

## Aspects of improvement of staff management at civil service in the Republic of Kazakhstan

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**Abstract:** The study is devoted to the issues of staff management at civil service of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Improvement of efficiency of civil service and quality of public administration has become obligatory condition of successful development of the country. The author analyzes the results of statistical research of the level of trust of state officials and citizens in the system of competitive selection of the personnel for civil service with the use of criteria of transparency, objectivity, professionalism; the level of trust of state officials and citizens in the mechanism of realization of meritocracy principles at civil service. The ways of improvement of civil service system in the Republic of Kazakhstan are identified.

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### 1. Introduction

Recently Kazakhstan has adopted a number of measures intended for formation of professional corps of civil servants in order to make the system of public administration more stable, to provide legislative and social security of state officials. However, as practice shows, these measures have not been always successful, formal approach to realization of some legislative mechanisms, such as personnel appraisal, staff reserve has not been very efficient in terms of quality of staff resources.

Modernization of the activity of state bodies, change of mentality of state employee - are the key elements of improvement of the efficiency of public administration system and administrative and managerial elite. Serious re-evaluation of conceptual foundations of administrative organization is connected with development of ideas of social partnership, "new public administration", new culture of civil service.

One of the aspects of public administration reforms in Kazakhstan is the problem of staff policy of civil servants, struggle with corruption, ethical issues connected with the work of state bodies' personnel.

In modern conditions scientifically grounded and system work with human capital at civil service of the country is a prioritized activity of the state machine. The necessity of efficient staff management is understood, the concept of staff management on state level, which contains unified methods and principles of work with the staff for all industries of public administration and economy must be developed and implemented.

Therefore, the importance of human capital and performance of efficient work on staff management must become key aspect in the new

model of civil service, which, in its turn, will demand legalizing of the provisions of new staff policy a key national priority.

Investigations in the sphere of human resources management at civil service were considered by many foreign authors: Ashbaugh, S., & Miranda R., Bozeman, B., & Straussman, J. D., Brewer, G.A., Selden, S.C., Bright, legislative, Cogburn, J.D., Dilts, D. A. and others [1-7].

One of the most important driving forces of numerous reforms of civil service, performed in Western countries for the last decades have been increased requirements imposed by the society to the efficiency of work of state bodies and to quality of services provided by them. Growing distrust of the population in state power, doubts in the necessity of public administration of separate branches of economy resulted, on the one hand, in the use of the principles and methods of commercial management, on the other hand - in implementation of measures intended for improvement of the image of civil servants in the citizens' eyes.

Our study has been prepared on the base of analysis and generalization of legislative acts and the practice of civil service in Kazakhstan with due regard to the best practices implemented in foreign countries.

### Formation of legislative framework in Kazakhstan

State bodies' staff management seems to be one of the key tools to increase the efficiency of the system of civil service and is realized by formation of staff teams consisting of professional civil servants. Since the time when Kazakhstan has become independent state the public administration system in state bodies has been changed significantly. Organizational reconstructions of the 1st period were intended for implementation of market reforms and the methods of management, creation of national own

institutes of public administration. However, civil service at that period was not changed cardinally which often resulted in such negative consequences as breaking of business continuity, high fluidity of staff, deterioration of the prestige of civil service, and as a result, deficit of qualified personnel.

In the course of stage-by-stage development the reform of civil service has been formalized institutionally, sphere of civil service was taken out of general labour legislature and became the subject of special legislature. The reform facilitated formation of Kazakh model of civil service.

At present stage the Concept of new model of civil service of the Republic of Kazakhstan is in force, which was approved by the Decree of the president of the Republic in 2011. This concept defined main principles and general approaches to development of civil service system of the Republic [7].

After adoption of this new concept the process of improvement of legislative and regulatory acts for control in the sphere of civil service has commenced.

In order to provide its successful development the Republic of Kazakhstan, as any other modern state must develop new approaches to public administration, adequate training and use of the staff at civil service. They must provide further strengthening of sovereignty, efficiency of institutional reforms and irreversibility of socio-economic transformations.

Profound administrative reforms performed in our country were intended for creation of institutional and legislative foundations for functioning of efficient and transparent system of civil service. In accordance with rankings of international organizations and experts Kazakhstan has achieved good results in the sphere of formation of civil service, having achieved the level close to international standards. In the process of transformation and reforms of civil service the following has been achieved: normative regulatory framework has been formed which regulates the sphere of civil service; 2-stage competition recruiting, tests for knowledge of legislature, rotation of political civil servants, appraisal of the staff have been implemented; the division of civil servants into political and administrative groups was done; infrastructure of training of civil servants in the center, in the region and abroad has been formed.

At modern period in Kazakhstan the model of management of the staff at civil service on political and legislative level was formed, but realization of this model in practice has been difficult because of absence of the initiatives from the staff of state bodies.

The President of the Republic of Kazakhstan pointed out: "It is necessary to strengthen the status of civil service, to elevate state staff policy onto the rank of especially important national target Kazakhstan. Secondly, the principles of civil service must be revised, it must be based on meritocracy, honesty, efficiency" [8].

In December of 2012 the President of Kazakhstan signed the Law "About introduction of amendments to some legislative acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan in regard to civil service" The law must strengthen meritocracy principles, increase efficiency of state bodies thanks to, among other tools, implementation of new mechanisms of formation, functioning and evaluation of the work of the staff at civil service. Regulatory document suggests increase in professionalism and efficiency of state bodies through implementation of efficient and transparent mechanisms of recruiting for civil service, system of evaluation of career planning, creation of management corps *A*. Also it must provide improvement of institutions and the mechanisms of staff management, more functions of staff departments, and modernization of measures intended for motivation of civil servants, service ethics and anti-corruption measures [9].

First of all, modernization of civil service demanded changing of its structure. The new list of positions must be implemented which is based on 3 corps. This are: the corps of political civil servants, corps *A* - managerial officials and corps *B* - administrative civil servants. This division was based on best practices of civil service functioning in the USA, Canada, developed countries of Europe and Asia. This division is not by chance - it allows to divide more distinctly the processes of strategy formation, decision-making and their implementation on all levels of public administration. Therefore, every level presents some requirements to civil servants after achieving of which a man can expect promotion. So, in new structure of civil service the career vertical has been emphasized. This is one of the positive moments.

For example, we have an opportunity of constant recruiting of the most professional and efficiently acting civil servants from corps *A* to corps *B*: this creates incentives for professional growth, constant work one oneself. In its turn, by the same principle administrative employee will get an opportunity to be enlisted in the reserve of political civil service. Now formation of political staff reserve or managerial reserve of corps *A* at the expense of administrative civil servants will be provided by national Commission on staff policy controlled by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan - the necessity of formation of such commission was

mentioned by him, and the last time it was said at the extended meeting of the Government this year. The Commission must perform such functions as formulation of the proposals in regard to strategy of staff policy in our country and submission these offers for consideration of the President of the country; monitoring and analysis of the current state, efficiency and realization of staff policy at civil service, selection and formation of the staff reserve for political and other state positions, rotation of civil servants at the political and other state positions.

Generally speaking, availability of 3 corpses of civil servants will not mean the isolation of civil service. Thanks to the mechanism of social lift most professional specialists which do not work in state sphere will still have the opportunities to be recruited for civil service, Social lift mechanism will allow to attract the most trained young Kazakhstan people. These, first of all, are the graduates of the Presidential program *Bolashak* who are studying at most prestigious universities of the world, and of course, best graduates of Kazakhstan universities.

#### **Analysis of statistical surveys devoted to improvement of methods of recruiting for civil service in Kazakhstan**

The Agency for civil service affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan which deals with the issues of civil service and its territorial offices pay special attention to the level of professionalism and knowledge of legislature by citizens who will be recruited for civil service and administrative civil servants.

The work is done in regard to recruiting and development of the staff of state bodies by means of competitions for vacant jobs at administrative civil service; also appraisal procedures are carried out in order to identify the level of professional training, legislative culture and ability to work with people.

We shall consider competition selection in more detail.

Competition means recruiting of candidates by method of business competition of specialists which provides equal conditions for all candidates, its key characteristic is self-nomination. Here numerous forms and methods of competitions are used in order to select most appropriate staff for work in state bodies. Competition tested by many-years' practice abroad is an objective factor of this process. That is the reason by which competition technologies are used today and in perspective they will be considered as the most important way improvement of work with staff.

Competition provides young people with real opportunity to be accepted for civil service, it is a kind of lift by which well-prepared professional can make a good career.

That is why it is not by chance that the new model of civil service in Kazakhstan has set obligatory competition selection of candidates for administrative civil service. Being maximally open and public the competition is the only mechanism of realization of constitutional rights of citizens for equal access to civil service, "real anti-corruption measure while recruiting for civil service".

In accordance with necessity of further increase in efficiency of civil service of Kazakhstan and improvement of efficiency of the reforms in this sphere it is important to provide appropriate appraisal as a way of evaluation, improvement and perfection of civil servants' professionalism.

A group of experts of the Academy of public administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, by the order from the Agency for civil service affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2012 a research was done of the possible ways to improve methods of recruiting for civil service. [10]. In the framework of this research the population was interviewed, the question was about the level of trust of population in the system of competition selection of staff for civil service, the respondents had to evaluate their trust by criteria of transparency, objectivity, professionalism and the issues connected with implementation of meritocracy at civil service. Interview was performed by the SPSS-method, which gave results in percentage form.

3200 people were interviewed, 2888 questionnaires were processed (9,75% of questionnaires were faulty). Among respondents the proportion of men was 40,4%, women - 59,2%.

The age of respondents - from 18 and more; including 18-29 - 31,8%; 29-35 - 19,9%; 35-45 - 22,4%; 45-50 - 11,6%; 50-65 - 12,3%; 65 and more - 1,2%. 50,9% of respondents were civil servants and 41,1% were the employees of state enterprises, national companies, commercial structures (LLPs) and ordinary people. 90% of civil servants, 85,7% of employees of state enterprises, national companies and LLPs, 81,3% of population answered that they trusted the method of competition selection performed by the method of testing.

Trust in competition selection performed by the method of interview was shown by 78,2 % of civil servants, 73,2% of employees of state enterprises, national companies and LLPs, 71,5% of population.

Transparency, objectivity, professionalism of the staff was evaluated in the following way:

23% of respondents believe that competition selection for civil service is not transparent;  
21,5% - that it is not objective;  
9,2% - that it is not done in professional way;  
25,4% - that it is not transparent, not objective and done in non-professional way.

The level of trust of population in the system of competition selection of the staff for civil service is at average is 79,9%.

The law "About amendments to some legislative acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan in regard to issues of civil service" also emphasizes the strengthening of principles of meritocracy while recruiting and promoting the staff.

The emphasis on meritocracy principles is based on the decision of the President, its aim is to improve efficiency of state staff and provide society-oriented attitude of civil servants. The key moment here is human capital, professional competence of civil servants. The tool of realization of human potential is meritocracy.

In developed countries meritocracy is understood as recognition of the previous results shown by an employee in order to evaluate the labour of a man, state employee justly; and in such a way provide opportunities of career growth, promotion. Implementation of meritocracy will allow recruiting of the most decent, moral and competent, talented and diligent people. Such equality of opportunities for citizens is the foundation for social "lifts" in the country.

In the framework of this study one more research was done: it was intended to find out the level of trust of civil servants and ordinary people in the mechanism of realization of meritocracy principles at civil service.

The results were as follows:

65,5% of respondents are familiar with meritocracy principles at civil service; 84,8% of respondents trust in the principle of recruiting for civil service on the base of competition; 80,6% - of respondents trust in principle of evaluation of candidates by criteria of their personal abilities, knowledge and skills; 76% of respondents trust in the principle of equal attitude to all civil servants; 75,3% of respondents trust in the principle of labour payment depending on the results of work; 75,4% of respondents trust in principle of stimulation and penalties of civil servants depending on the results of work; 78,5% of respondents trust in the principle of promotion on the base of previous results.

In the regions most civil servants and ordinary population trust in meritocracy: the situation looks positive.

The level of trust of civil servants and ordinary population is 78,4% at average [10].

This research demonstrates that the reforms which were realized in the system of civil service in Kazakhstan for the last years improved the image of civil service and the level of public trust in it.

Agency for civil service affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan in January-February of 2011

performed evaluation of efficiency of central state and local executive bodies' work for previous year. The level of satisfaction of civil servants with career promotion opportunities, system of incentives and opportunity to improve qualification was evaluated by interview method.

Total number of respondents was 26767, among them - 19059 - from central executive bodies and 7708 - from local executive bodies. The level of satisfaction with career opportunities was 75,17% [11].

One more research was performed by Public Fund "Center of socio-political research "Strategy" by the order of the Republic of Kazakhstan Agency. Totally 2045 people from 14 regional centers, cities of Astana and Almaty were interviewed; they presented 33 state departments (Ministries, agencies, committees, law enforcement bodies and regional akimats). The aim of the research was to evaluate advantage of civil service. On the first place there was an opportunity to facilitate well-being of society - 45%. This answer was characteristic for all demographic and social groups of civil servants. One more advantage - opportunity to improve qualification and education - 30%. It is well-known that civil service is a chance to acquire certain level of professionalism in order to leave civil service after some time and be employed at private, more paid sector. That is the reason by which this variant is more popular among the young men whose age is under 25 - 40%, who are striving to get experience after graduation from university. The 3rd advantage of civil service - opportunity to realize one's own potential - 27%. Most often this answer was given by employees at top-positions. Opportunity to get useful connections, friendly team, interesting work - 20%; opportunity to make career, stable payment, availability of status, competent director - 17-12% [12].

Thus, it becomes obvious that modern civil service still has a lot of unsolved problems because the issues of social support, career planning showed low results.

Changeability (fluidity) of the staff in state bodies is still rather high. In January 2012 total changeability rate in the Republic was 14846 employees or 16,21% of total staff number, which is 3,41% more in comparison with the same period of the previous year. Proportion of civil servants with long working experience at position (over 5 years) is only 21,33% from total number of civil servants [11].

The effect of this is reduction in the level of professionalism of activity of administrative civil servants, absence of continuity in affairs, which influences the quality of work of state bodies.



Absolute majority of scientific inventions in regard to staff management (reliable, grounded and proved) are not used in practice: staff employees are not ready to implement them because of the absence of special education corresponding to their position. Policy to perform staff achievements of the science “from top” – from political level (rotation, evaluation of activity efficiency) will not eliminate the need of staff departments for qualified HR managers who could control civil service staff because the aim of all staff technologies is correspondence of individual qualities of an employee to professional requirements.

### **Conclusion**

Staff management must be based on rational staff policy which must take into account the interests of civil servants and the needs of bodies of public administration rather than on administrative methods. That is why we need brand new scientific knowledge and efficient technologies in the sphere of human resources management, methods of formation and management of labour teams, innovative technologies in the work with staff. New approaches are necessary to such problems as: staff planning, professional selection and evaluation of an employee; reserve of the staff and career planning; management and training of the staff in the process of labour activity; regulatory base of staff management; style of staff management and optimization of labour of directors; control in the system of staff management; ethics and etiquette of labour relations; formation of healthy moral-psychological climate in a team etc. [13].

The issues of human resources management must be treated with due regard to scientific-practical concepts, here both national and world best practices must be used. It is necessary to follow best practices of the world and regularly perform audit of the staff at civil service by independent experts, companies, and after their conclusion to build the strategy of development of state body and its staff potential, to find out the problems in inter-personal relations which hinder efficient functioning of state bodies.

Important element of modernization of civil service is still formation of efficient system of recruiting at civil service. The new system of recruiting developed by the Agency for civil service affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan will provide this recruiting in another way. Besides available test of legislative knowledge, the selection will be done on the base of one more test which will forecast the efficiency of the employee with due regard to its individual characteristics. In order to do that personal competence test was developed and is being approved now - so called psychometric test. This test will not allow not only evaluate current competence of a candidate but find out potential ways of his further development as a civil servants.

Another important aspect of modernization of civil service is implementation of the system to evaluate the quality of work of civil servants. This mechanism must be adjusted to Kazakhstan conditions. The new model will include the evaluation system for assessment of activity of civil servants, with due regard to the volumes and the quality of work, degree of responsibility, level of professionalism. This innovation will allow to take into consideration labour experience and the results of the work of civil servants; to identify need for his re-training and improvement of his qualification. The evaluation of civil servants' work will be one of the factor for promotion of an civil servants to a better position.

Important moment which must be mentioned is further improvement of ethic standards of civil service. Existing model of civil service is based on rather efficient regulatory framework to control ethical issues of civil servants - Laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan about civil service, about struggle with corruption, the Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan about the Honor Code of civil servants. In the same time, we must think how to use best practices of separate countries for development of administrative ethics management system. In this case the legislature of our country could integrate American or European models of civil servants behavior which suggest 2-level system of administrative ethics management. The 1st level is code of civil servants' behaviour - it is general for all civil servants including law enforcement and social services. The 2nd level - more detailed regulations of civil servants. State bodies can produce such rules on their own and use them only for their employees. The rules of civil servants' behaviour can characterize the problems in ethics terms in detail in every situation in which an employee can be while performing his duties and provide detailed description of what must be done in such situations.

Solution of mentioned problems will allow to increase efficiency of staff potential, to refill state bodies with highly-qualified specialists, who are able to work efficiently in conditions of democratic, information society, and to form modern system of management of civil service staff.

### **Inference**

Thus, at the current stage of development of civil service in Kazakhstan it is necessary to continue the improvement of civil service system: we are still lacking such tools as system forecasting, professional adaptation, staff marketing, working time management; serious disadvantages are in the procedure of recruiting, rotation, appraisal and payment, re-training and qualification improvement; insufficient functioning of staff services; absence of

positive image of civil servants, insufficient trust of population in them.

Improvement of civil service is closely connected with increase in efficiency of state bodies. This must be one of prioritized areas. Public administration system which has formed in Kazakhstan for the last years is far from perfection. The methods of evaluation of efficiency of state bodies and the methods of efficient financing of the costs for keeping state bodies with due regard to end results of activity have not been developed.

In many countries the necessity of improvement of the efficiency of civil servants' work, the quality of realization of state functions by them and implementation of new methods of management were the basis of reforms of civil service. Reforms in most developed countries for the last decade were directed to implementation of new public management principles into civil service system, which provide direct dependency of the payment, career opportunities on the results of work.

Use of the methods of management oriented to the result will allow to provide qualitatively new level of efficiency of activity and involvement of civil servants into solution of tasks which are set forth before state bodies, to create the foundations for individual interest of employees in socially-significant targets, efficient performance of duties, optimal managerial decisions.

The results of interviews demonstrate that state bodies very slowly acquire new qualities, which will be adequate to modern tasks and requirements. Moreover, negative trends are observed, which reduce efficiency of work and the authority of state power. Many reforms are of shallow character and are restricted to unreasonably frequent re-organizations of state bodies. Objective needs for changes in public administration system in Kazakhstan determine the necessity of development and implementation of the mechanisms which will allow to increase manageability and efficiency of state bodies' activity.

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