

THE FORMING SYSTEM IN ROMANIAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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Abstract: In the context of the Romanian public administration reform, the continuous formation of human resources becomes a solid background. In order to implement all continuous forming programs and realizing the public administration reform objectives there is needed the establishment of the priority problems and the time horizon they must be approached in. All these aspects are mentioned, detailed in the following article.

Key words: Forming system, public administration, human resource management

The forming system represents the total activities and the corresponding structure regarding initial and continuous formation of public servants, meaning the conceptual, methodological and didactical support, in order to realize the forming strategies. This system's construction offers an overall image of all mechanisms and forming methods, emphasizing their coherence and efficacy. Actually, the knowledge transfer, know-how and/or experiences essentially orient this system as follows:

- the knowledge transfer consists of the mobilization of general or specialized knowledge needed to be accumulated with priority;
- know-how means detailed knowledge of means and necessary methods needed to develop current activities;
- experiences appeal to active participation during the forming program, regarding the possibilities transfer in order to act.

The architecture of the forming system appears to be extremely diverse and specialized, consisting of the following aspects:

1. The compulsory forming levels;
2. Forming cycles including the program frames;
3. Forming centers (national and local forming network)

The compulsory forming levels

The successive scanning of compulsory forming levels is materialized in proficiency recognition, needed to access and promote in the public servant career. These levels are presented as follows:

Level 1: forming before conscription, generally realized in an organized environment, based on knowledge development, usually corresponding to the high school or specialized university studies. This forming level corresponds to the forming need of potential public servants.

Level 2: general initial forming corresponds to the realization of **basic administrative education** which gives to the public servant the possibility to master basic vocabulary knowledge as well as public institutions and authorities structures and a series of concepts connected to the reform process of public administration. The target group consists of potential public servants, as well as debutante public servants without an initial specialized formation.

The first two levels can be put together and can address to existing and future public servants, whose initial forming is different from the legal sciences or public administration.

In this case, initial forming in the mentioned fields becomes compulsory and must assure the indispensable professional re-conversion for public servants that held a leading position or high public servants. This project will be realized by the INA by specialized forming programs, lasting two years, conceived as post-university forming programs with professional disposition, dedicated to future public servants, and by accredited universities by post-university academically studies in the public administration field, lasting for two years, especially dedicated to the public servants holding leading positions and high public servants without initial specialized qualification.

Level 3: Post-conscription forming in order to adapt to the position, which means reading and learning the details mentioned in the job description, and underlying the attributions derived from it, upon legislation, methods and specialized practice as well as understanding the decisional and organizational processes specific for the public service. This forming level is especially conceived for debutante public servants, not matter their initial knowledge.

Level 4: The continuous forming regards trying to make the professional practice perfect, the periodical actualization of knowledge, methodology and law fundamentals. Continuous formation is especially conceived for all public servants and is realized according to their career plan and the public service exigency.

The forming cycles

The **formation cycles** (3 – 5 years) consist of **frame programs**, elaborated and commonly approved by the trainers and the trainee. Such frame programs correspond, on short term, to a perfection program, and it regards, on annual sequence, the themes presented in table 1.

All forming cycles have a logic sequence according to the career plan of each public servant, putting together the *forming route specific for the public service*.

Table no.1

	Frame I	Frame II	Frame III	Frame IV – V
Actualization of specialty knowledge	30–35%	25–30%	20–25%	15–20%
Assimilating managerial aptitudes	10–15%	20–25%	30–35%	40–45%
General problems of the public sector	20–25%	15–20%	15–20%	10–15%
European integration	15–20%	20–25%	20–25%	20–25%
Other	15%	10%	5%	5%

The forming centers

The structure of the forming system is given by the I.N.A. and by the eight regional centers for continuous forming in the local public administration. The main evolution direction of this structure is represented by the increase of *the density of forming network suppliers* by:

- *Creating a national and eight regional center network* of continuous forming in which there will be trained, directly or in partnership, the other actors and accredited forming suppliers. The access in these networks will be coordinated by the I.N.A., and, if the case, by the continuous forming centers for the local public administration, based on the methodology elaborated by the Scientifically Council of I.N.A.

The methodology will have the following criteria:

- the expertise and the experience proven in organizing the forming and perfection programs;
 - the existence of an own specialized forming course;
 - promoting the programs included in the I.N.A. portfolio, correspondent to the forming needs, established by the public authorities and institutions;
 - the logistic capacity and conditions, according to the standards and methodology used by the I.N.A. or the regional centers;
 - the needed accreditation, in legal or administrative science or other specialization required by the public service.
- *Expanding the actual own preparing network* by creating in each county, a continuous forming unit, managed by the regional center to which the county belongs to, together with the county public authorities.

By creating these continuous forming units, the access to the programs will be a lot easy, the costs will be reduced and the implication and responsibility of local authorities of public administration will be increased.

- *Promoting alternative forming mechanisms* by the methodological and pedagogical coordination with the partner universities to I.N.A., in order to widen the good practice and usage of reciprocal analysis of continuous forming;
- *Use of new informational and communication technologies* and creating on the I.N.A. level, of a public administration knowledge center, which will include the best practice and their distribution in the national and regional network.

Regarding the forming programs methodology, elaborated by I.N.A and consulting the regional centers, is regarded the learning and usage of different forming techniques and standards offered by prestige institutions from the European Union, just as:

Table no.2

Technique	Frequency
Seminary/conference	35 – 40%
Case studies, discussions	25 – 35%
Study visits	10 – 20%
Simulation, role playing	20 – 25%

The used standards regard to:

- a) the evaluation of continuous forming activities, the knowledge assimilation level, the participation and interest regarding the training level (see table 3).

Table no. 3

General criteria	Specific criteria	Percentage in final evaluation
Active participation and the interest in learning	Attendance to forming activities; Consistency and frequency of all interventions.	30 – 35%
Team work and the position inside the team	Relations with other participants; Assuming the leading position.	20 – 25%
The level of accumulation for the new knowledge and abilities	Testing results; proof of accumulated abilities.	40 – 45%

- b) the participants' evaluation of forming activities, forming methodology, as well as means of communication (see table 4).
- c) the evaluation of INA performances, of regional centers and of other forming suppliers. This type of evaluation regards reaching the established forming levels, coverage of all themes and necessary capacity required by the authorities and public institutions, together with obtaining the quality standards for the preparing process of public servants;

Table no. 4

General criteria	Specific criteria	Percentage in final evaluation
Adequate forming methods	Usage degree for the new technologies; Methodological diversity.	30 – 35%
Exposure clarity	Approaching the announced themes; Time sufficiency.	30 – 35%
Reaching formative objectives	Understanding the forming content; Clarifying the new concepts and approaches.	30 – 35%
Behavior	The type of public and collaboration relationships	10 – 20%

- d) the evaluation of beneficiaries' satisfaction regarding formation (public servants), reported to the mission of public authorities they are part of, as well as the individual career plans.

By the forming methodology is also taken to consideration the insurance of a unitary formation system support by creating a quality standard system for didactic materials, under the I.N.A. expertise. Considering each type of continuous forming program, the content of the didactic materials must have the pattern of a minimal curriculum, representing 75% of the total forming activities. In order to establish this minimal curriculum, I.N.A., together with the other formation actors will take into consideration the European field activity as well as the knowledge level, managerial and speciality aptitudes, required by the public service.

An essential aspect in ensuring the efficiency in the forming system consists in the trainers' formation.

On the I.N.A. level, but also on the regional centers there will be constituted a trainer's body, upon professional criteria, that will put together the individual, theoretical and methodological expertise with the experience specific to public administration professionals.

In conclusion, inside the public servants corpse can enter specialists and practitioners from the central and local administration, teachers, and experts in the superior teaching institutes or from continuous formation centers inside the country or from abroad, together with trainers prepared in international projects or by the I.N.A., or regional or department centers.

The corpse will have *expertise degree hierarchy*, similar to the practice used by some institutions of the European Union, and will be structured on forming levels covering the immediate and future needs, regarding the supplying of continuous forming programs.

Regarding the building of a corps of professionals in the formation field, there is necessary to be followed the next stages:

- widening the selection and formation base of trainers used in the INA promoted programs and/or regional centers;
- elaborating selection criteria and strengthening the own testing and trainers evaluation system, such a manner that it will ensure the complete coverage of forming needs;
- establishing the best report between the theoretical content and the practical content of the formation, putting more accent upon the most relevant practical aspects and promoting good practice techniques in public servants' activity;
- conceiving and promoting a stimulation system regarding the payment of the trainers' activity.

The annual initial and continuous forming capacity for the public servants can only be touched by the implication in the forming system of other fore mentioned actors, who will ensure equivalent forming programs, offered by the same trainer or by different trainers, in the following conditions:

- the trainers have a well-known expertise for the field they activate in;
The well-known expertise must be based on the professional evolution and on the personal career accomplishments of all trainers and depends of the environment they come from: university, central and local administration, institutions specialized in training programs, etc.
During the build-up of the trainers' corpse, on the INA level or usually on the regional levels, the expertise will be recognized as belonging to this corpse.
- the forming supplier is temporary authorized or accredited, according to the Romanian law and holds the necessary logistic conditions for the program to be performed.
The temporary authorization and accreditation are concepts used in the Romanian superior teaching institutes and will be taken to consideration, especially in the long-term programs. There can also be taken to consideration the authorizations and accreditation obtained by international

cooperation or by especially constituted by INA and ANFP (The National Institute for Administration and the National Agency of Public Servants).

- the forming and evaluation methods are compatible and they ensure the flowing process of the program at the same exigency level;
The forming programs addressed to the public servants have something specific, needing the usage of new information and communication technologies, as well as complex evaluation systems, capable to emphasize the formative aspects and the resulted managerial skills, as a result of the attendance to the program.
- the duration of the programs is the same;
Reported to the type of the offered program, the same duration supposes the same number of hours dedicated to didactical and application activities, meaning the same number of teaching hours, applications or other direct activities, like the individually assisted study.
- the content of the programs is similar and answers the forming needs for a certain public service, ensuring the best report between theoretical and practical applications;
This condition imposes the existence, in the total content of the program, of some modules ensuring the minimal curriculum passage, finalized by obtaining the same level of theoretical and formative knowledge.

In the general economy of some equivalent programs, the minimal curriculum should cover 70 – 75% of their content.

The other activity existent in the program will be connected to the specialization, having the possibility to be optional, and this way ensuring a wider vision upon the problems existing in the public administration.

For the executive public servants, there are created equivalent programs, according to the mentioned period and expertise conditions, and the professional training programs for the specialty of the position they hold.

Also, in the same mentioned conditions, equivalent programs can be considered the programs realized during international projects dedicated to institutional building of public administration structures, etc.

In table 5, there can be observed the equivalent program types, the target groups to which they are addressed, the forming suppliers, and also the means of attesting the knowledge:

Table no. 5

Programs	Target group	Forming suppliers	Equivalent programs	Confirmation of the preparation
The specialized forming program for public administration lasting 2 years.	Licensed youths in universities, not older than 30 years; public servants with license in other fields (reconversion)	INA; Universities; European forming institutions.	Post-university Academic studies, lasting 2 years; Post-university studies on long term, developed in European institutions for	INA Diploma; Postuniversity study diploma granted by MECT; Diplomas from European institutions for public

Economic Theories – International Economic Relations

Programs	Target group	Forming suppliers	Equivalent programs	Confirmation of the preparation
			public administration forming.	administration forming.
The specialized forming program for public administration lasting for one year.	Actual and future leading position public servants.	INA; University; European forming institutions.	Master programs in public administration organized by the profile universities.	INA diploma – master; Master diploma given by the MECT
Post-university specializing programs lasting minimum 180 hours.	Public servants for operational leadership (office manager, service manager).	INA; Regional centers cooperating with profile universities.	Post-university specializing programs organized by the profile universities.	INA diploma; Post-university specialization diploma given by MECT.
Mastering programs in public administration, lasting between 3 days and 3 months	- All public servants and contractual servants from central and local public administration, no matter the position they hold (executive or managerial).	INA for high public servants and medium leadership servants; CRFCAPL for leading public servants in operational leadership.	Post-university programs organized by profile universities; Master programs for specific public administration fields organized by schools and forming centers of ministries and central institutions;	INA certificate Post-university certificate given by the MECT; Master certificates given by the ministry schools.
Seminaries and conferences, lasting from one to 3 days.	All public servants or contractual servants.	INA; CRFCAPL; NGO's.	Seminaries and conferences on different themes from the public administration field.	Participation proofs.

In order to implement all continuous forming programs, and to finish all public administration reforms, there is the need of establishing the problems by their priority and the time horizon for their approach, as follows:

A) on short term :

- the elaboration and promotion of forming programs corresponding to the forming levels one and two, and also to those corresponding to the professional re-conversion;
- identifying the forming needs revealed by the Country Report 2003, and ensuring the formative support for the public servants part of the privatization process, agricultural reform, administrative and legal reform, local development and project management;
- building the trainers corpse and establishing the calendar regarding its proficiency;
- building, together with the ANFP, the back-up corpse for the young public servants and the initiation of some prior forming activities need for them;
- identifying the financial and operational mechanisms for the logistic and conceptual support of the continuous forming strategy for the public servants;
- elaborating standards and unitary evaluation criteria regarding forming in the public administration field, according to the European practice;
- conceiving and defining the forming routes for each type of public service.

B) on medium term:

- the consolidation of the continuous forming system for public servants and making all its segments operational;
- creating the necessary capacity in order to form according to the Public Servants Status;
- conceiving and implementing forming programs for the European integration of the public servants reported to their part and position in the process of adherence to the European Union;
- starting forming programs in the European Administration especially created for youths, meant to prepare specialists who will ensure the interface between the central and local administration and the European institutions;
- projecting and developing the forming activities regarding the support in the prefecture corpse's proficiency;
- integrating in specific proficiency programs of high public servants;
- creating a new infrastructure and logistic base for INA and the regional centers that are compatible with their mission in the process of reform of public administration.

C) on long term:

- harmonizing and updating the methods and forming practices with those from the administrations of the countries members of the European Union;
- consolidating the professional dialogue with the partners and other forming suppliers inside the country and abroad;
- affirmation of INA and of the regional centers as an authority with a recognized expertise in forming public servants, inside the country and abroad;

In conclusion, one might say that in the context of Romanian public administration reform, the continuous forming of human resources becomes its solid support, being constituted in a determined process of its acceleration.

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