

Directions of Public Administration Professionalisation in the Slovak Republic

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Abstract

The paper identifies the framework of the public administration system in the Slovak Republic, considering its professionalisation. The aim of the paper is to demonstrate the process of the public administration transformation and legislation and the basic features of the existing model, to identify the main categories of public administration employees, and to indicate their professional development. Secondary analysis of primary legislation, and statistical data were applied in the research. The paper highlights the professional training of public employees as a lifelong process that follows the acquisition of qualification prerequisites and professional experience. The professionalisation of public administration should by 2030 include the expansion of professional in-service training for employees in particular specific workplaces, the development of training programs, the training of employees in local self-government, the extension of managerial training for professional and senior employees in the state administration. The requirements of the state administration and self-government should be recognised and included in higher education. The quality level of education providers should be assessed and ranked with respect to quality ranking system of education providers, considering newly defined job positions and the uplifting of human resources in public administration.

Keywords: employer-employee relations, human resources, professional development, public administration.

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1. Introduction

Public administration is a term that includes the terms ‘public’ and ‘administration’. Administration is simply defined as the daily activity of each subject, which takes care of itself, or matters entrusted to it. The public represents a community of people, citizens who inhabit a certain territory and live together in harmony. It is therefore possible to understand certain activities through which public goals are achieved under the term public administration. Public goals are achieved on behalf (in the interest) of the public, the community of people, while they are controlled by the state. It is necessary to note that public administration is a certain instrument of the state in achieving state goals, such as the economic growth or lowering the unemployment rate.

Public administration is used to manage the public sector, since no other entity in the sector is available. The public sector is financed from public funds, which are made up of resources from residents. Some economists assume that public administration without the economic policy of the state loses its meaning, as it loses the direction and object for its activity and action. And vice versa, the economic policy of the state cannot exist without public administration, as political forces cannot fulfil their role. Public administration is an important element in economic policy.

The aim of the paper is to outline recent development trends in public administration in the Slovak Republic and characterise the main features of the existing model which has been in place and operating for over 20 years. The existing model will be characterised as the model with the features of democratic governance, decentralised, however, operating as two parallel systems, including state administration and local self-government. The analysis would like to show that there are several components bonding both systems – namely the legislative framework, the depoliticisation efforts, human capital development, the professionalisation of the system and the uplifting and upskilling of public administration employees. The paper was based on the analysis of the legislative framework, strategic documents issued by the Slovak government and the results of examples of good practice via relevant projects implemented in the country.

According to Kuril,³ from the functional aspect, public administration can be understood as the executive activity of the state as a basic public law entity, which is carried out through its bodies, as well as the executive activity of the so-called other public entities, or of their bodies, which has its basis in the administration of public affairs and is implemented as a manifestation of executive power in the state.

Thus, it could be explicitly stated that the public administration is the backbone in the performance of the executive powers of the state, and in this case, also the rights and competences of the self-governments.

³ Kuril, J. 2018. *Verejná a štátna služba. Vybrané otázky*. Bratislava: Wolters Kluwer, p. 75.

2. Process of public administration transformation in Slovakia

In accordance with the transformation of the social and economic systems, after 1989, the process of transformation of public administration had to begin in Slovakia as well, in order to meet the current conditions of the environment and society. Such a goal of the transformation of the public administration system was set by the government of the Slovak Republic.

According to Hamalová,⁴ the public administration system reform was divided into three stages, while Stage I (1990–1991) represented the beginning of the reform; Stage II (1995–1996) was a reform of the territorial state administration and Stage III (after 1999) was characterised as a systemic reform of public administration in the Slovak Republic.

According to Búšik,⁵ the goal of the Stage I was to create stable conditions for the functioning of the state based on the 27 principles of the democratic system as applied in European countries. There was a deconcentration of state administration after the national committees were annulled. New public administration bodies were created, in the state administration district and district offices were created, mayors of municipalities, mayors of cities, and councils came into existence in self-government.

Due to the Act of the Slovak National Council (Parliament) no. 369/1990 Coll. on the municipal establishment, a real self-government body was created in the villages, headed by the mayor of the village. According to the Act of the Slovak National Council (Parliament) no. 472/1990 on the organisation of local state administration, the territorial division of the country was changed, four regions were nullified, 121 territorial districts were created, and 38 districts were preserved. During Stage I, a regional self-government was not created, however, no functional connection between the self-governments and the state administration was in place.

During the Stage II of public administration reform, districts and district offices were abolished. At the level of districts and regions, the offices of the general state administration took over the competence. State administration on the basic level was performed by 79 district offices. The regional division of Slovakia was renewed, with eight regional offices created, which carried out state administration on the second level. All competences of district offices were transferred to district offices. From the original district offices, some competences were transferred to the regional offices. Most of the specialised state administration networks were cancelled. District and regional offices have become coordinated bodies of state administration. However, in the second stage of public administration reform, the regional level of self-government was still not created.

The Stage III of public administration reform was a systemic reform of

⁴ Hamalová, M. 2008. *Teória, riadenie a organizácia verejnej správy. Organizácia verejnej správy*. Dunajská Streda: Valeur s. r. o., p. 111.

⁵ Búšik, J. 2003. *Verejná správa a regionálny rozvoj*. Bratislava: Ekonóm, p. 87.

public administration in Slovakia after 1999. The direction of the d III of public administration reform was defined by the Government Program Declaration⁶ (Government Decree no. 788 of 18 November 1998), in which the Government undertook to consolidate the democratic rule of law, to modernise its functioning via further the decentralisation of competences from state administration bodies to territorial self-government and the decentralisation of public finances, as well as by the ratification of the European Charter of Local Self-Government.⁷

3. Public administration in Slovakia and human resources – basic frameworks

According to Feik,⁸ a parallel model of public administration has been introduced in the Slovak Republic, which is manifested by the state administration as an independent component of public administration. In the territory of the Slovak Republic, we can currently speak of a single-level local state administration which is covered by district offices (72) with several competences, including state defence, economic mobilisation, environmental care, real estate cadastre and others. At the local level, executive power is entrusted to municipalities and cities, the number of which is not constant. Currently (2024), there are 141 cities and 2927 municipalities in Slovakia.

Due to Konečný,⁹ as part of their self-governing competence, they provide several activities, namely in the field of spatial planning, local communications, culture, public transport, local police, nature and environmental protection, collection of local taxes, sewerage and municipal waste management, local development, housing, preschool and school facilities, social facilities, medical facilities and others, as well as participation in regional plans and within the transferred powers from the state administration, in the area of registry, elections, spatial planning and building regulations, and others.

According to Dudová and Vadkertiová, for example, recently the support in favour of the solution of socio-economic problems through the social economy has been of particular importance.¹⁰

⁶ Government of the Slovak Republic. Government Program Declaration. Government Decree no. 788 of 18 November 1998.

⁷ Council of Europe. 1985. European Charter of Local Self-Government. European Treaty Series No. 122. Strasbourg. 15.X.1985.

⁸ Feik, M. et al. 2021. *Zamestnanosť vo verejnej správe. Identifikácia potrieb, štruktúry a odmeňovania pracovníkov v štátnej a verejnej správe a ich vplyv na trh práce. Spôsoby odmeňovania v štátnej správe, súčasný stav – štruktúra a ich vplyv na trh práce (Employment in public administration. Identification of the needs, structure and remuneration of workers in state and public administration and their impact on the labor market. Remuneration methods in the state administration, the current state – structure and their impact on the labor market)*, https://www.kozsr.sk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/AV6_Zamestnanost-vo-verejnej-sprave.pdf.

⁹ Konečný, S. 2016. *Verejná správa v členských štátoch Európskej únie*. Bratislava: Mayor, p. 57.

¹⁰ Dudová, I., Vadkertiová, S. 2024. „A szociálisgazd áságmintaharm adikszektorte véke-nységterületea Slovák Köztársaságban (Social economy as an area of activity of the third sector in

In Slovakia, state administration and self-government meet at the regional level, where self-governing regions perform tasks on behalf of the state, but they are dependent on the state funds regarding their income.

The term e-Government is most often associated with the electrification of public administration, which is relatively difficult to define. In general, however, it can be characterised as the use of information and communication technologies in the performance of public authority. The issue of e-Government is regulated in the Slovak legal system by Law No. 305/2013 Coll. on the electronic form of exercise of jurisdiction of public authorities and on amendments and additions to certain laws.¹¹

The main goal of this law is the introduction of electronic communication as the primary form of communication between persons (natural and legal entities) and public authorities, as well as between public authorities mutually. The strategic goal, according to the National Concept of Informatization of Public Administration of the Slovak Republic,¹² is to achieve progress by 2026 in the DESI index of the digital economy and society in the field of digital services by 40% more compared to the current state.

By means of the DESI index,¹³ the European Commission monitors the digital progress of member states. The European Commission applies the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) to rate the digital economy and society in EU countries. The DESI index makes it possible to assess the overall level of digitisation of society in each member state and identify problem areas to which the state should pay attention.

The DESI Index in 2022 focused on human capital, connectivity, integration of digital technology in businesses and digital public services. In 2021, according to the DESI index, Slovakia ranked 22nd among the 27 EU member states. Slovakia has remained in the same position as in 2020. Regarding the human capital indicator, it ranked just below or around the EU average. Although as many as 54% of Slovaks have at least basic digital skills and 27% have above-average digital skills, this is less compared to the EU average of 56% and 31%, respectively. In 2022, Slovakia ranked 23rd among the 27 EU member states. It means that the two thirds of the EU member states progress in DESI Index; however, Slovakia remains at the same position as in 2020, ranking among the seven least progressing EU member states. According to Matúšová and Kollár (2023),¹⁴

the Slovak Republic"). In: *Civil Szemle*. Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 105–121, DOI 10.62560/csz.2024.01.07.

¹¹ Law No. 305/2013 Coll. on the electronic form of exercise of jurisdiction of public authorities and on amendments and additions to certain laws.

¹² Ministry of Investments, Regional Development, and Informatization of the Slovak Republic. 2021. National Concept of Informatization of Public Administration of the Slovak Republic.

¹³ European Commission. 2023. Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) in EU countries in 2022.

¹⁴ Matúšová, S., Kollár, V. 2023. „Labour and Education Markets in Industry 4.0”. In *Acta Educationis Generalis*. Vol. 13, Issue 1. DOI: 10.2478/atd-2023-0001.

Slovakia is below the EU average across the indicators for digital public services. Simply, Slovakia needs to improve and expand digital public services.

Digital transformation is one of the main pillars of the Recovery and Resilience Plan of Slovakia, with the main emphasis on public services, skills, and digitisation of business.

According to the National Concept of Public Administration Informatization in the Slovak Republic¹⁵ to improve the country's position in the DESI index, public administration must improve services, create conditions for digital transformation, better use of data, increase effective IT, and support cyber and information security. The state of public administration in every period of its existence reflects society and political conditions in the country. Public administration is dynamic, it is part of the state and should be depoliticised to the greatest extent possible.

The state is in charge of the public administration employees, and therefore must take care of their professionalism, impartiality, and trustworthiness, as they manage public resources, i.e. the public finances. According to Hamalová,¹⁶ it is the task of the state to obtain the best candidates for the performance of public functions, to distinguish between political and professional positions, to guarantee the professional continuity of the performance of public functions, to give the public service legitimacy as well as credibility among citizens, and to create control mechanisms to prevent abuse of public powers.

Public administration is governed by the Constitution of the Slovak Republic and the resulting laws, decrees, and regulations. Public employees must fulfil their duties in accordance with the legislation, but their rights are protected by law and must not be denied. Although public employees differ from civil sector employees, and special laws apply to them, it is possible to consider them as a special group. Even in the group of state administration employees the employment relations significantly differ therefore the group is differentiated and distinguished by employment relations.

Exempli gratia, it is possible to cite the principle of centralism and strict hierarchical subordination or the principle of disciplinary responsibility. These principles are prominently represented and applied in the employment relations of police officers and soldiers, and less in the employment relations of officials.

Law no. 552/2003 Coll. on the performance of work in the public interest, as amended, defines the rights and obligations of employees and employers in the performance of work in the public interest, which, in the sense of this Act, means an interest that brings financial or other benefit to all or most citizens.

Law no. 553/2003 Coll. on the remuneration of certain employees when

¹⁵ Ministry of Investments, Regional Development, and Informatization of the Slovak Republic. 2021. National Concept of Informatization of Public Administration of the Slovak Republic.

¹⁶ Belajová, A., Geciková, I., Hamalová, M. & Papcunová, V. 2015. *Teória, riadenie a organizácia verejnej správy*. Bratislava: Wolters Kluwer, p. 124.

performing work in the public interest, as amended, specifies negotiations in salaries and general conditions of work in the public interest.

Since public administration also includes state administration, civil service, we must mention the following laws:

- Law no. 55/2017 on the civil service and on the amendment of certain laws, as amended.
- Law no. 73/1998 Coll. on the civil service of members of the Police Force, the Slovak Intelligence Service, the Prison and Judicial Guard Corps of the Slovak Republic and the Railway Police, as amended.
- Law no. 346/2005 Coll. on the state service of professional soldiers of the Slovak Armed Forces, as amended.
- Law no. 200/1998 Coll. on the state service of customs officers, as amended.
- Law no. 315/2001 Coll. on the Fire and Rescue Service, as amended.
- Law no. 151/2010 Coll. on foreign service as amended.

The specifics of these employment relationships in the public and state service refer to social security, which is different compared to the civil, private sector. Law no. 328/2002 Coll. on the social security of policemen and soldiers and on the amendment of certain laws regulates social security, which consists of sickness insurance, accident insurance, seniority service provision and social security services. The law defines who is specifically meant by the term police officer as follows: ‘For the purposes of this law, the term police officer means a member of the Police Force, the Fire and Rescue Service, the Mountain Rescue Service, the Slovak Intelligence Service, the National Security Office, the Prison and Judicial Guard Corps and an armed member of the financial administration, unless otherwise provided by law.’

The education of civil servants in public administration is included in the Act no. 55/2017 on civil service. Decree no. 126/2017 Coll. of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic establishing details on the education of civil servants. In this decree, the subject of the decree is ‘details on the forms of continuous education, the content of adaptive education, types of competence education, the systemic approach in the education of civil servants’.

4. Professionalisation and development of public administration

The development of public administration is essential for the modernisation of public administration. The strategies are directed to the modernisation and efficiency of the public administration and in accordance with all goals that were set during the development of the public administration. Equally important in the professionalisation of public administration is human resources, i.e. public employees. They play an important role in the achievement of modernisation and professionalisation of the public sector.

Effective public administration, despite its specific features, can be perceived as an activity that is carried out in the manner and to the extent defined by law, while it can also be regulated by strategic goals. In the European Union, public administration operates in accordance with the principles of 3E's, i.e. Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness. The principle of economy is based on the allocation of public funds in compliance with the specific objectives that the objectives are achieved in the most economical way, while the required level of quality must be delivered.

In Slovakia, this principle is often misunderstood. In public procurement, for example, the lowest price of a tender offer is determining, but in the end, non-compliance with the required quality causes inefficient use of public funds, which is contrary to the principle of economy. The principle of efficiency is perceived through productivity, which means that for a given amount of funds, the sector should get as much performance as possible.

Even with this principle, it is impossible to admit that productivity can increase at the expense of the required quality. When public administration is assessed, the third principle of efficiency is the most problematic. In relation to the other two principles, effectiveness is based on the economic rationality of utilising public funds. However, the goals of public administration cannot always be clearly defined in such a way that they are easily measurable. For this reason, the identification of the effectiveness in public administration through efficiency is sometimes impossible.

According to Dudová, professionalisation can be understood as the uplifting of knowledge and practical skills of the parties involved in a certain field, the goal of which is the development and improvement of the quality of the given environs, the services that are offered in the field.¹⁷

In the process of professionalisation, the public administration attempts to retain existing public employees and attract potential employees with the necessary skills, as it is the employees that promote the performance and strategic results of activities in the public sector, using the available tools, techniques, and methods as efficiently as possible. Professionalisation in public administration depends on two prerequisites: the existence of a competence basis, and the relevance of adequate education, abilities, and skills of public administration employees. The operation of public administration in accordance with a competence basis requires the provision of relevant education activities to public employees that will enable them to acquire the necessary knowledge, abilities, and skills from the aspect of theory and practice.

The second prerequisite for the public administration professionalisation is a suitable code of ethics (code of conduct), in which the ethical values of em-

¹⁷ Dudová, I. 2013. „Human and social capital under conditions of intelligent and inclusive growth”. In: *Ekonomičnij časopis – XXI: naukovij žurnal*. Vol. 18, No 7–8 (1), pp. 30–33.

ployees are stated, while individual points of the code point to unacceptable behaviour, specify methods of inappropriate behaviour control and identify penalty consequences. The Code of Ethics also contains appropriate ways of applying the acquired education of employees.

In 2020, the Decree of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic No. 400/2019 Coll. issued the Code of Ethics for civil servants. This decree was established according to § 21 letter h) Act no. 55/2017 Coll. on civil service and on amendments to certain laws as amended. The civil servant's code of ethics also deals with the professionalism of civil servants: 'The civil servant ensures compliance with Art. 6 of the law by performing official tasks conscientiously, at a high professional level, striving for the best possible results and supporting and enforcing the provisions of the code of ethics. The civil servant is responsible for the quality of the performed official tasks and for the development of one's abilities, knowledge and skills.'

Experts from the Sector Council for Public Services and Administration have drawn up a comprehensive Strategy for the development of human resources in the sector of public services and administration until 2030. The strategy analyses and assesses the current situation and forecasts the requirements for public administration employees. The strategy contains 34 measures aimed at human resources in public administration. Part of the Strategy for the Development of Human Resources in Public Administration also contains a detailed list of activities that are necessary to fulfil the given measures.

The measures contained in the strategy are aimed at the main trends in the human resources development in public administration, namely the professionalisation of human resources, digitisation of public administration and the increase of the competitiveness of public administration vis-à-vis the private sector as regards the recruitment, development, and the care of human resources.

According to the Strategy for the Development of Human Resources in the Public Service Sector and Administration until 2030,¹⁸ human resources are considered one of the most important pillars in the modernisation of public administration. It is therefore understandable that the most significant goal is the personal development in the public administration employees, continuous education, and the increase of the competences in existing public administration employees.

It is the professionalisation of employees in public administration that makes it possible to achieve innovative changes and modernise the public sector. The strategy was elaborated within the project financed by the European Social Fund within the Operational Program Human Resources. The strategy was developed by experts as part of the implementation of the National Project 'Sector-driven innovations for an effective labour market in the Slovak Republic'.

¹⁸ Sector Council for Public Services and Administration. 2022. Strategy for the development of human resources in the sector of public services and administration until 2030. National Project Sector-driven innovations for an effective labour market in the Slovak Republic.

The Government of the Slovak Republic in the Government Program Statement committed to increase the level of professionalisation of the public administration via regular education. The content of the education has been adapted to the project delivering good governance in Slovakia, which was implemented with the support of the European Commission and the Council of Europe.

5. Strategic directions of professional development in public administration

According to sector-specific employment indicators reported by the Sector Council for Public Services and Administration, the average age of employees in the public sector is 47 years (in 2021).¹⁹

The share of employees aged 55 and over represents up to 30% in the public administration, from which approximately one third of employees will retire within the next 10 years. The job in the public administration has the advantage over the private sector that it offers employees job stability, the certainty of financial remuneration and salary increase, respecting the years worked. Over 71% of university-educated employees from the total number of public employees are employed in the public sector.

According to Dudová, Stanek and Polonyová, public administration is the second-largest sector with the highest number of university-educated employees, the first-largest sector represented by education.²⁰ There are many job positions in public administration that require university education, which corresponds to the share of employees. One of the negative phenomena that concern public administration employees is the political influence on public administration.

Adequate remuneration of public employees, modernisation of workplaces, education and many other things depend on the financial flow from the state budget. With all changes in the public sector, the acquisition of new knowledge and skills to increase one's competencies in public administration is literally a necessity. Human resources, i.e. employees in public administration, constitute an important element that assists maintain public administration in the form it is currently presented and helps it develop to become modern and efficient. Employees in the public administration have an obligation to develop their knowledge, and the public administration has an obligation to provide public employees with personal development and professionalisation.

The Recovery and Resilience Plan for the Slovak Republic²¹ is made up

¹⁹ Sector-specific employment indicators.

²⁰ Dudová, I., Polonyová, S., Stanek, V. 2016. *Social Inequalities and Quality of Life*. In: 3rd International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on Social Sciences and Arts SGEM 2016: Political Sciences, Law, Finance, Economics and Tourism. Conference Proceedings, Vienna: SGEM. ISBN 978-619-7105-51-3, p. 519–526.

²¹ Recovery and Resilience Plan. 2023. Available at: <https://www.planobnovy.sk/kompletny-plan-obnovy/>, consulted on 1.05.2024.

of investments, reforms and measures that address the challenges identified by the European Commission, which are to be resolved by 2026. One of the areas targeted by the Recovery and Resilience Plan for Slovakia is effective public administration and digitisation. Funds allocated represent the amount of 1014 mil. Euro effective public administration and digitisation include 5 important components, namely the improvement of the business environ, justice reform, fight against corruption and money laundering, safety and protection of the population, digital Slovakia, and sound public finance. The main priorities that the reform wants to achieve include higher transparency of processes in public administration, better quality of public services, reduction of bureaucracy and the fight against corruption. An equally important priority is the introduction of effective tools and, with their help, the promotion of professionalisation in public administration.

In the Recovery and Resilience Plan for Slovakia, specifically in the part focused on the fight against corruption, the issue of streamlining and strengthening the administration at various levels of public administration is addressed. One of the challenges mentioned in this issue is to minimise and eliminate public disinterest in reforms and mistrust in public administration due to lack of information. The measures implemented in this field are intended to support the improvement of the qualifications of employees, their professionalisation, the uplift of their competence in advice provision in all public services for citizens and at the same time the increase of the personal integrity of public employees against corruption. During the implementation of the measures, a specialised education platform is available and applied, which will contribute to the improvement of qualifications, knowledge, and practical skills in public employees.

In the Strategy for the Development of Human Resources in the Public Services and Administration Sector until 2030, as part of the professionalisation of public administration, it is planned to require the supplementary education for employees with a special designation (for example, employees on maternity/ parental leave, newly recruited employees, employees in pre-retirement age over 50 years), development and educational programs in regional educational centres, in local self-government in specific fields and extension of management education for professional and senior employees in the state administration.

The requirements set in the above-mentioned project from the aspect of the professionalisation of public administration also include the effective students' practice in public administration, the transfer of the requirements from the state administration and local government to the higher education system, the creation of new management positions in public administration, and the exchange of expertise and experience between sectors with the purpose to increase the quality and performance of public employees.

Within the Code of Ethics for civil servants,²² professional development

²² Code of Ethics of Civil Servants. 2021.

can also be applied in Slovakia by observing the code. According to this code, inter alia, a civil servant, is obliged to take care of the improvement of services for the public, develop one's own abilities and skills via education and does not abuse the information obtained during work in the state administration.

Since the education of employees is part of their professionalisation, it is extremely important to offer public employees the opportunities of personal growth, developing their qualifications, knowledge, and professional skills. Education of public employees in Slovakia is a lifelong process. The education of public employees is contained in the Concept of Education in Public Administration in the Slovak Republic²³ and in the Concept of Further Education of Public Administration Employees of the Slovak Republic.²⁴

The system of education in public administration is regulated by laws on civil service, on public service and in other legal regulations, e.g. decrees and regulations. In these laws, the rights and obligations of public administration employees and employers regarding education are precisely defined. It primarily refers to the systematic education of public employees, while completion of in-service education is part of regular evaluation of employees in the public sector. The employer has the right to require from employees in the public administration to deepen and increase their qualifications, while the employer is obliged to create the relevant conditions for this. Lifelong education systematically follows the professional training of a public employee completed prior to the start of the public administration, i.e. the qualification prerequisites of education and professional experience.

According to Dudová and Matúšová, professional education of public employees can be divided into adaptive (introductory, preparatory), deepening of qualifications (for example, innovative, specialised and language education), functional, uplifting of qualifications and retraining.²⁵ The professional education of employees in public administration is provided by public educational institutions in the relevant fields of the public sector. The relevant secondary schools, higher vocational schools and universities are part of the educational framework, which, according to the relevant laws, are mainly involved in the qualification growth and in the functional education of employees in the public administration.

6. Conclusion

The analysis of the legislative framework regarding the public administration in the Slovak Republic aimed to show that the public administration is

²³ Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic. 2017. Concept of Education in Public Administration of the Slovak Republic.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Dudová, I. & Matúšová, S. 2022. *Development trends of human resources in public administration in Slovakia*. In: LIMEN Conference 2022 Conference proceedings: ISBN 978-86-80194-66-0, pp. 229–238, <https://doi.org/10.31410/LIMEN.2022>.

governed by relevant laws, acts, and decrees. Public administration demonstrates a system which is built on principles of democratic governance, ethical codes of conduct, sets of requirements concerning the fulfilment of qualifications and education, the educational needs of public administration employees and the necessity to professionalize the performance of personnel. However, there is a firm delineation between the state administration and self-government administration. The latter system is rather fragmented, provided with extra powers and competences.

Among the most significant innovations and innovation trends currently affecting public administration in Slovakia are the reduction of bureaucracy and departmentalism in public administration, digital transformation of public administration, new municipal management and forms of inter-municipal cooperation, strategic planning and modern human resource management, introduction of multi-channel communication with public administration, data integration in public administration and the use of big data, automation and semi-automation of processes in the performance of public administration agenda, smart agenda and intelligent management system development in network infrastructure, shared storage and remote access to agenda and office systems, introduction of new methods of cyber security, increase in cross-border interactions and adoption of uniform solutions across the European Union, effective crisis management. They should result in legislative changes and changes in the content of work, requirements for individual employees, and even the creation of new professions.

Personnel development of employees must be in the focus in the public administration, as trained and prepared human resources to make it possible to fulfil the modernisation goals of the public administration. On one hand, this is associated with the recruitment of new highly qualified experts, and on the other side with the impact of continuous education upon the increase of competences in existing public administration employees. Human resources are one of the most important *condicio sine qua non* of the modernisation of public administration and the achievement of innovative goals.

The professionalisation of human resources in the public sector will require, in particular, the extension of continuous education and in-service training for employees with a special designation, the development of educational programs in regional education centres, the extension of types of continuous education in self-government in specific professional fields, the extension of managerial education for senior employees and professional employees in the state administration, the transfer of requirements embedded in the state administration and self-government to the higher education system, identification of different qualitative levels of education among individual providers using the ranking scheme of education providers, support for the exchange of experience in order to improve the quality of human resources, definition of new job positions in public administration (in the area of management, performance of original and transferred competencies).

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