



Research Article

# Professionalization of the Public Function: New trends in Young People's Interest in the Romanian Public Service

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## Abstract

The public administration and a career in the public function do not occupy an important place in the professional orientation of the new generations. In this study I considered it appropriate, by using the idea of professionalization of public function, to present the situation of young people who are in the system and who want to develop careers in the field, the employment in a public office, the obstacles they are facing, although they have real qualities to contribute to consolidate and modernize the central and local public administration. Having as starting point the Strategy on civil service development 2016-2020 issued by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration together with the National Agency of Civil Servants, its Report on civil service management and civil servants for 2018, which indicates a level of occupation of public positions by people under 30 years of only 3.72%, I set out to identify the factors that determine such a low level of interest of young people in the positions offered by the public administration by indicating some measures that can be taken by the managers of local public institutions in order to attract them to a career as a civil servant. Young people are not deprived of qualities, skills, only a longer life experience. By making optimal use of their qualities and skills, by lowering the average age of employees in the system, it will be possible to achieve performance standard that can compete with those specific to the private system.

**Keywords:** Local Public Administration, Civil Servants, Youth, Professionalization

## Introduction

The phrase 'civil servant' is rarely found among young people's career options. Adolescents, high school students with different profiles, do not have much chance to hear that they have real skills in the field of public administration. Maybe they are too seldom helped to discover them and then they choose to leave them somewhere in the drawer of mistrust and renunciation.

For many, the status of civil servant has become synonymous with the office and the only good person to be denigrated, viewed with distrust, considered corrupt and corruptible once they entered the system, carrying out a linear, routine, challenge-free activity and enjoying the comfort of a 'state' job.

It is easier to criticize the actions and activity of authorities and civil servants than to be opened to discovering a complex system, with a long history of its establishment and becoming, with a certain organizational culture, requested and demanding at the same time, with rules, specific mechanisms, structures, processes, procedures, and policies. Let's add other factors with a negative impact on the work environment such as excessive bureaucratization and politicization, sets of laws, codes - administrative and ethical, budgets, debts, budget deficits, decisions, constraints that create frustrations for those in the system.

Starting from such an image, the desire to have a career in public service is a sign of doubt. Young people are reorienting to other fields or leaving the system after several years of experience in public administration. And it is not their fault. They are talented, eager to assert themselves, adaptable to new working conditions, want to get involved and be in

the service of the community, have their own values, maybe other than those with more personal-professional life experience and strongly believe in them.

The big public institutions have been disappointing far too much in recent decades. Actions that did not show interest in the citizen and his problems or at least the competence of this approach resulted in disappointment, lack of credibility, inertia and not just electoral.

The civil service is defined by the Administrative Code (2019) as the set of attributions and responsibilities, established under the law, in order to exercise the prerogatives of public power by public authorities and institutions. Also, according to the same normative act, the civil servant represents that person appointed, in accordance with the law, in a public position, and the activity carried out by them will be in order to ensure the general public interest.

Beyond the legal regulation, many authors have tried to define the notion of civil servant, giving a different legal vision, or even addressing its psychosocial side. We consider it appropriate to recall the definition given by A. Iorgovan (2005), according to which the civil servant is a natural person legally invested, by the unilateral act of will of a public authority or citizens, with the task of fulfilling a public position, in a limited or indefinite time, in order to achieve the competence of the body of the structure to which the respective function belongs.

M. Tofan (2018) defines the civil servant from the same perspective, considering that they are not a transient character in the life of a community but a reference element to characterize the activity of the respective public service. The official

becomes one with the service they provide and the quality of this service.

The definition given by M. Tofan, remains relevant for the society in general and for the Romanian society in particular, as the civil servant, especially the one who carries out their activity at the level of local public entities, represents the bridge between the decisions taken at central level and the way that local public authorities understand how to implement these decisions.

Remarkable are also the observations made by M.C. Apostolache and others (2014) regarding the civil service and the civil servant: there are legal institutions specific to public and administrative law that appeared and consolidated at the intersection between doctrine, jurisprudence, and regulation.

We have witnessed in the last 30 years numerous amendments to the legislation, especially in the economic and fiscal field, the aim being economic growth, overcoming a period of crisis, alignment with European standards, etc. All these changes were brought to the attention of the citizen who had no choice but to comply in the hope that he will benefit from quality public services, a higher standard of living, security. But the degree of compliance increases with the degree of understanding of the measures transposed in normative acts. No one can invoke ignorance of the law. But anyone can invoke its misunderstanding. The degree of trust and compliance of the citizen in the public authority increases as they find support at the nearest level - of the executing civil servant. The civil servant plays an important role in the process of understanding and enforcing legislation, measures taken regardless of their branch, as they must have the ability to understand the events taking place at the state level and the ability to disseminate information among the

citizens, creating that relationship of trust of the citizen in the administrative system and in the decisions taken for it.

The current system of the Romanian public administration is the result of several processes, stages, and reform programs. B. Ștefan and others (2001) consider that the modernization of public administration, especially the local one, had two components:

- The hard component represented by the set of laws adopted, by the creation or reorganization of institutional structures, by the promotion of a set of development programs of Western inspiration
- The software component is represented by the change of mentality, by the set of values and principles that would guide the behaviors of the employees from the public administration and of the citizen.

The Strategy on the development of the civil service 2016-2020 emphasized after a decade and a half that despite the modernization noticed by the above-mentioned author, the Romanian public administration still has great difficulties of efficiency, effectiveness, and image. Anchored in a conservative organizational culture, focused more on the formal side than on the informal side, lacking the desire to cooperate with academia, civil society and the private sector, public administration does not have a positive impact of actions.

It took three decades to implement a coherent and unitary legislative framework, to develop strategies for managing the administrative act and human resources.

The reform of the civil service was imposed as a priority for the act of government, but it remained far from one of its main objectives: the creation of a

body of civil servants whose strong attributes are professionalism, stability in the system and political neutrality.

Let's add to these goals the deepening of values such as transparency, professionalism, anticipation, and adaptability to change. The reform itself means change, but change for the better, growth, efficiency, simplification of procedures, reduction of bureaucracy.

It is the only way we can talk about quality public services, meant to increase the level of trust of the citizen in public authority in general and in public office in particular, about their participation and active involvement in the decision-making process.

Paul Negulescu (1925), the father of the science of administration and administrative law, at the initiative of which the Institute of Administrative Sciences of Romania was established almost a century ago, an institute that today bears his name, said that the science of administration, as a special branch of science, tends to train administrators and administrative law, based on the rules specific to administrative activity, establishes the principles of governing the relationship between administration and administrators.

Visionary, he stressed the role of local institutions in the life of local communities and the destinies of a country: when in a locality the citizen finds that legality dominates and institutions enjoy freedom, they will also experience a sense of independence and dignity.

We cannot take out of context the socio-economic conditions specific to the national and European space or the crises generated by the pandemic, but the security of managing the difficulties, the

way in which the solving strategies were conceived or chosen, together with the quality and professional capacity of those involved in the process reform have influenced its success or failure.

It has been and still is talking about the failures of the public administration reform, about the major reform measures that did not live up to the expectations of the community.

A look at what has happened in the last thirty years identifies periods of time with insufficient financial resources, strong political pressures, an administrative organizational culture resistant to change, values that no longer have their place in the new contexts, postponed priorities, the lack of preparation for their fulfillment and a grounded staff mentality, specific to the pre-December period. Creating a new administrative system after 1990 reflects the need for a modern and efficient administration, an adequate legislative and institutional framework both at central and local level. This need has become a priority but a mobilization of the necessary resources for the implementation and implementation of the reform measures has not been successful.

We live in a world of competition and competitiveness, of digitalization, of public-private coexistence, of a world order that overnight can become different. The community has other expectations, it wants visible investments in education, health, environmental protection, infrastructure. The central and local public administration needs to be performant, efficient, effective, in short, a good administration without comparisons with the past, without placing responsibility, without excuses or accusations between current and former politicians. A big unresolved issue remains the choice of the right

candidates, their identification and retention in the system.

In 2019, the Romanian National Agency of Civil Servants published the Report on the management of public service and civil servants, a report which stated that at national level (central and local structures), Romania has an aging body of civil servants, with an average age of 47 years. Comparing the evolution for the period 2009 - 2019, a tendency of constant increase of the average age was observed, for the year 2009 being registered an average of 43 years. Among the causes that could lead to an increase in the aging of civil servants, the Agency has identified a relatively low flow of new civil service positions (generally associated with young people). It was observed that the public positions of beginner are not always occupied by young recent graduates, but a tendency was identified to occupy these positions by people close to average age or even in the middle or towards the end of their professional career. There is a trend of an aging population throughout the European Union.

Statistics published by the General Directorate for Administration and Public Services in France, for example, mention that young people who are in the system are included in atypical forms of employment - for fixed periods, in subsidized places, A. Peyrin (2020). There is also an increase in the average age for recruitment. B. Floc'h (2020) points out in an article in the newspaper *Le Monde* that being a civil servant is no longer an attractive option for young people. The number of exam candidates for a position in public services has decreased from 650,000 in 1997 to 228,000 in 2018, and the cause is not the level of salaries but especially a crisis of vocations.

### **Empirical Study**

According to the data provided by the Romanian National Agency of Civil Servants on the management of civil service and civil servants for 2020, at the level of local public authorities there are 64,695 civil servants (excluding persons working in local police institutions), aged between 19 and 65 years old. Of these, the level of occupation of public positions by persons under 24 years of age (average age for completion of university / master's studies) is 0.39%, for the age limit 25-29 years of only 3.82%, and regarding the percentage of people aged between 30-34 years, is registered an index of 7.55.

On the other hand, the highest percentage recorded in the level of employment in the public service is found in the age group 50-54 years (21.41), followed by the age group 45-49 years where there are 17.08 %.

Considering the fact that the employment rate of people aged 19-34 is 11.32%, I set out to identify the factors that determine such a small percentage of the presence of young people in public administration and indicating some measures that can be taken by the managers of national and local public institutions in order to attract them to the career of civil servant.

We must make the following observation: the local public authorities are receiving students, based on collaboration contracts concluded with educational institutions with a public administration profile, in order to carry out educational practice. Most of the times, the educational practice is carried out at a theoretical level, the students being provided with organization and functioning regulations, working procedures, the legislation specific to the field of activity of the respective institution. In most cases, the information obtained is sufficient to make a report on

the completion of the educational practice, but it isn't providing sufficient reasons for future graduates to choose a career in public administration. Personally, as a graduate of a specialized college, I found that out of the total number of my colleagues, a maximum of 10 choose a career as a civil servant, the rest of them are working in the private sector.

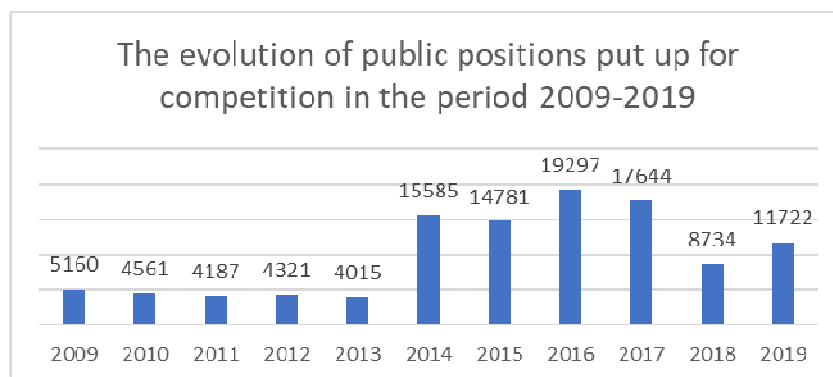
Also, as an employee in a public institution in the field of local taxes and fees, I found that the requirements for studies include the fields of public administration, economic studies, law. The town halls are looking for graduates of social sciences (social assistance), exact sciences such as engineering (construction), because the local public authorities offer to the citizen a wide range of services, and these must rise to the highest standards. Or the cases of students who come from universities, other than those in profile, are extremely low or even non-existent.

And then we can ask ourselves how can we attract young graduates from these fields to choose a career in local public administration as long as there is no opportunity to get acquainted / deepen this field?

Approaching the idea of professionalization of the public service, this study aims an analysis of the situation of young people who want to enter the administrative system, to hold a public office, highlighting the bottlenecks they face, although they have real qualities that can be an asset in the process of consolidating and modernizing the central and local public administrations.

I have as a starting point this statistical information provided by the National Agency of Civil Servants in the Report on the management of civil service and civil servants.

Regarding the number of positions put up for competition in the period 2009 - 2019, the following were found: at the level of 2009, a number of 5,160 positions were put up for competition at national level (both in the central and local administration). In the period 2010 - 2013, the number of positions approached 4,000 annually, this being largely determined by the normative acts adopted in this period of blocking access to public office. But in 2014 there is an explosion of the number of positions occupied by competition, respectively 15,585, and the highest level was identified in 2016 when 19,297 positions were registered.



**Fig. 1: Data series provided by the Romanian National Agency of Civil Servants**

One thing that attracted attention in this report was the fact that in 2019 a number of 11,722 positions were put up for competition, of which 9,936 were executed, and of these only 1% were subject to the Agency's recruitment procedure, 99% being subject to recruitment directly by public authorities and institutions. Or the role that the Agency plays in the management of the civil service should materialize in the involvement to a much greater degree in the field of recruitment.

### **Sample and Methodology**

Studying the relationship between the professional options of young graduates of specialized studies, their desire to opt for public administration and stay in this system is an approach that required the combination of specific methods, techniques, and tools.

The initiation and conduct of research aimed to identify the reasons for the orientation or non-orientation of young people to public administration, to what extent the reform of the administration really came to support them and managed to keep them loyal to the system and put their professional qualities and skills in its service.

The main objectives of the research were:  
 - Investigate the degree of adaptation of reform policies to the existing human resources in the system, especially young people

- Identify the correspondence between the training system / modalities and the training needs

- Tendency to stability or leaving the system

Second, I identified and established the criteria for selecting the persons from the research samples in order to ensure their

representativeness and I also developed a series of hypotheses such as:

- if the public administration system is or has been considered an attractive one, young people will turn to it.

- achieving the objectives of public administration reform will motivate young people to be dedicated to their choice and to remain in the field.

- the lack of support, appreciation of the qualities, professional knowledge, and desire to assert themselves of young people will determine them to move to other jobs.

- the lower the degree of satisfaction of young people, the higher the risk of them leaving the administrative system.

I chose a stratified sampling, on groups of young civil servants from urban and rural areas, using the technique of simple random sampling. The distribution by area of residence, gender, age, and seniority in public administration is as follows: 60% of the subjects come from urban areas, 40% from rural areas.

Regarding the distribution by sex, I mention that 55% are women, 45% are men, they are between 19 and 30 years old and a seniority in the system between 2 and 8 years. Given this experience in the system, it can be considered that the probability that they will opt for another area of activity is low.

Considering the seniority in the system (20% are 2-4 years old, 50% are 5-6 years old, 30% are in the 7-8 years old group) I consider the representative sample for the chosen topic, each subject being able to make observations relevant and easily complete the items of the questionnaire.

The research was carried out by combining quantitative-qualitative methods considering the nature of the phenomenon studied and the time available to finalize it. The questionnaire-based survey method and statistical methods predominated.

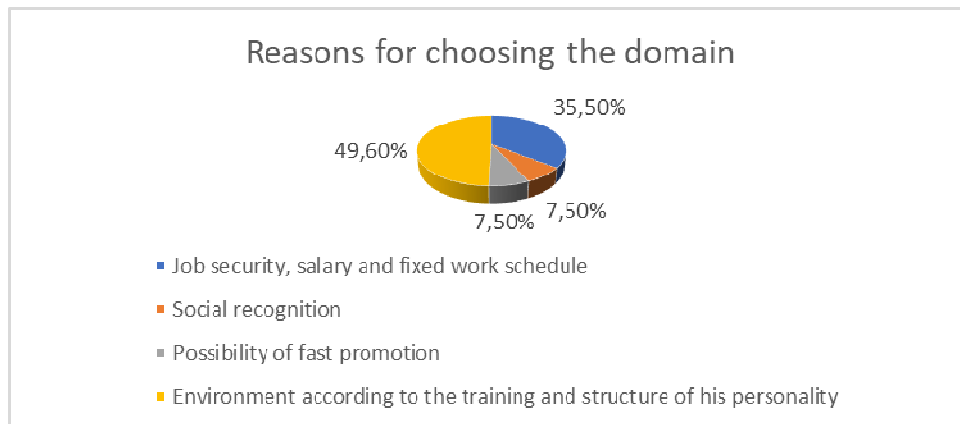
For the self-addressed questionnaire (applied online!), I formulated ten items with one or more answer options. I used both closed and open questions; for some I choose the matrix type variant.

The items formulated aimed at the attractiveness of the field, the reasons for the choice, the degree of satisfaction of the young people in the system regarding the work team, the appreciation of the performances and professional qualities, the encouragement of the initiative, the possibilities to promote, to what extent they benefited from training courses in

order to ensure better integration and development of the activity, to what extent they will want to remain in the system and what could be the reasons for giving it up.

For the first item (*Do you think that / Did you consider the public administration an attractive field for young people corroborated with item 3 respectively The reasons why you chose to work in this field are / were...*) we obtained the following results: 84.20% have answered YES, 9.30% chose the answer NO, and 6.50% chose I do not know / I do not answer.

The reasons for choosing the field (item 3) are / were job security, wage, and fixed work schedule (35.50%), social recognition (7.50%), the possibility of fast promotion (7.50%), desire to work in an environment that suits the training and structure of their personality (49.60%).



**Fig. 2: Reasons for choosing the domain**

From the answers obtained it can be concluded that for Romanian young people the field remains attractive, and the main reason is the orientation towards a system that corresponds to the competencies, abilities and personality structure of the respondents, a situation in which the first hypothesis can prove its validity.

For the answers given to the matrix type questions, item 2 (*Following the public administration reform process, your agreement to those listed is...*) and item 8 (*To the aspects listed below your degree of satisfaction is one ... (choose the option that suits you!)*), I recorded the following answers:



For item 2 - the degree of agreement for the digitalization of the system is the following: 50% of the respondents chose *totally agree* or *agree*; 31.40% expressed an *average / satisfactory* agreement, 16.20% chose the *disagree* or *totally disagree* option, and 2.40% opted for *I don't know / don't answer*.

The reduction of bureaucracy was appreciated as being achieved following the reform process of 35.60% of respondents (*total agreement* or *agreement*), the same percentage of 31.40% valid for digitalization we recorded for average agreement, 29, 40% were in favor of *disagree* or *totally disagree*, and 3.60% chose the option *do not know / do not answer*.

The simplification of the procedures is appreciated with the variant *totally agree* or *agree* of 34.60% of the subjects, also 31.40% chose the variant *average agreement*, 26.40% - *disagree* or *totally disagree*, and 7.60% *do not know / do not answer*.

The creation of a body of competent civil servants dedicated to their professional activity is considered to be a real one of 37.60 %; the average agreement was expressed by 42.60%, 17.40% disagree / *totally disagree*, and 2.40% have chosen *do not know / do not answer*.

The elimination of politicization and political clientelism in employment and occupation registered a low percentage in the *total agreement* or *agree* option (19.30%), quite close to the *average agreement* variants (35.40%) and *disagree / totally disagree* (36.70%); 8.60% chose the last option - *I do not know / I don't answer*. We corroborated for the demonstration of the following hypothesis the answers obtained with those from item 8, where it was requested to express the degree of satisfaction within the limits of *very satisfied ... very*

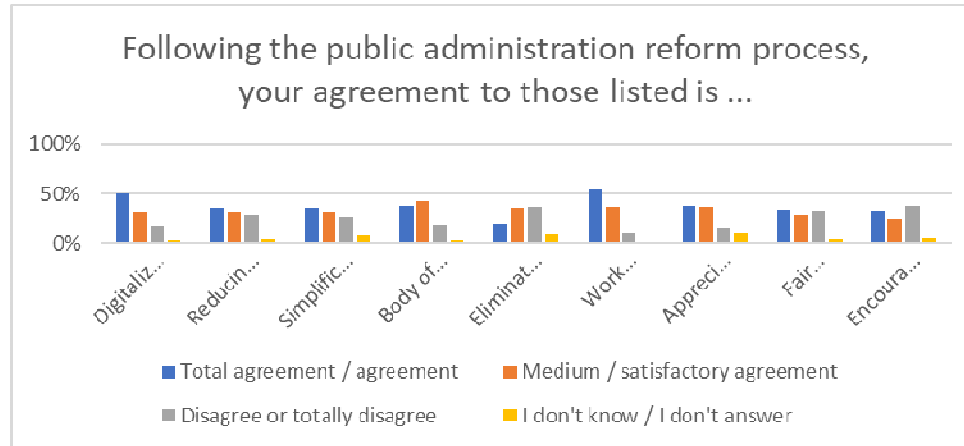
*dissatisfied*. 39.50% are very satisfied with the environmental conditions in which they carry out their activity; 37.90% said they were quite satisfied; 17.30% preferred to declare themselves *dissatisfied*, and 5.30% - *do not know / do not answer*.

The team in which they work registers a percentage of 53.20 people who are *very satisfied*, 36.30% *quite satisfied*, 10.50% *dissatisfied / very dissatisfied*, 0% for the *I don't know / don't answer* option.

Another sub-theme introduced in the matrix aimed at assessing personal merit, performance, professional qualities. Among the respondents, 38.10% said they were *very satisfied or satisfied*, 36.30% *quite satisfied*, 15.40% - *dissatisfied / very dissatisfied*, 10.20% - *do not know / do not answer*.

Regarding the fair distribution of work tasks at office / department level, more than a third said they were *satisfied and very satisfied* (33.50%), *almost a third quite satisfied* (29.50%), *very dissatisfied / dissatisfied* (32, 50%), and 4.50% preferred the last option - *I don't know / I don't answer*.

Encouraging the initiative, appreciating the successes, and requesting the involvement of young people in the act or decision-making process (aspects considered important by young people and not only) is not a strong point of the local public institution management - only 32.20% say they are *very satisfied or satisfied*, 24.60% are *quite satisfied*, 5.30% chose the *I don't know / don't answer* option. But the percentage of those who said they were *very dissatisfied / dissatisfied* is surprising (37.90% of the total number of respondents), because it is a percentage somewhat close to the elimination of depoliticization and political patronage (36.70%).

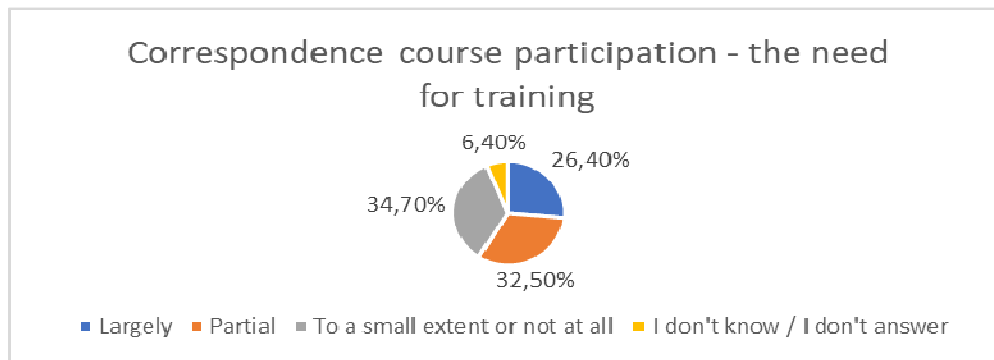


Overall, looking at the results obtained on these two items, we can say that the administration reform has only partially achieved its objectives and the percentages of those who have expressed an average agreement, total disagreement or partial agreement are significant. Except for the system digitalization for which the total agreement or agreement was 50% (but we know that not the reform but the Coronavirus pandemic accelerated this process!), to reduce bureaucracy, simplify procedures, create a body of competent officials and dedicated percentages are between 34.60 - 37.60, and with the elimination of depoliticization only 19.30% of the respondents agree, which means that it remained one of the big problems of both the public administration and the Romanian society. The degree of satisfaction of young officials is maintained in the range of 39.50% - 32.20%, for key elements of a modern management. These aspects confirm the following two hypotheses of the research. Young people will not remain in a "reformed" system for two decades, but will remain unchanged, and the lack of support and appreciation will lead them to move to other jobs, from other fields, most likely in the private sector.

The young respondents were asked to take a retrospective look at the activity they carry out (item 4 - Comparing your current activity with that of the last 2-6 years you can say that ...), 40.50% consider that they live fully the feeling of change in good of the administrative system, 45.70% preferred the *no* option, and 13.80% - *do not know / do not answer*. On the sub-topic *b you feel more fulfilled and more professionally fulfilled*, 38.70% chose the *yes* option, 58.60% - the *no* option, the rest, 2.70% - *I don't know / don't answer*, although to the next sub-item (*Come to work with great pleasure and can't wait to solve the challenges of a new day's work*), they answered *yes* 40.50%, but we cannot underline the percentage with the option *no* 43, 60%, and *I don't know / don't answer* 15.90%. The results for the sub-item d, item 4 was also surprising - *Do you feel more and more motivated every day?*: 41.60% answered *yes*, 43.60% - "no", 14.80% - *I don't know / I don't answer*. Is it natural to ask ourselves what happens between coming and leaving the job?!? Is it the lack of experience? Is it the need to receive support or the organization culture? All these percentages become a signal of the trend of professional under-involvement.

When the level of motivation is low, they will adopt attitudes and behaviors over time that will affect their subsequent professional and personal development. Young people expect from those with experience or in positions of leadership, support, guidance, appreciation. Of course, a young person, especially a new employee will have average performance, but in the first period not on the degree of performance we need to focus as managers or colleagues but on the degree of involvement and desire to become better. For young people, non-financial motivation matters a lot because they want their socio-professional and personal development.

Asked if they took courses or other forms of professional training at the proposal and with the support of the institution in the last 3-5 years, more than half answered affirmative (54.20%), 42% - *no* and 3.50% - *I don't know / I don't answer*. The problem arises when we asked to answer to what extent the courses responded to the need for training and if they applied in the following months at work those presented in the course. This was largely possible for 26.40% of respondents, partly for 32.50%, to a small extent or not at all for 34.70%; (6.40% - *I don't know / don't answer!*) and then what exactly do we perfect and solve?!?



**Fig. 3: Correspondence course participation**

In order to clarify the answers, I introduced another item -7- Except for the training / professional training courses within the institution, did you follow other courses in the field financially supported by you? If you answered *yes*, please motivate the answer. More than half of the respondents gave an affirmative answer (52.40%). Those who answered *no* (23.50%) are quite close to those who chose the option *do not know / do not answer* (25.10%). The most important aspect is that more than half of the respondents are interested in their own development. The participation was motivated as follows:

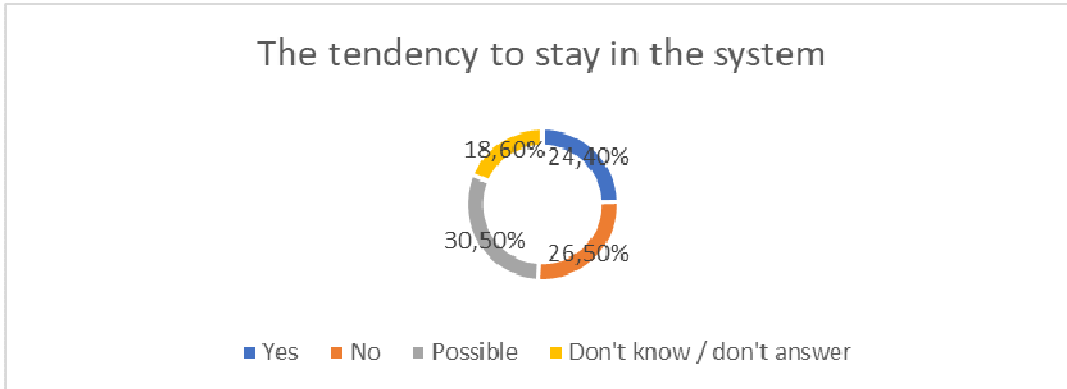
- the courses to which the institution sent me (courses from European funds) were far from my needs as a civil servant; I was not asked if I use, if I need, if I lack this information;
- too much theory in the courses "sponsored" by the institution; I need practice, not theory;
- I needed something clear and convincing, a course to say at the end that I was satisfied;
- the courses / trainings offered by the institution did not help me to consolidate practical aspects, only theoretical ones; or so I knew;
- for those with seniority there are no "professional obstacles", for me, yes! I wanted to make sure I am ok;

- I had lost or thought that I could not keep the balance between the professional and the personal area;

A degree of dissatisfaction can be identified behind these answers. It is important to look for solutions beyond the doors of the institution, to try to

overcome *obstacles*, to accept realities, the need for clarity.

In the last item *Do you consider or are you convinced that in the next 3-5 years we will find you in the same system?* I recorded the answers: *yes* - 24.40%, *no* - 26.50%, *possible* - 30.50%, *do not know / do not answer* - 18.60%.



**Fig. 4: The tendency to stay in the system**

I asked those who answered *no* or *possible* to motivate the answer. Maybe the percentage of those with a negative answer, a little over a quarter, does not seem exaggerated, but if among these 26.50% are the best of those who entered the system!?! Then, yes, it is a big problem.

I presented a selection of their reasons:

- ,The quality of the relationship between the younger generation and the older generation leaves much to be desired - the older ones consider us incapable of reaching their professional' performance 'although some barely know how to open the computer'

- ,I took an exam for employment, it was not easy for me and in the following months there were *n* jobs without an exam or at least an interview, and promotions in positions are made not on the basis of exam but appointment and only those who call I know the criteria,

- ,Real recruitment exists only in the ministry's papers ... in reality piles and clientelism'

- ,I don't think I can stand the habit of unethical behavior anymore'

- ,I was convinced that the role of public administration is to be at the service of the citizen; well things are the other way around'

- ,When you start to feel on your skin that responsibility, transparency, integrity, for many in the system does not exist, it is natural that you do not want to stay'

- ,I feel that I will not grow up! I don't want the system to turn me into something like it; the private system will provide what I need'

- ,I can't find my place in a system that cuts the wings of competence and the desire to be different!'

- ,It is a system of rigidity under which the incompetence of many in management is hidden'

- ,There are subscribers to temporary appointments - so temporary that they last for years. Appointments are made as

the wind blows in the stern of the ruling party, not in the stern of professional training and the code of ethics'

- ,I put myself in the place of the citizen - taxpayer ... not a beneficiary but a buyer of services forced to stand in line, without the possibility of choice, only of acceptance'

- ,I believed in the *nobility* of this system... that everything is done for and out of respect for people. I was wrong!'

- ,I am aware that I still have a lot to learn, but as long as incompetence and lack of commitment are elevated to a high rank, you end up not believing in yourself, and this affects you both personally and professionally'

- ,I wanted to work in a system of challenges, not one of compromises'

- ,Too many years for a step exam and the one when the management wants, if he wants'

- ,I failed to enter the system after graduating. I waited a long time - *there were no jobs*. But they were for others, who are not a mountain of preparation, on the contrary... This aspect demotivates but does not interest anyone. That's why you will definitely meet me in the private system...'

### **Conclusions and Guidelines for Management**

The state system, it seems, is waiting or not wanting change. The private system produces change, prioritizes, motivates, does not allow itself to lose employees with potential, leaves nothing to chance. Losing capable people means overburdening others, and the result will be a long line of dissatisfaction, lack of motivation, involvement, poor communication, more or less visible conflicts, low efficiency, and effectiveness.

In the current local public administration, there is no habit of assessing motivation, and this aspect decreases the degree of achievement of the institution's

objectives. It is necessary to pay more attention to the competition that the private sector makes to the public sector, the rigidity of bureaucracy, the general image of the public service, the performance evaluation process, flexibility, offering relevant training courses, mentoring, management style.

Lack of fairness, favoritism, promotion, and reward of incompetence by appointment or other favors are sufficient reasons for young people to leave the system. They do not want to limit their potential, not to fit into professional patterns. They want a system where people work for people, not one of demotivation and frustration, of the constraints of a job description that misses what is between obligations, responsibilities, and rights: involvement from personal beliefs and dedication. In this way, the system will not become one of stability but one of the transitions to other employment opportunities. A bad image of the public institution and the civil servant has a negative impact on society. The lack of appreciation of the activity of those who entered the system demotivates. Recognition and development of potential can compensate for the lack of professional experience.

In conclusion, young people have a different perspective on what work means. It must respond to the social environment, social needs, but also personal requirements. They need sincere and open communication, empowerment, trust, clear standards for evaluating the activity, models for taking responsibility. Young people are not without qualities, skills, and socio-professional skills, only life experience. By identifying and making optimal use of these advantages, by lowering the average age of employees in the public system, we can witness its relaunch and modernization, to achieve performance standards that can compete with those specific to the private system.

According to the information provided by the National Agency of Civil Servants, there are 1337 vacant / filled positions for a determined period. With regard to these posts, the public system should follow the example of the private system or the system of Community institutions. A solution to the problem discussed would be that once vacated, these positions should be given a grace period of 6 months, an internship period for young graduates in the discovery phase of their careers. During the internship period, they have the opportunity to get acquainted with the system, with the specific field of the institution. Also, the public institution could benefit by discovering young people with special skills, who may not be suitable for the service, but prove to be extraordinarily suitable for another activity.

Internship by definition is not remunerated but the benefits are considerable, especially for the public institution open to such a vision. From the young person's perspective, the internship can influence the decision to choose for a public position. These programs offer learning opportunities, but especially the training of practical skills which are so appreciated. There is thus the possibility of that *experience in the field* that you can add to the CV working in real conditions to implement what you have learned, you can better understand the field, its requirements and how it works.

There is even the Internship Law - Law no. 176/2018 (OJ no. 626/19 July 2019) and it is necessary to be debated at the level of educational institutions right from the last classes of the gymnasium on the occasion of career counseling classes, to continue in high schools and colleges. It will succeed in a selection of resources, but also a much more precise and efficient choice of the field, the employees will achieve performance in a much shorter time, and the staff turnover rate will be

reduced. A public system in which there will be the life and professional experience of officials past the early youth and the skills of young people, especially in the field of socialization, dissemination of information in the virtual sphere, would lead to a much stronger system, much closer to the needs of citizens. We expect our young people to show a desire for involvement and action. Everything comes naturally when they benefit from attention and interest, a pleasant working environment, good conditions, adequate training, and development programs.

Let us not forget the culture of the organization: it will always determine the quality of officials! A good organizational culture means tailored employees, and this requires leaders with a long-term vision, at all levels of the public institution.

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