

Guidelines and Criteria for the Submission of Short Papers at EGOS Colloquia

Short papers should focus on the main ideas of the later full paper, i.e. they should explain the purpose of the paper, theoretical background, the research gap that is addressed, the approach taken, the methods of analysis (in empirical papers), main findings and contributions. In addition, it is useful to indicate clearly how the paper links with the sub-theme and the overall theme of the Colloquium, although not all papers need to focus on the overall theme. Creativity, innovativeness, theoretical grounding and critical thinking are typical characteristics of EGOS papers.

Your short paper should comprise **around 3,000 words** (inc. references, appendices, and other material).

Submission deadline for short papers for the (main) 42nd EGOS online Colloquium hosted by the University of Bergamo, July 9–11, 2026:

- Tuesday, January 7, 2026, **12:00 CET**

The deadline is unchangeable and therefore **extensions can not be granted!**

Formatting your short paper

Your short paper should comprise **around 3,000 words**, according to the following format:

- Font: 12 pt, Arial or Times New Roman
- Margin left/right: 2.5 cm
- Line spacing: 1.5
- Use APA style for your citations

Do not use capital letters in your paper's title, unless they are proper nouns (e.g. "London", "Thomas"), quoted titles, or if it is the first word after a colon or hyphen. For example: *Mark Twain's "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn": Summary, analyses, and quotations*. Do not write your title in ALL CAPS.

Please **state your name** (and that of your co-author/s, if applicable) + affiliation + email at the top of your short paper (because no [single/double blind] peer review).

Short papers should be submitted as a **pdf or docx file**. Please do not upload txt files!



Steps prior to uploading your short paper

- To upload a short paper, you must be a **registered user** on the EGOS website.
If you have never been an EGOS member, never uploaded a short paper for one of the previous EGOS Colloquia, or never attended an EGOS Colloquium before, you need to **register on the EGOS website**. Click [here](#) and follow the instructions. Once you have an EGOS member number and password, please **log in to the member area “MyEGOS”** and follow the instructions for uploading your short paper listed below.
- If you are an active (or former) EGOS member, **log in to “MyEGOS”** using your email [or your EGOS member number] and your password.

Uploading your short paper

You can **only upload one short paper** with your EGOS member number! If your short paper is co-authored and you have already submitted a (single-authored) short paper to another sub-theme, then your co-author (one of your co-authors, respectively) has to upload this co-authored short paper by using their EGOS member number. Please note: You may only appear as **co-author in a maximum of TWO further short papers!**

- In the MyEGOS section of the website, click on **Submit your short paper**.
- Fill in the form.

Do not use ALL CAPS for your paper title.

As the uploader, you are the main author. Add all co-authors (can also be added when submitting your full paper).

Upload your paper as pdf or docx.

- If you want to re-upload your short paper because you submitted it to the wrong sub-theme or have an updated version, you can do so until the deadline:

In MyEGOS, you will see Status: Edit your short paper

Click delete your short paper application.

Submit your short paper again.

If you have any further questions, please contact the [EGOS Executive Secretariat](#).



Sub-theme 45: Redesigning a Digitalized and Sustainable Public Sector: A Crossroad between HRM, Changing Mindset, and Sources of Knowledge



42nd EGOS
Colloquium
University of Bergamo
July 9–11, 2026
EGOS

Convenors:

Andrea Tomo

University of Naples Federico II, Italy
andrea.tomo@unina.it

Manuela Barreca

Università della Svizzera Italiana, Switzerland
manuela.barreca@usi.ch

Manuel Castriotta

University of Cagliari, Italy
manuel.castriotta@unica.it

Call for Papers

The “more-than-human” framework challenges traditional human-centric perspectives by enlarging the focus to include non-human commodities such as technology, nature, knowledge, and ecological systems. In this sub-theme, we focus on the public sector, where digital transformation and sustainability intersect to redefine the workplace, service delivery, leadership styles, organizational culture, and governance structures (Bunker, 2020; Mascio et al., 2020; Schuster et al., 2020; Välikangas & Lewin, 2020; Yang, 2020), and we seek to explore if and how a “more-than-human” lens, when applied in collaboration with autonomous technologies and artificial intelligence, can guide public-sector reforms toward reaching equitable, innovative, and sustainable outcomes.

Specifically, in the public sector, digital transformation approaches are linked to civil society's evolving expectations, demanding that public administrations deliver high-value, real-time digital services. Governments, and the public sector in general, are changing their mode of



operation to improve service delivery, be more efficient and effective in their designs, and achieve objectives such as increased transparency, interoperability, collaboration, and citizen satisfaction (Mergel et al., 2019). Technology, with its transformative potential, is seen as a tripartite enabler: to transform service delivery, to transform public organizational culture and relationships with citizens, and to transform value creation as a transformation outcome (Scupola & Mergel, 2022). For instance, public universities, not only in terms of the services provided to students but also with regard to the methods of producing educational and scientific contents, are undergoing a profound transformation in their processes and organizational structures (Berg & Seeber, 2016; Lee & Benjamin, 2022).

Nevertheless, the rapid pace of these changes poses significant challenges for the public sector, requiring creative and proactive responses from civil servants. Thus, new digital technology advances, for example, applications, work tools, platforms, and social networking, are getting faster and often challenging for individuals and organizations, including the public sector (Sudarmo, 2020). Nonetheless, the rapid emergence of AI is pressuring the public sector to deal with how to change the way civil servants will perform their jobs and tasks and the competencies and ethical frameworks required for these changes (OECD, 2024). As public administrations navigate these complex transitions, the need for innovative, inclusive, and ecologically aligned practices, becomes increasingly evident.

Digital transformation has accelerated the adoption of new forms of work, including smart working, which has been widely adopted and has rapidly revolutionized work practices intending to enhance employee performance, flexibility, and autonomy (Todisco et al., 2023; Tomo, 2023) and, reshaping HRM practices in the public sector, introducing both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, digital tools like AI-driven recruitment, performance analytics, and collaborative platforms streamline processes and foster innovation. On the other hand, these tools raise ethical concerns about algorithmic bias, digital accountability, accessibility gaps, and the depersonalization of workplace interactions. Likewise, sustainability initiatives require HRM to rethink policies around workforce development, commuting, and workspaces, aiming to reduce the environmental footprint while enhancing employee well-being. Public administrations should develop HRM strategies that holistically address these dual transformations. Furthermore, this represented a great challenge, especially for the public sector, which often found itself unprepared for this unprecedented change (Tomo, 2023; van der Wal, 2020; Wang et al., 2009). However, these transformations often struggle to balance efficiency with sustainability and inclusivity.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted both opportunities and vulnerabilities in public-sector organizations. For instance, while remote working demonstrated potential for reducing



emissions and enhancing work-life balance, it also revealed challenges in digital literacy, inclusivity, and technological infrastructure.

This re-organization has brought new challenges to public administrations and their employees regarding resources, relationships, organizational structures, models, and practices (Tomo, 2023). The push over the new forms of work finds its rationale in the search for more sustainable organizational models in the public sector, as they should increase employee efficiency, cost savings, and reduce emissions due to reduced commuting (Gratton, 2021). Also, these forms of work should improve employee well-being because of increased work-life balance (WLB), flexibility, and autonomy in task execution. For example, in public universities, the cult of speed and hyper-productivity has fostered hyper-competitive researchers and empty departments. In this context, new technologies can play a pivotal role in rethinking the academic assembly line and teamwork forms, which has undermined workers' well-being and stifled the creativity of their scientific contributions (Collini, 2012; Bertella & Castriotta, 2024). Moreover, in this sense, they should ensure the development of more ecosystem-aware workplaces that consider the interdependencies between employees, technology, and ecological systems (Petani & Mengis, 2021; Tomo, 2023; Wilhoit Larson, 2021).

Public sector professionals play a crucial role in shaping these new models and practices, and their proactive engagement is vital to ensure a successful transition. As highlighted by the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) in 2021, it is essential that public administrations give high priority to developing the right mindsets, capacities, and skills for mainstreaming this transformative era. Indeed, no meaningful government transformation can happen without a change in public servants' mindsets, competencies, and behaviors (United Nations, 2022).

However, these considerations cannot stand alone without a deep reflection upon public reforms and organizational procedures and practices. Many questions arise about the adequacy of current reforms in the public sector as well as of organizational policies developed by public administrations. How can we ensure that HRM policies, leadership practices, and organizational structures foster sustainable, inclusive, and adaptive work environments in the (new) digitalized public sector?

On these grounds, in this sub-theme one of the few (or probably the only one) concerning issues related to the public sector, which is run since the EGOS Colloquium 2018, we invite critical and constructive papers theoretically or empirically addressing the challenges related to new trends in HRM in the public sector, the role of creative workplace and supportive



leadership in innovative processes, the effects of digital transformation on HRM practices, the role of technology within the public sector, the interplay between internal and external sources of expertise in co-creating solutions, and HRM relationship with individual and organizational acts of reactions, resistance, engagement, and coping with the digital transformation.

We invite contributions that critically engage with a wide range of issues, offering fresh perspectives and insights into the transformation of public organizations through a “more-than-human” lens, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Mechanisms for integrating non-human elements (e.g., AI, ecosystems) into HR practices and leadership models
- The impact of HR strategy on promoting workforce and place embracing creativity and innovation
- HRM fostering engagement and adaptability among public-sector employees amid rapid technological and environmental change
- Addressing power/resistance dynamics within organizations undergoing rapid technological and ecological shifts
- Ethical frameworks for HR practices in a more-than-human public sector
- Mechanisms and strategies for overcoming resistance to digital tools in bureaucratic systems and fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration (e.g., for employees in developing competencies for hybrid human-technology collaborations)
- The transformation of working practices and organizational models in the public sector after the pandemic and the spread of digital technologies
- The effects of agile forms of working on management practices, knowledge management, leadership, strategy, sustainability, and recruiting
- The implications of new forms of working on individual well-being, work-life balance as well as on public employees' identities
- The effects of algorithms, artificial intelligence, and other advanced forms of technology on HRM and other organizational practices
- The logic, practices, and values involved in replacing human-centric creativity with creativity generated by artificial intelligence
- Recruitment, retention, and development strategies for public servants in an AI-augmented workplace



- The role of collaboration with external partners in creative and innovative processes within the public sector
- The comparison of the outcomes of internally and/or externally driven innovation in the public sector
- Case studies that explore talent development initiatives aligned with ecological sustainability and technological advancement
- The comparative analysis of cross-sectoral and cross-national experiences of public management reforms, focusing on the deconstruction/reconstruction of cultural, professional, and creative paradigms and identities within administrations

References

- Berg, M., & Seeber, B.K. (2016): *The Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Bertella, G., & Castriotta, M. (2024): "Thinking and acting creatively for greater sustainability in academic conference tourism." *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism*, 25 (1), 54–72.
- Bunker, D. (2020): "Who do you trust? The digital destruction of shared situational awareness and the COVID-19 infodemic." *International Journal of Information Management*, 55, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0268401220311555>.
- Collini, S. (2020): "Universities and 'Accountability': Lessons from the UK Experience?" In: L. Engwall (ed.): *Missions of Universities: Past, Present, Future*. Cham: Springer, 115–130.
- Gratton, L. (2021): "Four principles to ensure hybrid work is productive work." *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 62 (2), 11A–16A.
- Mascio, F.D., Natalini, A., & Cacciatore, F. (2020): "Public administration and creeping crises: Insights from COVID-19 pandemic in Italy." *The American Review of Public Administration*, 50 (6–7), 621–627.
- Mergel, I., Edelman, N., & Haug, N. (2019): "Defining digital transformation: Results from expert interviews." *Government Information Quarterly*, 36 (4), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2019.06.002>.
- OECD (2024): *OECD Economic Outlook*, Vol. 2024 (1), https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/oecd-economic-outlook/volume-2024/issue-1_69a0c310-en.
- Petani, F.J., & Mengis, J. (2023): "Technology and the hybrid workplace: the affective living of IT-enabled space." *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 34 (8), 1530–1553.
- Schuster, C., Weitzman, L., Sass Mikkelsen, K., Meyer-Sahling, J., et al. (2020): "Responding to COVID-19 through Surveys of Public Servants." *Public Administration Review*, 80 (5), 792–796.
- Scupola, A., & Mergel, I. (2022): Co-production in the digital transformation of public administration and public value creation: The case of Denmark." *Government Information Quarterly*, 39 (1), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2021.101650>.
- Sudarmo, S. (2020): "Human resources management and leadership for public services in the 21st century." *International Journal of Business, Economics & Management*, 3 (1), 219–225.
- Todisco, L., Tomo, A., Canonico, P., & Mangia, G. (2023): "The bright and dark side of smart working in the public sector: employees' experiences before and during COVID-19." *Management Decision*, 61 (13), 85–102.
- Tomo, A. (2023): *Identity in the Public Sector: A Complex Journey Between Identity Features, Struggles and Dimensions*. Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited.



- United Nations (2022): *UN DESA Annual Highlights 2021–2022*. New York: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, <https://www.un.org/en/desa/highlights-report-2021-2022>.
- Välikangas, L., & Lewin, A.Y. (2020): "The lingering new normal." *Management and Organization Review*, 16 (3), 467–472.
- Van der Wal, Z. (2020): "Being a public manager in times of crisis: The art of managing stakeholders, political masters, and collaborative networks." *Public Administration Review*, 80 (5), 759–764.
- Wang, J., Hutchins, H.M., & Garavan, T.N. (2009): "Exploring the strategic role of human resource development in organizational crisis management." *Human Resource Development Review*, 8 (1), 22–53.
- Wilhoit Larson, E. (2021): "Creating home at work: humanistic geography and placemaking in organizations." *Culture and Organization*, 27 (6), 437–455.
- Yang, K. (2020): "Unprecedented challenges, familiar paradoxes: COVID-19 and governance in a new normal state of risks." *Public Administration Review*, 80 (4) 657–664.

