

# ASPECTS OF THE CIVIL SERVANT'S CAREER AND MANAGEMENT IN ROMANIA IN THE SARS-COV2 PERIOD

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## Abstract

*The institution of the civil servant emerged on its own in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and its importance is growing in all democratic countries.*

*And in Romania, even if it is subordinated to the political factor, the civil servant institution should be decentralised, politically neutral, with precise career management rules.*

*In democracies, civil servants need to be encouraged to take initiatives that reward their work and to have clear career development prospects that stimulate their creativity and make them not want to leave the job.*

*Civil servants are trained and specialised according to the areas of activity within the institutions, their specialisation requiring participation in courses appropriate to the stages of development of society and in correlation with the rules established by local, regional or European Union political factors.*

*This „public servants' joint-stock company”, as a legal entity, has to cope with the economic and social environment, normal or exceptional conditions in a given period without disintegrating or going bankrupt with the help of a qualified career management, depending mainly on the local political factor, but also on the obligations assumed as an EU member.*

*The methodology of understanding the role of the civil servant in society could be more easily applied if the whole society were compared to a commercial company and its structure which would involve specialised departments through which the objectives of its existence and purposes are achieved efficiently and on time for the benefit of the shareholders and the population of a country.*

*It can be said that there are situations of normality in social existence, but also situations of exception (pandemics, major economic and social crises, wars, etc.), according to which both management and individual careers must adapt, especially in cases of force majeure.*

*Force majeure events can occur at local (country), regional (EU), or global level, with relatively similar implications.*

**Keywords:** *management, development, activity, professionalism, costs, efficiency, reproduction, control.*

## 1. Introduction

Historically, professional careers developed subjectively within guilds, then within academic institutions and later under the control of state and political institutions.

Effective career development as a civil servant requires not only investment but also time, which implies the involvement of qualified management, depending on the state of normality or exception (pandemics, economic or financial crises, wars, etc.).

It is understood that each field of activity, productive, scientific, political, administrative, educational, etc., must have a specific career development management, determined by the present and future development of a society.

The economic and social development of an entity has required careers but also their management, so that they correspond to the needs of the moment, either of normal conditions, or of crisis, considering the possible consequences and consequences.

It can be said that each type of career has created another type of career management. The more a society evolves, the more it develops areas of activity, productive or political-administrative, which cannot be assigned without the appropriate qualifications, with the aim of maximising efficiency, also driven by the inevitable competition within the various activities.

## 2. Paper content

While for a long-time professional career depended on the efforts of each individual, with the development of society careers have become of major interest for all types of activities, which has led to the need for the

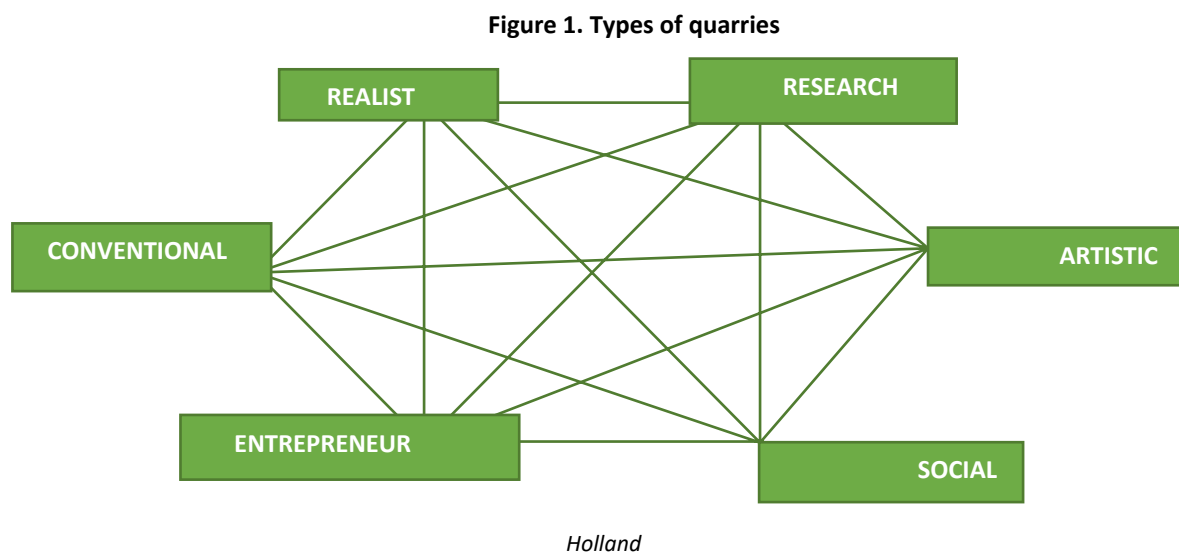
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emergence of career management.

Schooling at various levels was a first way to establish a start in various fields, the costs were mainly up to the possibilities of each person, and then with the support of the authorities.

It can be represented graphically, by theorising career types according to the theory of „Holland”.



It can be said that career management is concretely evident in fields such as sport, fine arts, music, in many cases with the assumption of failures, more or less costly, caused by various exogenous factors, but the least risky are the careers that involve an accumulation of information from a particular field, without assuming innate talents, especially in non-creative fields, in production, either in industry or agriculture, as opposed to sectors where innate talents or special physical conditions are required. In all cases, career planning must also be considered, which offers both individual satisfaction and social recognition.

Career decisions are influenced by a few factors:

- or psychosocial (family, school, group of friends, labor market demand, „fashion of professions”, prejudices related to certain professions;
- or individual (intellectual level, aptitudes, motivation, dominant personality traits).

In Romania, the National Authority of Civil Servants (ANFP), consequently under the influence of the government, as a political deciding factor would have the role of selecting and promoting in public positions, based on data submitted by human resources managers, under local or national factors. The ANFP's remit includes:

- management of public functions and civil servants;
- drafting legislation, policies and strategies for the management of public functions and civil servants;
- monitoring and controlling the application of legislation on the civil service, civil servants and the enforcement of rules of conduct in public authorities and institutions;
- providing expert assistance, on request, to the human resources departments of public institutions on the application of civil service legislation;
- developing competence frameworks;
- drawing up the annual report on the management of civil services and civil servants and submitting it to the relevant ministry;
- administration of the National Electronic Public Sector Employment System and the keeping of records of staff paid from public funds.

Once a civil servant, the person must comply with the statutes drawn up and approved by the government. The work of public officials is controlled and evaluated by each employing institution, as well as by specialised institutions (DNA, DIICOT, National Integrity Agency), and has an effect during election periods.<sup>1</sup>

Since 2020, the SARS-COV-2 virus pandemic, without knowing its origin, effects and treatments, has forced Romania to interact with EU Member States, either by applying regulations established by the European Union (vaccinations, green certificate, wearing of masks, special circuits in hospitals, etc.), with the involvement of authorities and family doctors and teachers.

<sup>1</sup> C.L. Butoi, C. Platon, *Career decision and factors influencing career choice*, in *Journal of Educational Assistance* no. 1/2012.

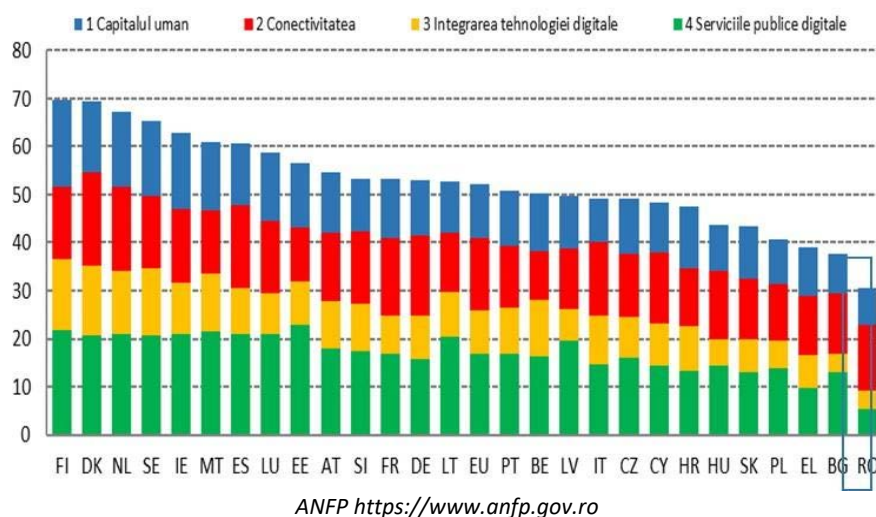
This pandemic has directly affected the national economy, the education system and human relations. The exceptional situation with the emergence of Covid-19 has required an increase in the responsibility of public institutions and public officials to ensure the limitation, spread and effects of the pandemic, taking regulatory and even legislative measures to achieve these goals.

The situation of force majeure established by the Covid-19 pandemic in Europe and Romania has imposed a decrease in direct inter-human relations, so that the need for digitization has arisen in some institutions with civil servants, supported by the fund from the Recovery and Resilience Plan for Romania (NRRP) with the appropriate equipping and training of civil servants.

While digitization is progress, the European Commission monitors Member States and publishes annual reports on the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI), ranking countries according to their level of digitization and progress, taking into account their starting point. However, the European Commission's report shows that Romania will rank last in the EU in 2022, with the biggest gap.

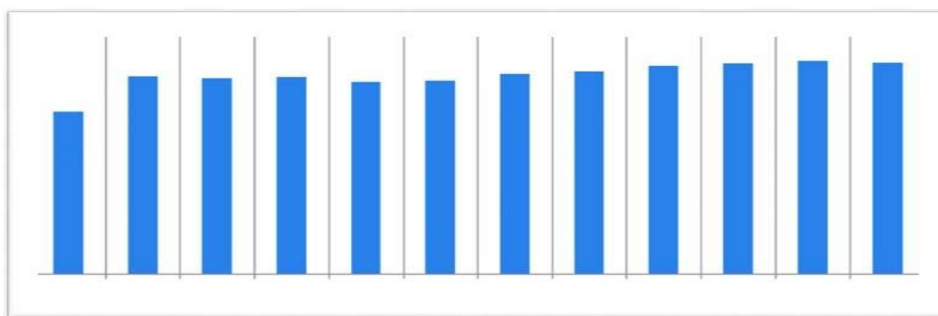
At the same time, from the analysis of the data posted by the National Institute of Statistics on the platform dedicated to statistical databases in Romania, we find that in 2021 the share of people who interacted via the internet with public authorities was only 15%.

**Figure 2. 2022 DESI ranking**  
Clasamentul pentru 2022 al Indicelui economiei și societății digitale (DESI)



The current problems in Romania's economic and social life have also required an increase in the number of civil servants as follows:

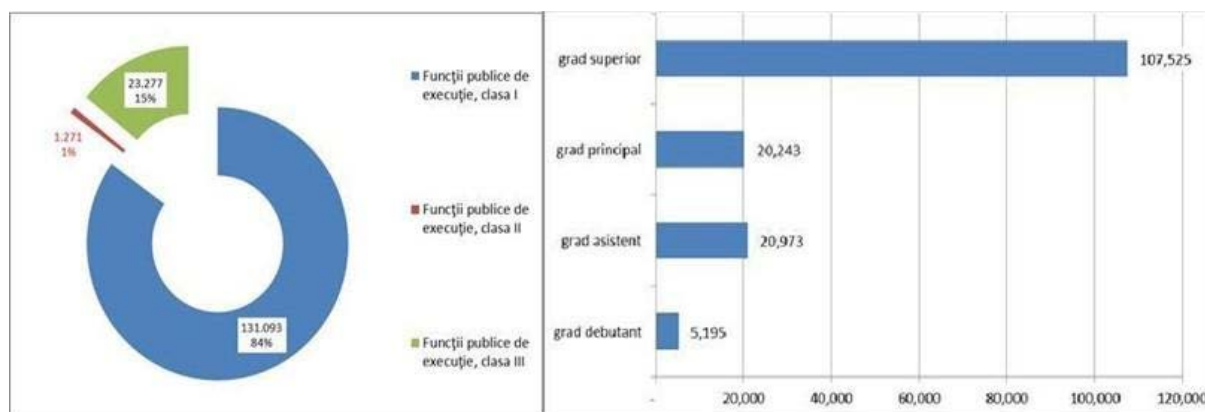
Figure 3. Evolution of the total number of civil servants (2009-2020)



ANFP <https://www.anfp.gov.ro>

There is a substantial increase in the number of public employees by more than 40 thousand, either as a necessity to carry out service tasks, and between 2019-2020 1628 people were hired because of the Covid-19 pandemic, or staff shortages. Civil servants may be classified into the following categories of functions:

Figure 4. Distribution by grade of executive civil servants and professional grades



<https://www.anfp.gov.ro>

It is obvious that there is a program for the evolution of functions in public institutions through the recruitment of young professionals, with adequate training for the positions, for qualification on the job and through appropriate courses, as future professionals with increased responsibilities, in situations of possible crises (pandemics, state of war, regional financial crisis, global crisis, etc.).

The lack of principled cooperation and collaboration between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Interior in setting up actions and rules during the pandemic did not bode well for the economy, social life, and most citizens in Romania, due to restrictions imposed. As a result, very high costs were found for questionable sanitary protective materials. And in the case of the pandemic, the EU Council has imposed for all members that at least 40% of civil servants should be female, where possible.<sup>2</sup>

In Romania, the percentage showing the female dominance of the number of civil servants can be justified by the fact that civil servants are mainly involved in social actions and less in economic and production actions, but also by the limitations of the extra professional activities of male civil servants, who in most cases, being the head of the family, are more interested in obtaining a higher income.

The Covid-19 anti-pandemic programmes developed at the request of the European Union and the Romanian Government must be understood and implemented mainly by civil servants in all types of administrative institutions, at the level of municipalities, towns, communes and villages, which obliges civil servants to adapt to the political factor in charge of the country, as well as to each new requirement developed and approved by the EU Council, taking into account also the applications through digitization.

<sup>2</sup> D. Dincă, *Public Services*, Economică Publishing House, Bucharest, 2018, p. 26.

There are categories of civil servants between public services of an administrative nature and public services of an industrial and commercial nature, which are differentiated by the way they are financed, so that significant additional sums were allocated from the budget during the Covid-19 pandemic, in the interest and for the protection of citizens. According to the literature<sup>3</sup>, the public interest means „the totality of interests expressed by a human collectivity with regard to the requirements of organisation, coexistence, social welfare, health, etc.”.

For the career development of the civil servant of basket must be trained regularly, through various means, to take cognizance of the programs instituted by the government and implement them properly, this variability is not optional for the civil servant, also valid in the case of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The career and management of the civil servant is decisively influenced by the political factor, currently in charge of the country, which he/she must serve in the implementation of various socio-economic development programmes, approved by ordinances or laws issued by the parliament.

### 3. Conclusions

It follows from the above that the management and the career of the civil servant are determined by the political factor and, secondarily, by intellectual training and work experience.

The specificity of the activities assigned to civil servants in Romania has highlighted the promotion of women in public office.

EU legislation influences and obliges the Romanian state to adopt rules and laws that determine functions and obligations for new activities of civil servants, as a result of new public institutions, also taking into account cases of force majeure.

Consequently, civil servants must continuously adapt their professional training, for which their management is of particular importance through the selection of staff and the organisation of appropriate and timely regular information courses, retraining and promotion of civil servants on objective criteria.

For this, the national and local budgets must quantify the amounts needed to update their professional training, but also with the funds made available by the Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP).

I believe that the Ministry of National Education should also include in its programmes the importance of the activities of civil servants and how to interact with individuals.

Civil servants' services should, where possible, be digitised, which would require appropriate investment, maximising benefits and appropriate training for civil servants.

In many cases, the work of civil servants is not carried out in compliant locations/seats and optimal solutions should be found.

Democratic countries establish specific legislation for civil servants who can play a special role in the social and economic development of society, as long as the political factor is progressive enough to cope with force majeure situations.

Civil servant career management must create conditions so that civil servants do not want to become workers in private companies.

**Proposals.** The management of civil servants' work should also consider a friendly and decent collegial atmosphere in the workplace for each team, in order to prevent conflicts between civil servants, which is the responsibility of the leaders of the respective institution.

The promotion of civil servants should be based on principles of respect for professional competitiveness that do not provoke dissension in the collective, without taking into account the involvement of the conjunctural political factor.

Civil servants who do not fit into the collective, or who do not demonstrate collective performance and workload should be excluded, subject to the legislation in force.

The extent to which personal professional training has increased through personal efforts (master's, doctorate, specialisation courses) should be recognized by management and encouraged/rewarded.

The services as a public servant must be performed with professionalism, dedication, and helpfulness, so that the public servant enjoys respectability in society.

The activities of civil servants should not be competitive within the same institution/service, but in positive competition with other territorial institutions.

Development of education and qualification plans for future specialised civil servants. Regular review of pay and reward systems and criteria for civil servants.

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<sup>3</sup> E. Prahoveanu, A. Matei, *Economics and Economic Policies*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., revised and added, Economică Publishing House, Bucharest, 2005, p. 172.

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