmitted to the public administration sector and become useful for the state administration leaders training.

The visit consisted of three main parts:

- the address of the CEO, briefly presenting the achievements of the authority, the challenges and the vision onwards,
- presentation of the HR division including practical teaching policies (finding & cultivating talents, training policies)
- a study visit to the training centre, currently the biggest in Europe, training ca. 200 potential future air traffic controllers) and a brief access to the operation room, where air control managers are overseeing the airspace above Poland.

## You won't hear about us if everything's OK

In her welcome speech, the CEO of the PANSA, Magdalena Jaworska-Maćkowiak highlighted the importance of the service the Agency is providing, but also briefly addressed the achievements and the challenges the institution is facing currently.

As air control service is an 24/7 and 365 days a year mode type one, with its main mission to monitor and manage safety and ensure security of the airspace over the Polish territory, the Agency focuses on performing its tasks “as seamless and as silent” as possible. It has, however, several challenges which need to be addressed, the main of which are:

- Necessity of acquiring and training a young generation of the air controllers, in a condition of a global competition between the airports and limited percentage of population having the natural predispositions to work as air controllers (ca. 4 % of the population).

- Necessity of managing the employment crisis connected with the global pandemic & Ukrainian war (restrictions resulting in declining of the number of flights and group layoffs of the staff)
- Necessity of managing of a PR crisis connected with the European strikes of the air controllers and the systems failure in Heathrow (resulting in PANSA being blamed for the delays in flights)

*The CEO defined the main priorities in the development of the Agency:*

- 1. positive PR** allowing to communicate publicly its successful operation as a counterweight to the information about critical situations and problems appearing in the public discourse occasionally
- 2. effective talent management system** addressing people, whose skills and competences could be useful in the air traffic control, but also the employees of the Agency
- 3. value-oriented management leading** to construction of an organisation, and creation of a community whose values such as safety culture, respect, trust and collaboration are built in the core DNA of the Agency

The Agency is currently in the process of redeveloping strategic processes, especially in the areas of HR, technology and engineering, with the aim of becoming one of the top 10 employers in Poland in the future.

## **PANSA Training**

The main resource of an air traffic controller acquired during the training and completed continuously through the job experience is the knowledge of the strictly defined procedures and rules of conduct in specific situations.

The skills training on the other hand focuses on improving or maintaining efficiency and refining innate traits as well as skills acquired on the job (reflexes, multitasking, spatial imagination, etc.).

The training process for the air traffic controller position includes the following areas:

- English language (specialised vocabulary, listening comprehension, communication)
- Theoretical training (aviation law, control principles, procedures, safety, etc.) – 5 months
- Simulator training – 5 months (operation of radar systems, real-time aircraft tracking, determining distances, route planning, etc.)
- On-the-job training – 12 to 24 months – practicing and refining acquired skills in the actual work environment (under the care of an experienced instructor)

Internships and student placements are tailored individually based on the intern's education and interests.

Employees also undergo periodic and refresher training to develop competencies and skills. These includeregular training for active controllers (main focus: procedures). Priority is given to courses useful for day-to-day operations (equipment and system handling, etc.).

## **Credibility matters**

The HRM teams described the main activities undertaken by the Agency to transform the air traffic control service and adapt it to the dynamically changing environment with the aim to achieve the strategic objectives. The main directions of activity are:

- Shaping the role of **a leader as a partner** who develops people and makes common goals achievable

- Introduction of **systemic solutions supporting the achievement of business goals**, increasing effectiveness and developing talents to ensure business continuity
- **Aligning employee performance with organisation's goals** by providing regular feedback and supporting employees in their professional development
- Shaping an **organisational culture based on values and partnership relations**

The Agency also presented their recruitment and training policy including the following:

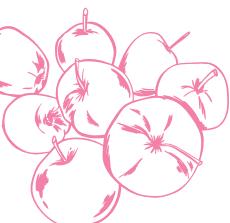
- **reaching out to people potentially skilled and interested in air traffic control** especially high school and university students through public events and academic partnership, dedicated internships, creating a community of people interested in air traffic and aviation,
- introduction of the **continuous recruitment and onboarding process** including maintaining the communication with the candidates at the every stage of recruitment,
- **on the job training** from the first day, by the Agency,
- **digitalisation of the training where possible, including all-in-one training management system** including using a smartphone app, **mass feedback collection** and analysing the collected data with AI tools, which allows for adjusting the training quickly to the needs of the trainees.

The HRM team also presented some of the employer branding activities undertaken such as the **PANSA Ambassador programme** including establishing the community of employees engaged in the promotion of the Agency, its core values and role in their social circles and externally, during the public events. The group is also consulting projects of the changes in the organisation as an employee voice in the process of planning any internal reforms.

### **Inspirations by PANSA:**

- *Long term perspective of recruitment and training planning and execution processes, allowing to prepare strategies for the potential challenges before they actually appear*
- *Investment in current and potential employees, building positive relation with potential employees before they become candidates/ employees*
- *Investment in innovation where it may foster the effectiveness of performance or optimisation of the process (e.g.: training management system in an app)*
- *development of an “on the job” training process allowing to blend the daily duties with the training and competency shaping activities*
- *basing the internal culture of an organisation on its predefined core values, building community of leaders and employees understanding and respecting the organisation values.*

Prepared by Agnieszka Gumbrycht, Public Administration Development Centre, KSAP



# WORKSHOP SUMMARY: MENTOR FOR MENTOR

## General information:

On May 23, 2025, from 10:00 to 12:30, as part of the DISPA meeting organised by KSAP, a workshop entitled “Mentor for Mentor” took place.

## Objective of the workshop:

*The main aim of the workshop was to present the current experience of the Polish administration in implementing and developing mentoring, within the framework of a moderated free discussion, as well as to discuss a selected topic referring to this year's DISPA theme: Public leadership for a resilient state.*

In the light of the increasingly signalled need for support also for the mentor—considering the significant investment of intellectual and emotional capital involved in mentoring—it was decided that this topic would be discussed in detail.

## Workshop participants:

The active participants and experts of the workshop were individuals with diverse experience in running mentoring programs:

- a mentor with many years of experience,
- a mentor with several years' experience, who was formerly a mentee in the program,
- a person with experience in running mentoring programs in business (outside of public administration).

This selection was intentional and aimed at providing broader conclusions within the discussed area.

In addition to the invited experts, 11 participants of the DISPA meeting signed up for the workshop. Prior to the workshop, participants' experience with mentoring had not been assessed.

*Some workshop participants declared that there no mentoring programs had been implemented in their institutions, and their goal in attending was to learn from the experiences of others in implementing such programs. Participants with extensive experience in running mentoring programs within their institutions willingly shared their knowledge and practical solutions in this area.*

## Workshop program:

1. Introduction: welcoming participants, discussing the purpose and assumptions for the workshop;
2. Getting to know the workshop participants and their individual goals for attending the workshop;
3. Presentation of the Polish administration's experiences in implementing and running mentoring as a form of professional and personal development for civil servants;



- Case study 1: Mentoring in the National Revenue Administration;
- Case study 2: Mentoring in the National School of Public Administration;
- Discussion on institutional and personal experience of workshop participants;

**4.** Discussion of the topic: Methods of supporting the mentor as a guide and advisor to the mentee—within the main DISPA theme “Public Leadership for a Resilient State”;

- Presentation of mentors’ experiences in a moderated discussion with Marek Korowajczyk, advisor, Chancellery of the Prime Minister, and Alicja Michalska, senior specialist, Internal Communication Team, National Revenue Administration, Ministry of Finance Communication and Promotion Office;

**5.** Challenges of mentor-to-mentor support;

- How to create a mentor for the mentor? – understanding the roles and expectations of both parties, moderated discussion with Dominik Abramowicz, Ministry of Climate and Environment.

**6.** Summary of workshop conclusions and thanks to participants for their active involvement.

## Key issues:

- mentoring in the changing conditions of public administration,
- the impact of generational changes on the mentor’s role,
- challenges of being a mentor and methods and tools for supporting mentors in carrying out their tasks,
- the future of mentoring collaboration models.

## Conclusions and recommendations:

- *mentoring is perceived as a tool for individualised development of public administration employees and as support for knowledge transfer within institutions, which brings tangible benefits on two levels: for individual employees and for the institution as a whole;*
- *there is a need to organise various forms of knowledge exchange (such as training and workshops) both on the national and international level, on the assumptions of mentoring cooperation as well as practical methods and tools for improving this cooperation;*
- *the starting point for planning any form of knowledge exchange on mentoring cooperation should be to examine the experience of the future participants:*
  - *participants without experience in mentoring cooperation are focused on learning about the mechanisms and specific procedures for implementing such cooperation;*
  - *participants with experience in mentoring cooperation are interested in improving existing programs, especially in learning about methods and tools that can increase their effectiveness;*
- *the conclusions from the implementation of the workshop have become an impetus for further professionalisation of the knowledge and skills of the group of mentors working with the participants of the National School of Public Administration.*

Prepared by Agnieszka Wilczyńska-Strawa, Student’s Training Centre, KSAP



# PARTICIPANTS

DISPA Meeting was attended by 57 participants from EU member states and candidate countries. The participants represented KSAP's partner institutions responsible for shaping civil servant training policies in their respective countries.

## EU Member States

No	Country	Institution
1	European Commision	European School of Administration (EUSA)
2	Austria	Federal Academy of Public Administration (VAB)
3	Belgium	Federal Public Service Policy & Support (FPS BOSA)
4	Bulgaria	Institut of Public Administration (IPA)
5	Croatia	National School for Public Administration (DŠJU)
6	Cyprus	Cyprus Academy of Public Administration (CAPA)
7	Czech Republic	Institute for Public Administration, Prague
8	Estonia	Ministry of Finance Government Office
9	Finland	Finnish Institute of Public Management (HAUS)
10	France	Institut National du Service Public (INSP) Institut Régional d'Administration (IRA), Metz
11	Germany	Federal Academy for Public Administration (BAköV)
12	Greece	National Centre for Public Administration & Local Government (EKDDA)
13	Hungary	Ludovika University of Public Service (LUPS)
14	Ireland	Institute of Public Administration (IPA)
15	Italy	Scuola Nazionale dell'Amministrazione (SNA)
16	Lithuania	Kaunas University of Technology
17	Latvia	Latvian School of Public Administration (LSPA)





18	Malta	Office of the Prime Minister, Institute for the Public Services
19	Netherlands	Ministry of Interior Affairs and Kingdom Relations; Office for The Dutch Senior Civil Service
20	Poland	National School for Public Administration (KSAP)
21	Portugal	National Institute of Administration (INA)
22	Romania	Institutul National de Administratie (INA)
23	Slovenia	Ministry of Public Administration, Administration Academy
24	Spain	National Institute of Public Administration (INAP)

#### EU Candidates Countries

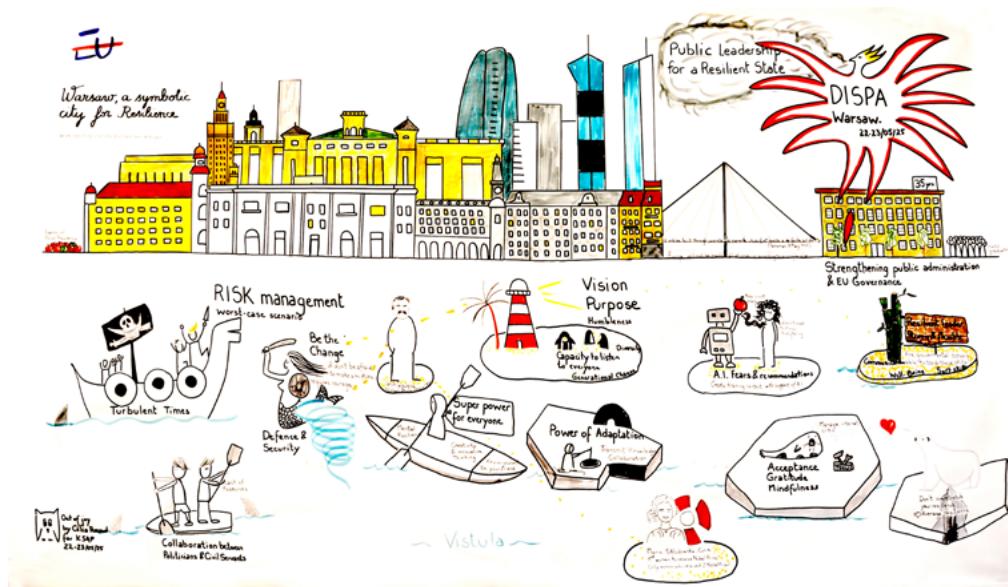
25		Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA)
26	Albania	Albanian School of Public Administration (ASPA)
27	Bosnia and Herzegovina	FBiH Civil Service Agency
28	Montenegro	Human Resources Management Authority (HRMA)
29	Georgia	LEPL Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration
30	Serbia	National Academy for Public Administration (NAPA)



# WARSAW, CITY OF RESILIENCE

## DISPA visual inspirations by Célia Pessaud, EuSA

The visual souvenir of DISPA meetings are drawings by Célia Pessaud (EuSA), inspired by the places of the meetings, themes, speakers, guests and events, by the history of the places or the characters.



Warsaw, City of Resilience, drawing by Célia Pessaud



Warsaw, City of Resilience, drawing by Célia Pessaud

