

The professionalism of civil servants with special status from the prison administration system

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Abstract

Human excellence is not a destination but a journey without end that every man has to follow in every moment and every day of his life. (Iordache Bota)[1]

Starting from the vision of the specialists in the field of vocational training on what the vocational training of the penitentiary administration system personnel is expected to be in the year 2015, strategic objectives which, once achieved, make possible the transform of the vision into reality, have been identified. The strategic objectives are supported, in turn, by specific objectives and the by annual plan of activities.

The initial and continuous vocational training, complex and multidimensional segment of human resources management, sustained in a significant measure, the rhythm and magnitude of changes and offered relevant solutions for supporting the exercise of the staff's working tasks, the smooth flow of the institutional processes development and the strengthening of the role of the public service of the National Administration of Penitentiaries.

Inherently, however, the general wear and tear of the training system of the personnel manifested itself under the impact of intra and extra organizational factors. The countering of the consequences which this reality reveals imposes the decisive renewal of vision at the level of the initial and continuous vocational training of the staff which ensures their structural and functional continuous modernization.

The specialized training, the preparation and improvement of civil servants in the penitentiary administration system aim at their general career development.

Keywords: vocational training, civil servants with special status, prison administration, professionalism

Introduction

The constitutions of Romania (since 2003) and Republic of Moldova (since 1994) established that there are three powers within the state: legislative, executive and judicial power. The instrument through which the executive power exercises its competence is the public administration. But administration, as an institution, operates through its staff, through its employees. They are civil servants. The holder of a public office in the state administration is not a simple employee, but a person with rights and responsibilities well determined by the Law regarding public function and the status of public servants no.158. XVI of July 04, 2008 and Law no. 188/1999 on the Status of public servants amended and supplemented by O.U.G. no.37/2009, as well as Law No. 293/2004 on the Status of public servants in the National Administration of Penitentiaries and the Law No. 15 of February 15, 2008 which amends and supplements Law 1036-XIII of December 17, 1996 regarding the prison system of the Republic of Moldova.

The exercise of the public function in the prison system is subordinated to some principles, which stand at its base.

The principles governing the organization and career development in the prison administration system are [2]:

- competence, the principle according to which people who want to gain or to be promoted in a public office in the National Administration of Penitentiaries and its subordinate units must hold and confirm the knowledge and skills necessary for the exercise of the public function in the prison administration system;

- competition, the principle according to which the confirmation of knowledge and skills necessary for the exercise of a public function in the prison administration is done through competition or exam;
- equal opportunities, the principle which ensures the recognition of vocations for the public function in the prison administration system to any person who meets the conditions established by law;
- professionalism, the principle according to which the exercise of public functions is made in compliance with the legal provisions;
- motivation, the principle according to which, in the purpose of career development, the National Administration of Penitentiaries and its subordinate units have the obligation to identify and apply, in accordance with the law, the moral and material motivation of civil servants, as well as to support their professional development initiatives;
- transparency, the principle according to which the National Administration of Penitentiaries and its subordinate units have the obligation to make available to those interested the information of public interest regarding the career in the penitentiary administration system.
- the stability of civil servants with special status in public function for which they were employed, determine their professionalization.

Presentation of the issue

In the Romanian prison system it is necessary to adapt those three types of vocational training of the European Union states: **centralized** (the decision-making and establishment of strategic guidelines take place at the central level, after which they are transmitted to the actors involved in the process of vocational training), **decentralized** (the competences of each actor involved in the process of vocational training are delegated), **semi-decentralized** (combines the two types) [3].

This process will take account of the following:

- **the creation of a professional body in the prison administration system.**

The present prison system in Romania is faced with shortage of resources, which imposes the creation and development of a professional body of staff of the prison administration system.

Also, in order to ensure an efficient leadership act it is necessary that the managerial capabilities of the staff which has coordination and management responsibilities be developed.

- **the introduction and use of new methods of vocational training**

The reform process of the Romanian prison system imposes the introduction and use of modern methods of training in accordance with domestic and international standards.

- **the permanent adaptation of the training strategy**

The training strategy must have a prominent character of adaptability and flexibility.

- **the consultation of the main actors involved in the vocational training of the of prison administration system's personnel**

For a more efficient correlation between the process of vocational training and the actual needs and interests of the beneficiaries, whether direct or indirect, it is necessary to consult them.

The strategy is based on several fundamental principles which are based on the best practices recognized on a domestic and international scale in the field of human resources development and vocational training from the system of public order and national security.

The main idea is that the vocational training is never an end in itself; the objective of the vocational training is to facilitate the students' learning in order to increase capacity and performance when completing work tasks.

The effectiveness of training depends on the impact it has – that is, the measure that increases the competence of learners in the workplace; training and the work activity complement each other.

The vocational training strategy sets the following strategic objectives, achieved through specific action directions and transversal action directions:

- **HIGH-PERFORMANCE INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT**

The efficient management of the prison system involves not only a strategic vision of the institution's management team, but also the implementation of a decision-making system based on

getting feed back from the staff in order to adopt measures with major impact on the system. This will lead to performance and achieving the objectives by associating the resources needed to achieve the objectives and their rational allocation.[4]

- **THE INCREASE OF THE LEVEL OF PROFESSIONALISM OF THE STAFF**

The increase of the level of professionalism is the main objective of the initial and continuous training of the staff.

Achieving this goal requires the correct formulation of premises and the establishment of adequate implementing measures which will activate the modernizing potential of the system.

Ensuring professionalism is not an objective in itself and for itself. The competence produced through training generates the professionalism necessary for the staff to fulfill with more competence the duties in the service of the institution and for the benefit of citizens. In this regard, we emphasize that the vocational training is, first and foremost, a major concern of the institution.

- **THE INCREASE OF EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM OF THE PERSONNEL OF THE PRISON ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM THROUGH A MANAGEMENT ORIENTED TOWARDS RESULTS**

Effectiveness is the indicator which highlights the extent to which the organizational objectives are fulfilled, for example those of the vocational training system. A systematic promotion of training activities aimed at obtaining more qualified personnel and at ensuring high-quality services needs to be established.

To be able to measure the effectiveness of the training activities, even through the indirect effects it produces, it is necessary to bring into balance the resources used and the results obtained. In the same line of thinking, we must assess the implications involved with the action of non-participating at a vocational training program. The programs can involve: unjustified waste of resources, failure to comply with certain duties and missions, the lower quality services, image deficit, or other types of losses which spread, not only collaterally, but also to the whole society [5].

At the present time the Romanian National Administration of Penitentiaries implements some strategic measures of professionalization of personnel that we are going to enumerate below:

High-performance institutional management

The A.N.P is working on elaborating and implementing an annual transparent program of identification and development of managerial capabilities of employees in the prison system which will ensure management continuity resulting in a better prepared managerial staff.

Also, the human resources policies and the relating procedures, respectively the planning, recruitment, integration, training, assessment, motivation, career management and counseling of human resources of the prison administration system are being developed and implemented. This strategic objective is aimed at developing an integrated management system of human resources.

The final result of the high-performance institutional management system is the promotion of the National Administration of Penitentiaries as a provider of vocational training in certain areas that are training "niche". It is an opportunity for the institution to specialize at a national and European level; this task is concentrated in the *accreditation as a vocational training provider for its own training structures*.

The second and most important strategic measure implemented by A.N.P. is ***the increase in the level of professionalism of the staff***. This measure can be achieved by adapting the vocational training system to the real needs of the prison establishments *by organizing all activities of vocational training in relation to the actual needs identified*. Together with the above-mentioned measure they rely on expanding the system of training through modern methods of vocational training *which would be reflected in the implementation of modern training methods at the level of all units in the prison administration system*.

Another aspect which has not been subjected to review so far is the quantification of the personnel professionalization through studies, analyses and statistics regarding the training conducted

by the National Administration of Penitentiaries through the assessment of vocational training provided for the staff and the completion of the curriculum on the vocational training necessary to achieve the standards of training.

The third strategic measure which is implemented by the A.N.P is **increasing the effectiveness and ensuring the efficiency of the training systems** through the awareness of the benefits of vocational training for the staff, institution and other interested factors. This measure is based on ensuring the attractiveness of the jobs in the field of personnel training system *by promoting quality, training of trainers and the development and modernization of its own training structures.*

Conclusions and suggestions

The prison administration system in the Republic of Moldova as well as in our own country has not yet exceeded the threshold with respect to personnel policies and professionalization. From this point of view it is necessary to create a closer connection between the prison system and the competent staff. The Prison Administration should manifest itself as a public service, in the service of the citizen, fact which cannot be completed without a professional personnel structure. In this context it is needed:

- the constant application of the principle of employment of civil servants with special status within the prison system solely on the criteria of professional competence;
- the elimination of political patronage in the prison administration;
- the promotion in public functions must be made on the basis of performance and morality in the spirit of the law and the Constitution;
- the coherent and correct management of the public servant's career in the prison system, by taking into account the specificity of its tasks, stimulating and ensuring normal work conditions for the purpose of compliance with the principle of stability and continuity in the work place;
- the creation of a high-performance system, national and regional, for the training of civil servants in the prison system;
- improving the reputation of the prison administration; This is relatively low, and the career in this field is considered least attractive, not only because of the relatively small salaries, but also because of the negative public opinion regarding the Government in general and especially this public service in particular,

Concluding, we can say that improving the situation in this field requires not only the training of the civil servants in the prison system but also the training of our States' citizens.

References

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