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**TRANSFORMING OECD STATISTICIANS FROM “INFORMATION PROVIDERS” INTO “KNOWLEDGE BUILDERS”:
THE ROLE OF TRAINING**

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1. Introduction

The role of an OECD statistician is mainly determined by the program of work designed through the dialogue among OECD governments, who are themselves confronted with new and more global challenges. Since 2001, the OECD has undertaken a Statistics Strategy and several actions have been implemented to improve the quality and quantity of OECD statistics. Moreover, the Strategy aimed at improving human capital and working conditions for OECD statisticians, making their daily job more challenging and interesting. In this context, a lot of attention has been paid to human resources management and training, developing, among other things, an on-going training programme designed and led by statisticians themselves.

But the Organisation is facing new challenges and a significant reorientation of its work, following the strategic directions proposed by the Secretary-General and the OECD Council. The Committee on Statistics has therefore also re-designed its future work and this change requires significant rethinking of the role of statisticians working in the Secretariat. In particular, the OECD’s statistical function is moving from a role of pure “information provider” to that of a “knowledge builder”, harnessing the power of new technologies and working closer than ever with analytical and policy experts.

The second section of this document is dedicated to the presentation of the new orientations guiding the work to be accomplished by the Organisation. The third one describes how the role of OECD statisticians has already changed and has to evolve further to achieve the new goals. The fourth section gives an overview of the reforms the OECD is undertaking to adapt both its structure and functioning to build a framework where the management of Human Resources can react and support an international organisation confronted with the new global challenges. Finally, some concluding remarks will follow.

2. A “new role” for the OECD

For many years the role of the OECD has been to assist national governments in addressing their policy priorities and in providing data, analyses and recommendations based on good practices. Moreover, the OECD has played a pedagogical role, helping governments to communicate with citizens about the necessity of reforms to improve the efficiency and the effectiveness of economic and social systems.

Considering the changes in the global political environment, in 2006 the Council of the Organisation at Ministerial level approved a new strategy to expand the OECD's global reach and policy impact through an enlarged membership and enhanced engagement with important non-OECD economies as well as to develop new ideas and be proactive in approaching non-member economies “*with a view to making the OECD a permanent hub for dialogue on global economic issues for member and non-member economies*”.

Responding to this request, in 2007 the Secretary-General noted that the OECD must increase the resonance of the rigorous analysis and peer learning methodology, which are the hallmarks of the OECD, to contribute more directly to the design and implementation of good policies. The “pursuit of relevance” also requires an extra effort to communicate key findings on important policy issues to the general public. Therefore:

- *The OECD must be more open:* This involves new ways of working and a new vision for the OECD. At a time when national governments are losing the monopoly of policy decisions, the OECD needs to reach out to society as a whole. The OECD needs to become more sensitive to diversity, more open to different ideas and cultures, more pro-active and flexible in addressing new global challenges, and more able to understand the many different paths that lead to growth and development.
- *The OECD must be more representative:* With many new and large economies emerging in the globalisation process, new challenges arise. The OECD's platform needs to be more inclusive, bringing in new players in the global economy and new policy issues in the OECD agenda. This will strengthen the OECD capacity to find common responses to these global challenges.
- *The OECD must be more supportive of the reform efforts:* The OECD has to be more proactive and systematically support its member countries with the political economy of reform. The Organisation needs to move beyond proposing best practices, to helping countries put them into operation. Thus, it must be prepared to explain the implications of inaction or delay, as well as provide options for helping to create the political momentum necessary to reform successfully. Support for reform also includes creating awareness of what other countries are doing in the relevant policy areas and how they make their public administration more efficient. The OECD can make a major contribution in that direction and is increasingly asked to do so. It is a new, bolder, but perhaps more useful way of serving member countries and it involves broadening the range of interlocutors in each country.
- *The OECD must be better connected:* The OECD will continue to strengthen its dialogue with a widening circle of interlocutors to help countries better deal with the challenges posed by globalisation. No institution alone can supply all the answers. The OECD will reach out to other international organisations to ensure that they complement each other. The OECD needs to create partnerships to make the most out of globalisation.

To respond to these challenges, several reforms have been launched across the organisation, addressing issues like Human Resources Management (HRM), Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), Budget and Financial Management. Moreover, an “Enlargement and Enhanced Engagement” strategy has been developed to evaluate the possibility of expanding the Organisation's membership (Chile, Estonia, Israel, Russia and Slovenia were selected for this process) and to engage key non-members (Brazil, China, India, Indonesia and South Africa). In particular, enhanced

engagement aims to bring partners closer to OECD and what it stands for by engaging them actively in OECD processes of peer reviews, peer learning and rule making, while supporting their own reform process through the adoption of OECD policies, guidelines or instruments.

3. A “new role” for international statisticians: the OECD Statistics Strategy

Building on the work launched in 2001, in January 2006 the OECD Committee on Statistics approved a Statistics Strategy for the Organisation for the following biennium, further updated and improved in 2008. The Strategy recognises that:

“globalisation is making the work of national and international statisticians much more difficult ... Institutional and political changes, as well as budget limitations, produce continuous changes in the division of labour both between and among national and international organisations. This may result both in a mismatch between the demand and the supply of international statistics, and in a systematic difficulty in making long-term plans for the development of new surveys or the steady improvement of statistical capacities, especially in international organisations and developing countries.”

Of course, globalisation of economic processes, technological revolution and cultural change must be considered together to identify how the world is changing and how this change can impact on OECD statistics. Over the last few years some trends in the demand and the supply of statistics, as well as in the way in which the “global information society” works, emerged more clearly, namely:

- Globalisation is fostering the demand for internationally comparable statistics, as well as national data. This demand for very timely data, with a detailed sectoral and geographical breakdown, is mainly due to the growing role of multinationals and international investors, which need to make decisions about the re-location of production processes or the investment of available funds. But also millions of enterprises need data to decide where are the most dynamic markets, the most skilled workers, etc.
- The international political agenda is now more focused on “global issues” (like global warming, migration, etc.) than three years ago. This requires the production of highly comparable statistics, but international and national statistical organisations still face big difficulties in joining their forces to find appropriate solutions to satisfy these needs.
- The development of a culture of “evidence-based decision making”, together with the transfer of some decisions from the State to individuals and the growing opportunities created by globalisation, has stimulated an unprecedented growth in the demand for statistics by individuals. On the other hand, monitoring policy outcomes through statistical indicators is a common practice in a growing number of countries and at international level. Therefore, citizens need more statistics than ever to exercise their democratic rights, participate in the public debate and select the best politicians.
- The development of statistical methods and ICT have reduced the cost of producing statistics, fostering the presence of new “agents” in the market of statistical information, including NGOs, private companies, lobbies, etc. The demand for statistics coming from governmental organisations and international/supranational organisation is often satisfied by suppliers who are not part of “official statistics”. A lot of users prefer to have “quick and dirty” data instead of going through the better established, but often less flexible, more costly and less timely in delivering the results, entities participating in national statistical systems. The multiplicity of sources is producing a “cacophony” in our societies, where users feel bombarded by data and have a growing difficulty to distinguish high and low quality statistics. Mass media love “numbers” and quote them as much as possible, without paying attention to their quality.

- New ICT tools and the success of Internet are deeply changing the way in which people, especially new generations, look for and find data. According to the Internet experts, 95% of those who use Google do not go beyond the first page of occurrences; once they reach a particular site, a similar percentage of users do not click more than three times to find what they want: if after three clicks they have not found what they are looking for, they quit the site. The visibility of official sources on Internet (and therefore the likelihood of being used) does not depend on it, but simply on the way in which the websites are built or the metadata are organised and presented to be easily found by search engines.
- National statistical systems have great difficulties in dealing with challenges coming from globalisation. Legal constraints prevent them from exchanging data across national borders and this reduces the accuracy of some statistics, making them less meaningful. Even in the context of the European Statistical System the exchange of microdata between countries is very complicated and there are strong resistances to the idea of compiling more accurate data using international/supranational organisations as “clearing houses”. At the same time, private sources now provide microdata on businesses derived from administrative sources: these data are widely used for analytical and policy studies, although their quality is quite doubtful.

All these issues require strategic thinking and co-ordinated efforts involving both national and international organisations active in statistics. In this situation, organisations like the OECD have to intensify their efforts to produce “global public goods” to:

- Improve the co-ordination and the effectiveness of national public policies.
- Identify and implement global policies to address emerging issues.
- Improve public knowledge about current and future challenges and contribute to create an environment conducive to the implementation of necessary reforms.
- Help businesses and citizens to take better decisions in the context of globalisation.

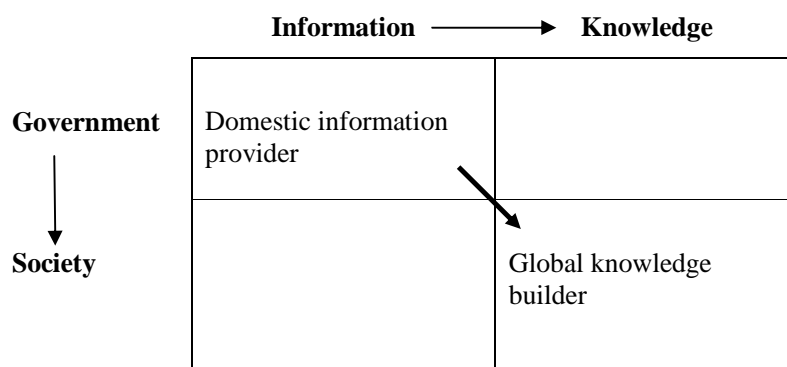
High quality international statistics represent a fundamental contribution to the production of global public goods. As indicated in the Istanbul Declaration (see www.oecd.org/oecdworldforum):

“A culture of evidence-based decision making has to be promoted at all levels, to increase the welfare of societies. And in the “information age,” welfare depends in part on transparent and accountable public policy making. The availability of statistical indicators of economic, social, and environmental outcomes and their dissemination to citizens can contribute to promoting good governance and the improvement of democratic processes. It can strengthen citizens’ capacity to influence the goals of the societies they live in through debate and consensus building, and increase the accountability of public policies”.

The production of data and metadata is not enough in this fast changing environment to achieve this goal: more and more NSOs and international organisations are requested to be more “knowledge builders” than simply “information providers”. The job of statisticians should not be limited to produce and disseminate data, but to make statistics actually used to build knowledge by all components of the society, and therefore to be used in as many decision-making processes as possible. This requires innovative thinking, re-orientation of resources, alliances with new partners, revision of the skills needed to perform these new functions, changes in the legal and institutional set ups, better integration between national and international organisations. In this way, statistics can become more relevant than ever.

The implications of the development of web 2.0 and its application to the world of statistics have not yet fully analysed and understood. According to some experts, the XXI century will see a completely new approach to information (including data) production and sharing, while for others the web 2.0 is not going to radically affect the role of well established information providers. What can be observed

so far is that the traditional media are changing quite radically their business model and that “unofficial” information channel are becoming more and more popular among new generations¹.



The OECD working style, based on Committees and working groups with national experts, is very conducive to explore the new opportunities provided by web 2.0. Moreover, with the organisation of its World Forums², the OECD has already demonstrated a very high capacity of attracting a diverse and very qualified audience to discuss how to reinforce the chain “Statistics, Knowledge and Policy” (see www.oecd.org/oecdworldforum). Therefore, to implement one of the strategic directions indicated by the Secretary-General (make the Organisation more open to external networks and interested parties), the OECD could represent a platform for national statistical offices to carry out a dialogue with experts of new forms of communication and social interaction to explore the gradually evolving and changing role of statistics.

Looking at the priorities indicated by the Secretary-General, it is quite clear that the OECD needs to intensify its statistical work on issues like:

- *Innovation*: to underpin the analytical and policy conclusions of the project of innovation requires the exploitation of a wide range of sources, including microdata. The project could lead to the development of a new measurement framework that could influence innovation surveys in the years to come. It is important that this work be carried out according to the Quality Framework and in close co-operation with other international organisations.
- *Inequality*: Issues related to the distribution of household resources are attracting growing interest from governments and the media in all OECD countries. The OECD could make an important contribution to the debate on the socio-economic impact of globalisation “by ... establishing the facts and examining trends in employment, earnings and income distribution” by bringing together up-to-date data on the distribution of household income in cash for all OECD countries, as well as information on other economic resources (in-kind public services, household assets, consumption patterns) that contribute to the well-being of individuals and families.

¹ See Giovannini E. (2007) and (2008).

² The first OECD World Forum on “Statistics, Knowledge and Policy” was held in Palermo (Italy) in November 2004, with the participation of 450 people from 43 countries. The second one, held in Istanbul (Turkey) in June 2007, was attended by 1200 people from 130 countries, representing various constituencies (policy makers, media, academics, statisticians, non-governmental organisations, etc.).

- *Human and social capital* through satellite accounts and/or selected groups of indicators. In the context of the work on Sustainable the measurement of stocks (including wealth) is more important than ever and the OECD should launch research initiatives in this area.
- *Progress of societies* To implement the “Istanbul Declaration”, the Global Project on “Measuring the Progress of Societies” should focus its methodological work on areas not covered by existing international working groups. The forthcoming third World Forum on “Statistics, Knowledge and Policy” (in late 2009) will be an important opportunity to make progress on the measurement of specific issues, bring together users and producers of statistics, as well as to raise the profile of statistics vis-à-vis stakeholders.

As indicated above, in the global information society there is an increasing need, both at national and international levels, to facilitate the transformation of available information into knowledge. This is a key challenge for statisticians and the OECD could play an important role in experimenting new approaches, identifying best practices and contribute to the production of “global public goods”: in fact, the combination of statistical and analytical capabilities in the same organisation, together with its network of national experts, represent a key asset to be effective in this area. Concrete actions to be undertaken over the next two years include:

- Improve the Statistics Portal, using the most appropriate technical tools, paying more attention to interactive graphical tools, improving the navigation through different themes, etc.
- Introduce web 2.0 tools to establish creative interactions with external audiences (researchers, students, NGOs, etc.) around OECD statistics. Given the complexity of the management of these new forms of interaction, it is suggested to proceed progressively, starting with a couple of domains where OECD has a comparative advantage (productivity, globalisation, etc.).
- Experiment innovative forms of communication (videos, dynamic graphics, etc.) to present statistics to non-experts. Establish partnerships with specialised media to test alternative forms of communication for specific audiences.
- Further investments should be made on dissemination tools. The development of country specific statistical (electronic and paper) publications, eventually developed in co-operation with national statistical offices, where internationally comparable data would be presented, could represent an important support to the OECD project on the “Political Economy of Reform”.
- The OECD should continue the efforts to reach undergraduate and graduate students, building partnerships with specialised publishers and academic networks and promoting the use of OECD statistics as fundamental tool to better understand global and national economic and social trends.

If statistics represent a fundamental tool to understand the world in which we are living, high quality data represent a fundamental tool for the functioning of modern democracies and to foster an evidence-based decision making culture. Given its credibility as source of statistical information and its linkages with policy making, the OECD could usefully promote a project to foster statistical literacy in member and key non-member countries, as already done for financial literacy, especially targeted to young generations. The project could be usefully developed maximising synergies with other international statistical agencies and research groups active in this field, building on good practices already existing and developing new ideas.

All these projects and challenges require a significant change in the profile and competences of statisticians working at the OECD. Therefore, a special investment has to be done both through training, to re-orient the skills of people already working at the OECD, and the development of new job descriptions to select appropriate people from outside the Organisation. Of course, these initiatives have to be taken in the context of the overall OECD HRM reform.

Fortunately, the OECD does not start from scratch. In the past, the job of OECD statisticians working in the Statistics Directorate largely consisted in collecting official data, checking data quality and consistency, compiling comparative tables between OECD member countries and producing monthly, quarterly and annually statistical yearbooks. Data processing was less developed than today and therefore it was a time consuming exercise. Some of the tasks mentioned above were not automated: for example, updates and calculations were done manually. Statisticians spent a huge amount of time in computerising each step of database management.

Since 2001, the development of the OECD statistical information system (including StatWorks, Metastore and the OECD data warehouse called “OECD.Stat”) enabled statisticians to save time on the database management part of their work and to concentrate on new challenges generated by the Globalisation process. Indeed, the new Statistical Information System (although far from being perfect), based on new Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), allowed a substantial improvement in the coherence, timeliness and interpretability of OECD statistics, as well as a reduction of the burden on data providers.

The time saved thanks to a better automation of processing procedures is now devoted to more value-added work. For example, because of globalisation OECD statisticians are now asked to deal with different statistical systems: the standardised European system applied by 19 OECD member countries; the United States, Canada and Japan systems that follow some global statistical standards, but not all; and the emerging countries like Brazil, India, Indonesia, China, and South Africa that adopt other statistical concepts and definitions, not necessarily comparable with those of OECD countries. Therefore, OECD statisticians have to understand and to analyse differences between these various statistical systems to provide highly comparable statistics and standardised information.

To contribute more directly to the design and implementation of policy reforms (for example, to make easier for governments to convince citizens to accept such reforms and to evaluate their impact on the society) statisticians cannot simply produce and disseminate quantitative and qualitative information. OECD statisticians are asked to do an extra effort to communicate statistics to the general public, exploiting new approaches and technologies.

Therefore, an OECD statistician needs to:

- be aware of the world economy and the reforms undertaken by governments;
- work in close co-operation with OECD analysts;
- focus on research for good sources of data to create relevant indicators along with detailed metadata;
- be able to work with both macrodata and microdata, now more available than ever, to create new tabulations and run statistical models;
- be aware of new opportunities offered by modern ICT tools³.

4. The reform of HRM

The overall objective of the OECD’s HR policies is to ensure that the Organisation has the staff with the capacities, motivation and job satisfaction that permits the OECD to deliver outputs to a standard of excellence that meets members’ expectations. Among its objectives, the reform aims to simplify the Organisation’s employment framework, make it more coherent in terms provisions applied to different

³ For example, in 2008, the first OECD wiki was launched, called “Wikigender”, on gender equality (www.wikigender.org), as well as new facilities for dynamic graphics based on OECD statistics (see www.oecd.org/statistics).

groups of staff, and ensure that it sends a clear message to staff and potential recruits regarding the OECD's career policy. There is also a wish to increase staff mobility and ensure a higher degree of flexibility in the deployment of staff, accepting that there are inevitable limits to mobility in an organisation that requires a high number of specialists and experts.

In relation to recruitment, the aim is to ensure that the merit principle, which is the basis of quality in staffing, is well supported by transparent and equitable processes. While the merit principle is considered fundamental, achieving diversity is also a major concern. In this context, particular emphasis is placed on the need to make rapid progress in achieving a better balance of nationalities within the Secretariat and a better gender balance.

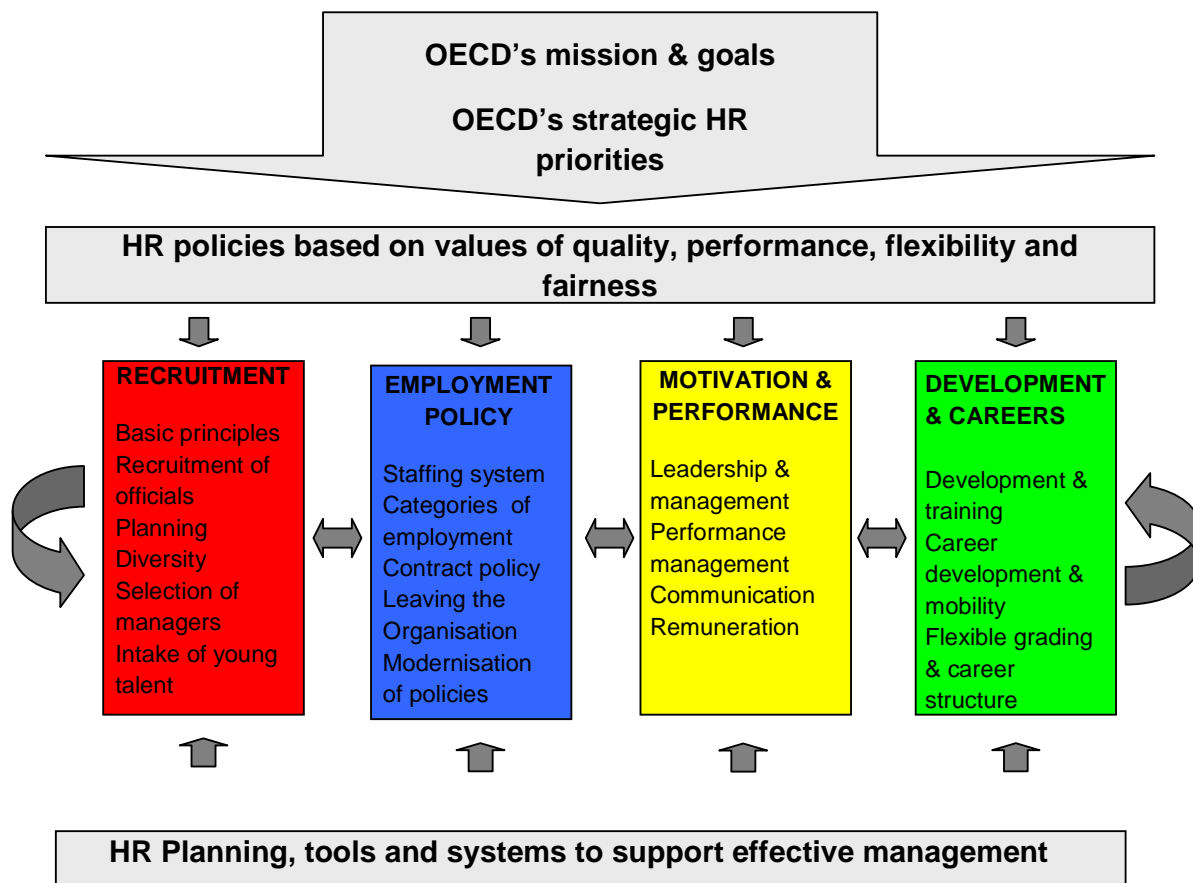
There is recognition that more resources are needed for training, particularly management training. There is a view that the grading and remuneration system could be improved and that performance management could be further strengthened. The need to modernise staff policies to take account of changing needs of staff and evolving social norms is also a consideration. Finally, there is a wish to provide more strategic direction to HR policies and to ensure that they reinforced and are consistent with a results-based management and culture.

The reform aims to ensure that HR policies are consistent with four guiding values, set out below:

<p>Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing internal and external recruitment of the best possible people to staff the Organisation by up-to-date criteria and merit-based processes • Redesigning the OECD's employment policy to attract high quality staff and retain those needed longer-term • Drawing on a wide pool of talent from all member countries to facilitate the achievement of diversity objectives • Offering good quality working conditions to staff • Quality of leadership and management which sustains the excellence of the Organisation 	<p>Flexibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility of the contractual framework to fit the Organisation's changing needs, while respecting the rights of existing staff • Flexibility of staff to adjust to a changing environment, supported by training and development • Flexibility to renew staffing and reassign staff as priorities change • HR policies which support mobility and build the values of collaboration, cross-organisational working and team work • Flexibility for management which is key to holding managers accountable in a results-based system
<p>Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing HR policies such as performance management, career policy, staff development and remuneration to encourage and reward high performance • Providing managers with the tools to manage the performance of their staff through appropriate flexibility and devolution of control, combined with accountability mechanisms • Sustaining and improving performance by investing in the development of staff • Linking more closely the accountability and performance of staff at all levels to their responsibility for, and contribution to, the delivery of relevant output results 	<p>Fairness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality of opportunity and application of diversity principles in all areas of HR • Fairness of the HR practices applied in the Organisation • Respect for the rights of existing staff when HR policies are revised

The HRM reform is designed to take actions on the following four dimensions:

- recruitment;
- employment policy;
- motivation and performance; and
- development and careers.



Recruitment

The Organisation's recruitment process is designed to ensure the independence and international character of the Secretariat, which is essential to its work. In recruiting officials, the Secretary-General will give primary consideration to merit, so as to obtain staff of the highest standards of competence and integrity. He will take measures to foster, so far as possible, a well-balanced mix of nationalities and gender balance. In this context, aspects such as vacancy notices, the composition and conduct of interview panels and the arrangements for oversight of the recruitment process will be examined in order to reinforce merit and contribute to the achievement of diversity.

The HRM Service (HRMS) will also work with Directorates to develop a forecast of recruitment needs, to the extent possible, and a plan of recruitment activity. Improved planning should give the

Organisation and member countries more time to identify sources of potential candidates before expected vacancies arise. It should also assist planning of mobility and career development for existing staff and succession planning for senior posts (as well as assisting with space planning and management). These plans will be reviewed with the Head of HRMS and will be approved by the Secretary-General.

Career development

It is important that staff retained longer term can be offered a career structure and opportunities for professional development. The possible changes to the grading system which are under study, along with improved career management are important in this regard. There will be an emphasis on continuing to build the skills and competencies of these staff through training and development opportunities. External mobility, facilitated through an improved programme of loans, exchanges and secondments with other organisations, can be an important component in the ongoing development of staff. Achieving a more fluid Organisation in this regard will require changes in the management culture, active support by HRMS and effective corporate processes to identify staff suitable for mobility and to support Directorates in catering for mobility needs.

Performance assessment and results-based management framework

The existing provision for the Secretary-General to grant or withhold salary advancement within grade on the basis of the competence, efficiency and conduct of staff will be reinforced so as to explicitly link to the performance assessment and the award of a satisfactory performance rating. This will underline the need for all managers to carry out performance assessments. The possible changes to the grading system which are under study could, in time, provide further scope to link salary advancement within broader grade bands to performance assessments, and may provide some scope to address the situation of staff who have reached the top of the salary scale for their grade, for whom the possibility to award or withhold salary advancement is not available within the current system.

The record of performance assessments will, as at present, be an important factor in the decision on whether to retain an individual in the Organisation over 5 years under the proposed new contract policy.

There is a need – at all levels – to associate staff performance more closely with the delivery of the output results approved in the Program of Work and Budget (PWB). This is an essential component of a results-based management system. To this end, the performance management system will be integrated more closely with the PWB through a process of cascading performance objectives linked to outputs.

Training

High priority training which will be resourced includes:

- Induction of new managers so that they are quickly able to work effectively and are fully informed about the OECD's approach to management and their management responsibilities;
- A new leadership and management development programme, based on core competencies, so that the OECD's managers are well equipped for their roles. It is planned that this will include, for example, essential elements such as training on financial and budget management, managing diverse teams, performance management and strategic planning. It is proposed that staff at A4 level would need to have completed core elements of the programme before being considered for promotion to A5;
- Diversity and gender awareness training for managers and all involved in recruitment panels;

- Training managers, administrative staff in Directorates and HRM staff in the new processes necessary to implement the HR reforms and in managing the associated organisational change;
- Measures to support the career development of staff, particularly those who remain with the Organisation for the medium to longer term, taking account of the Organisation's desire to improve national and gender diversity;
- Ongoing development of the technical and functional competencies of staff.

Management training will be redesigned. The programme will focus, *inter alia*, on assisting Heads of Division to improve their management skills, as they play a critical role in managing teams. Attention will be given to including women in management training programmes.

Staff that have been assessed as suitable for longer-term employment will be encouraged to diversify their experience through mobility and developmental assignments such as cross-disciplinary projects and job rotations. This type of experiential learning, which will need to be integrated with a better co-ordinated approach to mobility and career development, will be particularly emphasised for staff with management potential. Managers are finding it increasingly difficult to release staff for developmental purposes due to high workloads and are also less able to accept staff that cannot be operational immediately. This implies a more active role for HRMS and other corporate services in taking the whole-of-organisation view and working with Directorates to see how mobility and staff development can be planned and managed.

Grading and career structure

The objectives of a review of the grading system are to:

- Improve career structures and career management and provide staff with a clearer view of possible career paths, including a better career structure for specialists;
- Provide more scope to move people around within the Organisation by more clearly identifying jobs requiring similar sorts of skills, knowledge and abilities and designing the links between different job families that will facilitate lateral movement;
- Strengthen the focus on maintaining and improving skills, competencies and performance;
- Implement a rigorous and equitable system for reviewing and classifying the grading of jobs;
- Remove the pressure to upgrade jobs by creating broader grade bands, with clear distinctions between different levels of work and well defined rules for how people would move up through bands.

The "job family" approach (economics and statistics; policy analysis; corporate services, etc.) was considered well suited to organisations such as the OECD which have a high proportion of professional knowledge workers. Within job families, bands are established to represent increasing complexity of work involved, on the basis of each role, and the skills, knowledge and experience that role requires.

5. Moving ahead

The next steps of the HRM reform would then be to:

- Design generic job descriptions and specifications, using standard concepts and measures;
- Identify possible career paths within and between job families based on clearly defined competencies;
- Define the management of a broad banded structure – for example, specification of requirements for moving staff up within a job family.

As already described, over the last few years we have observed a significant adjustment in the profile of OECD statisticians, also following the ICT improvements and the changes of the programme of work. We are now facing challenges imposed by accelerated rhythm of globalisation, new expectations from the public (let it be policy makers as well as laymen), new communication tools allowing and requiring up to date, interactive and modular information. The Organisation has now to rethink the new role to be played by statisticians in content and context.

In particular, some additional competencies of an OECD statistician should include the following:

- *Adaptability, flexibility, learning orientation:* adaptability to new topics and new working arrangements (horizontal projects, new partners, etc.) is a must. Indeed, OECD statisticians also need to learn how to deal with new types of data, i.e. qualitative data and micro data. Therefore, they need to learn new methodologies and software applications.
- *Knowledge of the OECD business and openness to multidisciplinary approaches, creativity, innovation, analytical skills:* the OECD addresses key policy challenges from a multidisciplinary perspective. For example, in the areas of development, migration, water, climate change, among others, the horizontal approach can help governments improve inter-ministerial dialogue and co-ordination, overcome internal obstacles to reform and build a whole of government consensus on the reform agenda. Statisticians need to learn how to bring together different sources, create innovative tabulations combining and comparing diverse data. They need to work with colleagues in different directorates, as part of research teams.
- *Awareness of stakeholders' needs and dedication to communication:* as knowledge builders, statisticians need to be able to use new languages and technologies to best convey messages to targeted audiences which should contribute more efficiently to the design and implementation of policy reforms.
- *Information management:* bearing in mind the objective of knowledge building, the most promising possibilities of explanation, presentation and users' engagement should be explored. Web 2.0 and participative web technologies represent a major change and opportunity. Experiments with emerging new technologies, in particular collaborative tools, Wikis and Blogs, should be encouraged and carefully used, to increase the credibility and usage of OECD statistics.
- *Networking within and outside the Organisation:* statistics cannot be considered as a sole entity. To ensure the usefulness and relevance of statistics, the dialogue already established between statisticians and other policy directorates in charge of specific statistical activities has to be continued and strengthened. Efforts should also be devoted to help in establishing a better dialogue with NSOs and other national data providers, such as central banks and line ministries.

In order to reflect the evolving profile of statisticians, HRM processes are being studied or revised in the different fields of the reform. Examples include:

- Recruitment: job vacancies have been re-formulated to attract new and specific talents such as researchers (required to undertake research into how indicators influence policy-making) or statisticians “required to interact with other Directorates in activities related to private

enterprise micro data bases, especially in the field of quality assurance and the potential development of indicators and dissemination tools”;

- Career development and training: learning is now considered a shared responsibility between learners, managers and OECD to improve management capacity and organisational performance. Blended means (course, e-learning, on the job training through expanded mobility) will allow staff to acquire new skills/competencies quickly and easily. Knowledge sharing through debates, conferences, internal and external presentations, networking are organised to introduce new tendencies and facilitate exchanges;
- Grading and career structure: the evolution of the role of a statistician from information provider to knowledge builder would require a closer cooperation between statisticians and economists. This has been met by the creation of the statistics and economics job family. This new structure would facilitate and improve career development.

6. Conclusions

The job of statisticians, and especially of international statisticians, is evolving faster than ever. This evolution is extremely positive and can bring a real change in the way in which statistical processes and products are structured and organised. This can also enhance dramatically the impact that statistics and statisticians can have on our societies. Nowadays, the world considers statistics indispensable to run discussions and design policies. Unfortunately, in several cases poor quality data are used, but the popularity of statistics opens a great opportunity for national and international statisticians to make a fundamental contribution to public discourse and improve decision-making processes. Ultimately, to increase the welfare of the world's citizens.