

The Assumptions for Senior Civil Service in Lithuania

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This article analyses the assumption for establishing senior civil service in Lithuania in the course of reforms of civil service system directing much attention to the conceptualizations of senior civil service in contemporary strategic human resource management theory and research where the need for establishing senior civil service is grounded by stressing the differentiated approach to human resources. A special attention is paid to highly valued and unique human resources, capable of leading the institutions and the sector as a whole. The data of the empirical research indicate that the idea of establishment of the senior civil service in Lithuanian is accepted ambiguously within the system of civil service. The authors, noting highly contextual nature of the issue, conclude that the decisions on the concrete design of senior civil service in Lithuania should be based on consideration of noticeable tendencies of developments of senior civil services in the democracies of the world.

Key words: *civil service reform, strategic human resource management, senior civil service.*

Raktažodžiai: *valstybės tarnybos reforma, strateginis žmogiškųjų išteklių valdymas, aukštesnioji valstybės tarnyba.*

Introduction

For almost two decades the substantial changes of human resource management (HRM) in the Lithuanian civil service have continuously been implemented. Reforms inspired by political, administrative and technical reasons have been transforming HRM practices. In the course of modernization of the Lithuanian civil service the issues related to establishment of senior civil service are becoming very relevant.

According to SIGMA report of 2009, Lithuania has achieved the highest fit with the European principles of public administration and continued the civil service reforms after its accession to the EU [21]. Lithuania reaches a high degree of fit in areas such as the quality of the legal basis of the

civil service, the capacity and quality of the central management structures responsible for the coordination and control of civil service policy, and the system of open competition [20]. However, despite the progress, there remain several shortcomings. One of the biggest – senior civil service. In this area Lithuania's fit with the European principles of public administration is evaluated at the level of low/medium [21].

Establishment and functioning of senior civil services in foreign countries have permanently and very carefully been analyzed and compared by many scientists [3; 8; 11; 13; 14; 22; 28] and international organizations [18; 21; 23; 24; 30]. Though the dimensions of the researches differ, comprising legal, political, organizational, comparative to business, HRM and other perspectives, however the purpose of the investigations in most cases is very practical – to study the experiences of senior civil services provision seeking to provide recommendations for effectiveness or reform of the systems of senior civil service (or even wider systems of civil service and public administration). Therefore it has to be noted that a vast body of research results and theoretical approaches were accumulated.

However it has to be admitted that the issue and the nature of any senior civil service is much

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Straipsnis įteiktas redakcijai 2009 m. vasario mėn.; recenzuotas; parengtas spaudai 2009 m. kovo mėn.

dependant on the context and vary with administrative traditions, societal factors, institutions, level and scope of reform. Thus the conditions for establishing, reforming or abolishing the senior civil service are different in each country.

Therefore the purpose of our article is to analyze the assumptions for establishment of senior civil service in Lithuania taking into consideration the recent developments of strategic HRM related to the issue. The greatest attention will be paid to:

1. Conceptualizations of the senior civil service in contemporary strategic HRM theory and research literature. As it was noted, analyzing HRM related features of senior civil service much attention is paid to various aspects of micro HRM, such as recruitment, appointments, performance assessment and pay, promotion and mobility and etc. (for example see [23]). Thoughtful analysis of foundations of establishing senior civil service in the context of Strategic HRM is still not complete. The models applicable for business organizations are very valuable in this situation as the issues related to management of business top managers has been more intensively studied than the same in public organizations.

2. Attitudes of the possible senior servants and managers of personnel departments of the institutions to the possibility and necessity to establish senior civil service in Lithuania. Acceptance or resistance to the idea of establishing senior civil service among those the most concerned with the issue is one of the main assumptions of taking one or another action in respect to senior civil service in Lithuania.

3. Recent tendencies of development of senior civil services in foreign countries. During the last three decades of experience with senior civil services in various countries some trends of development of these structures are becoming evident. Knowledge of them obviously could be useful for the political and non-political officials making decisions in respect to the possibilities to establish the senior civil service in Lithuania and its possible design.

The research methods used in this study were analysis of scientific literature especially in respect to strategic HRM relation to senior civil service and development tendencies of the senior civil services in various countries. Also the data of the empirical study related to acceptance of the idea of senior civil service within the Lithuanian system of civil service will be presented.

Conception of senior civil service

Senior civil service is defined as a system of non political personnel for high and top level man-

agement positions in the national civil service, formally or informally recognized by an authority, or through a common understanding of the organization of such a group. It is a framework of career-related development providing people to be competitively appointed to functions that cover policy advice, operational delivery or corporate service delivery [9; 25; 30]. In this article we will use the term "senior civil service" however noting that different countries use different terms to identify the highest structures of civil service.

Only a few countries have a very clear definitions and delimitation of the senior civil service; majority of them are able to delineate more or less clearly their senior management group [23]. However in spite of the problems of the demarcation of senior civil service, there is a noticeable tendency at least in most EU Member States to pay special attention to the group of senior civil servants. Often they have a special status with special recruitment, compensation and other conditions [9].

Countries which do not have a differentiated group of senior management, for example Finland, apply more or less similar management systems to their senior executives as to their other civil servants [23]. In Lithuania special provisions have been developed for the heads of institutions concerning the appraisal of their performance, special training programs are provided for them. However, there are no special conditions in respect to the majority of legal and HRM related aspects. Therefore senior civil servants are not officially considered as a special group in the Lithuanian civil service [20].

Usually the mode of senior civil service depends on the design of general civil service system prevailing in a certain country. Classical distinction was made between two main types of the systems [23]:

1. A "career-based" civil service system usually recruits from the group of top civil servants. Recruitment takes place early on in the career and often uses competitive examinations and thereafter progression is managed by the institution. Plenty of resources are invested in the development and the careers of the selected civil servants to prepare them for top executive positions.

2. In a "position-based" civil service system candidates for particular top executive positions are recruited from the wider civil service and the private sector. The result of that is a large pool of possible candidates. Appointments tend to be made on the basis of seniority and merit within the confines of the involved department.

The first senior civil service was established in the United States of America (named as Senior Executive Service) in 1978 (effective from 1979). It comprised more than 7000 officials at the bureau director level in charge of management, supervision and policymaking. In Australia ranks and grades were simplified and the positions of about 1450 officials above division chief level were formed into the Senior Executive Service in 1984. Through several stages the Executive Group was established in early 1990s in Canada, and now it consists of almost 4000 officials. About 3800 officials were formed into the senior civil service in 1996 in the United Kingdom. In the Netherlands Senior Public Service, which was established in 1995, affected those at or above bureau director level and expanded in 2001 to include division chiefs. In all, about 900 officials (top management group and management posts) in this country were involved in 2003 [15].

Generally the purpose of having separate senior civil service is related to strong wish to improve performance of government and other public organizations though increased quality of management and leadership. The senior civil service can be a useful bridge between policy making and implementation. It is expected that the senior civil service will serve as a key link between political executives and the rest of the career civil service [15]. Experience of government organizations' functioning and their managerial perspective enables the senior civil servants to shape and guide implementation of strategies, which is especially important during times of political instability and the periods of governments' change. Through the mechanisms of horizontal mobility senior civil servants are likely to work in several different government organizations and this helps to maintain government-wide perspective in all the public sector.

Thus summarizing it can be stated that senior civil servants usually have three critical jobs: managing the political-administrative interface, managing the institution or department, helping to manage the civil service as a whole.

Issue of senior civil service in the context of strategic and differentiated approach to HRM

The concept "strategic" implies something that is seriously consequential for the future of any organization public or private. There are three critical elements which can assure long term strategic viability of the organization: appropriate goals, relevant non-human resources and capable people. It means that without certain kinds of human capital, organizations are simply not viable. This is quite

obvious but it has to be stressed because many important decisions are made and dozens of books are published on strategic management assuming that good strategy appears out of nowhere: human beings do not seem to be involved [4]. True nowadays reality is that appropriate human resources are strategic to success of every organization.

Many today can copy technology, manufacturing processes, products, services or strategies. However it is hard or impossible to copy human capital, therefore it represents a unique competitive advantage for business organizations and the essential resource used for effectiveness in public organizations. Therefore improving the process of strategic management has a lot to do with human resource management [5]. Edward Lawler [16] in this context emphasizes the significance of the human capital centric (i.e. HC-centric) business models. According to Lawler, an HC-centric organization is one that aligns its features (compensation, division and department structure, information systems, and etc.) toward the creation of working relationships that attract talented individuals and enable them to work together in an effective manner.

Having admitted that HRM strategy is becoming essential for strategic management of organization as a whole it is important to admit that strategic management is a human process beset with all the pitfalls that characterize human attempts to make decisions in conditions of uncertainty, rivalry and limited resources [4]. Human cognition is a psychological term for thinking processes, for our ability to process information and make decisions. Research on cognition recognizes the viability of Herbert Simon's statement, in his classic "Administrative behavior" that people are subject to bounded rationality [as cited in 4]. Therefore organizations have to be very careful handling their human resources, especially ones responsible for formulation and implementation of the strategy. The greater the uncertainty and discretion involved in work, the more important is to hire and promote people of high ability, with a well rounded intellectual and emotional profile, who have the capacity to lead, to think and to act more creatively and flexibly. That is why the organizations facing tight competition (in business) or high requirements (in public sector) have to discern their essential human resources and handle them differently.

Due to this a human resource strategy is usually non-homogeneous, especially in bigger organizations managing at least several categories for differentiated personnel groups. The evidences sug-

gest that organizations rarely adopt a single style of management and unified set of critical HRM practices for all their employee groups [4]. As Wright and Boswell conclude, “the assumptions of homogeneity of human resources of organization is naïve and detrimental to the development of the field” [as cited in 27, p. 92].

Therefore it is better to consider HRM strategy as a cluster of HR systems as shown in Figure 1.

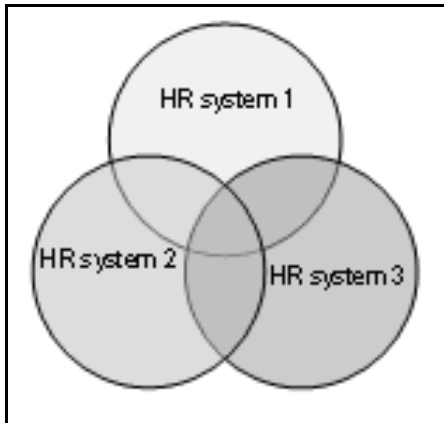


Figure 1: An organization’s HR strategy as a cluster of HR systems [4]

Usually it will be some overlaps in HR practices across HR systems within an organization: for example, there maybe common ways of handling leave and common ways of dealing with personal grievances. However, there are also substantial differences across HR systems. Each system is aimed at organizing the work and managing the employees of major workforce groups. It is quite common for there to be one HR system for management, another for core operating staff, and one or more models to support workers of various kinds [4]. It has also to be noted that HR systems vary in messages they send: some are more oriented to achieve low labor costs with adequate levels of effectiveness than they are to achieve high levels of employee commitment and expert performance.

Lepak and Snell [17] developed a model proposing four employment modes that shed light on the nature of HR systems in organizations (Table 1). The model extends prior theoretical works by specifying the characteristics of employees that cause firms to differentially value and manage them and as a result to form qualitatively different kinds of employment relationship with them. Their unique input is the introduction of the idea that the competencies and contributions desired by an organization from its employees determine the choice of HRM practices [31].

Table 1: Human capital characteristics and employment modes (adapted from [17])

		<i>Strategic Value</i>	
		<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
<i>High</i>	Quadrant 4: Alliances/ partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - External knowledge - Access to internal knowledge - Needs trust and sharing - Collaborative HRM 	Quadrant 1: Knowledge-based employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide knowledge base - Internal development - Skills and competence count most - Commitment-based HRM
	Quadrant 3: Contractual work arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Little strategic value - Low skills, low cost, short training time - Candidate for outsourcing - Compliance-based HRM 	Quadrant 2: Job-based employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Important contribution, but transferable - Acquired externally - Salary in return for job performance - Results-based HRM
<i>Uniqueness</i>			
<i>Low</i>			

Lepak and Snell [17, p.35] propose that the decision to invoke a particular set of HRM practices is a function of value defined as “the ratio of strategic benefits to customers derived from skills relative to the costs incurred”, and uniqueness which is understood as the degree to which the individual has the firm specific skills that are not widely available in the external market of human capital. Employees are valuable to the extent that their skills contribute to the amount a customer is willing to pay for the organization’s products or services, whereas employees are unique if their skills are useful to the employer but not widely available in the external labor market [31]. Using the dimensions of value and uniqueness Lepak and Snell [17] develop four employment modes: knowledge-based employment, job-based employment, contract work and alliances/partnerships (Table 1). Every employment mode is matched with certain HR configuration.

The most attention here deserves human capital belonging to the first quadrant, which is most likely to be viewed as core to the firm. Because of their value, these employees are able to contribute to a firm’s strategic objectives. When human capital is

both valuable and unique, it represents the knowledge base around which firms are most likely to build their strategies. Knowledge workers are defined primarily by the work that they do, which is relatively unstructured and organizationally contingent, and which reflect the changing demands of organizations more than occupationally defined norms and practices [29]. Knowledge-based employment is related to applying commitment based HRM practices that provide for enhanced employee skills, motivation, and autonomy in decision making. Developmental and career management practices are also used. We suppose that majority of heads and top managers of public organizations should fall under this category. The argument could be supported by the facts and findings that that many public sector organizations are knowledge intensive, therefore at least their leaders should be considered to be knowledge workers [1; 2].

The models stressing the differentiated approach to managing human resources have originated in business HRM research literature, however they obviously could be useful and applied to HRM practices in civil service especially noting the influence of new public management [12]. A striking features of new public management has been its emphasis on the establishment of a cadre of top management to enforce a business-like approach. These managers are ceded greater operational control but are more subject to centralized forms of audit [2]. Many governments now are in the urgent and complicated situation solving the problem of how to attract and retain the best top managers and leaders [6; 7; 15; 16].

Thus summarizing the analyzed literature we have to conclude that human resources are becoming strategic for majority of organizations, they should be treated differently applying varying HRM strategies, taking into consideration their value and uniqueness. Namely this idea is behind establishing and reforming the systems of senior civil service.

However having all the theoretical assumptions in Strategic HRM of establishing senior civil service, there remain context related issues. The first of them is – the level to which the idea of having separate senior civil service is acceptable to those most concerned with it.

Acceptance of the idea of senior civil service within the Lithuanian system of civil service

With the objective to ascertain the level of acceptance of the idea of establishment of senior civil service in Lithuania we carried out the empirical investigation of the opinion of the civil

servants in respect to the issue. The survey was conducted in August-September of 2008.

The following groups of the respondents were selected:

- Civil servants of 18-20 categories. 54 civil servants from this group were surveyed, which makes 13,5 per cent of the total number of civil servants having 18-20 categories.
- Heads of personnel departments of the institutions were higher categories (18-20) civil servants are working. The list of 102 of such institutions was composed. 47 civil servants from this group responded to the survey, which makes 46 per cent of the total number of civil servants of this group.

The total number of the surveyed was 101, which makes 20,4 percent of the general population intended to be surveyed. Thus the authors of the research conclude that the results of the survey are representative in respect to the general population (Civil servants of 18-20 categories and heads of personnel departments of the institutions were higher categories (18-20) civil servants are working) with possible bias comprising 9,8 per cent.

In Figure 2 the opinion of all the respondents is presented in respect to the statement that the establishment of senior civil service would improve the quality of management of the civil service in Lithuania. The majority of the surveyed (45,9 per cent) are sure that establishment of the senior civil service would improve the quality of management of the civil service in Lithuania, about quarter (27,6 per cent) have the opposite opinion, and the remaining quarter (26,5 per cent) could not express their unambiguous opinion.

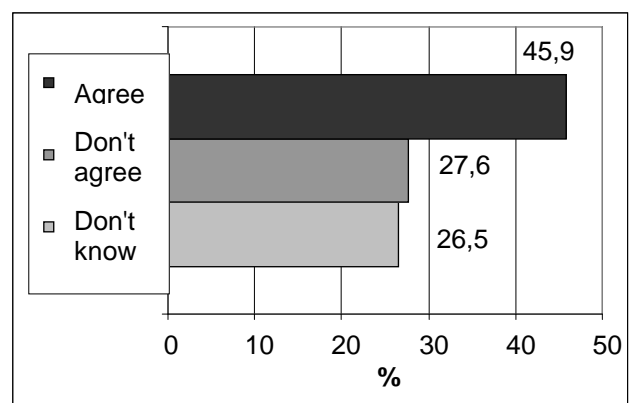


Figure 2: Distribution of the responses to the statement that establishment of the senior civil service would increase the quality of management of the State civil service in Lithuania

The responses to the discussed question were found to statistically reliably correlate ($\tau = 0,453$, $p < 0,01$) with their responses to the next statement if it would be purposeful to separately regulate the status of higher categories civil servants and heads of institutions in the Lithuanian civil service (Figure 3).

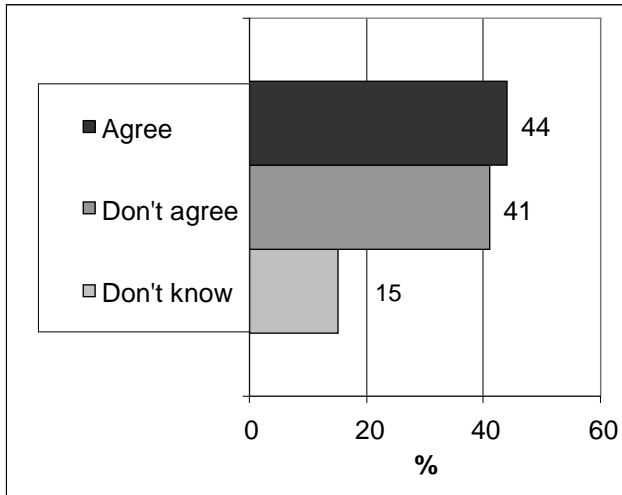


Figure 3: Distribution of the responses to the statement that it would be purposeful to separately regulate the status of higher categories civil servants and heads of institutions in the Lithuanian civil service

The ones who believe that the establishment of senior civil service would improve the quality of management of the civil service in Lithuania are also sure that it would be purposeful to separately regulate the status of higher categories civil servants and heads of institutions in the Lithuanian civil service. 44 per cent of the surveyed accepted the idea of purposefulness of establishment of senior civil service, 41 – rejected, and the remaining 15 – responded as “don’t know”. Table 2 represents the responses to the same statement discussed in Figure 2 analyzed according to the social demographic characteristics and tenure in civil service of the surveyed.

As could be noticed from Table 2, slightly higher percentage of men (42,9) than women (42,9) are accepting the idea of establishment of senior civil service. The biggest supporters of senior civil service are among the group of the youngest (72,7 per cent) and oldest (45,2 per cent) respondents. Acceptance or not acceptance of the establishment of senior civil service is essentially not related to the tenure in civil service.

Further analyzing the data it was noted that higher categories (18-20) civil servants are more likely to accept the idea of establishment of senior civil service than the surveyed heads of the personnel departments (Figure 4)

Table 2: **Distribution of the responses to the statement that it would be purposeful to separately regulate the status of higher categories civil servants and heads of institutions in the Lithuanian civil service (according to the social demographic characteristics of the surveyed and tenure in civil service)**

<i>Social demographic characteristics and tenure in civil service of the surveyed</i>	<i>Responses to the statement that it would be purposeful to separately regulate the status of higher categories civil servants and heads of institutions in the Lithuanian civil service</i>					
	Agree		Don't agree		Don't know	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Gender						
Males	45,5	20	36,4	16	18,2	8
Females	42,9	24	44,6	25	12,5	7
Age						
Till 30 years	72,7	8	18,2	2	9,1	1
31-40 years	42,4	14	39,4	13	18,2	6
41-50 years	32,0	8	60	15	8	2
51 and more years	45,2	14	35,5	11	19,4	6
Tenure in civil service						
Till 5 years	57,9	11	26,3	5	15,8	3
5-10 years	29,6	8	44,4	12	25,9	7
10 -15 years	48,4	15	45,2	14	6,5	3
More than 15 years	43,5	10	43,5	10	13	3

Heads of the institutions appeared to be the group the most accepting the idea of establishment of senior civil service in Lithuania (Figure 5).

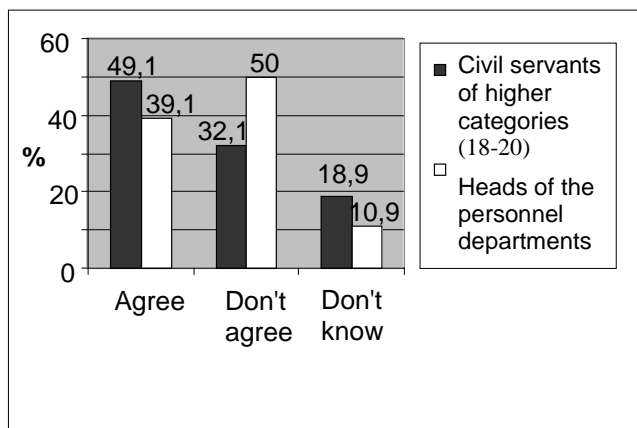


Figure 4: Distribution of the responses to the statement that it would be purposeful to separately regulate the status of higher categories civil servants and heads of institutions in the Lithuanian civil service (according to dependence of the surveyed to higher category civil servants (18-20 categories) or heads of the institutions' personnel departments)

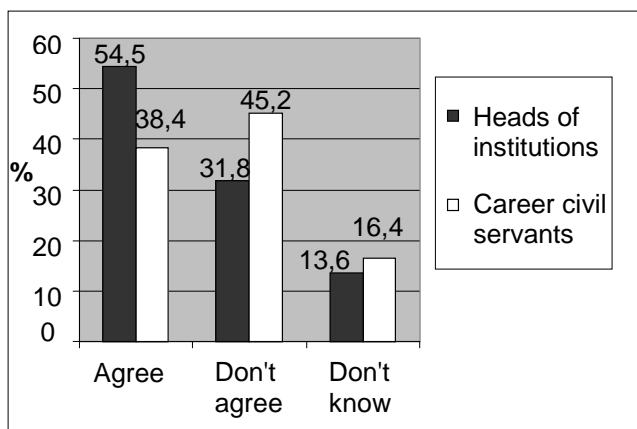


Figure 5: Distribution of the responses to the statement that it would be purposeful to separately regulate the status of higher categories civil servants and heads of institutions in the Lithuanian civil service (according to dependence of the surveyed to heads of institutions or career civil servants)

Majority of heads of institutions (54,5 per cent) are sure that it would be purposeful to separately regulate the status of higher categories civil servants and heads of institutions in the Lithuanian civil service. Just 31,8% have the opposite opinion and 13,6% don't know. As it can be seen from figure No.5 other career civil servants are more reluctant to accept the idea of senior civil service in Lithuania. Only 38,4 per cent of them agree and 45,2 per cent oppose to the idea.

A more critical approach of lower categories (8-17) civil servants to the establishment of senior civil service in Lithuania could be understood as a kind of opposition to forming the stratum of civil servants with special status and the fear that this would be more useful for the possible senior servants themselves than for the country's civil service. That is confirmed by separate opinion expressed by some respondents where they declare that if we have the purpose of strengthening leadership in civil service, we should not limit that to the highest level civil servants, the leadership is very important everywhere in the civil service. Moreover it remains unclear if we will succeed in establishing equal and transparent possibilities of acquiring the status of senior civil servant.

Summarizing the results of the survey it must be concluded that the idea of establishment of senior civil service in Lithuania is accepted ambiguously within the system of civil service. The acceptance of the idea is higher among higher categories civil servants and decreases with the category. This obviously means that some explanatory campaign is necessary to assure more support for the idea within the system of civil service. The results of the survey are quite important in the face of the reforms of the Lithuanian civil service, taking into consideration aforementioned evaluation of Lithuania's fit with the European principles of public administration and essentially positive developments and reforms of senior civil service system in the majority democracies of the world, which have already established their senior civil service systems.

Tendencies of development of senior civil service

Among the most important recommendations given at the conference "The Lithuanian Civil Service and the Guidelines of its Modernization" which took place in the Lithuanian Parliament on February 24, 2009, was the following: to start establishing a senior civil service in Lithuania by recognising a narrow scope of the senior civil servants and establishing some special conditions with regard to recruitment, career, pay, training [21]. Obviously this recommendation is based on strong belief that the leading and the most essential human resources must be adequately valued in the civil service.

It has to be noted that establishment of senior civil service does not guarantee success in itself. For example, Hungary and Slovakia tried to implement that, but the systems in both countries have failed. These experiences indicate that senior civil services are sometimes difficult to institutionalize in Central and Eastern Europe. Here it may be more important

to consider the political context for the establishment of senior civil service systems [19].

However majority of the countries which have established their senior civil services are further developing them and not abolishing. Many Asian and African countries are latecomers in installing a separate higher-level civil service. Also, many Latin American countries are still under the substantial influence of the spoils system. Accordingly, the best examples of higher-level civil service are from the continents of North America, Europe, and Oceania [14].

As reforming senior management is currently becoming a common theme in many countries around the world some generalizations about the most evident trends and directions of development of these structures are already available, though some of them are still under intense discussion. Thus analyzing the experiences of different countries and data from various comparative studies we find the following tendencies of development of senior civil services:

1. *Competency management* for senior civil service is implemented. This system usually aims to enhance professionalism among senior civil servants and decrease the focus on “function and task” orientation and thus create a more flexible altitudes [32]. Countries are using different frameworks to describe the most important competencies of senior civil servants. The recent research made in Korea identified the following core nine competencies: communication ability, customer-oriented service, presentation of vision, coordination and integration, goal and result orientation, innovative leadership, professionalism, understanding of potential problems and strategic thinking [14].

2. *Recruitment and selection*. The tendency is noticeable that countries aim at recruiting executives with management and leadership capacities. Competition and openness for the positions of senior civil servants is strengthened (open competition and job posting). Recruitment is carried out through government-wide competition or outside competition. Senior executives with proven leadership skills outside the public service are expected to encourage a change in mentality and open a window on societal changes [23].

3. *Appointments and contracts*. In many countries appointments are made for fixed terms. Increasingly, these countries work out detailed individual performance contracts, and some countries are linking these individual contracts to organizational objectives and long-term strategies [23].

4. *Development of abilities and capabilities*. Individual and customized training programs are starting to be used more widely. Development is related to competencies assessment and carrier planning. It is recognized that the initiative of developments should stem from the senior civil servant and the support must com from the system, but not the opposite.

5. *Performance assessment*. Countries are using increasingly complex performance assessment systems which aim at establishing a dialogue on objectives and results. Performance-oriented civil service culture is encouraged though designing separate performance related systems for senior civil servants. To promote this new culture, countries realize that it is necessary to establish transparent procedures to avoid undermining staff confidence. Assessment procedures begin at the critical point when objectives are assigned. They are regularly adjusted and are directly tied to organizational objectives. More extensive assessment on termination of contracts or mandates determines whether an executive is kept in the service or even promoted. Certain countries provide appeal procedures in the case of disagreement [23].

6. *Compensation*. The tendency of passing from pay based on hierarchy and seniority, (rank-in-person system) to pay determined by the type of position and performance (rank-in-position system) is noticeable [10; 14]. Pay rates for top management in the civil service are determined through a process of independent review. Some countries regulate the salaries of their senior civil servants attaching them to certain level pay rates for equivalent private sector jobs [26].

7. *Promotion and career*. The tendency of passing from seniority - based promotion, to promotion based on performance evaluation and competition. Personnel exchanges take place between ministries and agencies, and there are government-wide solicitations to fill vacant posts [10; 14]. In order to promote government-wide perspectives, interagency transfers of high level officials are encouraged through both monetary and non-monetary incentives.

8. *Strict division of responsibilities and spheres of influence between senior civil servants and politicians*. As it was noted in “Study on the Political Involvement in Senior Staffing and on the Delineation of Responsibilities Between Ministers and Senior Civil Servants”, “in countries with weaker governance systems, politicization in civil service recruitment and management presents greater risks, and exposes the system to the associated problem of senior officials lacking the competence to carry out their functions” [18, p.11]. Countries choose different means by which the senior civil service systems

achieve a balance between political neutrality and responsiveness of the public interests. These include: legal and conventional constraints on ministerial decision-making, the promotion of a culture of apolitical professionalism amongst civil servants, formal delegations and divisions of labor between ministers and civil servants, openness of process, and oversight by legislative or judicial authorities. This helps to avoid the extremes of a self-serving civil service immune to political leadership, or an over-politicized civil service hostage to patronage and serving partisan rather than national interests [18].

9. *Publicity*. Implementing any reforms related to senior civil service well designed publicity campaigns are used to help the general public have a better understanding of the system and its changes.

10. *Involvement*. Having the purpose to implement serious changes in the system of civil service all the interested and able to help to better understand the relevant problem are usually involved. It is necessary to carefully review a broad range of opinions and obtain feedback from government officials, politicians, scientists, journalists, civic groups and the general public through public hearings [14].

Thus summarizing it can be stated that there are noticeable tendencies of the development of senior civil services. Taking into consideration that the issue is highly contextual they nevertheless should be evaluated as very relevant in the process of designing senior civil service system in Lithuania.

Here it is also important to stress that the costs of poor governance in a small society are very large, given the extreme difficulty in recovering from the consequences of inappropriate policies and practices sustained over a long period. In the countries with weak traditions of openness, participation and accountability all the rearrangements of the structures of civil service should be undertaken with special care.

Conclusions

Having acknowledged that the senior civil service provides the front line at which major issues have to be confronted, and the essential mechanism for the transmission of change and direction in the administrative apparatus and having analyzed the assumptions for establishment of senior civil service in Lithuania we have to conclude that:

1. Strategic approach to human resource management implies that human resources are especially unique and valuable leaders should be treated differently from other groups of employees within the public sector. The civil service system should invest

much in providing internal development possibilities for them and use commitment-based human resource management practices. This idea should be used as one of the bases implementing the reforms in human resource management in civil service.

2. The idea of establishment of senior civil service in Lithuania is accepted ambiguously within the system of civil service. The acceptance of the idea is higher among higher categories civil servants and decreases with the category. This obviously means that some explanatory campaign is necessary to assure more support for the idea within the system of civil service.

3. The decisions on the concrete design of senior civil service in Lithuania should be based on consideration of noticeable tendencies of the development of senior civil services in the democracies of the world. However at the same time it is very important to stress a highly country contextual nature of the issue and the vulnerability of the designed system to various political, economical, societal and other influences.

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Aukštesniosios valstybės tarnybos steigimo prielaidos Lietuvoje

Santrauka

Straipsnyje analizuojamos aukštesniosios valstybės tarnybos steigimo prielaidos Lietuvoje reformuojant valstybės tarnybos sistemą. Didžiausias dėmesys skiriamas aukštesniosios valstybės tarnybos poreikio analizei strateginio žmoniškųjų išteklių valdymo teorijoje, aukštesniosios kategorijos valstybės tarnautojų ir įstaigų personalo vadovų požiūrio į aukštesniosios valstybės tarnybos steigimą vertinimui ir aukštesniosios valstybės tarnybos sistemų užsienio šalyse vystymosi tendencijoms. Atkreiptas dėmesys, kad strateginio žmoniškųjų išteklių valdymo teorijoje ir tyrimuose akcentuojamas diferencijuotas požiūris į skirtingos vertės ir unikalumo žmoniškuosius išteklius, į lyderystės ir vadovavimo gebėjimais pasižyminčius darbuotojus. Autorių atliktas tyrimas – aukštesniųjų kategorijų valstybės tarnautojų ir įstaigų personalo vadovų apklausa - rodo, kad aukštesniosios valstybės tarnybos steigimo Lietuvoje idėja yra vertinama nevienareikšmiškai: aukštesniųjų kategorijų valstybės tarnautojai yra linkę tam pritarti labiau nei žemesniųjų. Atsižvelgiant į tai, daroma išvada, kad požiūris į aukštesniosios valstybės tarnybos steigimą priklauso nuo konkrečios šalies politinio, ekonominio ir socialinio konteksto, ir todėl, projektuojant aukštesniąją valstybės tarnybą valstybės tarnybos sistemoje, būtina atsižvelgti į aukštesniosios valstybės tarnybos vystymo tendencijas įvairiose pasaulio šalyse.

DOI: 10.5755/j01.ppa.0.27.26941