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Innovation in the Public Sector

Country experiences and Policy Recommendations





United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Innovation in the Public Sector



UNITED NATIONS

New York and Geneva, 2017

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This volume is issued in English and Russian only.

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ECE/CECI/23

UNITED NATIONS PUBLICATIONS Sales number E.17.II.E.20 ISBN 978-92-1-117141-9 eISBN 978-92-1-362799-0 ISSN

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FOREWORD

The public sector plays a very significant role in modern economies. As in the business sector, innovation can be a major source of productivity growth, cost savings and improvements in service quality; benefits which then also positively affect businesses and citizens who rely on an efficient and effective public sector.

The ability of the public sector to innovate is therefore increasingly seen as a critical element of economy-wide innovation performance. However, innovation policies and strategies relating to the public sector are far less developed than those targeting the business sector. There are important differences between the public and the private sector in terms of incentives and motivation, resource allocation, and attitudes towards risk, which are inherent in the different roles played by the two sectors in the economy, and which have a profound impact on how innovation is carried out and how policy can support it.

The collection of contributions in this publication address a wide range of issues related to the promotion of innovation in the public sector as well as policy lessons learned in this area, drawing on the experiences of different countries.

The issues discussed in this publication refer to a relatively new policy area. Countries are at different stages in the conceptualization and implementation of relevant strategies. Overall, there is a need to further develop the understanding of innovation in the public sector and to increase policy awareness. This creates significant scope for policy learning and the exchange of experiences through international multilateral initiatives.

I hope that this publication will contribute to the dissemination of good practices in the promotion of innovation in the public sector and provide a useful reference for policymakers and other innovation stakeholders in their activities.

Olga Algayerova Executive Secretary United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication was prepared under the auspices of the UNECE Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships as part of the programme of work of the UNECE Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies. It is the outcome of an applied policy seminar on Innovation in the Public Sector held as part of the series *Policies for Innovation and Knowledge-Based Development in the 21st Century*. The UNECE Secretariat thanks the authors of the chapters for generously sharing their expertise and the members of the Team of Specialists and seminar participants for their contributions to the discussion.

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