



INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

AN INITIATIVE OF
THE WOODROW WILSON SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
AND THE BOBST CENTER FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

Series: Centers of Government

Interview no.: D10

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Interviewer: Yoni Friedman

Date of Interview: 31 January 2012

Location: Vilnius, Lithuania

FRIEDMAN: This is Yoni Friedman and I'm here today with Mr. Sigitas Slupsinkas. Could we begin with you telling us a little bit about yourself.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: I am Sigitas Šiupšinskas. Now I am working for the Ministry of the Interior as a vice minister and I am responsible for public administration affairs and also for regional policy affairs and for public service affairs. So those are the main areas I am responsible for.

Now it is the fourth year I am working here in the Ministry of the Interior. Before I had been an adviser to the President, Mr. (Valdas) Adamkus. My responsibilities were the same. Not the same, but very similar. They were local governance, public administration affairs and regional policy. I mentioned before, I worked for Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania as executive director. For those three positions I am working very stable, for a very long time.

In 1994 I started to work in the Association of Local Authorities. Then in 2005 I started to work in the president's office as adviser for local administration and regional policies and in 2008 I started to work here at the Ministry of Interior. I don't know—do you have interest about my earlier activities before Association of Local Authorities?

FRIEDMAN: Yes, especially because you have been involved in some of the same issues for a longer period. So, certainly, if you want to talk about the state of public administration.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: Yes, my experience in the public administration is about 20 years. In the very beginning I started to work in a local municipality, in neighborhood administration. Later I started to work in the prime minister's office as a consultant for local municipalities. All those five activities take from 1993 up until this year.

FRIEDMAN: So maybe can we start at your time as adviser to the president?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: Maybe I made some mistake. I will calculate the time more precisely. I started in maybe 2003. I have to check in my CV (curriculum vitae).

FRIEDMAN: I think it was Mr. Adamkus, did he come back in 2004?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: Yes, now we are in 2012. I started working here three years ago, 2009. The four years before I worked for the President. It means I started to work in the President's office in 2005 up until 2009. Okay?

FRIEDMAN: Okay. So maybe I'll ask you first about 2009 when you arrived at your current position.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: Here.

FRIEDMAN: What was the state of public administration? What did you think was working well and what did you think were some of the weaknesses?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: It was a very interesting time because the trends in 2008, 2009 were increasing curves. I mean, the increasing curve of civil servants number, the increasing curve of incomes, the increasing curve of additional expenditures. In that time it was very hard to say what big changes should be in the near future because the financial crisis happened a couple of months after the new government got into power.

I don't believe, at that time, changes came to be so big in public administration because there were not so big changes before. Before, in the last ten years—I mean not the period after the Soviet time, but I mean our independent period. I had some communication with some experts from different foreign countries. We had a question: Is it possible to change our civil servant system?

I thought at that time that it was impossible to change very critically because the critical mass was different. But the challenges that we have met in 2008, those challenges show what we had to prepare very important, very ambitious action plans to meet those challenges. Then the (Andrius) Kubilius government started to work, at which time I still was in the president's office as an adviser. I saw drafts of the program, this government program, the action program. My first mind was, "Wow, that program includes so many different issues, it is enough for three governments." That was my first impression.

The first question was: Is it impossible to implement all of that statement? But it was real life. After four or five months I started to work here in the Ministry of the Interior as adviser first, but it was just for two months. After that I started in the position as a vice minister.

Some changes were made in the central government system. Maybe you know what we had before—state secretaries—those positions were not political. It is like a career position. The decision was made to change the top-level of officers. The main idea was to change career officers to political officers for boosting reforms.

FRIEDMAN: Okay, so in terms of the very ambitious reform agenda in public administration, the different components of the VORT (Improvement of Performance-Based Management – from the Lithuanian *Valdymo, orientuoto j rezultatus, tobulinimas*) project, civil service reform issues, performance management tools. What were your priorities?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *These priorities were written in government action plan. Also, each ministry has its annual year's priorities. The VORT reform that we had made was cutting into the intermediate administrative level—county administration. This reform is finished now. It took 1-½ years. Now we only have a post-reform evaluation process and monitoring situation—how it functions were transferred from the intermediate level to municipalities or how functions were partly transferred to some other central government institutions; how it works, how those institutions run.*

The idea is to, one year later, make some evaluative statement about those functions about that reform. Additionally I want to say that it is very important to evaluate, to monitor after reform processes. In different fields we have made—for example, in education and other fields, we have made reforms but they are not evaluated enough, having post evaluation. So here we are doing that.

That reform is finished; that's good news because it is finished. It was a priority. In the central government program, it was a priority in our ministry. We have success on that. But not everybody thinks like that because some people lost their position, some institutions were closed and some entities were closed—so naturally they are not happy on that. These are very human things—it is natural because you lose jobs, and for that time they lose stable incomes, so it is natural.

We said all service functions have to be transferred to the local level. All of them were transferred with only one exception. Local governments had the willingness, and we did the same proposals, that land had to belong to the local government. They have to make the decision how to use this land because local governments are responsible for spatial planning, for strategic planning. They have to handle resources, not only financial, but land also. That position was sent from central government as well to parliament. Only in very wide hearings between parliament and the president—there was not enough political willingness to make the decision and to transfer land to local governments. So one minus for that reform. Maybe in the future there will be better conditions for making such revolutionary decision.

Another part of control functions was transferred to another state institution because naturally control functions, supervising functions, belong to the state not to local governments to supervise spatial planning processes, to supervise how education entities work, et cetera. It belongs to the state naturally. So that function, that group of functions was transferred to other state agencies. Not important, not actual functions, it was made some functional audit, we just cut it. They are not actual; they were not actual for the time. The decision was made, don't run more; just stop.

So about 50, 40 million litas per year, not more, was the financial effect of that reform. But about quality—are services run in better qualities? Are we more reachable for people? Are we happy with those services? We will see it later, after one year. That is one direction.

Another direction is public administration reforms. Public administration reform initiatives are very complex. You have been before this meeting in the conference. We had discussions about those initiatives. We have a lot of initiatives, but it is very important—and your question for us was how is it coordinated? Who are the leaders? Who is in the leadership?

Really, in some cases we feel that it is not enough leadership. For example, in horizontal affairs we have traditional Lithuania and such a kind of law or legislation system. But for all institutions, it is better to work in the vertical. It is more understandable, clearer. Somebody is the boss, somebody is responsible for that boss. So it is like direction. You have to do that.

But what we had started in this government was to change the culture and to say that it is very important to work in horizontal level, as partners, as common teams, to look for some usually not casual decisions. In that case, other ministries—we are like a coordinator for preparing public administration reform program, as a coordinator for implementing. But we see there is not enough believing in other ministries to participate in that format.

As I mentioned before each ministry wanted to have personal programs. Okay, for example, we have the environmental ministry. We want to have strategic documents for environmental affairs. We have, for example, communication and roads ministry (Ministry of Transport and Communications). We want to have strategic plans. But in that case it is very hard to find a common decision and to integrate all initiatives and to say we have common goals, common vision. We can integrate our activities in that direction together.

So what we are doing now in partnership with the prime minister's office is working together with them and together with Sunset Commission (The Commission for the Improvement of State Administration) to change that type of

thinking. The prime minister said, not one time, to the Sunset Commission, "You are like an agent and please talk in your ministries, inside your ministries because each ministry has ministry Sunset Commission." All central Sunset Commission members, we are like agents in each ministry helping to change this type of thinking.

FRIEDMAN: Is every ministry represented on the Sunset Commission?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: Not all the ministries. We have interesting composition for central Sunset Commission. Composition is partly from members of ministries like some vice minister or head of department from the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Finance, Prime Minister's office and some other ministries but not all of them.

Another part is from active stakeholders, like think tanks who are working very actively in public areas like the (Lithuanian) Free Market Institute, et cetera. So it is a very different composition. It belongs to different types of organizations. What are we trying to do in that commission? We have discussions on all ongoing reforms in the central government. It is important not only to find the best solution, but one more important task is to communicate, to share information. It is very important. We have no other way; we have to do the reforms and to explain for public area what should be the additional value for the reforms.

In that case our ministries are responsible for preparing public administration reform package and coordinating ministries and activities of different ministries to put one strategic paper and to set evaluation criteria and values for that. Now what we are doing is, I think, it should be following this first day will be a meeting of the government and we will present for the second time. The first presentation was last week, last Monday on this new program and now it should be this Thursday.

FRIEDMAN: If I can, I'd like to ask you a bit about the work of the Sunset Commission. I understand that one of its objectives was to look for efficiency gains. You mentioned that in 2008 the salaries were going up, the number of civil servants was increasing, and that was an issue.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: You mean in 2008?

FRIEDMAN: Yes. Then, of course, the financial crisis hits so there is even more pressure on the government budget. So I understand that one of the goals was to look for efficiency gains, ways to reduce staff numbers—can you talk a little bit about that?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: Okay, if we compare three years ago situation, what we have in the public administration area. In the public administration area we have about 870 institutions, which are all or partly involved in public administration functions. I mean, we have some institutions which are only partly involved in public administration functions, but it is not a big number. But the whole amount is about 870. In those institution worked about—maybe I have a paper if you have some interest on the numbers.

FRIEDMAN: Sure.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: Only I can say in those types of institutions it was decreased about 12-½% workers in a period of the last three years. We have two types of institutions. The main part is those institutions, those entities that are directly responsible for

central government or to the ministries. In those parts, the number decreased 12.67%, but it is the real number of workers, not statistical. In another part of the institution, those responsible to local governments, to parliaments—for example courts' administration et cetera, here the number decreased is less, about 3%. Totally we have, in all public sector—I mean public sector but in this part works public administration institutions, not public services. Not schools, not hospitals, not universities, but only those institutions which are responsible for public administration affairs. The number decreased is 10.34% .

So it shows that central government is ambitious. The decision is result-oriented. This number 12.67% shows what number decreased in institutions is. Four times less to compare with other public administration institutions, which are responsible for other municipalities, parliament, president's office. It is only one direction.

Here in the Ministry of the Interior, we started to work at the first stage with civil service reform in a more complex understanding. In the central government program and in our priorities, in ministries' priorities, it was written to make civil service-oriented results, to make more effective and to make less in number—less workers but more efficiency.

We started to work in early 2009 but in that process it is very important to have wide agreement with parliament because it is connected with changes in the laws, and some crucial changes. The idea was to set a top-level officer status and to set rotations or cadences for those types of civil servants. We started to discuss here in the Ministry of the Interior; we had prepared draft paper, green paper. Then we sent this bill to the prime minister's office.

The prime minister's office formed another working group and started to work with some additional corrections and some additional ideas. I think this process was so long and now we have adopted the program. But we have—I will say later what changes we made, but not in all the issues of what we had planned before.

FRIEDMAN: Okay.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *So the paper was sent to parliament but parliament sent the answer to prime minister's office. We understand that it is important to make some big changes but it is not enough time because cadence is going to the end and crisis is still not over. It is not a good time to make such wide reforms with civil service. It means that only some part of corrections is possible to do; we had made some of them. What had we made in the civil service initiative?*

For example, we have new evaluating system. Not system, but principles and methodology. For example it started in 2011, each employee has to agree with his direct chief to some annual tasks—what he is planning to implement or what he is planning to do in the next year. It was set in the beginning of 2011 and now in January we had an evaluation process: Was it reached? If it is not, what risks do we have? Does it belong to some activities of civil servants or was it from the outside, somewhere from outside.

What did we learn from this process? We learned it is very hard to find clear solutions, to set criteria—ambitious criteria but not so it is impossible to realize. Like communication in between chief and employee and to find golden medium, how to make work more creative and more responsible for civil servants from one side. From the other side, for the boss, the section head or department head to be sure each employee knows what we have to do and to be sure we understand

each other on common goals and common tasks. So it is good for that time. But a small problem: We don't have enough resources for motivating.

For example, now in the civil servants law, it is written that it is reachable for each civil servant to get class, a qualification. But now it is not connected with results. For example, in any other year, you be more active to show that you have more initiative. If you are evaluated positively or very positively you can get class. But it means you get a class and you keep this class in the next and the next year.

So it is losing motivation to be oriented to the goals and other years.

FRIEDMAN: Can I ask you a little more about the class?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: Yes.

FRIEDMAN: Class—is it like a status just to tell the worker that he or she has done a good job or is there a financial reward for moving up to a class?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *Intervention, yes. Class—for example, you can get as a recommendation of your direct boss, it is a special commission which learns the situation, and looks for partly two results and partly two competences you have. After that if the decision is positive it means we have three classes: third, second and first class. First class is highest; it means you can get 30% additional, extra payment for your wages. It is very much a real instrument.*

We sent a bill to parliament saying what those classes have to be, give it only for one-year period. It means that if you show good results you can get, but in the next year it is the same process, you have to earn better. So it is like ranges. Now, in the mentality of civil services, it is like ranges. Okay, you reach this range. It is like naturally, okay, the range is higher.

FRIEDMAN: You can't go up 30% every year.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *You get first step 10%, second step 20% and third step is 30%.*

FRIEDMAN: And that's it?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *That's it. But you know you get it, you have it. It doesn't mean that you will work very effectively next year. We wanted to say for Parliament, of those classes, give it only for one-year period. It is only for one year. It is not property. You have to be connected—it is motivation. Now, this law is not adopted in the parliament and it means that our system—on one hand we started to set tasks, we started to organization evaluation process, but we don't have extra money to evaluate and to say, "Okay, you did it very well, you will have class for the next year." We have some small resources but if this change was made it means—we had possibility to have bigger pool for motivating.*

FRIEDMAN: In your opinion why did parliament reject this change now?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *It is not popular. One is a political case; another is not enough believing in the changes. Is it important? Is it positive for Lithuania for now? We have different legislation tradition to compare with the United Kingdom, for example. I have a very good example: Thinking, for example, about the traditional civil servant and another legislation system. We have a law; the main part is principles and*

another part is procedures—how a civil servant or another person has to proceed, some process or some theories.

In the U.K., civil servants would look to the first part—to the principles, to the rights, to the ethics, how he can use those instruments in his activities. Here, in the continental legislation system, everybody looks to procedures. Everything has to be written, step-by-step. It is the main problem, a cultural problem. What I have noticed, for example, what we get, very perfectly from the EU (European Union) rules, procedures. It is terrible. For me, as a politician, when I started, were here, I started asking questions. Why are you doing it like that, like that, like that?

“Oh, Vice Minister, it is the rules.” Okay, we have rules. Why do you try to change before something? No, your legislation. Okay, where is your legislation? In your legislation there is nothing written imperatively you have to do that and that and that. You can very creatively use some aspects in your country, what is better.

So it shows what our civil servants directly—we use all the procedures because we understand very clear, we want to work like a conveyer. But in that time, in that challenging time, it is not impossible to live in that style of living. We have to be more oriented to principles, to common tasks, common goals and to empower civil servants, to make them work more independently and to make some important tools which can help to have such a type of working. But it is very hard to change.

You ask me about parliament. All parliamentarians, we have advisers. We have the same civil servants who advised them directly if it is acceptable or not acceptable law. I think that critical mass, they are still afraid on those big changes. Critical mass of those types of thinking, it must be found in a short time and all parliamentarians, we have to understand, it is not another way for us, for Lithuania, for a small country, because we are a small country and we have to be smarter and smarter, to have more and more inside resources to reach the same task. Faster and smarter—there is no other way of thinking.

But you know, the first step we made. We're hoping that this public servant reform should be made, if not in the past years, it should be made—because civil servants have to be in charge, not on process, but on results.

FRIEDMAN: Can I ask you a little bit more about the tasks that each civil servant now has? Have you completed one cycle? Are they going through the appraisals now for the first time?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *You mean to take some case of civil servant? On what way are they responsible?*

FRIEDMAN: You mentioned that last January each civil servant—.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *Ah, about deceleration process?*

FRIEDMAN: Yes. So first question is each civil servant now has three, four or five goals for each year?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: Yes.

FRIEDMAN: How do you decide on those tasks? Do the civil servants negotiate with their—?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *Okay, about the process, the goal-setting process. From down to up and then from up to down. It was done in January when we evaluated the 2011 results. For example, I had to evaluate two persons—only two persons, because two departments belong to my responsibility. One of them is the regional policy department and another is the public administration department. We had to write what we have done in the past year and then to write what tasks or what ideas he suggested for next year. We had discussion on that draft paper—is it correct or not. For example, if we agreed, we made some corrections. I had no case in my two persons but if some had we would have to write a different opinion.*

For example, if the responsible person wrote what he did an argument for that. The chief can write no because that, and that and that. This document has to be given to the commission and the commission would make some final decision about the case.

FRIEDMAN: So would they disagree about what was achieved or about the goals for next year?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *Yes, if it was achieved or not.*

FRIEDMAN: Okay.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *But it is one part of that type of agreement. Another part is setting next year's tasks. It is a very creative process because it depends on the priorities of the ministry, the priorities of the political cabinet and naturally from the departments, because we have a lot of different multi-annual programs which have to be implemented. We have a set of ideas from those sources and the political level, ideas from the priorities' level. So that makes discussion. It is then possible to have a set of tasks for next year. It takes not one time or meeting. The principle is from bottom to up and then up to the bottom. But it can be several times. It depends on how it was reached, if agreement was reached or not.*

I have, for example, in one department, two meetings for that discussion. With the other department I had four meetings so it depends.

EVANS: Can I just ask you, the government sets some strategic priorities for itself?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *Yes.*

EVANS: Do those priorities wind up in the performance contracts of people in your department? Was there any discussion with the prime minister's office?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *If you mean the government priorities?*

EVANS: Yes, the government priorities.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *It was a kind of new initiative from the prime minister's office. For example in 2011 I know each minister had to go with some ideas, some financial resources, how much he needs for the priorities. It was not agreement but just discussion—direct discussion between prime minister, finance minister and ministers from different affairs on next year for example, next annual year, tasks, priorities and about finances. It was started in the prime minister's office. It was a new idea. I think it is okay, it is the first step but there is not enough time for clarification, to discuss in all specific aspects. Because, for example, our ministry, the Ministry of the Interior, we have a very wide area of responsibilities. We are responsible for public safety, police, border defense, fire stations, et cetera—a lot of statewide*

organizations. On the other hand we have regional policy and we have public administration, civil servants policies.

In some cases for example our minister said when he is going to formal or informal meetings with different countries of Europe and ministers, he has to meet three different ministers. So we have very concentrated ministry. For example, for other ministries, I think, to communicate with the prime minister's office we must have at least three meetings for different fields. To discuss on that field and that field and that field. But it is okay for starting, for starting it is okay. It will be improved. In the future we will have more and more professional, not agreements, but discussions, maybe agreements, who knows, maybe future agreements.

EVANS: These priorities, will they end up in individual performance contracts? You were talking about the system of setting goals for each employee, for the senior employees. Will those government priorities end up in their agreements?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *Yes, we discussed in between the central government, prime minister's office, the prime minister and each different ministry and ministers. When the minister goes here, naturally he has minister's priorities. It would have to be connected with central government priorities, but it is possible to have additional priorities or more, clarified, more detailed priorities, some specific priorities. We have, each year, ministers' priorities. So if I am responsible for regional affairs or public administration affairs and all those priorities, I am discussing with the heads of those departments. I am saying, "For us it should be important this and this and this things. You have to think about that."*

It doesn't mean I have two meetings or four meetings with another head of department; it was only these two or four meetings, no. We have coordinating meetings each week. Every time we are talking about what is important, what we have to correct or where we have to reorient our activities. It means it is not something new for them; it comes from our activities, from our discussions, from our lives. Maybe it is bigger clarification or just formalization of issues.

The director of the department, he sets for heads of the sectors the tasks for the next year. The head of a sector sets in discussion with all civil servants, all specialists, for each specialist, it goes to each specialist. On the web page you can read each senior civil servants' tasks and responsibilities for next year. It should be available in each ministry. Clearly I don't know if all ministries have published them. But in government decision it is the statement we have, all senior officers, their task has to be published and available on that page.

Publicity is a very important instrument to control.

FRIEDMAN: New transparency.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *Yes, and competitive thing is very important. For example, each ministry can look to other ministry's web page. Okay, what criteria have you set? Is it similar to ours?*

FRIEDMAN: Perhaps make them more ambitious.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *Yes, maybe.*

FRIEDMAN: May I ask you about a different project, this is part of the VORT project and I understand it is now the responsibility of your ministry. That is the functional

reviews. I understand that the Sunset Commission played a role in developing the methodology. There have been a few pilot reviews. Can you discuss a little bit the purpose, the goal of functional reviews and how you intend to use it?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: Functional reviews—the main purpose is for making the public sector more efficient. Naturally you can find in different fields some overlapping functions, some operations which are not so important. For example, in other cases, e-governance and t-governance helps to exchange of information, not between two different sections in one department but in between different institutions. This functional review is very important basically for that purpose, to make the public administration sector more efficient and setting, knowing what—it is very important to review functions periodically.

For example, what we have made in the Ministry of Interior, administrative burden. We have set methodology; experts help us to set the methodology for decreasing the burden for inhabitants. At first we set very ambitious plans for the Ministry of the Interior. What we have done in the last year? We decreased the burden between 11 and 19%. In all processes where there is provided public services. We have not a lot of those cases. For example, it was about 50 services, institutions responsible for the Ministry of Interior; we provide about 50 services for inhabitants.

We checked all of them and decreased two parameters. One parameter is time—decreasing time for giving services. Another parameter is additional costs—so it means we have to decrease additional costs for inhabitants. It was very interesting. We found that in one department it was written in formal documents what the client has to get information from one section and to give to another section in the same department. It was not a tradition; it was written in formal papers.

Everybody talks about e-government. Everybody talks about one-stop shop, et cetera. Everybody knows about it, everybody is trying to do it. But if you did it formally in all the areas and all the services you can find such interesting things. It shows the resources for decreasing of the burden is a lot. The same in the functions. Before, there was no systematic review of functions.

One case is reform of county government offices. When we cut a lot of not important, not actual functions under this reform, it shows that nobody did reviews before. It just was in some law, some regulation and function turns on. It shows what was very important too on first step to set areas, to set directions, where it is crucially important to start because effectiveness should be bigger. Now, what we have now is we have paper for review of those functions and we are planning to do in our Ministry of the Interior, in the I.T. (information technology) sector and in the police department because public safety is a very important function and it is the biggest part of our ministry, the police department. It shows from here we have start. We can reach bigger effectiveness in that case.

In that paper we have a plan for reviewing the functions. Different ministries will participate. It was a democracy for ministries to set directions and to set functions. They should make the review first. But it is good; I think it is motivation for ministries. We have to see a future, additional value for that review; not only a formal process but additional value.

EVANS: Throughout this period, a lot of these initiatives—functional reviews and capability reviews and things like that—have in some ways been started by the office of the prime minister and the Sunset Commission.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: Yes.

EVANS: Now you're the ministry that then has to deliver and coordinate all these things across government. Have they coordinated effectively with your ministry or do you just sort of wake up in the morning—?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *It is a very good question. For example, my opinion, my personal, not official, but I think that the prime minister's office should be stronger for coordinating affairs. When we have a lot of reforms somebody has to control those reforms and you have to evaluate. They do that. In such a situation they do very effectively but it is a small prime minister's office for controlling all reforms and for coordinating all reforms. It has made some reforms in prime minister's office. For example, laws and some legislation, draft evaluation, function—they transferred it to the Ministry of Justice.*

Some European coordination and integration affairs, we transferred it to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I think for having permanent and strong reforms, we should have stronger body in the prime minister's office. Maybe in some other countries it is enough, but in Lithuania we have a stronger vertical administration culture. In this case, when we are writing, please give us information for different ministries, or please describe some things, okay, maybe, maybe we'll get answer. Maybe it was not so precise. We have to write additionally. But when it goes from the prime minister's office, it is more effective.

EVANS: It is a mentality.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: Yes, in that period I think—.

EVANS: That's a good point. Let me ask one additional question. There are numerous different models of where a professional civil service should begin and end. This government made a big change in reintroducing the vice minister position, making that a political appointee rather than having that as part of the permanent civil service. Now that you have been here for a while and are responsible for the public administration and civil service, what is your opinion about looking ahead, about keeping that sort of political position?

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: *What we had before, really, the political cabinet, it was very weak before—now it is stronger. But connection between political and not political level, I think every time it is a rhetorical question. How can that connection work better? I will talk about my experience and what I have met here. I am responsible for public administration affairs and regional policy. Before it was two persons responsible, two secretaries responsible, two state secretaries responsible for those fields. It means that now our cabinet is less. Not cabinet less but there are more concentrated responsibilities.*

What does that mean? It means we have looked wider but we have no possibility to be so deep as did the state secretaries. What does it mean? It means the heads of the departments have to go a little bit higher level because we are now the highest level of career civil servants, but not all of them understand that. Sometimes it is a problem. When we are talking to each other, I am trying to explain that I am responsible not only for your department affairs but for that department, I have to handle, I have to look for public problems. Now if we have

more in that department I will work with this department; it means you are responsible to speak for all things because political level you have to be more oriented to political agenda.

On the other hand each week you have to work with your departments, with your employers and to be in touch in all things, in all issues which are important. So I think it is a challenge for the whole system for the political level having wider responsibilities to compare with state secretaries and for high levels of civil servants to go to a little bit higher level because now we are highest level of career civil servant. So we have to be more flexible, wider thinking, et cetera. So it means we have to get more quality for that level of civil service.

I think if we are talking about the future, everything depends on the culture of working. Not structure is the main factor; the main factor is understanding how we have to work. This decision, it was special for that crisis time.

FRIEDMAN: Yes.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: As I mentioned before, to make a stronger politically-oriented ministry's body to run the reforms, as I mentioned before in Prime Minister Kubilius' program it was written maybe three times more reforms than was mentioned in the earlier programs. So I think it is logical, it is a logical decision. But in the future all changes are possible.

The main idea is they are thinking of the way of working. It is very important to motivate, for us to motivate civil servants, to make them more result-oriented. I think it will help us to reach results faster and more easily. Less procedures, more results.

FRIEDMAN: Mr. Vice Minister, I want to thank you very much for your time and for meeting with us.

ŠIUPŠINSKAS: Thank you, it is very interesting for us to read your reports and your comparative analysis of different countries in the future. It can help us to look at the future more productively.