

Sedliar V. R.

Bachelor's degree student

Speciality 281 "Public Administration and Management"

Academic supervisor: **Moroz Yu. Yu.**

Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor

Department of National Security,

Public Administration and Management

Zhytomyr Polytechnic State University, Zhytomyr

THE STATE AND PROBLEMS OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC AUTHORITIES OF UKRAINE: REGULATORY FOUNDATIONS AND PRACTICAL CHALLENGES

Personnel management in public authorities and local self-government bodies is a key element of public sector activity, as human resources ensure the stability of administrative processes, the quality of public services and the implementation of reforms. An effective human resource management (HRM) system determines the state's ability to respond promptly to social challenges and to maintain public trust. However, staff shortages, low employee motivation, limited opportunities for professional development and the slow implementation of modern HRM practices create a significant gap between legislative principles and the actual state of personnel policy.

The effectiveness of the civil service depends on the competence, professional training and experience of personnel who ensure the fulfilment of tasks and foster public trust, which is essential for a democratic society [1, p. 17].

It is precisely the systematic combination of competent personnel, modern management practices and an appropriate motivation policy that creates the prerequisites for the stable functioning of public authorities and increased public trust. In addition, the integration of best private-sector practices, such as performance assessment based on key performance indicators (KPIs), the development of soft skills and the use of digital tools, can significantly enhance the effectiveness of the civil service. Thus, the modernisation of personnel policy and the professional development system becomes not only desirable but a necessary condition for building effective and sustainable public administration.

The regulatory and legal framework governing the civil service includes laws, subordinate legislation and methodological documents that define requirements for

professional competence, recruitment procedures, performance evaluation, rotation, professional training and career advancement of civil servants. This framework regulates recruitment, assessment and professional development, ensuring the principles of transparency and professionalism, and establishes ethical standards, political neutrality, equal access and accountability of civil servants. Furthermore, current regulations define requirements for organising public service in the context of public administration reform, mechanisms for supporting professional development and tools for ensuring integrity. Such a regulatory system creates the foundation for forming a professional, impartial and effective civil service corps.

Despite clearly defined regulatory principles, a number of problems persist in personnel management practice. The National Agency of Ukraine on Civil Service Affairs (NAUCS) performs a coordinating role by developing standards, approving training programmes, organising performance evaluations and participating in recruitment procedures [2]. However, excessive bureaucratisation, insufficient digitalisation of processes and uneven application of the competency-based approach result in recruitment competitions that do not always allow for a comprehensive assessment of candidates' competencies and managerial potential. This creates an imbalance between formal requirements and the actual quality of recruitment. Such a situation highlights the need not only for compliance with legislation but also for the introduction of modern HRM tools, performance monitoring and human capital development, enabling the civil service to respond more flexibly to societal challenges and to maintain public trust.

In the private sector, recruitment is based on forecasting an employee's future performance and includes the use of competency-based interviews, job simulations, assessment centres and the involvement of external experts [3]. In public authorities, these approaches are applied only partially, which reduces the quality of personnel decisions and limits the development of the talent pool. Young professionals often leave the civil service due to low salary levels, the absence of clear career prospects and the complexity of administrative procedures [2].

In business practice, personnel selection is grounded in performance forecasting and assessment under conditions that closely resemble real work environments. The

main approaches include the assessment of soft skills and behavioural competencies (communication, emotional intelligence, teamwork, adaptability); competency-based and behavioural interviews to evaluate potential and managerial abilities; job case simulations to test practical skills and stress resistance; assessment centres and simulation-based training; involvement of HR specialists, psychologists and external experts to ensure objectivity; and linking results to KPIs and motivation systems to stimulate career growth [3]. In the public sector of Ukraine, these approaches are applied only partially: formalised competitions, limited use of case studies and assessment centres, and the absence of a comprehensive competency assessment lead to a mismatch between recruitment outcomes and the real needs of public authorities, slowing down the development of the talent pool and reducing the effectiveness of civil servants [2].

As a result, while business actively integrates modern HRM tools to ensure workforce effectiveness, the public sector remains at an early stage of implementing similar practices, which underscores the need to adapt best private-sector practices to public administration.

Professional development is crucial for the effectiveness of the civil service. NAUCS regulates annual training, develops standard programmes and implements electronic learning platforms. Training programmes for 2024–2025 cover anti-corruption standards, digital literacy, cybersecurity, leadership, change management and crisis communications [4]. Unequal access to programmes, fragmented training and the lack of monitoring reduce their effectiveness, whereas in the business sector training outcomes directly affect KPIs, remuneration and career progression.

Material motivation is a traditional incentive for employees but presents a number of problems in the Ukrainian public sector. Civil servants' salaries are often below market levels, which leads to the outflow of qualified personnel. The bonus system lacks transparency and depends on budgetary constraints rather than performance results, reducing its motivational impact. According to NAUCS data, more than 60% of civil servants consider moving to the private sector due to low pay and limited bonuses. The main problems of material motivation in the public sector include low salaries, a non-transparent bonus system and staff turnover. Effectiveness

can be improved through salary revision, transparent bonuses and linking remuneration to performance, whereas in business motivation systems are clearly structured and tied to KPIs, bonuses and career advancement.

Non-material motivation in the public sector includes psychological support, competency development and recognition of work, but remains insufficiently developed. NAUCS is developing mental health support programmes, including short-term training sessions, webinars and consultations to overcome stress and burnout. According to a 2024 study, 55% of civil servants reported a deterioration in their psychological well-being and a need for consultations and educational materials [2].

In the business sector, non-material motivation is more advanced: recognition of achievements, feedback, mentoring, team activities and coaching increase employee engagement and reduce staff turnover. In the public sector, these approaches are only beginning to be implemented and require systematic introduction and monitoring.

Thus, the current state of personnel management in public authorities of Ukraine is characterised by a combination of an established regulatory framework and insufficiently effective practical implementation. Staff shortages, low motivation levels, fragmented professional development and limited use of modern HRM tools constrain the development of the civil service. Improving its effectiveness is possible only through comprehensive modernisation of personnel policy, expanded use of the competency-based approach, strengthening of motivation mechanisms and adaptation of best private-sector practices to the needs of public administration.

References

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