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Abstract

Conflict of interest is a primary risk to integrity in the public sector. The breaking down of barriers between the public and private sectors - through the privatisation of services and public/private partnerships - has created grey zones. While a conflict of interest is not necessarily corruption, it is recognised that conflicts between the private interests and public duties of public officials, if inadequately managed, can result in corruption.

The OECD developed the Guidelines for Managing Conflict of Interest in the Public Service to help governments identify and manage conflicts of interest as well as a Toolkit to put them into practice. These take a practical approach, considering that all conflicts of interest cannot be eliminated. Therefore public officials' private interests need to be properly identified and managed in an appropriate manner.

In 2006, the OECD reviewed progress made in implementing the 2003 Recommendation on Guidelines for Managing Conflict of Interest in the Public Service. In the past three years two thirds of OECD countries have already reviewed their conflict-of-interest arrangements. However, fewer established mechanisms to put these rules into practice. The review also highlighted emerging challenges at the public and private sector interfaces, in particular post-public employment and lobbying.

Biography of Presenter

Ms. Elodie Beth is an Administrator at the OECD specialised in integrity and corruption prevention. She is responsible for designing and conducting comparative research projects on risk areas for corruption in the public service. Ms. Beth is currently leading the project on integrity in public procurement.

Prior to joining the OECD, Ms. Beth worked for a consulting firm organising strategic expeditions for high-level European executives in North America to disseminate good management practices from public and private organisations.