

## TALENT MANAGEMENT IN CIVIL SERVICE

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### Abstract

In the article, relevant aspects of talent management in civil service are examined, which is the important component of effective state apparatus. Talent management is aimed to ensure high productivity, professional growth and motivation of civil servants, which, in turn, is the basis to achieve strategic goals of the state policy. The author analyzes modern approaches to formation of the talent management system, in particular, urgency of integrating the lifelong learning concept, which provides for continuous professional development of personnel, adaptation to new conditions and challenges, and increasing their competitiveness. Particular attention is paid to the role of young people in civil service, which is strategic resource to ensure innovative development of public administration. Some ways to attract young professionals, to create favorable conditions for their professional formation and development, and to form personnel reserve for effective management in the long term are considered. Young people have significant potential to introduce new approaches, initiatives and technologies into civil service, which is urgent within globalization, digitalization and the public administration reform. In the study, key challenges faced by the talent management system in Ukraine are identified, including low motivation of civil servants and limited resources for training and development. At the same time, in the study, prospects to improve this system are emphasized, including: introduction of modern technologies, development of mechanisms to assess labor efficiency, and strengthening of international cooperation in human resource management. It is emphasized by research findings that it is necessary to develop the comprehensive talent management system that will cover all stages of professional development - from recruitment and selection to training, evaluation, motivation and retention. This will help create capable, professional and motivated team of civil servants who can respond effectively to challenges of the modern world.

**Keywords:** public service, public administration, talent, talent management, human resources, human resource management, human-centeredness, professionalization in the field of public service, Lifelong Learning, personnel reserve, mentoring.

**JEL Codes:** H73.

### Introduction

Practices of talent management have evolved over the years to meet trends in people, just like all other aspects of work, and have changed rapidly in past few years. Strategic talent management is relevant in modern hyper-changing environment.

Formation of the innovative system of innovative human resources in civil service is the

objective of strategic importance, requiring deep scientific approach, development of effective tools, and active cooperation between science, government agencies, and the public.

The aim of the article is to develop the conceptual approach and practical tools for formation of the innovative talent management system in the Ukrainian civil service. This

includes the analysis of current trends and challenges in personnel management, identification of key factors affecting efficiency of human resources management, and adaptation of international experience to the national requirements.

### **Literature review**

Current problems of talent management in general and in civil service in particular, formation of the human resources management system, are the most urgent topics of research in modern science. Papers of the following foreign scientists as Gagnier F., Ashton K. and Morton L., Armstrong M., Michaels E., Hildon D. are devoted to this issue. Gagnier F. views talent as an object, as above-average ability for certain function or range of functions. He considers talent to be a special, rather than a “normal” ability, which makes talented people develop and use them rise above the rest of their colleagues at certain age (Gagne F., 2000). On the other hand, Ashton K. and Morton L. consider talent as a subject, a person who possesses special skills or abilities (Ashton C. et al., 2005).

Thus, Armstrong M. interprets talent management as: “application of integrated set of activities to ensure that the company attracts, retains, motivates and promotes talented employees it needs now and in the future” (Armstrong M. et al., 2015). Michaels E. et al. believe that: “talent management is the company’s activity that allows it to use investments in talented personnel in middle and top management” (Michaels E. et al., 2001). At the same time, Hildon D. considers talent management as “a set of individualized management practices for employees with high potential or from the personnel reserve” (Hilton D., 2013).

Within the research (Ramchurn R. et al., 2024; Calderon-Orellana Magdalena et al., 2024; Al Jahwari Abdullah et al., 2023; Ridei N. et al., 2022), some features of using knowledge management technologies in public organizations were analyzed, the role of support of senior management and effective communication in civil service was investigated, as well as the role of crisis management by providing public services.

Scientists (Farasat Z. et al., 2022; Rasul Imran et al., 2021; Cardenas L. et al., 2021; Jakubek P. et al., 2023) analyzed substantive shortcomings of the law on civil service management, investigated organizational efficiency and the management model itself. Articles (Nelipa D. et al., 2020; Lauzikas Mindaugas et al., 2019; Yang Wenhui et al., 2024) are of practical relevance, which consider improving the quality of civil service management, communication efficiency and effectiveness in strategic management of changes, as well as civil service management and supply of civil servants.

It is worth noting that, despite available thorough research in this sector, the main aspects of implementing the innovative management system of human resources in the Ukrainian civil service are at initial stage of development.

This is due to some factors, including difficulties by adapting international experience to specifics of the country, insufficient implementation of modern technologies in human resources management, and limited financial and organizational capabilities.

This topic is the subject of active scientific discussion aimed at finding effective ways to improve the management system of human resources. In particular, it concerns urgent creation of comprehensive mechanisms for selection, development and retention of qualified personnel, which will ensure high efficiency, innovation and competitiveness of civil service in modern conditions.

### **Methodical approach**

The research is based on the systemic approach. Research methods as follows: generalization, content analysis, induction, deduction and abstraction, synthesis and analysis, statistical, systematization, grouping, and graphic were used in the article.

### **Results**

According to the Law of Ukraine “On Civil Service”, civil service is: “public, professional, politically impartial activity in practical implementation of tasks and functions of the state”. And a civil servant is: “a citizen of Ukraine who holds the position in civil service in the state authority, another state body, its apparatus

(secretariat) (hereinafter referred to as the state body), receives salary from state budget and exercises powers established for this position, directly related to implementation of tasks and functions of this state body, and adhering principles of civil service”.

Analyzing dynamics of the number of civil servants and their qualitative composition for 2021-2023, the following trends and impact of the key factors can be identified (Table 1).

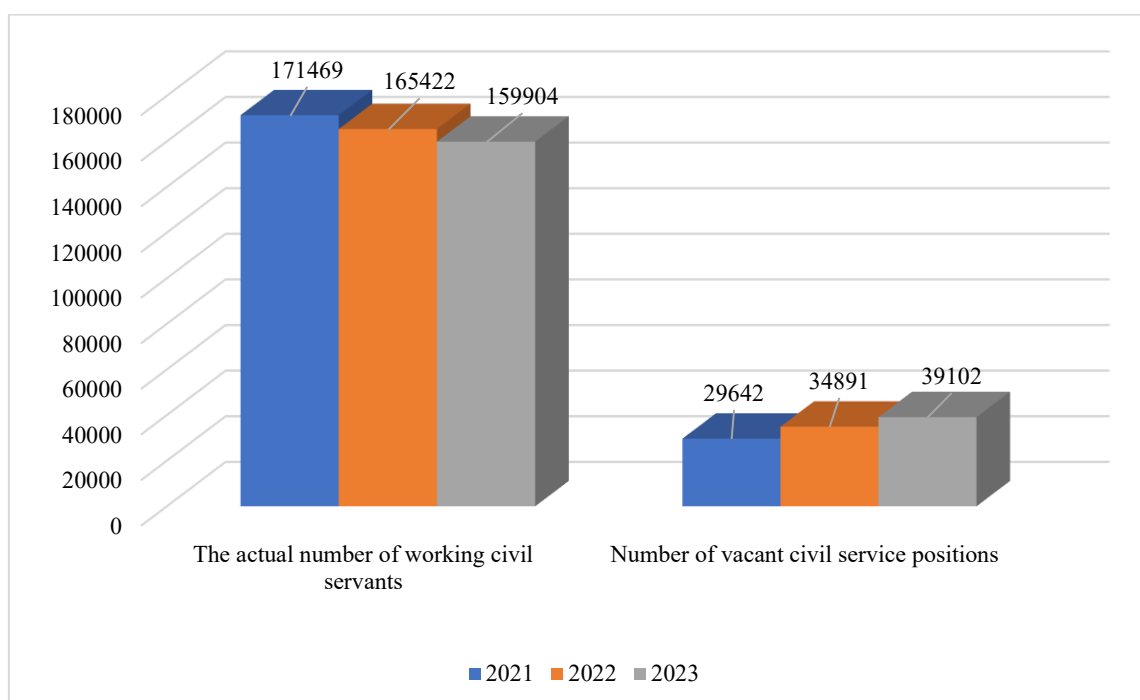
**Table 1. Dynamics of the number of civil servants and their qualitative composition, persons**

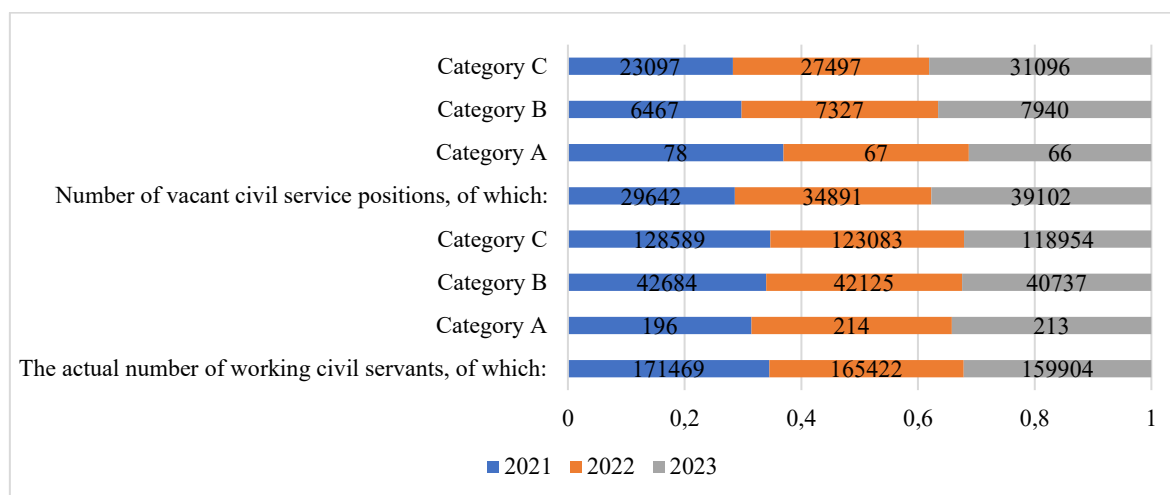
Indicator	2021	Share, %	2022	Share, %	2023	Share, %
Actual number of working civil servants, including:	171469	100,0	165422	100,0	159904	100,0
Category A	196	0,1	214	0,1	213	0,1
Category B	42684	24,9	42125	25,5	40737	25,5
Category C	128589	75,0	123083	74,4	118954	74,4
of them, civil servants with disabilities	9608	5,6	10560	6,4	10877	6,8
Number of vacant civil service positions, including:	29642	100,0	34891	100,0	39102	100,0
Category A	78	0,3	67	0,2	66	0,2
Category B	6467	21,8	7327	21,0	7940	20,3
Category C	23097	77,9	27497	78,8	31096	79,5
Number of civil servants younger 35 years, including:	43125	25,2	31745	19,2	33649	21,0
Category A	28	0,0	20	0,0	25	0,0
Category B	5636	3,3	3917	2,4	4456	2,8
Category C	37461	21,8	27808	16,8	29168	18,2

*\*Source: compiled by the author based on the National Agency of Ukraine for Civil Service.*

Total number of employed civil servants in 2021 was 171,469, which decreased to 159,904 in 2023 (a decrease of 6.7%). This is due to reduction in the number of state bodies through

the TOT, structure optimization of civil service, and impact of military operations, which forced the state resources redistribution (Fig. 1).





**Figure 1. Dynamics of the number of civil servants and vacant positions**

\*Source: <https://nads.gov.ua>.

Structure of working civil servants by category is as follows:

1. Category A – number of civil servants is stable (about 0.1% of the total number).

2. Category B - number of employees slightly increased (from 24.9% in 2021 to 25.5% in 2023), but absolute number decreased (from 42,684 to 40,737 people in 2023), because of reduction in middle-level managers.

3. Category B – remains the largest category, but its share decreased from 75.0% to 74.4%.

The number of civil servants with disabilities increased from 9,608 people (5.6%) in 2021 to 10,877 people (6.8%) in 2023. This indicates active personal integration of disabled persons into the state apparatus, due to programs on supporting equal opportunities. Increase in the number of disabled persons indicates positive developments in inclusion.

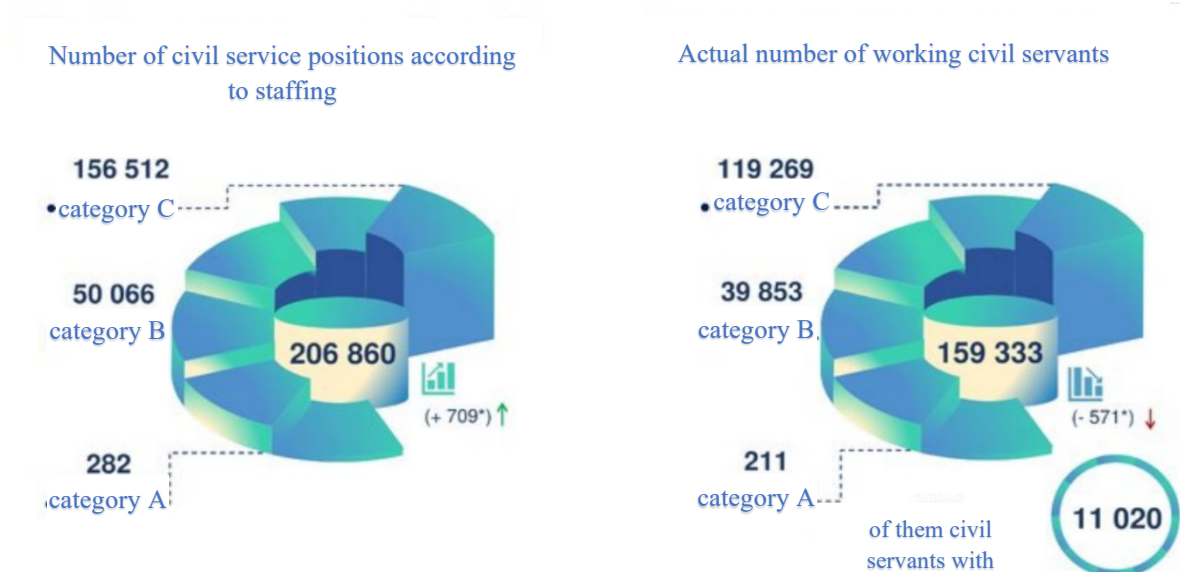
Increase in the number of vacant civil service positions is observed as follows: from 29,642 in 2021 to 39,102 in 2023 (by 31.8%). The largest increase is characteristic of category B, share of vacancies increased from 77.9% to 79.5% of the total number of vacant positions,

which indicates lack of attractiveness of these positions due to low level of pay and difficult working conditions, especially in front-line areas, large group of civil service positions in this category. Economic crisis and war led to decrease in share of civil servants and increase in the number of vacancies.

Young people play the key role in shaping effective, innovative and progressive civil service. Their active participation allows for dynamic development of public administration, introducing new ideas and technologies, and adapting to modern challenges.

Share of young people in civil service decreased from 25.2% in 2021 to 21.0% in 2023, which is a negative factor. This decrease is most noticeable in category B, where the number of young employees decreased from 37,461 to 29,168, caused by lack of motivation, career prospects, and departure of young professionals abroad.

As of April 1, 2024, there were 159,333 civil servants in Ukraine. The number of vacant positions in civil service increased by 1,667 to 40,769. Actual number of working female civil servants is 119,696, and only 39,637 men (Fig. 2).

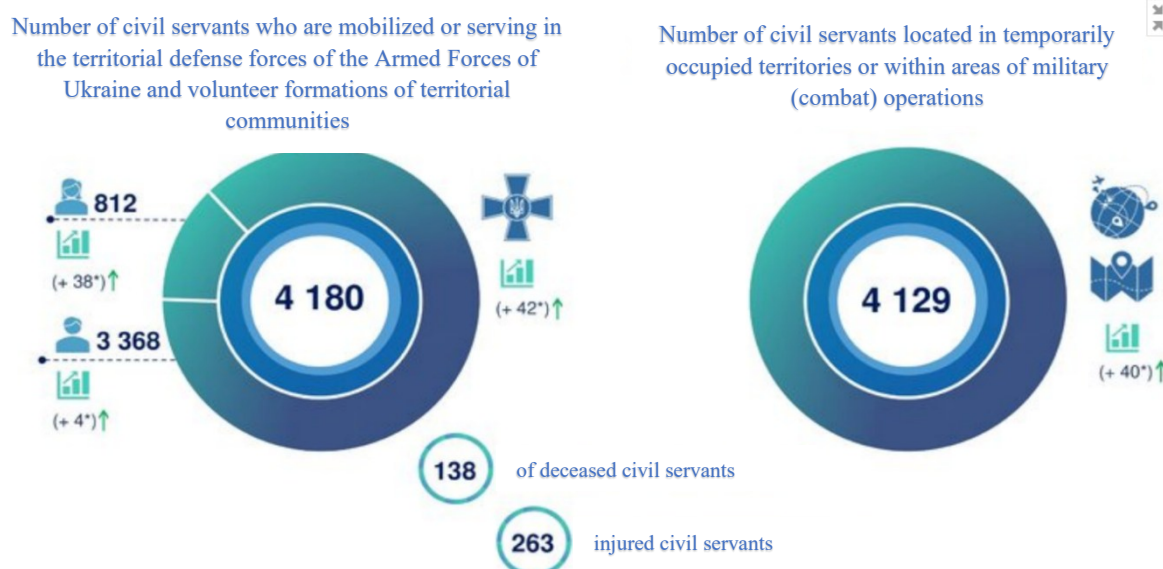


**Figure 2. Quantitative indicators of working civil servants**

\*Source: <https://nads.gov.ua>.

Number of civil servants mobilized or serving in the territorial defense forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and volunteer formations of territorial communities as of April

1, 2024, was 4,180 people, including 812 women. The share of civil servants in the regions of military (combat) operations is 4,129 people (Fig. 3).



**Figure 3. Share of civil servants mobilized or serving in the territorial defense forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine or in temporarily occupied territories**

\*Source: <https://nads.gov.ua>.

Youth is the driving force behind the civil service reform. Integration of young professionals contributes to increased efficiency of public administration and its adaptation to modern

realities and social needs. However, to ensure active participation of young people, it is necessary to create favorable conditions for their potential.

Concept relevance of civil servants and human resources is based on the need to attract, develop and use competent human resources for efficient functioning of state structures. Competent civil servants possess unique professional skills, innovative thinking, ability to solve complex problems, high moral responsibility and willingness to serve society.

Key aspects of this relationship include:

1. Innovation and efficiency - competent civil servants can propose new approaches to solve problems, increase management efficiency, to implement the latest technologies, and to provide quality services to citizens.

2. Leadership and motivation – talents of civil servants include leadership qualities that inspire teams, motivate staff, and ensure effective implementation of the public policy.

3. Decision-making ability – competent civil servants have high competence in their duties and can make informed and effective decisions in crisis situations.

4. Flexibility and adaptability – In current rapidly changing world, civil servants must adapt to new challenges. Talent allows them to quickly respond to changes and take appropriate action.

5. Moral responsibility and service to society – talent in public service is also associated

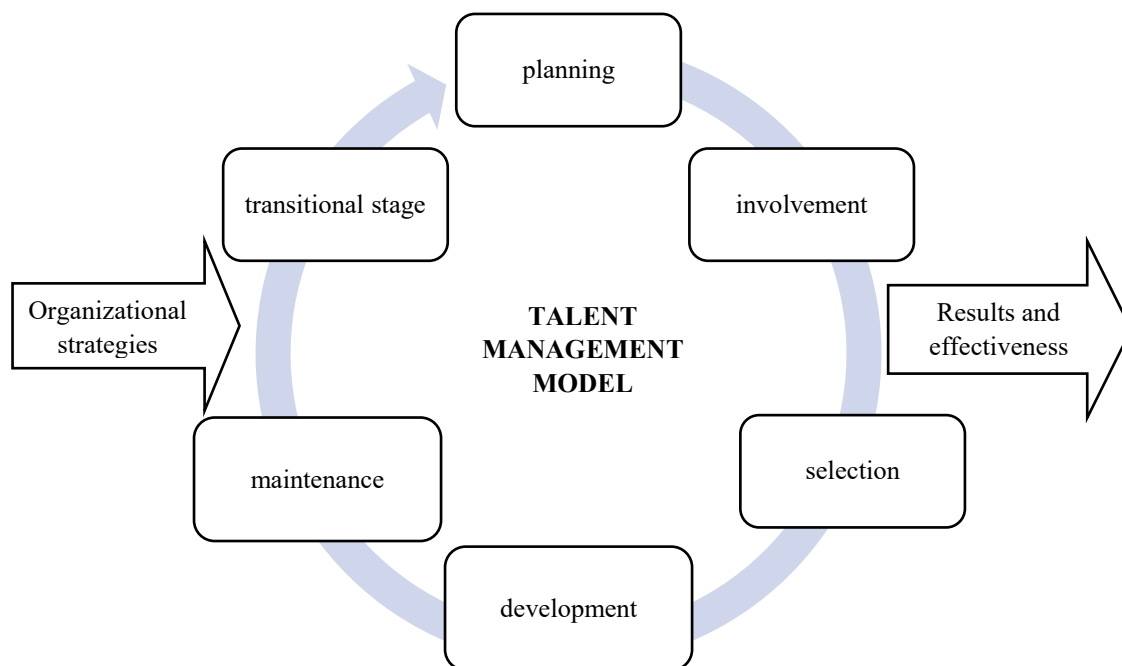
with moral principles, responsibility to society, and pursuit of the common good.

Talent in civil service is important factor to ensure efficiency, transparency and innovation in public administration. At the same time, the state must create conditions for development and realization of talents in civil service, including appropriate system on education, professional development, fair remuneration and opportunities for career growth.

Talent should be considered as human capital of the institution (both an individual and all employees). Managers perceive all employees as talented, it is proceed from the fact that these people are the most important asset of the institution.

Talent management in civil service is defined as methodically organized strategic attracting the right talent and helping them develop to their optimal potential, considering organizational goals. Today, researchers give their interpretation of this process.

Although talent management is often cyclical rather than general linear development of events, one can consider talent management in civil service, starting from recognizing the need for talent and ending with filling this gap and ultimately growing and optimizing skills, abilities and experience of employees (Fig. 4).



**Figure 4. Model of talent management**

*\*Source: developed by the authors.*



Let's consider key steps in effective talent management:

1. Planning. As with the defined outcome, planning is the first step in talent management. This involves identifying gaps – requirements for human capital, job descriptions for key roles needed to help guide search and selection, and developing the talent plan for hiring initiatives.

2. Recruitment – Based on the plan, it is natural that the next step is to decide whether to fill talent requirements internally or from external sources. In either case, this involves attracting the stream of applicants. External sources include job portals, social media, and referrals. The talent pool that needs to be recruited needs to be identified to ensure the process as smooth and efficient as possible. This is where the brand of public service that the institution has created for itself comes into play, as it determines the quality of applications that come in.

3. Selection – involves tests and assessments to find the perfect match between the employee and the position. Written tests, interviews, group discussions and psychometric testing, along with an in-depth analysis of all available information about the candidate on public platforms, help assess his or her comprehensive picture. Today, there is software and solutions based on artificial intelligence that recruiters can use to review a huge number of resumes to focus on the most suitable options and find the ideal candidate.

Systems on leaders selection for civil service should be based on two groups of competencies:

- basic competencies – include desire for personal development, integrity, interpersonal skills, and motivation of the civil servant;

- leadership competencies (mandatory for senior officials) include Leading Change (ability to implement changes, adapt the institution to new challenges and initiate innovations); Leading People (effective personnel management, creating favorable environment for productive work); Results Driven (focus on achieving goals, high quality work and meeting expectations); Business Acumen (understanding basics of public administration and using them for effective operations); Building Coalitions (creating

partnerships and strategic connections on the national and international scale to achieve common goals).

These competencies define the professional leader who can effectively manage the team, initiate innovation, achieve high results, and ensure development of the institution in constant changes. The leader who combines these skills builds trust and authority, ensuring sustainable development of civil service.

4. Development ( Lifelong Learning ). Many government agencies today have in mind the idea of hiring through internships and skills training. This makes sense, because the resume cannot fully reveal a candidate's predisposition to certain abilities. Developing employees, training them with the experience needed to perform tasks, also builds loyalty and improves employee engagement. This starts with effective onboarding program that helps the employee settle into new role, and then provides ample opportunities to improve skills, abilities and qualifications, and promotes growth through consulting, coaching , mentoring and job rotation schemes.

5. Retention – For any government agency to be truly successful and sustainable, talent must be effectively retained. Most employers try to retain their best talent by promoting and upgrading, offering opportunities for growth, encouraging participation in special projects and decision-making, training for more evolutionary roles and rewards, recognition programs. It is worth noting that today, key indicators of performance for civil servants are also being introduced in personnel management of civil service, which are annually assessed based on results of activities of civil servants to determine quality of their performance, as well as to make decisions about bonuses and career planning. This assessment is based on indicators of effectiveness, efficiency and quality, determined considering job responsibilities of the civil servant, as well as compliance with rules of ethical conduct and legal requirements to prevent corruption, implement individual professional development, as well as indicators specified in the civil service contract.

6. Transition Stage – Effective talent management focuses on collective transformation and evolution of the institutions through the

growth of individual employees. This means that each employee feels being the part of greater whole. Providing retirement benefits, conducting exit interviews, and effective succession planning may seem like unrelated career moments, but they are all transition tools that provide common path.

### Conclusions

Dynamics of share of civil servants indicates difficult period for civil service of Ukraine. The main challenges remain as follows: decrease in the total number of employees, increase in share of vacancies and lack of attractiveness for young people. At the same time, positive aspects are personal integration of disabled persons and stability in senior management.

Therefore, the talent management system is critical activity for the Ukrainian civil service, which must strive to attract, develop and retain the

best talent. By effective management on each stage – from workforce planning and talent acquisition to retention – public institutions can create stable groups of qualified and motivated employees. Applying best practices at each stage of the talent management model ensures that this strategy will both meet development goals of civil service, but will also contribute to sustainable development of the state as a whole. Further efforts should be aimed at improving effective management of human resources, especially by improving the system of motivation and support for young people.

Several models for talent management have been developed over the years, including in civil service. However, challenges of talent management is that the model must transform in line with the latest trends in talent, digitalization of management, and expectations of the employee.

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