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**Human Resource Investment – a Step  
in the Development of Public Administration**

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**Abstract:** Human capital development supposes important investments in the field of public administration and the assurance of the necessary conditions to provide some quality–services. This paper has as a starting point the statement of the German sociologist Max Weber according to which “a modern society can function efficiently by training and perfecting the experts within a bureaucracy.” Modern societies put into evidence new values of public administration such social responsibility and adaptability. By specializing human resources, we contribute to using them efficiently. **The purpose** of this paper is to analyse the degree of involvement of the public institutions in developing human capital and to focus on the role of the education of public administration in order to internally increase stability so that we resist the frequent changes which suppose the continuous adjustment to external conditions. Our aim is also to analyse the already-implemented programmes as well as the ongoing ones concerning the training and perfecting of the public servants.

**Keywords:** perfecting public servants, adaptability, informational society.

## **1. Introduction**

According to the literature in the field, “the efficiency of the public administration depends on the human quality and the technical capacity of the people that frame it”. The quality of the administration is obtained only as a result of the continuous training and development of the professional training of the public administration personnel.

The administrative system must cope more and more every day, with the challenges of the social environment, and this fact can be achieved through ensuring the proper terms of function of the administrative mechanisms (Moinescu, 2009). The public administration has a series of resources, through which, can ensure a high level of achievement of the goals of the administrative structures. The main resources of the public administration are: human resources, financial resources, material resources and informational resources.

Although, all these resources are important, it is known that the value of the public administration consists of the human potential in the way in which the services are provided and in the behaviour of the civil servants. Broadly, the achievement of the political decision making, the socio-economic progress depend on the public administration, which makes the problems regarding the training and development of the personnel in this field, very important.

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The right to training and professional development of the civil servants is stipulated in art. 32 of the Romanian Constitution under the title “Right to education”. In order to hold a public office, the people that attend the exam must have the necessary studies, according to the classification of functions. Although, the civil servants have the right, the public institution has the obligation to support them in order to benefit from the terms that our society has created to raise the level of professional development, in relation with the requirements of the socio-economic, technical and scientific and cultural progress.

The improvement of the professional development takes into consideration the main characteristic of the human being, to develop itself, the permanently educate, to form skills to complete its personality and to fulfil its goals (Slaniceanu, 2000).

Exercising a public office implies that the appointed person must always be up-to-date with the evolution of information, of the knowledge in the field and not only, for the progress of the public administration in particular and for the society in general.

“The professional development” must not be considered a step, but a process that unfolds throughout the whole period of the carrier of the civil servant, allowing him to cope with the current responsibilities of the public office, to adapt to the demands of the public office, in relation to the evolution of the new and multiple works tasks.

## **2. Legislative Framework**

One of the objectives of the Romanian Governments is the reform of the training and development system of the civil servants, stipulated in the National Strategy for a Sustainable Development Horizons 2013-2020-2030, the National Plan for Reform 2014, the National Strategy against corruption as well as in the Governance Plan 2013-1016.

The right of the civil servants to continuously improve their level of professional skills and training are stipulated in Law no. 188/ 1999 on the status of the civil servants but also in the other strategic documents mentioned above, which are essential in order to achieve the governance program and the strategic commitments of Romania.

According to the Government Ordinance no. 129/2000, continuous professional development is made after the initial education and ensures either attaining new skills or the development of the current professional skills.

The training and professional development are both a right and an obligation of the civil servants, according to Law no. 188/1999 on the status of the civil servants. However, exercising this right is affected by the limited financial capacity and by the lack of a favourable development framework which can offer relevant opportunities in relation to the needs and interests of the civil servants, as well as encouragement measures to efficiently participate and study.

Government Decision no. 1066/2008 on the approval of the norms regarding the professional training of the civil servants, normative act that arises from Law no. 188/1999 on the status of the civil servants, that creates the normative framework and stipulates the rights and obligations of the civil servants, the training providers and the public institutions.

This decision sets the principles applicable to the professional training system of the civil servants, namely, efficiency, effectiveness, coherence, equal treatment, decentralised management, of the training process, free access to training services, planning and transparency.

Through the Order of the president of the National Agency of the Civil Servants (ANFP) no. 2323/2013 the priority areas, are set, in which training programs are organised for the civil servants that hold general public offices of execution and management, as well as public offices assimilated by these.

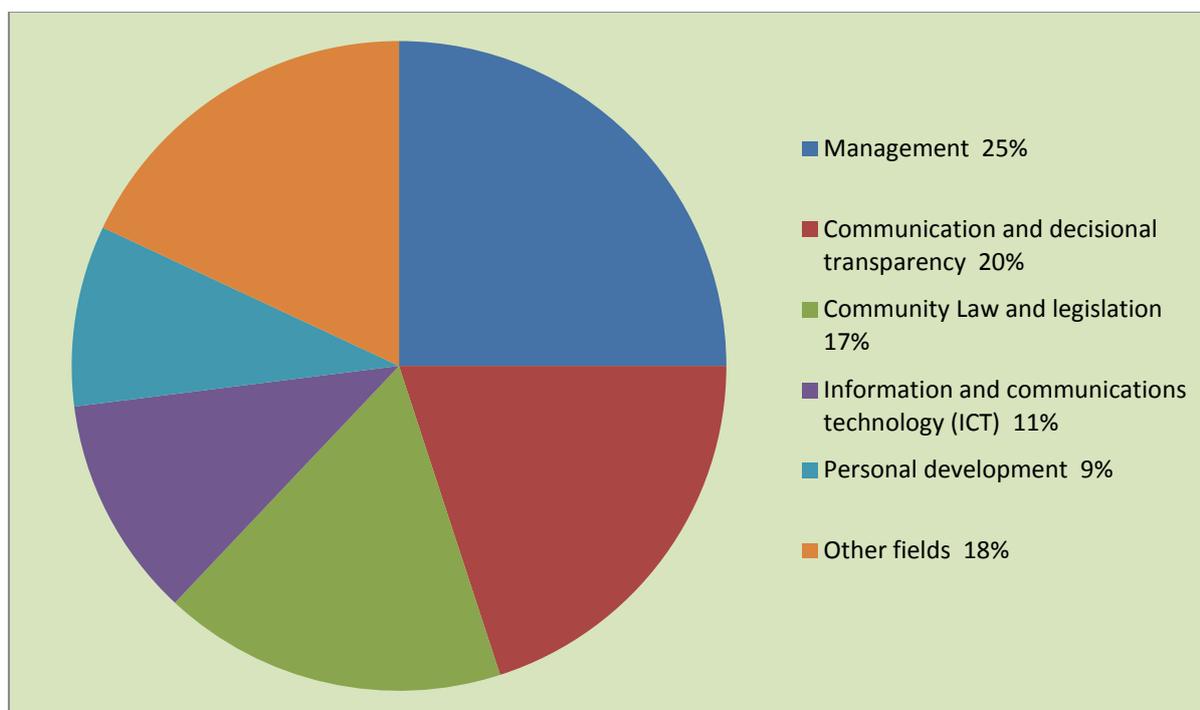
### 3. Priority Areas

The priority areas for the training and the professional development of the civil servants in the year 2014 are:

- Management;
- Communication and decisional transparency;
- Personal development;
- Community Law and legislation;
- Information and communications technology (ICT);
- Public resources and services.

The training programs are made on topics such as: public acquisitions, public internal audit, marital status and the record of people, the management of documents in the public institutions, training of trainers, public entities managements and chance equality.

The public authorities and institutions have the possibility to identify other areas of training and professional development than the ones provided by the ANFP, according to the needs identified after the legislative modifications in the areas of competence of the civil servants or the modifications in the job description. These also have the role to detail these areas in the field of training, according to the institutional needs set through the annual plan on professional training of the civil servants.



**Figure 1. The training options of the civil servants at a national level**

Source: adapted from the official site of The National Agency of Civil Servants (ANFP)

From the option of development of the civil servants both at the central and local level (Figure 1- The training options of the civil servants at a national level), it is apparent that the field of Management represents 25%, Communication and decisional transparency 20%; Community Law and legislation 17%; Information and communications technology (ICT) 11%; Personal development 9%.

In the field of Information and communications technology (ICT), in the year 2013, the majority of the civil servants have been educated in order to obtain a ECDL certificate - 1025 people, HTML Web Design - 1336 people, on E-learning have been educated only 19 people, and in the year 2014, the majority of civil servants have been educated for obtaining the ECDL certificate - 1430 people and on E-learning - 1336 people. In the last years, a sustained growth was felt, in the number of programs in the priority areas as well as in the number of civil servants that applied for this training.

#### **4. Actors Involved in the Training and Development of the Civil Servants**

The strengthening the institutional capacity of public authorities is determined by the level of training of the civil servants. They must receive adequate training in areas and topics of training / professional development that are adapted to the new challenges of society.

The training policies that have as a major aim the development of the innovation capacity of the civil servants. The **National Agency of Civil Servants (ANFP)** has a role in defining policies and strategies for training and professional development and in annual planning based on an analysis performed to identify the training needs of public administration personnel. Training and development services provided by ANFP are certified by ISO 9001/2008, following the implementation of the Quality Management System.

ANFP manages four Regional Training Centres for the local public administration, with the role of supporting the training process corresponding to the set programs established and to ensure the necessary quality standards.

These regional centres organize training programs for up to 90 days, develop and implement projects with non-refundable external funding in the field of local public administration, through which professional training programs can be achieved, also together with higher education institutions can develop, various activities such as the development of studies, projects, developing collaboration relationships with other institutions in the field of public administration.

Training and professional development is a priority at the national level, although in order to support this process both public authorities and institutions at the central and local level are important. They have competence in training planning, in training services and in monitoring and evaluation of the training of civil servants. Every year, public authorities and institutions are required to initiate the process of identifying the training needs of the civil servants.

Public authorities and institutions must take into consideration the ANFP Report on the proper planning of the process of training/professional development. Another document in which is reflected the training and professional development is the "Government Programme for the period 2013-2016" but also in other strategic documents. Among the main challenges in the field of civil service which are stipulated in the Government Programme 2013-2016 are: rising the efficiency of the public administration, professionalization of the civil servants, improving professional skills in the field of civil service.

Public authorities and institutions are required to inform ANFP each year, regarding professional training plan for civil servants, as well as regarding funds stipulated in its own annual budget to cover the costs of professional training of the civil servants, organized either at the initiative or in the interest of the civil servant.

According to the ANFP Report in the year 2014 only 4.4% of all the public institutions have provided an answer, a very low percentage, similar to the previous years, which signifies a lack of involvement of these in the development of the public administration. This report reveals that the funds allocated for training and professional development are insufficient in relation to the actual training needs this aspect is behind the lack of motivation of the public institutions.

The training and professional development activity of civil servants is funded from the budget of the public authority or institution and other sources, but in most cases the budget is insufficient. Apart from these sources allocated from the state or local budget there can also be sources from Structural Funds through the development of some projects with non-refundable external funding.

The possibility of adequate financial support for the training activities by some of the public authorities is still difficult due to limited funds, but they can be supported through EU funds inside projects with external funding. ANFP has been involved in developing and carrying out projects with external funding, which offers the possibility of training for civil servants.

## **5. The Role of Training and Professional Development and the Attitude of the Civil Servants towards them**

Professional training supports the development and professional evolution because more frequent changes require rapid adaptation to situations more diverse and challenging.

According to the Report on the management of civil service and civil servants of the ANFP the year 2013, the public administration consisted of 89.30% public office of execution, 10.60% - public office of management and 0.10% - high civil servants. Around 80% of the civil service of execution were occupied by civil servants with higher education which shows the interest of the public institutions and also of the public servants in education.

From observing the behaviour of the civil servants, they need encouragement and incentives to adapt to changes and they adopt new approaches, with difficulty, even if in statements they say these are beneficial. The introduction of new interactive methods of individualization for training like in the field of e-learning are important, even if some of the personnel still pose resistance, they must be open, because the tendency is to replace the traditional method with the mixed ones. The difficulties in the process of training are determined by the people's perceptions on professional training, less open and even more reticent.

In the period 2009-2012, ANFP had had some European funded projects in the field of ICT, having as objectives the development of the PC utilisation skills and the implementation of the e-learning system in the public administration to support the information society.

In general, civil servants show openness towards professional training, given that often when faced, with the need to use new information technologies, they need to develop new skills. Another challenge is to "upgrade" permanently the information – they must always be in possession of the latest information. Civil servants are aware of these limitations and enrol in the training process when necessary, or when they have the chance or are urged - oriented towards the training courses.

Unfortunately reluctances are found both from the civil servants and from the public institutions inside which, the financial and temporal availability work, especially in times of economic crisis and the implications derived from it or there is a category of people reluctant to this training process and namely those that deny its benefits, arguing that basic training is sufficient, and the performance is achieved only if they are self-taught and through their experience of various work tasks.

Among identified weakness points of the training programs are that they are not sufficiently focused on the specific needs and are therefore only slightly based on best practices, these programs are made with advanced teaching technologies, there is a shortage of skills in providing specific training, there are also insufficient financial resources to fund timely and on specific needs training, and a lack of administrative tools necessary to fulfil the responsibilities that limit the utilisation of knowledge and achieving performance.

The training of civil servants is important in the public administration; it must be responsible on the long term, to ensure the necessary skills to efficiently develop activities and should focus on the directions that have the greatest impact on individual and institutional performance. The responsibilities regarding the training in public administration are divided between the ANFP, the civil servant-enrollee in the training and the institution that facilitates the training.

For the effectiveness and efficiency of training of the civil servants practical courses are needed, based on experiences and case studies on work instruments. Exchange of experience, internships at other institutions and participation in conferences are considered attractive learning methods. Heads of institutions and also senior civil servants need skills like leadership and applied management in the specific areas in which the civil servant performs his duties.

The success of any program of training and development depends on the correct identification of the problems of the public administration, on the objectives of training courses and on the chosen methods. A higher form of professional training is done by doing doctoral studies or by those that develop some studies or scientific papers in the field.

**The added value of the investment in human capital** consists of:

- Strengthening the administrative capacity of the administrative-territorial institutions in order to improve public service delivery;
- Development of cooperation among institutions involved in the regulation and provision of public services;
- Skills development, openness to new approaches and methods, creativity, ability to adapt to constant change;
- Development and implementation of quality standards which are result-oriented;
- Increase transparency of civil services provided by public administration authorities;
- Formation of a more complex vision and the training of specialists.

Investing in human resources is necessary to adapt to new socio-economic and administrative realities, of the legal framework of the civil service, for the training of civil servants in fields corresponding to Romania's status as a member state of the European Union, to strengthen the capacity of the public administration with the objective of professionalizing the civil service, in order to enable the civil servants to effectively assume the occupied position.

Through the means of programs, institutions and public authorities, they can remodel and adapt the training and the behaviour of management and execution civil servants in order to determine and implement the absolutely necessary changes in the public sector reform process.

The training and professional development of civil servants is one of the most important tools of managing the civil service and to increase the quality of public administration in any state.

Regarding the need for investment in the human resources from the public administration, fast paced development of human society, the acceleration process of history, the increase in the speed of change in the living conditions and environment, necessarily determines the structural change in the ratio between the basic training, necessary to ensure professional mobility in the future evolution and continuous training.

The public administration is a living phenomenon, ever-changing, evolving and moving. The public administration personnel, whether it is the civil servants, contract based or persons holding public positions, has the mission to always keep up with these changes. The services they provide must meet the evolving needs. To this end the Western doctrine theorizes the principle of civil service adaptability.

The idea of progress in social life is closely related to the efficient organization of civil services, and this in turn is related to the ability of civil servants to improve their professional training and management. Through training and professional development the civil servants improve their work efficiency, based on their skills and professionalism.

The increasing computerization of activities in the public administration determines the need for the continuous training of civil servants in order for them to have permanently the necessary flexibility to adapt to the level, structure and intensity of changes in the system of social needs and in the reform process.

## **6. Conclusion**

“Education and professional training are the most important investments in the human capital” (Becker, 1995, 17). Author Gary S. Becker developed the theory of investment in human capital respectively the term of return rate on investment in human capital and the role of education. He considers that the human capital is similar to the physical means of production: additional investments in human capital - through education and training.

Studies in the field of human capital show that countries which invest more in human capital through education and research are those that register the most significant economic performance (Mursa and Ignat, 2009, p.10).

The importance of investing in human resources in general is also emphasized by the actions of OECD to develop the educational capital (Voicu, 2004, p. 6). Blaug (1972, p. 105) states that the individuals of a country must have a minimum level of education in order to take advantage of the technological progress at a given time.

You cannot talk about performance in public administration, nor about efficiency, without well-trained human resources. Investing in human resources is an equity investment, because the human being is a precious capital. Human resource is very important for the development and dynamic of the administrative processes, when they meet certain criteria of qualification and involvement in professional activities.

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