

# PEOPLEGOV NEWS

*The People in Government Lab bi-monthly newsletter*



## WELCOME

Welcome to the first issue of the PeopleGov newsletter, a bi-monthly publication with updates on our research and engagement activities. If you would like to subscribe and keep up with our news, please email [peoplegovlab@bsg.ox.ac.uk](mailto:peoplegovlab@bsg.ox.ac.uk).

Michaelmas was a busy term for the People in Government Lab (PeopleGov Lab) - we hosted our first international meeting, held a seminar on the future of work in public organisations, and welcomed two new team members, while continuing our research on remote working and the impact of COVID-19. Find out more below.

## The future of work in public organisations

In November, the PeopleGov Lab and the University of Chile joined together to host a seminar on the future of remote work in public organisations: from teleworking to hybrid working arrangements. The event brought together academics and leaders in the public service to share research and experiences of remote working gained during the pandemic and to reflect on our hopes for these new working arrangements going forward.

The need to closely monitor remote working arrangements as an innovative practice was a recurring theme, as was the need for new strategies to understand staff and measure well-being and productivity. Many participants felt that there had been a shift in recent months from operating in crisis mode, to a future focus and consideration of the cultural impact of hybrid working, for example a need to rebuild social capital. They agreed that cultivating a new style of leadership was essential to build the trust and motivation needed to make hybrid working more effective in future, and all remained committed to adopting and improving remote working arrangements in the long-term.

# PeopleGov International Meeting

Our first international meeting convened around 40 international experts in people management from nine different countries, including practitioners from leading centres and think-tanks, high-level government officials, and academics.

In the first panel, Low Peck Kem, Chief HR Officer and Advisor of the Public Service Division of the Government of Singapore and Dan Honig, Associate Professor of Public Policy at the University College London, reflected on people management challenges and opportunities in the mid- to long term and evaluated key opportunities to improve public servants' motivation, effectiveness, and responsiveness. Some of the main points of the discussion were how to balance technological progress with public employees' needs, improving leadership, and how to develop collaborative and trustworthy workspaces in the public sector.

In the second panel, Marc Esteve, Director of EsadeGov Center for Public Governance, Beth Blauer, Executive Director of the Center for Civic Impact at Johns Hopkins University, and Henna Khan, Strategy and Innovation Management Consultant at Deloitte and founder of the UK Government's first HR Innovation Sandbox discussed how to foster effective collaboration on people management, including the role of research centres, public policy, and public administration, as well as the gaps when it comes to research informing practice and how applied research can contribute to fill these gaps.

In the second issue of this newsletter, we will be sharing some key insights from the meeting.

## THE KEYS TO THE CITY

Pedro Arcain Riccetto, Project Associate and Postdoctoral Fellow, was honoured in December by his home city of Londrina, Brazil, where he received the keys to the city and became its first Ambassador, in recognition of his engagement with local policy.

Pedro helped develop an evidence-based strategy for the city in the creation of its Masterplan 2040 – a strategic policy plan spanning 2022 to 2040 and an innovation for the city. Pedro also led two students from the Blavatnik School of Government to study priority topics within the Masterplan and developed partnerships with Harvard and Columbia Universities, USA, to produce research focused on improving the city of Londrina.

Congratulations Pedro!

Londrina, Brazil

Image credit: Vladimir Soares, Unsplash



## Our publications

C. Leaver, O. Ozier, P. Serneels and A. Zeitlin, 'Recruitment, Effort, and Retention Effects of Performance Contracts for Civil Servants: Evidence from Rwandan Primary Schools', *American Economic Review*, Vol. 111 Issue 7, 2021, pp: 2213-2246.

<https://arxiv.org/abs/2102.00444>

This paper reports on a two-tiered experiment designed to separately identify the selection and effort margins of pay-for-performance.

D. Brown, J. Kohli, S. Mignotte, 'Tools at the Centre of Government', 2021.

<https://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/research/publications/tools-centre-government>

In this paper, the authors look at how the 'centre of government' can add value from their position and with the tools available to them.

L. Hensel, M. Witte, A. Stefano Caria, T. Fetzner, S. Fiorin, F.M. Götz, M. Gomez, J. Haushofer, A. Ivchenko, G. Kraft-Todd, E. Reutskaja, C. Roth, E. Yoeli, J.M. Jachimowicz, 'Global Behaviors, Perceptions, and the Emergence of Social Norms at the Onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic', *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, Volume 193, 2022, pp: 473-496.

[https://authors.elsevier.com/c/1eGZZ\\_3pQ3iOU7](https://authors.elsevier.com/c/1eGZZ_3pQ3iOU7)

This paper evaluates the results of a large-scale survey covering 58 countries and over 100,000 respondents between late March and early April 2020, studying beliefs and attitudes towards citizens' and governments' responses at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In January 2022, we published a blog in collaboration with the Global Government Forum, written by 2020 PeopleGov Summer Fellow Alexandra Spicer. Alexandra wrote on motivation for public sector employees and the extent to which pay is a factor.

<https://www.globalgovernmentforum.com/pay-autonomy-and-the-desire-to-make-a-difference-three-key-factors-for-motivating-public-sector-officials/>

## WELCOMING NEW TEAM MEMBERS

In November, we welcomed Elise El Nouchi and Sally Leach to the PeopleGov team.

Elise is a Research Analyst who recently completed her master's in Development Management at the London School of Economics and Political Science and will be leading our project, Voices of People in Government.

<https://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/people/elise-el-nouchi>



Sally is an administrator with experience in events co-ordination, now supporting our varied engagement activities.

<https://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/people/sally-leach>

