



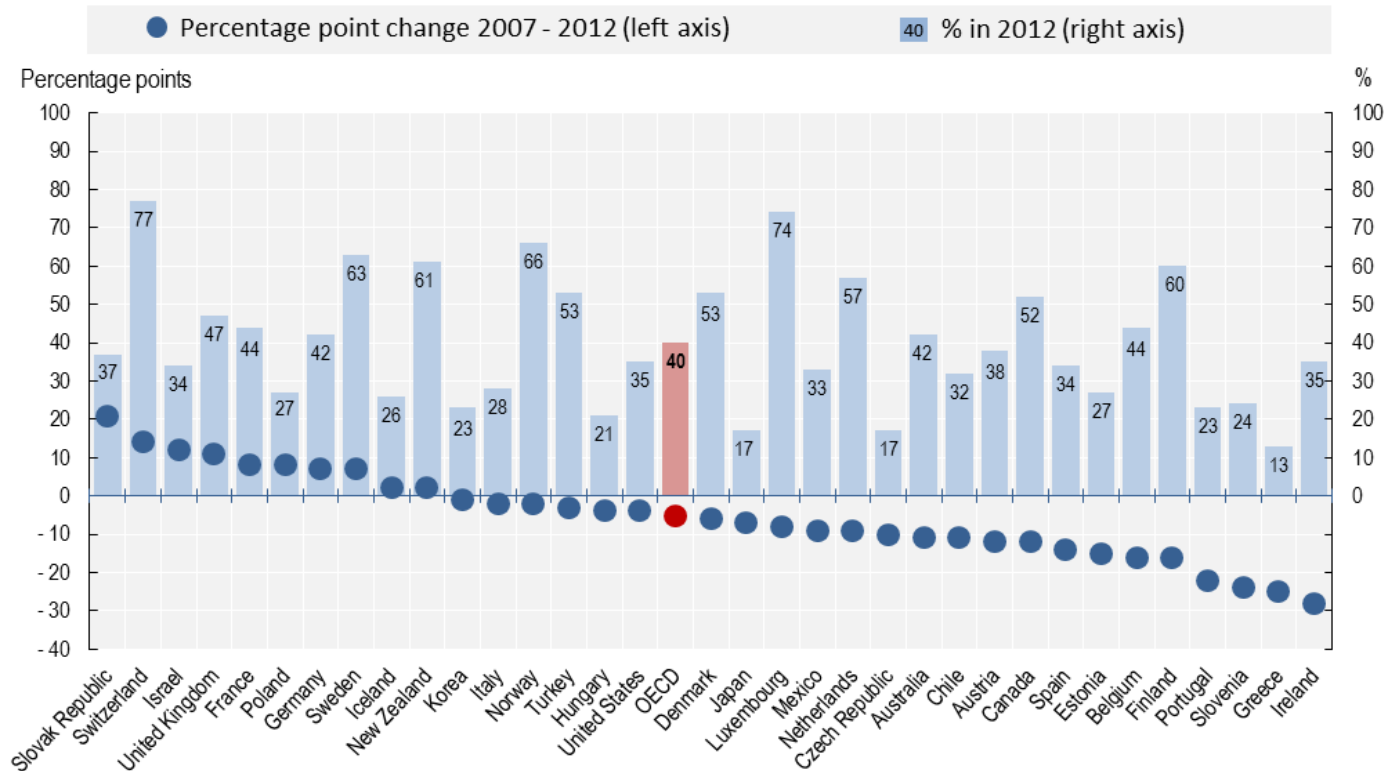
STRENGTHENING INTER- INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION

PERSPECTIVES FROM THE OECD



Network of Senior Officials from Centres of Government Meeting (2013)

Key theme: Trust in government



Source:
Gallup
World
Poll,
2012

- Historical low point – uncharted waters
- Low levels of trust hamper policy action in many ways (reduced support for reform, resistance to change, lower acceptance of regulations, taxation...)
- Question for CoG officials: how can the Centre help rebuild trust?





The role of the Centre: crucial for today's key governance challenges?

Key challenges are difficult to assign to specific ministry

→ rebuilding trust, fighting poverty, maintaining competitiveness, open government, risk management, ageing, climate change, etc.

Danger that these become the task of everyone and no one

No real alternative to the Centre

BUT tough questions about the capacity of the Centre to deliver.

Many OECD and non OECD countries looking for model of a more effective Centre.





What the crisis showed us: a wake up call for the Centre

What were the lessons?

- Centre found to be under-resourced -- analytical capacity had been neglected, over-emphasis on day-to-day management, strategic function underused and budget document used as surrogate;
- Centre often a repository for “homeless” policy issues – too many orphan units blurred the focus and overstated real CoG resources;
- But Centre also proved itself as a key facilitator of decision-making and implementation in difficult times.

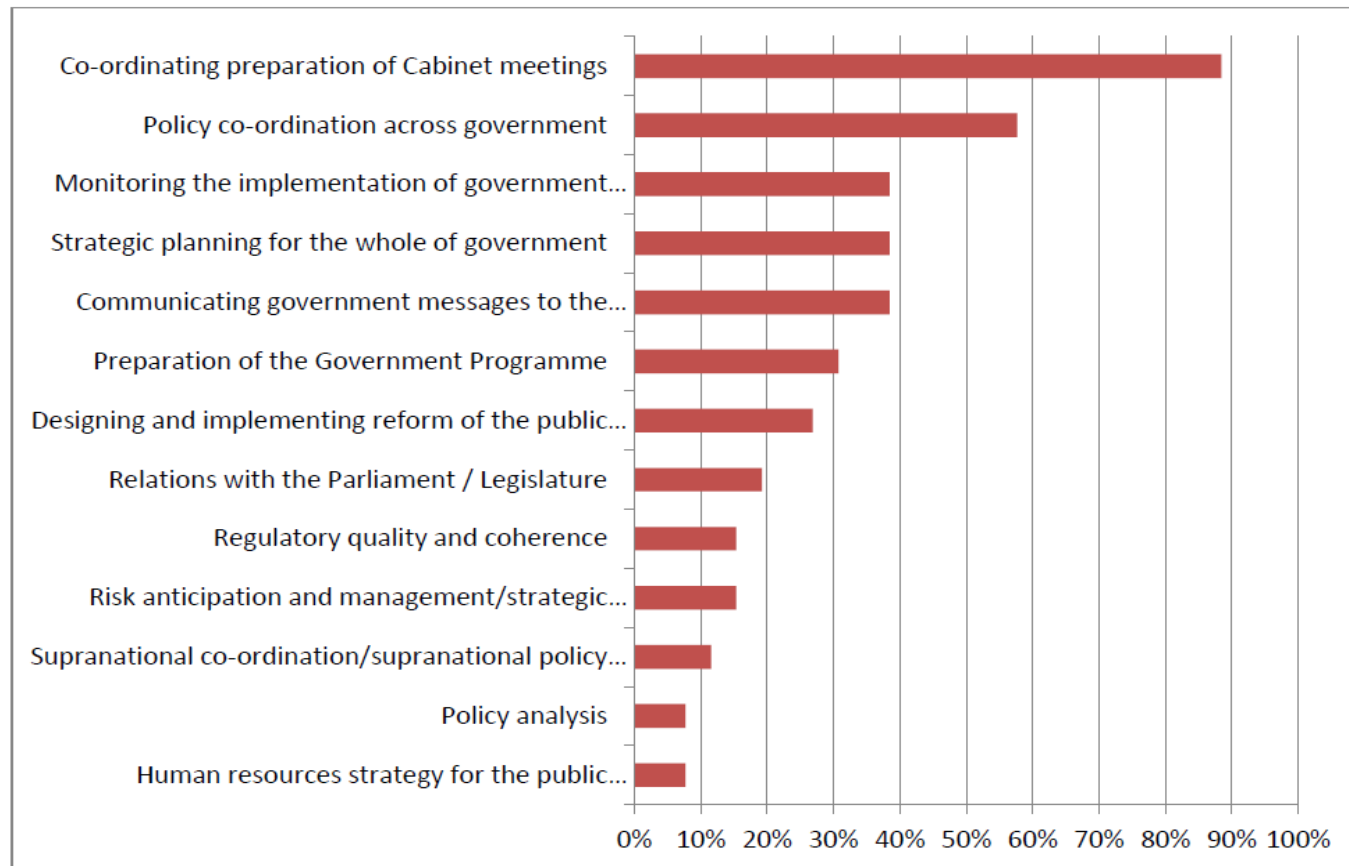
Looking ahead: keywords for improving the Centre:

- (1) flexibility/adaptability, (2) leadership, (3) focus, (4) strategic thinking, (5) coordination





Focus on key tasks



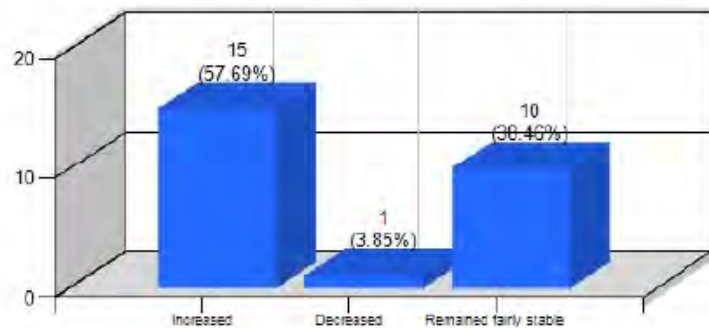
Following the crisis, **the core tasks of the CoG** are now more important than ever:

1. Quality decision making
2. Leadership and co-ordination
3. Effective implementation

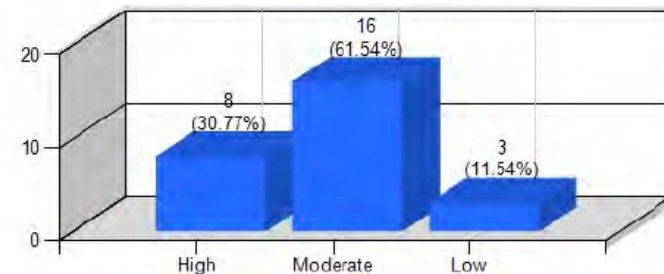


Coordination

**From 2008-2012, did the number of cross-governmental policy initiatives increase, decrease, or remain fairly stable?
(26 Responses)**



**How much influence can the Centre of Government exert over line ministries to encourage them to co-ordinate with each other?
(26 Responses)**



- Is the Centre able to exert real control or is it an illusion?
- A culture of cooperation is required. Do departments buy in to the Centre's coordinator role?



A focus on coordination:

Why is lack of coordination a problem today?

- Today's challenges are increasingly complex and multisectoral
- Climate change, competitiveness, fighting poverty, ageing, etc. share common features:
 - They do not fit into a single ministerial portfolio
 - They spread across boundaries and jurisdictions
 - They depend on expertise from both government and non-government actors





INTERNAL COORDINATION :

Coordination promoted from the Centre

The survey of OECD Centres of Government showed that:

- Policy coordination is now one of their priorities
- The number of cross-departmental initiatives that they lead has grown significantly
- Many are experimenting with new mechanisms to improve coordination
- Key elements: joint performance targets, better information sharing, and more flexible budgets,

BUT:

- A majority recognise that their influence has limits





INTERNAL COORDINATION :

Examples of efforts to promote culture of cooperation

1. Chile – President’s Delivery Unit

- President identified 7 cross-sectoral priorities
- Used crowd sourcing to identify many small reforms that would help achieve big strategic objectives.
- Delivery Unit facilitated innovative joint working methods by ministries to solve problems





INTERNAL COORDINATION:

Examples of efforts to promote culture of cooperation

2. Finland

- Drew on international comparison and OECD review that called for more collective commitment & resource flexibility
- Developed cross-sectoral analysis to overcome siloed government programme constraint
- Developed better information exchange to support shared agenda for action.





INTERNAL COORDINATION:

Success factors

- Political leadership to show that coordination is essential
- Good balance between coherence and push from the centre and expertise and initiative from line ministries themselves
- Willingness to experiment
- Humility – expertise lies in ministries, credit should go to ministries





EXTERNAL COORDINATION: Reducing silos at the point of delivery

(with support/encouragement from the Centre)

1. Integration of services across different levels of government

In Denmark borger.dk – financed and led by partnership of national, regional and municipal govt. Financing 40% national; 20% regional; 40% local govt. Led by Steering Committee with representatives from different govt levels. Sub-national take-up facilitated by making infrastructure freely available for municipalities to use, therefore implying cost efficiency savings for municipalities.

2. Redefinition of services according to user needs

Life-cycle packages of services that users need at different points in their life are a way to integrate services around needs regardless of which agency is responsible for delivering them. The 'Life Event Access Project' in the *United Kingdom* is one of the many national practices that can serve as a model. LEAP - Life Event Access Project. <http://www.leap.gov.uk>.





EXTERNAL COORDINATION:

Success factors

- Good evidence/information on users' preferences and needs.
- Commitment to rethink internal processes, functions, systems.
- Not a panacea: need for context assessment and selection of most adequate solution, which might not be coordinated option.





Examples of principles of good practice at the Centre

1. Roles of institutions are clearly established and coordination is ensured through explicit procedures
2. Processes and documents for policy planning are harmonised and linked to financial planning processes
3. Policy decisions draw on analysis that reflects different opinions and options
4. Monitoring of implementation is regular, standardised, linked to targets and accessible
5. Government decisions are prepared in a reliable, transparent manner that ensures legal conformity and equitable access, including coordination with Parliaments
6. New legislation is assessed against regulatory quality principles (RIA, etc.) and is linked to regulatory stock reviews
7. ...
8. ...





Public Governance Reviews (PGRs)



- **Key framework elements include:**
 - Is there a national strategy to meet the country's current and emerging challenges?
 - Can national and sub-national public authorities deliver on this strategy,
 - Is effective strategy-setting, steering and performance-monitoring being led by the Centre of Government?
 - How open and transparent is public governance?
 - Are national and sub-national ministries and agencies well-structured and co-ordinated?
 - Are resources efficiently allocated?
 - Are services meeting the needs of citizens and businesses properly?





Public Governance Reviews (PGRs)

OECD Public Governance Reviews are:

- Based on a partnership with the requesting country
- Tailored to the country's context (institutional, cultural, legal)
- Involve all relevant actors, outside as well as within government
- Led and facilitated by an expert OECD team
- Supported by peer reviewers and experts from other countries
- Set in an international comparative perspective, and best international practice
- Make use of the insights from OECD work on public governance innovation
- Start with the country's own perspective and reform plans





Public Governance Reviews (PGRs)



To give the reviews concrete shape, the key building blocks of good governance are taken into account:

- budget management
- human resources management
- integrity
- open government
- e-government readiness
- centre of government
- regulatory governance
- multilevel governance

...





In conclusion

- Huge interest of strengthening the Centre in OECD and non OECD countries – highly visible in Latin America;
- Recognition that an effective Centre is a prerequisite for effective policymaking today;
- Previous emphasis on “difference” and “political context” giving way – shared challenges need similar responses;
- No “model” of a perfect Centre -- many questions remain about effectiveness in practice, no barometer for success. But some principles emerge as a basis for assessment
- Exchange of experience via the CoG network particularly valuable because the Centre is a relatively new area for governance analysis.



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