



GENERATIONS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

2024

Research Report Collection

Edited by
Csilla Paksi-Petró



LUDOVIKA
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and the Ministry of Public Administration and Regional Development.



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Welcoming Thoughts

It was a great pleasure to collaborate with the Deputy State Secretariat for Personnel Affairs of the Ministry of the Interior and the staff of the Ludovika University of Public Service (LUPS) during the implementation of the Hungarian Presidency program of the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN). We owe them our gratitude for their research work aimed at uncovering generational differences to ensure the efficient and modern operation of public administration. The results of this research are summarised in this outstanding study.

Nowadays, ensuring a suitably composed public administration workforce is a challenge across Europe, especially given the aging of the civil service personnel. This phenomenon is increasingly evident in many countries, making it ever more urgent to enhance the attractiveness of public administration for younger generations.

In light of these considerations, the Hungarian EUPAN Presidency concluded that generational research could effectively support European public administrations in their efforts in this regard. The Ministry of the Interior entrusted the expert staff of the Ludovika University of Public Service with this highly significant task. The resulting study provides invaluable insights into the characteristics, needs and expectations of different generations, offering substantial assistance in developing future strategies and measures.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the researchers and colleagues who participated in this work and contributed to the publication of this document.

Thank you for your dedication and excellent work! I hope that we can continue to rely on your cooperation in further developing public administration in the future.

Katalin Uzsák

Deputy State Secretary Responsible for the Operation
of Territorial Public Administration
Ministry of Public Administration and Regional Development

Foreword

Nothing illustrates the importance of public service generational management better than the fact that there is no European country that is not grappling with generational challenges hampering the replenishment of the public administration workforce. It is a general phenomenon that societies are continuously aging, and this trend is even more accelerated in public administration. The increasing demands place ever-growing burdens on healthcare and social systems, making it increasingly difficult to secure sufficient human capacity to ensure public services. Despite these difficulties, the countries that succeed are those that not only address the challenges posed by an “overweight” older population but also see them as opportunities for development. With age-conscious personnel policies, they can influence demographic trends and, as part of this, redesign HRM processes to consider age-specific needs, maintain the work ability and well-being of government officials throughout their careers, and ensure continuous professional development during a lifelong career.

In Hungarian public administration, the proportion of younger age groups increased due to government measures introduced in the early 2010s. However, the age composition of the workforce has once again started to shift toward aging. This predicts that within 5–15 years, we will face another, more prolonged wave of retirements, and the government must be prepared to address this issue. A first step toward addressing this challenge could be the scientific research conducted by the Department of Human Resources at Ludovika University of Public Service at the request of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Public Administration and Regional Development.

The researchers focused on key areas, including the age composition of employees in government administration, the persistence of seniority, knowledge transfer, the functioning of mentoring programs, expectations expressed in the “psychological contract”, the interrelations of generational management and employer branding, as well as development and talent management programs. These topics are of particular importance for ensuring the sustainability of public service operations, as the efficiency of public services depends not only on the age

of employees but also on the effectiveness of knowledge sharing and collaboration between generations. Bridging the generational gap and preserving the knowledge of older workers are crucial for the future of public administration.

I would particularly like to highlight that, for the first time, data from the recently introduced Government Personnel Decision Support System were utilised for scientific research. This enabled a comprehensive empirical examination of the entire body of government officials, comprising over 77,000 employees. The research resulted in more than 12,000 completed questionnaires, generating not only quantitative analyses but also detailed, in-depth qualitative findings. The combination of interviews and survey data collection allowed for a thorough analysis of intergenerational dynamics and the challenges of generational management.

International connections also played an important role in the research. Analysing European practices, such as the generational strategies employed by the OECD and the EU, alongside international experiences, helped us identify directions for the Hungarian public service that align with global trends while accounting for domestic particularities.

The research aims not only to benefit Hungarian public administration but also to contribute to European administrative practices. The findings were presented and recognised at both the working group meeting and the Directors-General meeting of the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN).

The thoroughness and professionalism of this research have contributed significantly to advancements in the field of generational management. The work of the researchers not only provides valuable contributions to the scientific community but also supports governmental decision-makers in shaping public service strategies and policies. This document fulfils Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's sentiment: "We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children." It reminds us that the transfer of knowledge and joint effort are about laying the foundations for the future, not merely preserving the past.

Budapest, December 2024

Enikő Kovácsné Székér
Deputy State Secretary
Ministry of the Interior

Preface

From 1 July 2024, Hungary, as the rotating President of the Council of the European Union, will also assume the presidency of the European Public Administration Network (hereinafter: EUPAN) for a six-month term. EUPAN is an informal network of public administration and civil service professionals operating at both expert and political levels in EU member states. Its primary goal is to share professional knowledge and experiences. Hungary's representation in EUPAN is jointly carried out by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration and the Ministry of the Interior based on governmental task distribution related to human resource management, organisational development and public service innovation. Consequently, the Hungarian Presidency program was prepared collaboratively by experts from these two ministries, prioritising generational management in public service, greening and digitalisation.

To address these topics, the two ministries invited the Department of Human Resources and the Public Service HRM Research Workshop at the Ludovika University of Public Service (LUPS) to conduct scientific research and present the results at working group meetings (WL level) and director-general meetings (DG level). The findings were also developed into studies, presentations and workshop background materials.

The project's planning phase began in October 2023, followed by a more than one-year collaborative effort involving the ministries and several external experts. During this time, three large-scale empirical research projects and two additional comprehensive descriptive studies were conducted. The project officially concluded on 30 November 2024. By the given deadline, all professional analytical materials and background documents had been completed, and the planned presentations and workshops had been delivered. The lectures, workshops and research reports received significant positive feedback from representatives of the ministries, and EUPAN member states, particularly regarding their high professional standards and practical applicability.

The research process involved more than 22 internal and external experts, whose creative and precise professional work contributed significantly to the project's success. The internal contributors included staff from multiple university departments and organisational units, covering the full spectrum of academic roles, from doctoral candidates to professors, including scientific researchers. This diversity ensured a rich and high-quality scientific foundation for the research.

The project encompassed a wide range of research and professional activities focusing on three main topics: generational research, an overview of the public administration organisational system and administrative innovations (greening and the digitalisation of public administration). Over 20 author's sheets (approximately 800,000 characters) of expert material were produced during the research. The activities implemented yielded significant new findings in all three aforementioned fields.

In this volume, we publish the findings of the human resources field, with a focus on generational research.

The first part of the volume presents the structure of Hungarian public administration and the foundations of personnel policy. This comprehensive overview of the structure, organisation and personnel policy system of Hungarian public administration aims to provide an informative foundation for our international readers or anyone seeking to understand the Hungarian public administration system.

This chapter is followed by an overview of the international branch of generational research focusing on the practices of the EUPAN countries and exploring the generational challenges.

The volume concludes with a summary of the empirical research on Hungarian public administration. This provides valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities of the Hungarian civil service and offers practical recommendations for enhancing efficient generation management in public administration.

This volume will serve as an insightful resource for those seeking a deeper understanding of the Hungarian public administration system and the current

challenges in human resource management across Europe. We hope that the research findings and analyses presented here will contribute to professional discourse and provide inspiration in administrative innovation and generational management.

We extend our gratitude to all the authors and contributors for their outstanding efforts and our readers for their interest and engagement.

I wish you an enjoyable and enlightening read!

The Editor

Dávid Ludányi

The Organisation and Officials of the Hungarian Public Administration

INTRODUCTION

The review entitled *The Organisation and Officials of the Hungarian Public Administration* was prepared for the Hungarian EU Presidency 2024 as part of the EUPAN activity.

This comprehensive overview detailing the Hungarian public administration's structure, organisation and personnel policy system aims to provide an informative foundation for EUPAN activities.

The review provides detailed insights into the Hungarian public administration system, allowing member states to benchmark and compare their own structures and practices. EUPAN members can identify areas for shared initiatives by understanding Hungary's public administration framework.

THE ORGANISATION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION¹

The organisation of Hungarian public administration can be divided into two distinct parts; *central administration* and *territorial–local administration*. While at the central level there are only state administration bodies dealing with uniform matters nationwide, at local level there are both state administration bodies and local government bodies. The first is dominated by the

¹ Contributor to the translation: István Kamrás.

administration of national affairs managed at the territorial level, while the second is dominated by the administration of affairs of local relevance.

Central bodies of Public Administration

The common characteristic of central bodies is that they operate on a countrywide basis, otherwise known as having *national jurisdiction*. It also follows that these bodies are at *the highest level* of their respective administrations (e.g. the Ministry of the Interior is the highest organisational level specialised in home affairs).

Central bodies can be distinguished according to whether they can only deal with certain administrative matters (e.g. among others, the Ministry of the Interior is responsible for home affairs) or whether they are responsible for the management of the whole administration (only the Government is authorised to do so). Organisations that deal with only a specific issue are called *specialised bodies*. In contrast, the Government is *a body with general powers*.

Central bodies of administration can also be distinguished according to whether they are *under the control of the Government* or operate *independently of it*. For example, ministries are under the control of the Government (e.g. Ministry of the Interior). At the same time, the so-called autonomous state administration bodies (e.g. the Hungarian Competition Authority) are not, as their name implies, under the control of the Government.²

The following *types of bodies* are classified as central bodies:

- the Government
- ministries
- main government agencies
- central agencies
- autonomous state administration bodies
- independent regulatory bodies
- law enforcement agencies

² For more information see SZALAI 2020: 177–178.

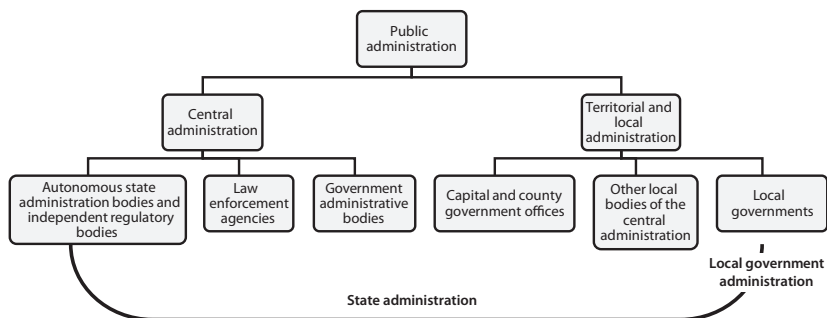


Figure 1
Organisation of the Hungarian public administration
 Source: Compiled by the author

The Government, ministries, main government agencies and central agencies are collectively called *governmental administrative bodies*. Similarly, autonomous state administration bodies and independent regulatory bodies are distinguished as *bodies with a special status* (complemented by offices of public authorities not classified as state administration bodies, as well as the offices of public corporations).³

It is worth mentioning that some central bodies have decentralised bodies *at territorial level* (such as the Nógrád County Directorate of the Hungarian State Treasury).

First, we shall present the *state administration*. The organisational and operational rules of state administration bodies are governed by Act CXXV of 2018 on Government Administration (hereinafter referred to as Kit.) and Act XLIII of 2010 on Central State Administration Organs and the Legal Status of Members of the Government and State Secretaries (hereinafter referred to as Ksztv.). The diagram below shows the relative position of the state

³ A központi államigazgatási szervekről, valamint a Kormány tagjai és az államtitkárok jogállásáról szóló 2010. évi XLIII. törvény § 1 [Act XLIII of 2010 on Central State Administration Organs and the Legal Status of Members of the Government and State Secretaries, Article 1].

administration bodies (the dotted line does not indicate direct subordination but refers to the organisational level occupied).

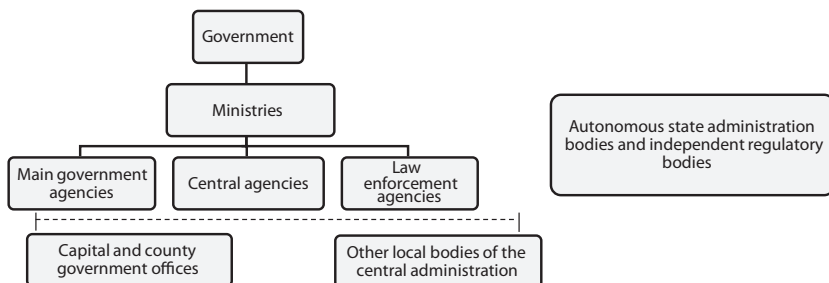


Figure 2

Location of public administrations in relation to each other

Source: Compiled by the author

In the following, we review the main characteristics of *government administration bodies*.

The Government

The Government is the *supreme body of Hungarian public administration*. It is a body with general powers and nationwide competence, and therefore operates on a national scale, dealing with all branches of public administration (including home affairs and defence). The precise tasks of the Government are difficult to define, but it is possible to group them. We can distinguish between two types of roles: the so-called state administration role and the governmental role.⁴

⁴ For more information see LÖRINCZ 2010a: 117–118.

The role of State Administration

The Government performs various *public administration tasks*. It directs the activities of subordinate governmental administrative bodies and coordinates their activities.

The Governmental Role

The Government's role in governance is primarily *to determine the general policy of the country* and, on that basis, its *foreign and domestic policy*. This includes, for example, shaping the country's political system, social system, economic policy or even employment policy.

Members and Functioning of the Government

The Government is a collegial body, made up of the *Prime Minister* and *ministers*. Both the Prime Minister and the ministers are senior political leaders (i.e. political rather than professional). *Cabinet meetings* are the most important manifestation of the government's operation. In its state administration and governmental role, the Government also establishes its official positions and makes decisions during weekly meeting. To be able to deal with the large number of proposals on the agenda, it needs to prepare these meetings properly. This is managed by the so-called *Meeting of Permanent State Secretaries*, which precedes the Cabinet meetings. Its most important task is to review and discuss the proposals received from the ministries and, overall, to prepare in detail the decisions of the Government.

The work of the Government may be assisted by Cabinets, Government Committees, Government Commissioners and Prime Minister's Commissioners, which, similarly to the Government, operate in a collegial form. However, they are not usually entitled to take specific decisions and typically meet less frequently and in a narrower circle (i.e. only the heads of the relevant ministries attend these meetings). Their activities may have preparatory, advisory or

consultative nature. One such cabinet is the so-called *Economic Cabinet*, which discusses economic policy issues before a cabinet meeting.⁵

The Prime Minister is a prominent figure in the Government, shown by the fact that the Prime Minister chairs the meetings. Decisions of the Government may be, inter alia, decrees or resolutions. Cabinet meetings must be documented. The Government Office of the Prime Minister and its Permanent State Secretary play a major role in the preparation and conduct of meetings.

Ministries

Basic characteristics of ministries

A ministry is a Minister's *working organisation*. Ministries are under the control of the Government, they perform specialised administrative tasks, and they are responsible for the day-to-day administration of affairs. Ministries have a dual function: they are involved in carrying out the tasks of the specialised administration, but at the same time they also play a role in the policy development of their own administrative sector, and in the formulation of sectoral policy. Ministries also have a nationwide competence and represent the highest level within their own sector. They have special powers, subject only to the general powers of the Government.⁶

Organisation and management of ministries

A ministry is headed by a *Minister*. The tasks of a Minister shall be laid down by a Government Decree. A Minister's *tasks* include drafting regulations; preparing proposals for the government; preparing legislation; drawing up sectoral strategy; implementing legislation, steering, supervision and controlling; establishing and maintaining international relations; and liaising with NGOs.

⁵ See more in JUHÁSZ–SZALAI 2021: 53–68.

⁶ For more information see LÖRINCZ 2010b: 119–127.

The organisational structure of a ministry is determined by the Minister. The organisational structure of ministries can vary. However, what they all have in common is that they are divided into Minister's Cabinets (not to be confused with the cabinet meetings in subsection *Members and Functioning of the Government*), departments and secretariats. A department and a secretariat, if led by a head of department, may be divided into units.

Ministers are supported by *their deputies* in policy-making and implementation tasks. The Minister is deputised by two types of State Secretaries; the Parliamentary State Secretary, who is a political leader, and the Permanent State Secretary, who is a professional senior manager.

The *State Secretary* is the Minister's fully authorised deputy who is responsible for a sector in the ministry. For this reason, the Minister appoints a *Deputy Minister* (typically the Parliamentary State Secretary) who generally replaces the Minister in policy-making (for example, he may attend parliamentary meetings in place of the Minister). The Ministry's organisation is headed by the *Permanent State Secretary*, who acts under the direction of the Minister, in accordance with the relevant laws and professional requirements. As a general rule, the *Permanent State Secretary* exercises the rights of employer over government officials working in the ministry. While the main function of the Secretary of State is to replace the Minister in a political capacity, the Permanent Secretary of State relieves the Minister of the burden of running the office of the Ministry (for example, by exercising the power of employer in relation to government officials). The Minister is also assisted by *Deputy State Secretaries*, who take responsibility for the management of particular areas. The Deputy State Secretary is directed by the State Secretary or the Permanent State Secretary. The Deputy State Secretary may be substituted by a *head of department* or another Deputy State Secretary. A department is led by the head of department, while units are led by either a head of department or a separate head of unit. The Minister's duties are also supported by *other auxiliary bodies*. Such auxiliary bodies may be the Minister's Cabinet or secretariat.⁷

⁷ For more information see JUHÁSZ–SZALAI 2021C: 69–97.

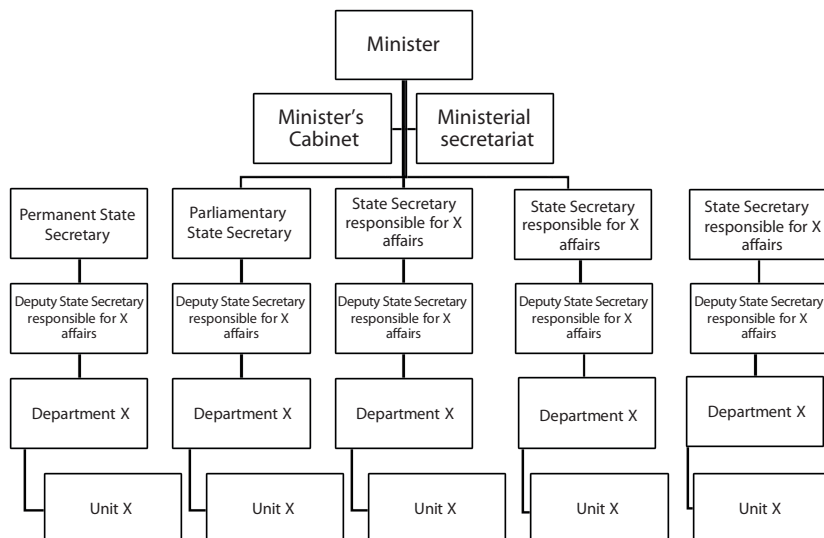


Figure 3

*Organisational structure of ministries**Source: Compiled by the author*

Main Government agencies and central agencies

In some respects, main government agencies and central agencies are of less importance *than ministries*. Their leaders are usually called presidents and are therefore not members of the Government. Consequently, they do not have the power to make regulations and ultimately have much less influence on policy development in their own field (thus, they primarily perform tasks of a law enforcement nature.) However, *they are similar to ministries* in that they also have a nationwide competence and specific powers (i.e. for their own sector). They are also similar in their organisational structure and staffing. For example, the Hungarian State Treasury (as a central agency) is headed by

a president. While the Treasury undoubtedly plays an important role in the implementation of budgetary tasks, it does not have as strong influence on budgetary policy as the Minister of Finance, who supervises it. Its tasks are more executive in nature (e.g. central payroll accounting).⁸

*Autonomous state administration bodies and
independent regulatory bodies*

The most important common feature of these bodies is that, although they have nationwide competence and special authority, they are part of the central government and perform tasks in the interest of the public or the state administration, without being under the control of the Government. This is significant due to the nature of the activities they perform. Although these bodies also have administrative duties, these cover areas in which independence and impartiality from the Government are particularly important. The heads of these bodies are therefore accountable not to the Government but to the Parliament. This independence also applies to the officials. Along with some other aspects, the demand for independence connects the bodies responsible for monitoring compliance with market competition conditions and ensuring the transparency of public procurement.⁹ The main difference between autonomous state administration bodies and independent regulatory bodies is that only the latter have the power to issue regulations (i.e. their independence is even stronger than that of autonomous state administration bodies, as their summary name implies). Autonomous state administration bodies and independent regulatory bodies are listed in the Ksztv.

⁸ For more information see JUHÁSZ–SZALAI 2021b: 98–113.

⁹ For more information see SZALAI 2020: 220–222.

Table 1
Autonomous state administration bodies and independent regulatory bodies

Autonomous state administration bodies	Independent regulatory bodies
National Authority for Data Protection and Freedom of Information	Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority
Hungarian Competition Authority	National Media and Infocommunications Authority
Public Procurement Authority	Supervisory Authority of Regulatory Affairs
National Election Office	Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority
Directorate-General for Auditing European Funds	
Integrity Authority	
Sovereignty Protection Office	

Source: Compiled by the author

Territorial and local bodies of public administration

At the territorial and local levels of the Hungarian public administration, a distinction must be made whether the bodies in question perform state administrative or municipal (local government) functions.

Based on this:

- state administration tasks are carried out by the capital and county government offices and district offices
- municipal functions are carried out by local governments and their administrative bodies

Metropolitan and County Government Offices

Basic characteristics of Metropolitan and County Government Offices

The *Metropolitan and County Government Offices* are territorial government administration bodies of the Government with general competences. Government offices are led by government commissioners appointed by the Prime Minister and they operate in each county (County Government Offices) and the capital city of Budapest (Metropolitan Government Office). They have a wide range of responsibilities in their respective areas. Government offices coordinate and facilitate *the territorial* implementation of *government tasks* (i.e. the tasks of the central government administrations).

Organisation and management of the Metropolitan and County Government Offices

The Government Office is headed by the Government Commissioner and is assisted by the Director-General and the Director, who are the professional heads of the Office. The position of the Government Commissioner is a political position, appointed by the Prime Minister. The Government Commissioner exercises the duties and powers of the government office, and also holds employer authority over the officials and employers of the government office. The Director-General is in a government service employment relationship, with an indefinite term of appointment. The Director-General is the general deputy of the Government Commissioner and also leads the official organisation of the government office. The Government Office is divided into departments led by heads of department and into district offices (metropolitan district offices in case of the capital city). The district (metropolitan district) offices are integral sub offices of the government offices, and as such they are the lowest level units of territorial state administration and they function as branches of the county (capital) government offices. The head of the district office is the *district registrar*, who is a professional head. The registrar is supported by a deputy registrar. The

government offices operate a so-called integrated customer service, which is called the Government Service Centre. These Government Service Centres are located in the district offices.¹⁰

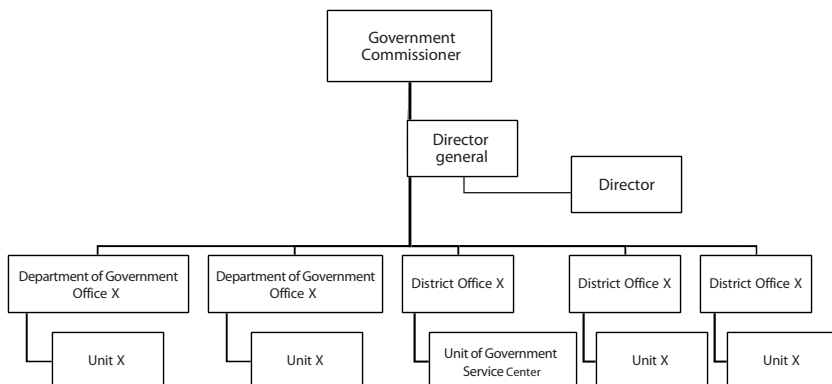


Figure 4
Organisational structure of government offices
 Source: Compiled by the author

The government office is directed by the Government through the minister appointed by a government decree for the management of the government office (currently the Minister of Public Administration and Justice). Due to the wide-ranging responsibilities of the government office, the minister who holds the relevant responsibilities in the Government Statute may also participate in the professional management (otherwise known as the professional supervising minister).¹¹

¹⁰ For more information see HEGYESI–JUHÁSZ 2021: 114–141.

¹¹ A Kormány tagjainak feladat- és hatásköréről szóló 182/2022. (V. 24.) Korm. rendelet [Government Decree 182/2022 (V. 24.) on the Competences and Powers of the Members of the Government].

Local governments

Hungary has a *two-tier* local government structure. *Municipal governments* are found in villages, towns, cities with district seats, cities with county rights and the districts of the capital. Their primary task is to take care of *local public affairs*. *Territorial governments* are the county governments, whose role is complementary to that of the local governments.

The main rules governing the organisation and operation of local governments are laid down in Act CLXXXIX of 2011 on the Local Governments of Hungary (hereinafter referred to as Möt.v.). The fulfilment of local government tasks is ensured by the *body of representatives* and its organs. The body of representatives of the local government consists of representatives and the mayor. The *organs* of the body of representatives are: the mayor, the mayor's office, the clerk, the committees, the association, the body of the sub-district local government. The body of representatives shall hold the number of *meetings* laid down in the rules of organisation and operation, with a minimum of six *meetings* per year. The mayor convenes and chairs the meetings and, in case of obstruction, the deputy mayor replaces him. Generally, meetings are open to the public, but they may also be held in camera (for example, when dealing with a matter concerning a municipal authority or a conflict of interest). Minutes of the meeting must be taken and signed by the mayor and the clerk. The clerk must send the minutes to the government office. The quorum for a meeting of the body of representatives shall be more than half of the members present. The decision of the body of representatives may be a decree or a resolution. The adoption of decrees is a non-delegable power of the body of representatives. A qualified majority vote is required for the adoption of a regulation.¹²

¹² See more in FEIK 2019.

OFFICIALS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

*Characteristics of civil service legislation applicable
to officials in Public Administration*

The role of civil servants in the efficient and professional management of public administrations is of paramount importance. Currently, the legal regulation of the *civil service* in the Hungarian public administration is significantly differentiated.¹³ The status of civil servants are regulated by the following public service acts.

Table 2
Overview of acts on legal status in the Hungarian Public Administration

Grouping of administrative officials		
Act CXXV of 2018 on Government Administration (Kit.)	Applies to officials in central and territorial governmental administrative bodies.	This includes government officials working in ministries (e.g. the Ministry of Defence), main government agencies (e.g. the Central Statistical Office), central agencies (e.g. the Education Office), capital and county government offices and district offices.
Act CXCV of 2011 on Public Service Officials (hereinafter referred to as Kttv.)	Applies to employees in the administrative bodies of local governments.	Includes civil servants and civil service administrators working at local governments.
Act CVII of 2019 on Special Status Organs and the legal Status of Persons Employed by them (hereinafter referred to as Küt.)	Applies to officials working for bodies with a special status.	This includes civil servants working in autonomous state administration bodies (e.g. the Hungarian Competition Authority), independent regulatory bodies (e.g. the National Media and Infocommunications Authority), offices of public authorities (e.g. the Office of the Constitutional Court) and offices of public bodies (e.g. the Secretariat of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences).

¹³ See more in HAZAFI 2023.

Grouping of administrative officials		
Act CXXX of 2020 on the Legal Status of the Personnel of the National Tax and Customs Administration (hereinafter referred to as NAV Szjtv.)	Applies to officials working in the tax administration area of the National Tax and Customs Administration.	Includes employees working as officials in the National Tax and Customs Administration.

Source: Compiled by the authors

Establishment and modification of a legal relationship

Selection

The *selection* procedure is carried out by the administrative body on its own initiative or by the Personnel Centre (located in the Government Office of the Prime Minister). If it does so on its own initiative, the post may be filled by a restricted or self-administered application procedure.

The *general conditions of appointment* are the uniform employment requirements expected of all candidates. Only those who meet all these requirements can therefore be officials. The general conditions of appointment are laid down in each civil service law. In general, they are as follows.

Table 3
General conditions of appointment in the Civil Service Acts

Capacity to act
Age limit (18–70 years)
Hungarian citizenship
No criminal record
A minimum level of education (secondary school leaving examination or, in some civil service laws, an intermediate-level vocational qualification)

Source: Compiled by the author






Specific conditions of appointment are generally defined as specific employment requirements (e.g. professional experience, specific educational qualifications or the fulfilment of a specific obligation, etc.) for certain posts or positions in certain public administration bodies. These may be imposed by legislation at various levels (mainly laws or government decrees) or by the employer.¹⁴

The appointment and the conditions of validity

Once the most suitable candidate has been selected, the legal relationship is established *by appointment and its acceptance*. The appointment and acceptance *shall be in writing*. Any appointment which is contrary to the law *shall be null and void*. A common feature of the appointment, whichever civil service act is used as a basis, is that it must contain the so-called *indispensable elements*, which lay down and specify the main conditions of employment. The main mandatory elements are illustrated in *Table 4*.

¹⁴ For more information see LUDÁNYI 2022b: 47–59.

Table 4
Key elements of the appointment letter

Appointment document		
Content of the appointment		Example
	The duration of the relationship	Indefinite duration
	The official's working time	Full-time (40 hours per week)
	The salary	HUF 700,000 gross
	The place of work	Ministry of the Interior – Headquarters: 2–4 József Attila street, 1051 Budapest
	The official's duties	Personnel tasks, such as preparing appointments and merit reviews

Source: Compiled by the author

The validity of the appointment is subject to the *taking of an oath*. Lastly, the most credible means of measuring competence and ability is the *probationary period*, which, as a general rule, should be fixed at the beginning of the employment relationship for a minimum of three and a maximum of six months.

Characteristics of the amendment of the appointment

The amendment of the appointment means a change in the content of an appointment brought about by the will of the parties. In public administration, there are basically *two types of arrangements*. Table 5 illustrates the main differences between the two solutions. One can be illustrated by the Kttv. and the other by the Kit.

Table 5
Characteristics of the change of appointment

	Amendment of the appointment in the Kttv.	Amendment of the appointment in the Kit.
General rule	The appointment may be amended by mutual agreement of the parties	The employer may unilaterally amend the appointment
Specific rule	In certain cases, the employer may unilaterally change the appointment	There is no specific legislation (however, the general rule does not exclude the possibility of changing the appointment by mutual agreement)
Conditions for unilateral amendment	Must meet specific legal conditions Cannot cause disproportionate harm to the official	Does not have to meet specific legal conditions
Discharge	The official may request it in certain cases of unilateral amendment	The official may request this in certain cases

Source: Compiled by the author

Elements of the content of the legal relationship

This section focuses on the basic characteristic of the legal status of officials, their main *rights* and *obligations*.¹⁵

Remuneration system in Public Administration

It is a basic right for officials to receive a salary in return for their work. Each civil service law specifies, to a greater or lesser degree of precision, the salary to which an official is entitled. Without exception, the laws contain salary scales and associated rules which show the grade to which an official may be assigned

¹⁵ See more in PAKSI-PETRÓ 2023: 520–527.

on the basis of seniority, education, language skills, criteria established by the employer, etc. It is important to note that the salary must be at least equal to the *guaranteed minimum wage* (HUF 326,000 gross in Hungary in 2024).¹⁶

Performance evaluation in Public Administration

The *evaluation of the officials performance* may result in their professional development and an increase in their salary. On this basis, it is possible to identify areas for improvement and to raise or cut the salary. During the evaluation process the officials' *tasks* (job or post) their *competences* (knowledge, skills) are assessed.

However, there are also significant differences between the various categories of officials based on the detailed arrangements. While in the local administration it is compulsory to complete an evaluation twice a year, in the tax administration it is once a year, for the administration of government and special status bodies it is only optional. In the latter cases, an evaluation of the official's performance is only required once in the year concerned, upon the official's *request*.¹⁷

Conflict of interest in Public Administration

The purpose of *conflict of interest* is to ensure the impartiality and integrity of the official and to maintain confidence in good administration. Conflict of interest rules are designed to prohibit or restrict an official from partaking in certain activities, engaging in certain conduct or holding certain positions. Several types are known in public administration which are listed in *Table 6*.¹⁸

¹⁶ For more information see LUDÁNYI 2022a: 35–52.

¹⁷ See more in LUDÁNYI 2021: 19–32.

¹⁸ See more in PETROVICS 2015: 93–99.

Table 6
Types of conflict of interest

Types of conflict of interest in public administration
Conflict of interest arising from the principle of separation of powers
Political conflict of interest
Economic conflict of interest
Conflict of interest of relatives

Source: Compiled by the author

Cessation and termination of employment relationship

Cessation of legal relationship

Legal relationship shall be over by the occurrence of an objective cause independent of the will of the parties. Cessation is therefore automatic, by operation of the law. The main grounds for cessation are set out in *Table 7*, based on the rules of the Civil Service Act.

Table 7
Main reasons for cessation in the Civil Service Act

Statutory facts	Death of the official The dissolution of the administrative body without succession	The election of the official as a senior political official or political leader The official's conflict of interest (if not resolved)	The official's entitlement to an old-age pension The expiry of the fixed term of appointment of the official
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Source: Compiled by the author

Termination of legal relationship

In contrast to the former, the legal relationship may be *terminated* for a subjective reason dependent on the will of the parties, in connection with the lack of need to maintain the legal relationship. To trigger the legal effect of termination, a unanimous legal declaration by the parties or a unilateral legal declaration by one of the parties is required. The most common cases of termination under the Civil Service Act are set out in *Table 8*.

Table 8
Most common cases of termination under the Civil Service Act

	Declaration of unanimity of the parties	Unilateral declaration by the official	Unilateral declaration by the employer
	Legal relationship can be terminated		
Statutory facts	By mutual agreement of the parties	By the resignation of the official	By discharge by the one exercising the employer's powers
		With immediate effect during the probationary period	

Source: Compiled by the author

Some statistical indicators on government administration officials

As mentioned above, within the Hungarian administration, government administration can be divided into central and territorial bodies. In 2024, the government administration consisted of 64,855 government officials: 30,567 working in the central government (47%) and 34,288 in territorial government (53%).

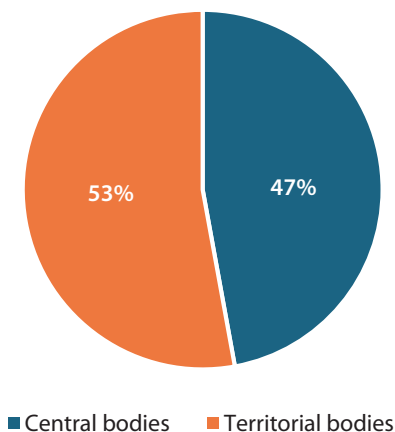


Figure 5

*Composition of government administration**Source: Compiled by the author*

The following findings can be made regarding *gender balance* in government administration: out of 64,855 government officials, 16,914 are male (26%) and 47,941 are female (74%).

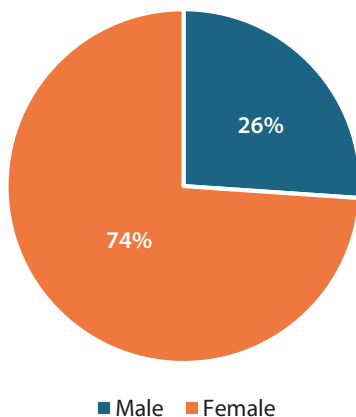


Figure 6

*Gender ratio in government administration**Source: Compiled by the author*

If we only take a look at the gender distribution in central government administration bodies, we can see that 9,200 men (30%) and 20,040 women (66%) can be found among the 30,567 officials (no data on 4% of the workforce, i.e. 1,327 people). The same distribution in the *territorial* government administrations is as follows: out of a total of 34,288 people, 7,714 are men (22%) and 26,574 are women (78%).

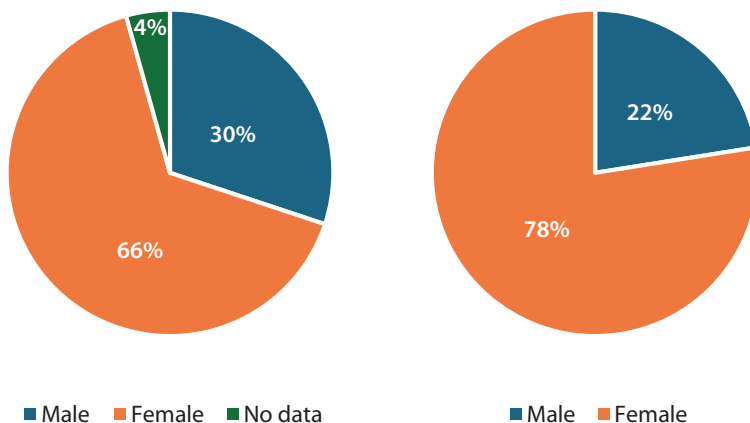


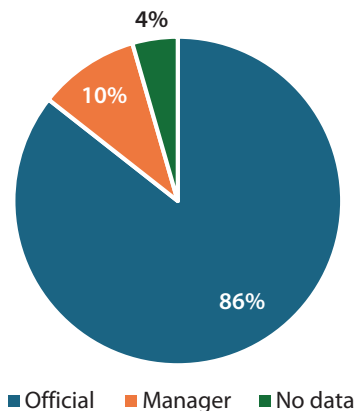
Figure 7

Gender distribution in central and territorial government administration

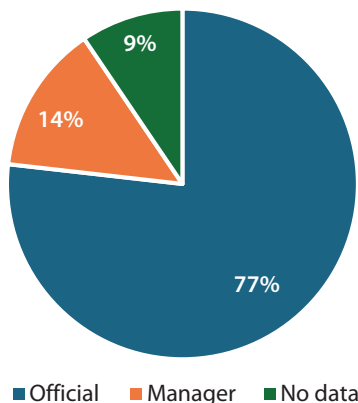
Source: Compiled by the author

Within the total number of *government administration* officials (64,855), 55,517 work as *subordinates* (86%), while 6,445 government officials are *seniors/in managerial position* (10%) (no data on the posts of 4% of government officials, i.e. 2,893 people). Taking a closer look at this distribution in relation to *central* government administrations, the following picture emerges: in the central bodies (30,567 government officials), 23,476 people are in subordinate positions (77%) while 4,198 government officials are in senior/managerial positions (14%) (no data on the posts of 9% of government officials, i.e. 2,893 people). The same distribution is found in the *territorial* bodies (34,288 government officials): 32,041 (93%) are subordinates while 2,247 (7%) are senior government officials.

Officials and managers in government administration



Officials and managers in central government bodies



Officials and managers in territorial government bodies

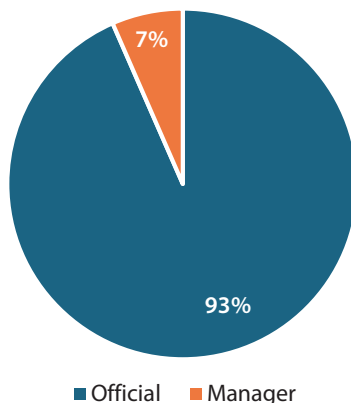


Figure 8

*Officials and managers in government administration**Source: Compiled by the author*

Finally, we should also briefly mention *the age distribution* of the government administration officials.

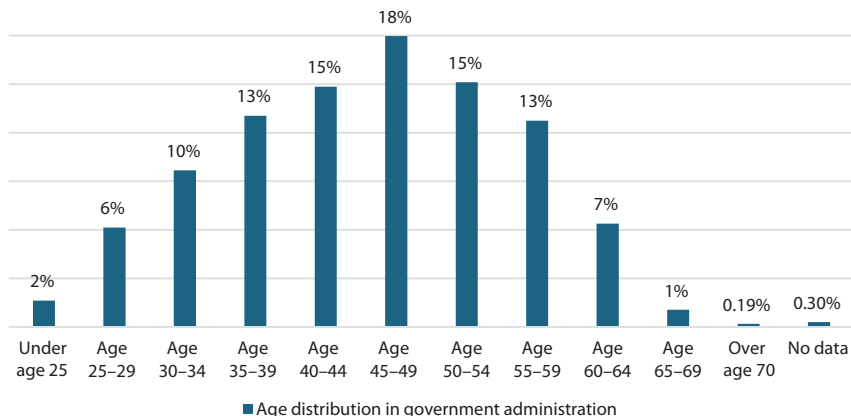


Figure 9

Age distribution in government administration

Source: Compiled by the author

The bar graph shows that the highest proportion of people in *government administration* is from the 45–49 age group (18%), followed by the 50–54 age group (15%) and the 40–44 age group (15%). They are followed by employees aged 55–59 (13%) and 35–39 (13%), then the groups aged 30–34 (10%), 60–64 (7%) and 25–29 (6%). When broken down by *central* and *territorial administrations*, no significant differences are found. In both areas, the highest proportion of people are between 45–49 years old (18–18%). A slight difference can be seen between the two age groups. While the second most populous age group in the central authorities is the 40–44 years old age group (15%), the second most populous age group in the territorial authorities is 50–54 years old one (17%). Another slight difference is that while the next most populous age group in the central authorities is the 35–39 years olds (14%), the next most populous age group in the territorial authorities is the ones between 55–59 years old (14%). Finally, it also seems to be only a slight

difference in the age distribution: while there are more government officials aged 25–29 (7%) in central government compared to those aged 60–64 (6%), the reverse is true for regional government (5 and 7% respectively).

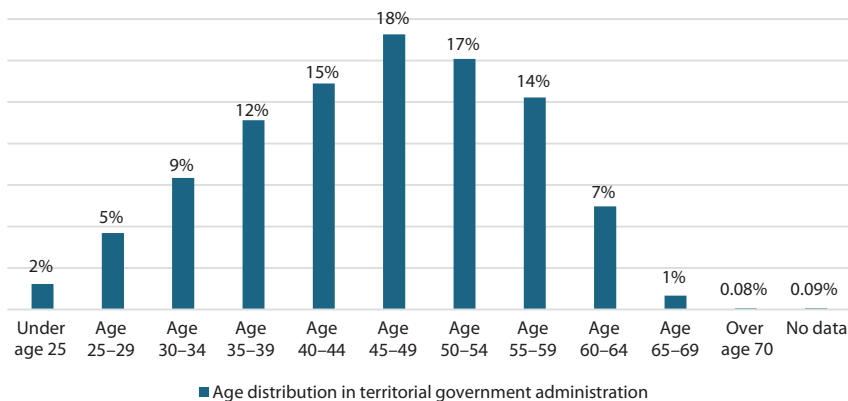
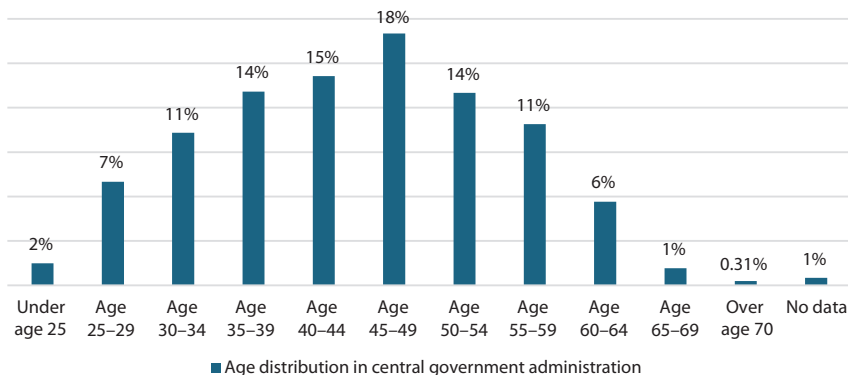


Figure 10
Age distribution in central and territorial government administrations
 Source: Compiled by the author

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Adrienn Magasvári – Csilla Paksi-Petró

Generations in Public Administration 2024

OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Several global human resource management trends are directly related to the issues examined in this report. Many countries worldwide are grappling with an aging workforce. Simultaneously, welcoming Generation Z and, soon, the Alpha Generation into the labour market is also challenging. Effectively transferring the knowledge and experience of older employees to younger generations is critical for preserving and enhancing organisational knowledge. Automation, artificial intelligence (AI) and digital tools reshape work. Younger generations bring strong digital competencies, while older generations often contribute valuable experiential knowledge. Promoting workplace diversity, particularly age diversity, has become a central focus in global HR strategies. Enhancing intergenerational cooperation supports the development of inclusive workplace cultures that appeal to all age groups. Retaining talented employees in civil service is as crucial as in the private sector. HR policies and employer branding strategies should address generational aspects to strengthen civil service competitiveness in the labour market.

In aging societies, public administrations must develop strategies to maintain organisational knowledge and foster knowledge transfer between generations. This ensures organisational stability and improves the stable quality of public services. Different generations bring varying expectations to the workplace (e.g. work–life balance, value-driven work). Understanding and addressing these differences can reduce workplace conflicts and foster more effective collaboration. Civil service is responsible for maintaining social cohesion and improving citizens' quality of life. Strengthening intergenerational

cooperation enhances public administration operations and contributes to societal stability. Collaboration and knowledge-sharing among European public administrations provide opportunities to identify and adapt best practices. The findings of this research may offer input for improving HR policies at both national and international levels.

Overall, this research helps uncover how age diversity can be managed effectively and how intergenerational cooperation can drive modernisation and sustainability in public service organisations. The study provides insights into enhancing civil service operations while aligning them with global HRM trends by addressing these issues.

From 1 July 2024, Hungary holds the presidency of the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN) during the rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union. The management of different generations in the civil service is a priority in its work programme, aiming to address the demographic challenges that all countries are increasingly facing. Effective communication and cooperation between different age groups significantly influence the effectiveness of the organisations. There is a growing need in public administrations to transfer the experience and knowledge of older workers to younger generations. To achieve this, recruitment policies and organisational culture need to evolve to encourage intergenerational cooperation and maximise the benefits of age diversity. An effective human resource management (HRM) policy is needed that takes advantage of the opportunities arising from age diversity.

The Hungarian Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Public Administration and Regional Development entrusted the Ludovika University of Public Service (LUPS) with conducting scientific research on the practices of the EUPAN countries and to explore the generational challenges. The study was carried out by the HRM Research Group of the University to map the differences between the generations working together, the factors influencing their cooperation, and to identify steps to improve intergenerational cooperation in the civil service.

This report reflects the network's collaborative effort to address key public administration issues in the field of human resource management during Hungary's presidency term. It includes insights and data collected through various channels to enhance public sector practices and policies, as well as it aims to facilitate further discussions and initiatives.

Topics covered by the research

- examination of the age characteristics and composition of government officials and the “survival” of seniority
- knowledge (capital) transfer, mentoring programmes
- the psychological contract
- generation management and employer branding
- learning and development (L&D)

In addition to documentary and content analysis, statistical data analysis, questionnaire surveys, and in-depth interviews were conducted with senior managers – top leaders in the Hungarian public administration during of the Hungarian presidency. The following chapter of the volume provides a detailed summary of the Hungarian aspects and findings of the research.

As part of the extensive research, a separate questionnaire was developed to explore the practices of EUPAN countries under the title *Questionnaire on the HR Management of Public Administration Organisations in EU Member States, Observer Countries and the European Commission with a Special Focus on the Area of Generation Management*.

The main topics of the questionnaire

- general data on the workforce composition
- general characteristics of employment in central administration, employer branding
- strategic HR decision support

Key focus areas

The primary goal of the questionnaire was to provide insights into the workforce composition, HRM strategies and specific tools employed to foster intergenerational collaboration. The survey collected data on key HR aspects such as workforce demographics, strategic planning, mentoring programs and employer branding. Additionally, it aimed to identify innovative practices that could serve as benchmarks for other Member States.

Workforce composition and characteristics: Detailed analysis of age distribution, gender ratios and contract types across various levels of public administration.

Examination of retirement trends and their impact on workforce sustainability.

HR strategies and decision support: Assessment of HRM strategies, including succession planning and policies addressing workforce aging. Evaluation of strategic frameworks and data-driven decision-making practices in personnel management.

Mentoring: Analysis of mentoring programs aimed at integrating new employees and facilitating knowledge transfer.

Employer branding: Exploration of employer branding strategies to attract and retain talent, particularly in the context of generational differences. Identification of factors that enhance the appeal of public administration careers, such as work–life balance and competitive benefits.

Learning and development: Evaluation of learning and development (L&D) methods, including innovative tools such as AI-supported training and micro-credentials.

Satisfaction and progress: Employee satisfaction surveys and organisational development programs at the central level, based on which effective strategies can be developed to enhance employee engagement, improve organisational efficiency and address specific challenges.

This research is valuable for gaining insight into and enhancing HRM practices in public administrations across Europe. Collecting diverse data

and highlighting effective practices tackles prioritising issues such as an aging workforce and generational differences while providing strategic guidance for shaping future HR policies in the ever-changing context of civil service.

Questions answered by the questionnaire

- Does the ageing of central public administration staff affect all EUPAN countries in the same way, or are there any differences among these countries?
- What is the average age of central administration staff in the EUPAN countries, and how does the age composition develop?
- Is there a planned succession strategy in place in the organisations?
- What are the characteristics of mentoring programmes that support inclusion (e.g. in terms of level of regulation, training, managerial commitment)? How committed is an organisation to implementing the programme? Does it have a role in building individual career pathways?
- What is the social media presence of organisations–agencies like?
- How flexible are the working hours in the public administrations?
- What kind of modern technology is being used to strengthen the workplace–employer brand?
- What learning and development (L&D) tools–methods are used to develop civil servants?

A total of 26 countries and the European Commission completed the questionnaire by the end of August 2024.

Some questions were not answered by all countries, so the number of countries responding to each question may vary. This is also due to the fact that certain data might not have been available in some EUPAN countries, as was indicated in previous data collections. The report contains analysis and findings based on country responses.

Sections of the report

- overview of the research framework
- general data on workforce composition (questions 1–8)
- strategic thinking (questions 9–10)
- mentoring programmes (questions 11–12)
- employer branding (questions 13–15)
- training and development (questions 16–18)
- satisfaction and progress (questions 19–20)
- personnel decision support (questions 21–23)

The structure of each section is consistent, beginning with a theoretical overview followed by the analysis of the questionnaire data. Each section concludes with a brief summary and references.

Methods

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative analyses to comprehensively process responses from 27 partners. Out of a total of 38 entities (27 member countries, the European Commission and 10 observer countries), 27 completed the questionnaire. This represents approximately 71.05% of the total entities.

The questionnaire was designed to capture both structured, closed-ended responses and open-ended qualitative insights. The structured sections of the questionnaire provided data on key indicators and trends, while the open-ended sections encouraged participants to elaborate on specific practices, challenges and perspectives. The combination of these formats facilitated a nuanced exploration of the research questions. It included Likert scale ratings for factors such as strategic alignment, workforce planning and leadership competencies, alongside free text fields for sharing best practices. This dual approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of HR practices while allowing respondents to elaborate on unique experiences.

Structured, closed-ended responses were organised and analysed using Microsoft Excel. This facilitated calculations of frequencies, percentages and averages, while visual representations such as charts highlighted trends across countries. Open-ended responses were manually reviewed and analysed to identify and collect the best practices from the countries. Data cleaning and systematic categorisation ensured the reliability of the findings. This methodological approach provided a balanced perspective, leveraging both numerical patterns and detailed qualitative insights to address the research objectives effectively.

Authors and chapters

Overview of the research framework: Csilla Paksi-Petró

Q1–8: Zoltán Hazafi

Q9–10 and Q21–23: Péter Klotz

Q11–12: Edit Kajtár

Q13–15 and Q16–18: Edit Kajtár, Adrienn Magasvári

Q19–20: Csilla Paksi-Petró

The countries (and the European Commission) participating in filling out the research questionnaire are the following:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Austria | 10. France | 20. Portugal |
| 2. Belgium | 11. Germany | 21. The Republic of Türkiye |
| 3. Bulgaria | 12. Greece | 22. Serbia |
| 4. Croatia | 13. Hungary | 23. The Slovak Republic |
| 5. Cyprus | 14. Ireland | 24. Slovenia |
| 6. The Czech Republic | 15. Italy | 25. Spain |
| 7. Denmark | 16. Latvia | 26. Sweden |
| 8. The European Commission | 17. Lithuania | 27. Switzerland |
| 9. Finland | 18. Luxembourg | |
| | 19. Poland | |

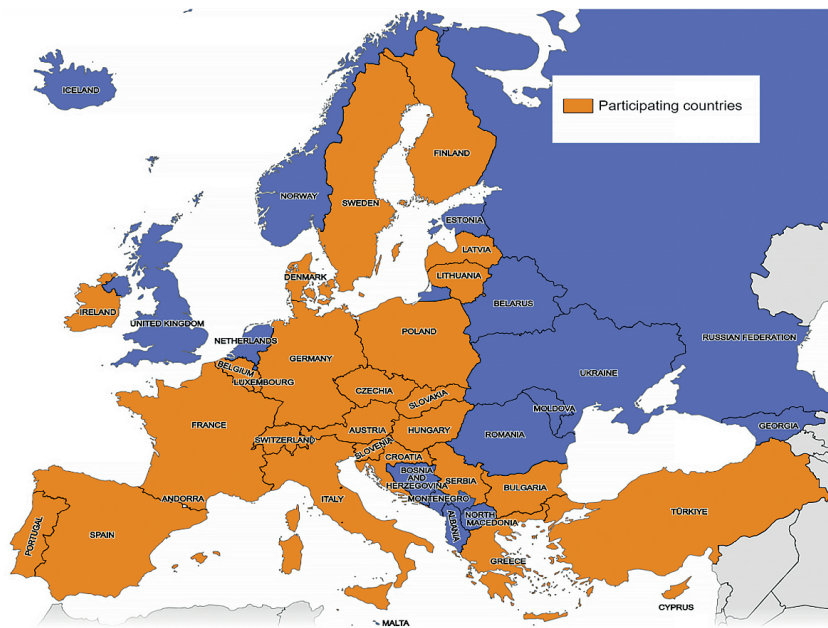


Figure 1

Participating countries in the research questionnaire

Source: Eurostat

In the report, the term “EUPAN countries” refers to the countries participating in the EUPAN cooperation as members or observers.

We sincerely thank all contributors involved in preparing this report, including the Ministry of Public Administration and Regional Development, the Ministry of the Interior, and the external and internal experts of the Ludovika University of Public Service.

Sincere appreciation is extended to the representatives from the EUPAN countries and observer countries for their willingness to provide data included in the report.

GENERAL DATA ON WORKFORCE COMPOSITION (Q1-8)

Theoretical framework

This section presents fundamental statistical data on the composition of the workforce, with a specific focus on civil service employees. It examines various factors such as the number of staff, gender and age distribution, as well as different employment types, including contractual and civil service positions.

In the first part of the questionnaire (Q1-8), we collected data on the composition of the workforce, including key staffing figures, age composition, gender ratio and the form of employment.

Using detailed data and charts, the chapter explores employment trends in public service across EUPAN and OECD countries, with a particular emphasis on the age composition of the workforce, including the proportions of younger and older employees and the average age.

Number of employees

The headcount figures alone do not tell us anything, but if we compare them, for example with the economically active population, we can compare countries (Eurostat s. a.).¹ The ratio of the number of staff in central government to the economically active population aged 15–64 can be used as an indicator to assess the relative weight of the number of staff per country.

According to this, in EUPAN countries, the central administration workforce accounts for an *average of 2.8% of active employees*. However, certain countries significantly deviate from this average. In the Republic of Türkiye, the proportion of those working in central administration is more than five times the average, in Luxembourg more than four times and in Sweden more than twice the average. On the other hand, in eleven countries, the proportion

¹ The economically active population (also called labour force) is the sum of employed and unemployed persons.

of the central administration workforce does not even reach half of the average, and in Poland, this figure is less than one-tenth of the average ($N = 23$).

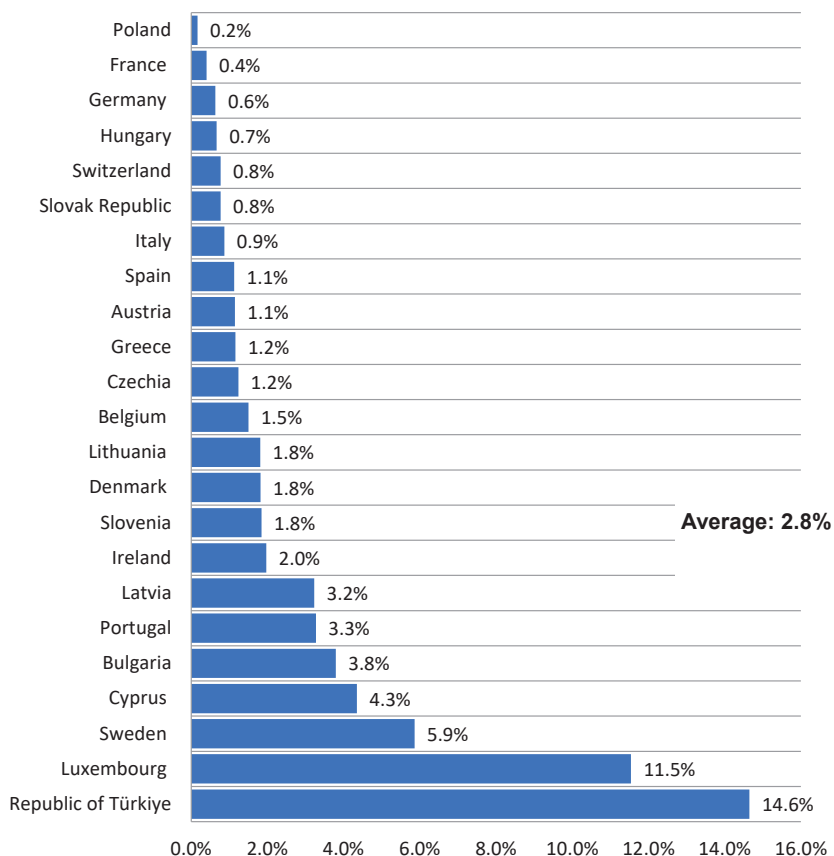


Figure 2

The proportion of the people employed in the central public administration in relation to active employees in the labour market

Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN,² Eurostat s. a

² Whenever EUPAN is cited as the source, it specifically refers to the research of *Generations in Public Administration 2024*, conducted for the Hungarian EU Presidency 2024, as part of the EUPAN activity.

OECD data show that despite austerity measures following the 2007–2008 financial crisis, the share of public service employment in total employment has remained relatively stable, falling from 18.2% in 2007 to 17.9% in 2019.

If we look only at the EUPAN countries, we can see that the number of administrative posts increased in the vast majority of countries between 2007 and 2019. The highest average annual increase was in Luxembourg (3.6%), while in Greece and Latvia the average annual decrease was more than 1% (N = 23).

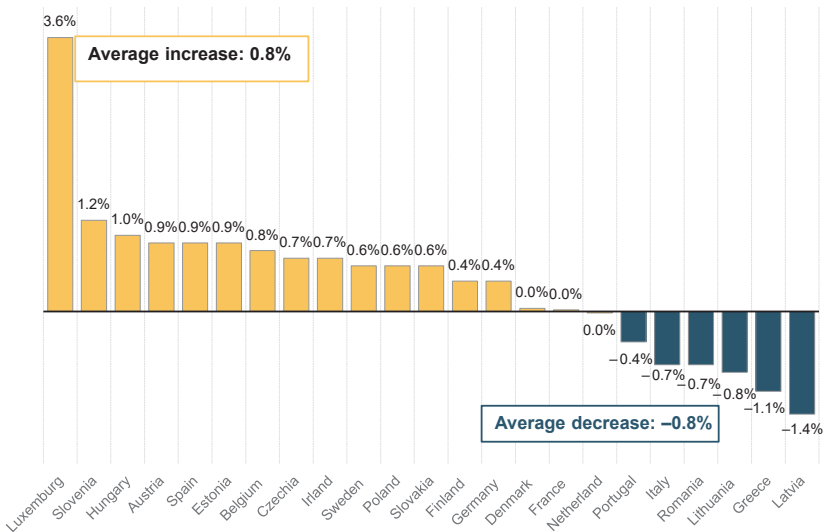


Figure 3

Average annual change in the number of jobs in public administration (2007–2019)

Source: Compiled by the author based on OECD data

Public administration employment then continued to grow, with all but a few countries (France, Poland) exceeding the previous year's level in 2021. The largest increases occurred in Latvia and Estonia. The increase is explained by both the average increase in administrative employment over the year and the slight decrease in general employment (N = 24).

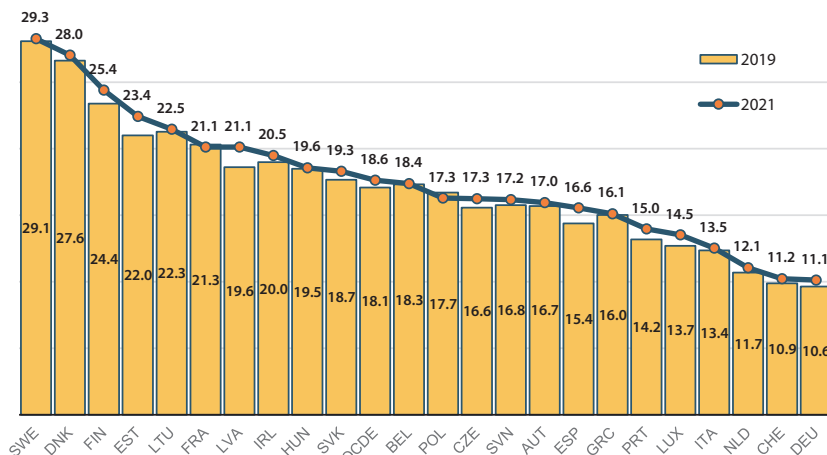


Figure 4

Administrative posts as a share of total posts (2019–2020)

Source: Compiled by the author based on OECD data

However, these changes did not affect the “normal” order of countries. Public service employment is highest in the Nordic countries (Sweden, Denmark, Finland), where it accounts for almost 30% of total employment. They are followed by the Baltic States.

If we take a look at how the change in the number of civil servants has affected the internal proportions of age groups, we come to the conclusion that *three trends* have emerged across countries. In the Czech Republic, Denmark and the Netherlands (in the latter two the size of the staff has not changed), the proportion of young people has increased sharply (15.9%, 10.7% and 4.4% respectively), while in other countries, although the employment of young people has increased, it has not risen as much as the overall increment in the number of employees (Austria, Belgium and Finland).

In other countries, despite the growth of public administration staff, the share of persons in the age group of 18–34 years has fallen. The phenomenon is most striking in Germany, where employment in public administration increased by 5%, but the share of young people fell by 13.4%.

In Latvia, Lithuania and Portugal, both the number of people in public administration and the share of young people fell (in Latvia by twice as much) (N = 21).

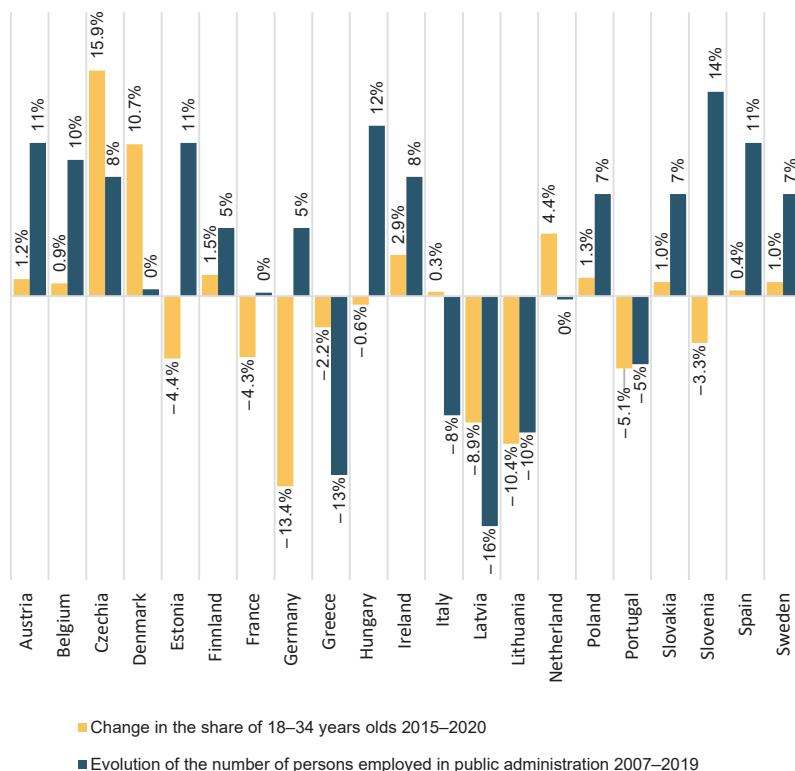


Figure 5
Evolution of the number of persons employed in public administration and of the number of persons aged between 18–34

Source: Compiled by the author based on OECD data

Trends in workforce size and the number of employees

Average age

Most data were provided with the average age of the central administration. The *average age* in EUPAN countries is 46.8 years. In comparison, 7 countries (EC) have an average age higher than this (N = 21).

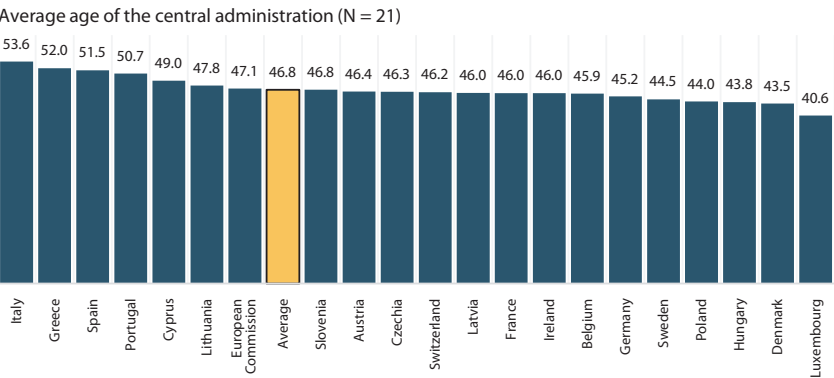


Figure 6
Average age in the central administration
Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

Contractual employment and application of the Labour Code

In 10 of the responding countries (N = 10) there is a possibility to apply general labour law rules in the central and the public administration, which provides favourable conditions for personalised employment. Some countries have a particularly high proportion of contract workers (Portugal, Germany and Lithuania).

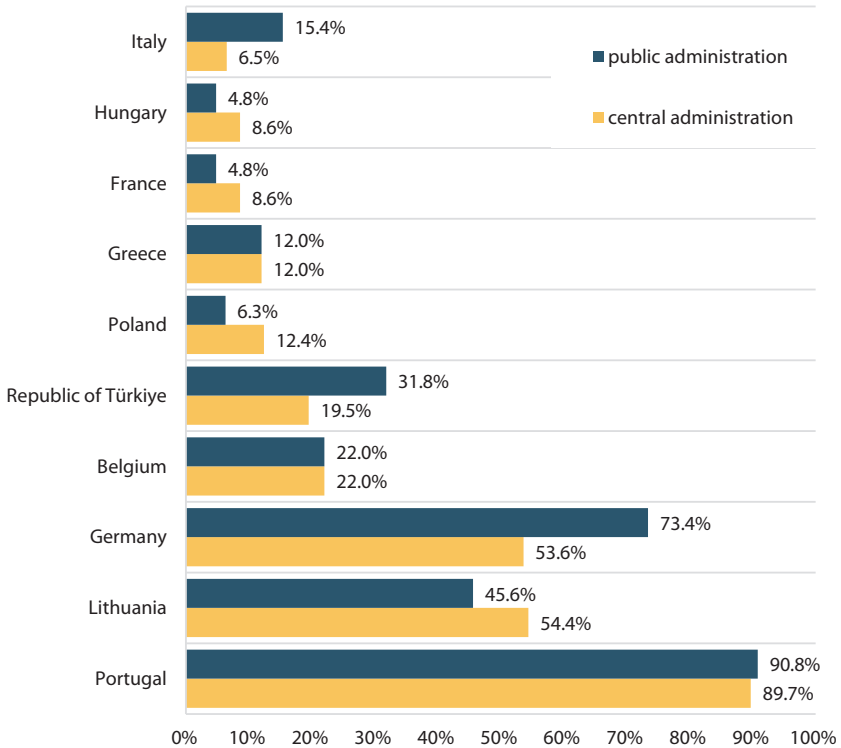


Figure 7
Contractual employment and application of the Labour Code
 Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

Gender distribution

On average, 59.4% of people working in public administration are women. They are the majority in all countries' administration except Switzerland and the Republic of Türkiye. In seven countries, they account for more than two-thirds of the population ($N = 25$).

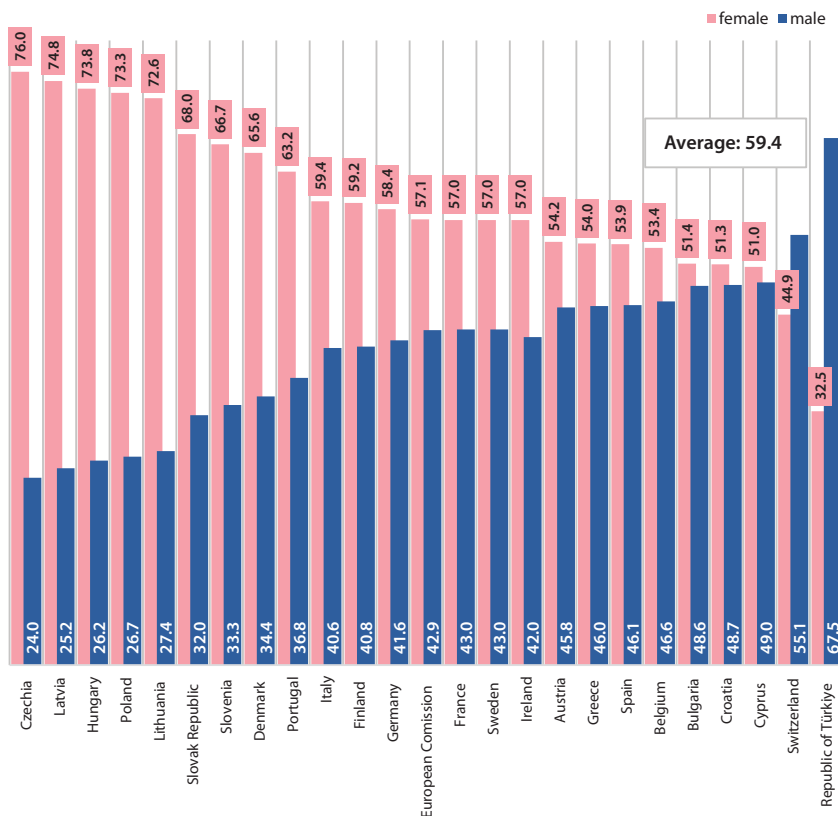


Figure 8
Gender ratio in public administration
 Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

In the broadly defined public sector, women make up 59.9%. In contrast, they are underrepresented in the overall labour force, where their proportion is 47.7%.

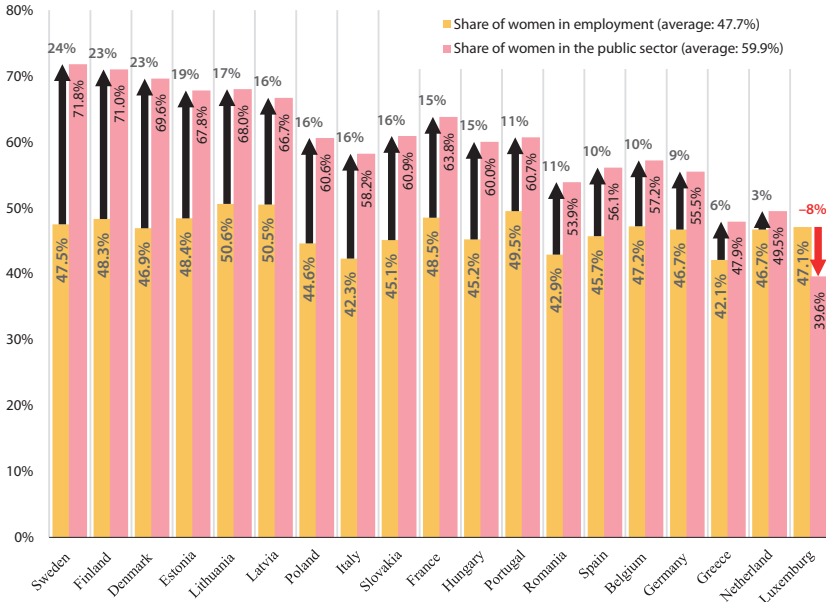


Figure 9

*Share of women 2019**Source:* Compiled by the author based on OECD data

In Hungary, gender distribution was already dominated by *women* in the early 1990s (67%–33%), and later this trend strengthened further (HAZAFI 2023: 87). Today, approximately three out of four civil servants are women. The proportion of women working in public administration is almost as high as in the education (76.2%) and health sectors (81%), which are traditionally considered female professions.³

³ Number of persons employed by industry, sector, gender – author's calculation based on TEÁOR'08 s. a.

Age composition

A common feature of developed countries is the ageing of society and of the public administration staff, which is more significant in public administration than in society as a whole (HAZAFI 2009). For this reason, “shaping” the age composition of the workforce is one of the challenges of HRM, not only for today but also for the future. At the same time, it should be noted that all EUPAN countries have the highest proportion of middle-aged staff (N = 22).

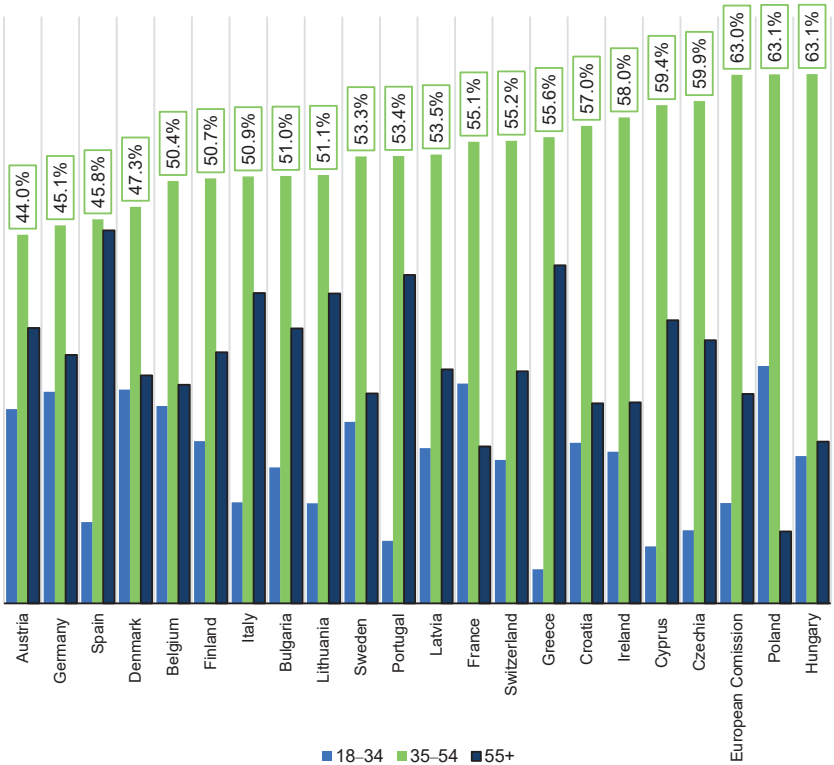


Figure 10
Age composition in public administration 1
Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

According to a study published in 2015, the *age composition* of the civil service varies across groups of countries in the European Union (Baltic Institute of Social Sciences – ODA 2015). Different trends characterise the “old” (western) and “new” (eastern) Member States.⁴ Data at that time showed that the proportion of people aged 50 and over was much lower in the “new” Member States (30.8%) than in the “old” Member States (41.4%). The direction of change also differs between these two groups of countries, with the proportion of people aged 50 and over generally decreasing in the “new” Member States and increasing in the “old” Member States between 2010 and 2014 (Baltic Institute of Social Sciences – ODA 2015). The largest decrease was in Hungary (7%) and the largest increase in Ireland (12%) (Baltic Institute of Social Sciences – ODA 2015). The study attributed this to the generational change that took place in the 1990s with the regime change. Furthermore, employment conditions in public administration in Eastern European countries developed favourably in the early 1990s. Young people considered public administration a good opportunity to gain their first work experience. In addition, experience in law and finance in public administration provided unique and competitive skills in the labour market (Baltic Institute of Social Sciences – ODA 2015).

If we look at current data from the “old” and “new” countries, this difference is no longer apparent (N = 22).

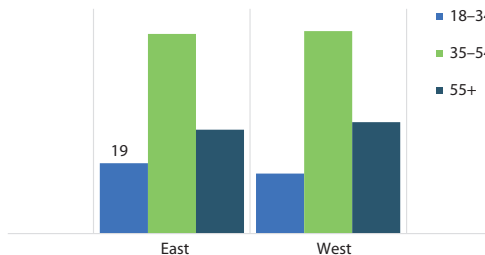


Figure 11
Age composition in public administration 2
 Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

⁴ The division between “old” and “new” Member States distinguishes between Member States that joined before 2004 and those that joined after 2004.

The proportion of persons in the age group of 18–34 is below the average (17.2%) in only nine countries (and the European Commission). In five countries, it does not even reach 10%. The difference between the two extremes is nearly sevenfold (N = 22).

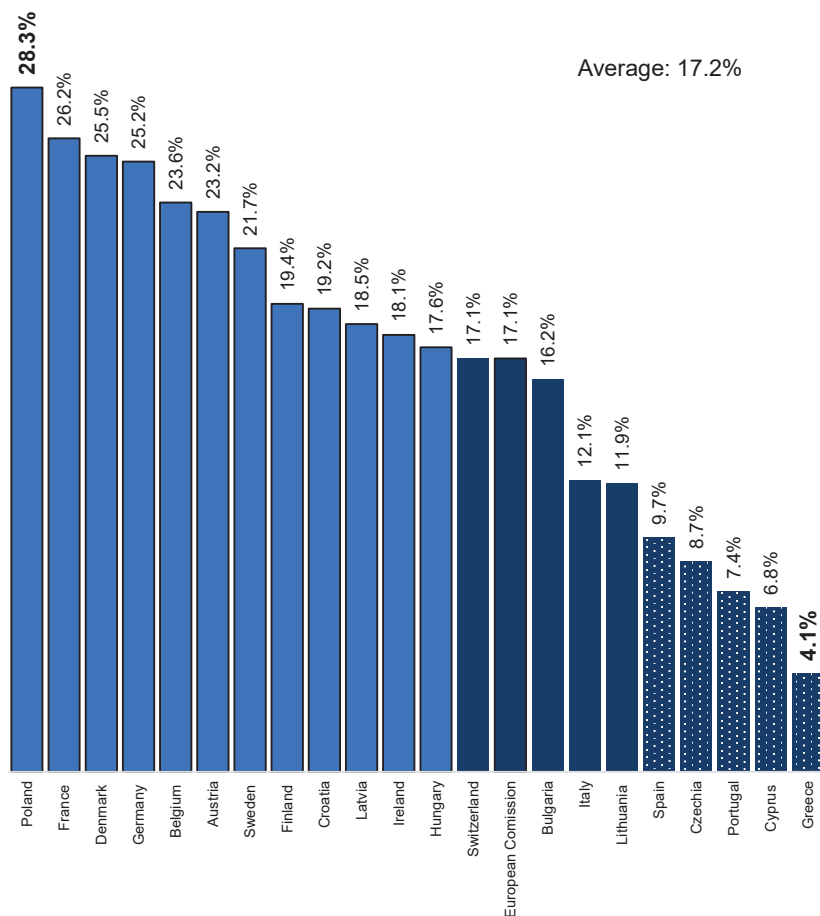


Figure 12

Proportion of persons aged between 18–34 years in public administration

Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

The proportion of those aged over 55 years exceeds the average in eleven countries, with Spain having more than five times as many people from this generation working in public administration compared to Poland (N = 22).

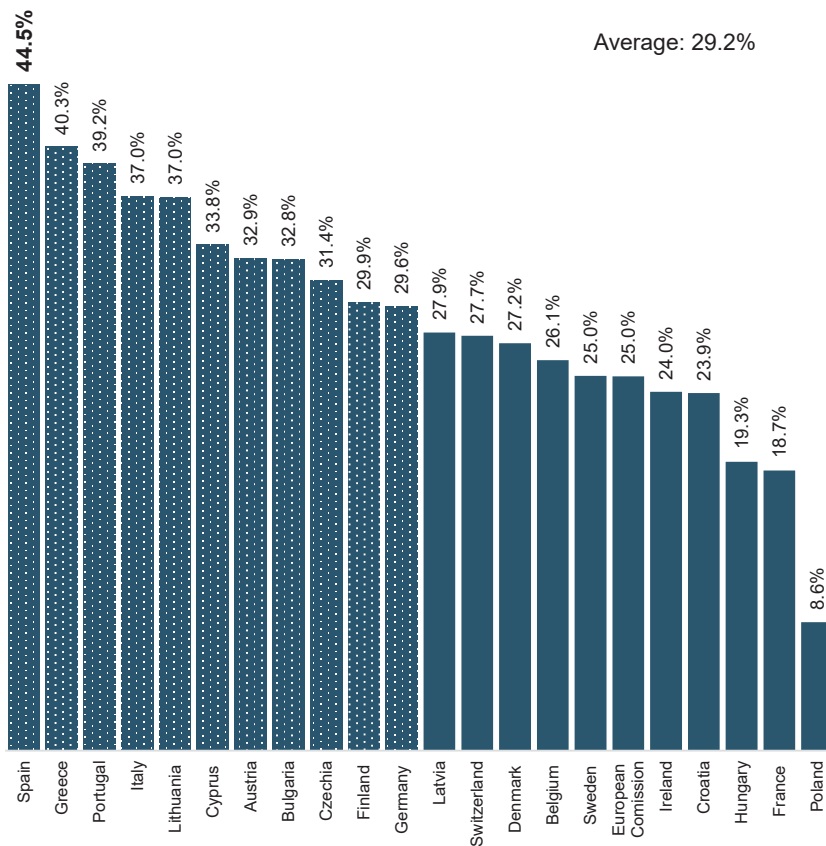


Figure 13

Share of persons aged over 55 years in public administration

Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

OECD data also show that the *rejuvenation* started between 2015 and 2020 has stalled and the weight of the generation aged over 55 years has increased again (N = 20).

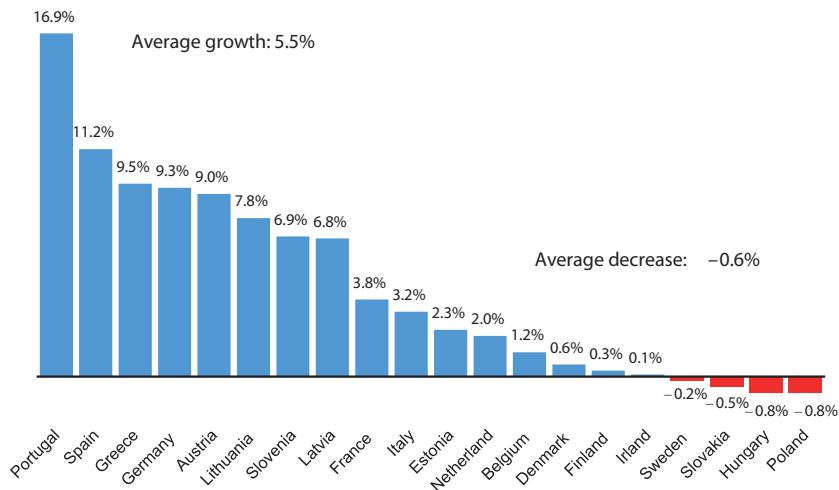


Figure 14

Change in the share of the persons aged over 55 years in public administration, 2015–2020

Source: Compiled by the author based on OECD data

The *ageing process* is also confirmed by the fact that, as the share of older people has risen, the number of young people has generally fallen (N = 13).

Experience is valuable in an “older” organisation, while a “young” organisation is strong in digital competences, entrepreneurship–innovation and motivation. Organisations can benefit most from generational diversity through transgenerational working groups and mentoring programmes. At the same time, intergenerational tensions are a major challenge for HRM, as each generation has its own vision of work, its own ways of working, and its own different attitudes towards hierarchy and different technologies (HAZAFI–KAJTÁR 2021).

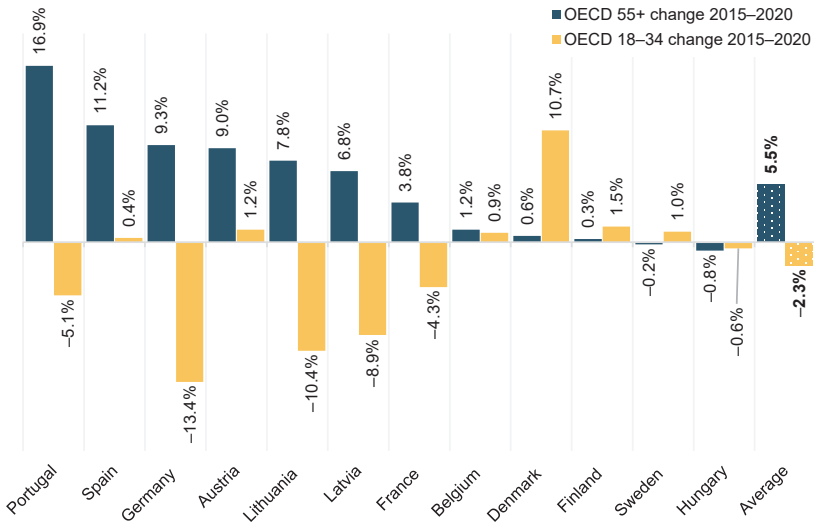


Figure 15

*Ageing in public administration, 2015–2020**Source:* Compiled by the author based on OECD data

They carry the values of the age in which they grew up (LING 2018). However, survey results show that if we simplify the age grouping into two large blocks (Baby Boomer and Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z), the age group's perceptions of work are closer than we might normally think. The importance of work/life balance, self-fulfilment, job security, financial stability, freedom and flexibility are almost equally valued. There is also agreement on the need for autonomy, innovation, patience and ambition to be successful in their careers. All this shows that the age groups have almost identical value orientations on a number of important issues (LING 2018).

SUMMARY

The primary objective of this chapter was to present the findings pertaining to the composition of the workforce within the civil service. In EUPAN countries, the central administration workforce accounts for an average of 2.8% of active employees. The average age of the workforce is 46.8 years, and the proportion of women in the civil service is high (59.4%). The average proportion of those aged between 18–34 years in EUPAN public administrations is 17.2%. The proportion of those over 55 exceeds the average (29.2%) in eleven countries (e.g. Hungary, Poland, France and Ireland). Organisations can benefit most from generational diversity through transgenerational working groups and mentoring programmes but intergenerational tensions remain a challenge for HRM.

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STRATEGIC THINKING (Q9–10)

Theoretical framework

The concept of strategic human resource management (SHRM) was formed in the 1990s and became a fully accepted approach after the turn of the millennium (WRIGHT–MCMAHAN 1992; BOXALL–PURCELL 2003). As recent research has shown (STOREY et al. 2019), the approach to HRM has changed significantly in recent times, with new areas of study (leadership, performance, ethics, generations) becoming the focus of attention. Despite the wide range of research, experts agree that organisational performance and the achievement of organisational goals depend primarily on the composition, competencies and readiness of human resources, which management must address at a strategic level and within a strategic framework.

As the earlier EUPAN's research during the Latvian Presidency found, “[the factors of attitudes towards public administration] are at least partly based on actual problems connected with strategic personnel planning. It means that it is not possible to improve the image of public administration as an employer only by communicative means. However, in the long-term, it might only be achieved by a systematic development of personnel policy, adjusting it to the overall strategy of public administration and labour market demand” (Baltic Institute of Social Sciences – ODA 2015: 7).

Almost a decade since the study was carried out, we have been prompted to examine the framework for strategic planning in public administration in the context of our questionnaire. In other words, the extent to which specific HRM strategy is developed within public administrations. Although we are unable to provide comparative data for previous years due to the lack of a similar survey, and thus, it is not possible to outline trends and developments, the research can nevertheless provide useful information on the strategic HRM thinking of public administrations in the EU Member States, European Commission and observer countries.

HRM strategy in the central public administrations

The management of different generations in the civil service is a priority of the EUPAN presidency program of Hungary during the rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union (aiming to address the demographic challenges that all countries are increasingly facing). Therefore, in our questionnaire, we not only asked about the strategic HRM framework of the EUPAN countries but also examined the extent to which the strategy *regarding the ageing of personnel*, including the employment of both older and younger generations, is a feature of the strategy. Accordingly, we examined the continued employment of the older generation after retirement age and the challenges of attracting young people to public administration.

Our analysis of the HRM strategy has been limited mainly to the level of central administration. Our research defined central administration as core ministries and agencies of central and federal governments. The reason for narrowing the focus is that, on the one hand, the strategic management of public administration has its most significant impact at the level of central administration and, on the other hand, the fact that even if HRM strategies are adopted at the level of territorial administration in a country and age-specific issues are addressed, this is not necessarily the case for all territorial administration bodies in the country.

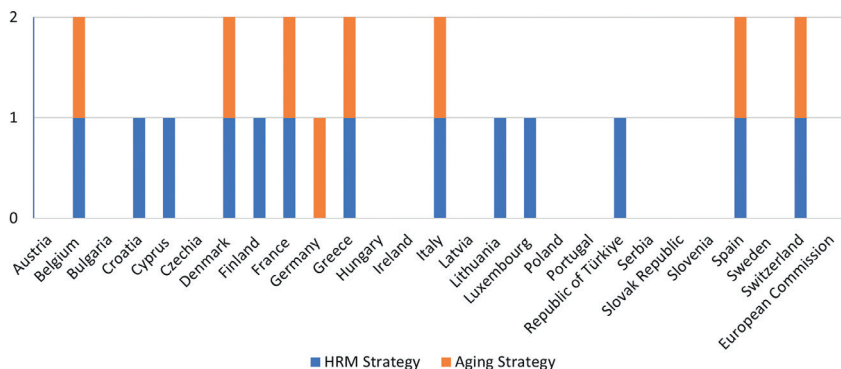


Figure 16

HRM strategy and ageing strategy in the central public administrations

Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

Many EUPAN countries and observer countries responded to the questionnaire, allowing us to analyse data from 26 countries and the European Commission. Of these entities, 26 responded to questions 9 and 10 on the state of play of the HRM strategy and the ageing strategy, respectively.

From the answers to question Q9 (Is there an HRM strategy in the central administration?), 14 of the responding countries have an HRM strategy in the central administration, which indicates a rate of 50%. The responses are summarised in the chart below (N = 27).

As can be seen from the chart, the HRM strategy is very often accompanied by a strategic element addressing age specificities, but in Germany, there is a separate ageing strategy.

Some of the responding countries also provided additional comments to the completed questionnaire, which helped to refine further the picture of the situation of HRM strategy in central administrations.

In *Austria*, the individual departments carry out strategic human resources planning, management and coordination (human resources management). The federal administration needs an overall strategy for the ageing workforce.

However, individual ministries take measures in this area based on their strategic fields of action.

In *Denmark*, the HRM strategies are handled by the local HRM units at the local workplaces. Due to the decentralised organisation of the Danish central government, they do not make decisions or create strategies across the central government.

In *Finland*, the government is focusing on the whole life cycle management of public officials instead of specific ageing management. Therefore, measures mentioned in the questionnaire are taken as part of everyday management and work but not as part of a specific strategy.

In *Ireland*, the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (DPENDR) has overall responsibilities for the civil service workforce, while individual Departments and Offices receive delegated sanction from DPENDR. The Department does not currently have one overarching HRM strategy for the Civil Service workforce but it does provide policy and strategy across individual aspects of HRM. Aspects of DPENDR's approach to the development of the workforce are included in the Better Public Services – Public Service Transformation Strategy 2030. Individual Departments are also able to devise and develop their strategies for HRM, people and culture.

Poland and *Latvia* are working on developing their specific HRM strategy. Poland uses specific standards for human resources management, and Latvia focuses more on public administration modernisation and learning and development plans for public administration employees.

In *Lithuania*, the Public Management Agency was established in 2023 and is responsible for implementing state policy in public administration and civil service, including HRM. The agency participates in improving human resources management through the following activities: organising and implementing centralised career management for institutional executives, ensuring the legality of competitions for career civil servant positions, and participating in the enhancement of the human resources development process and organisational culture of public institutions.

In *Germany*, there is a specific program for structured knowledge transfer entitled “Wege-Weiser”, a specific concept for organising the remaining working years and the transition to retirement.

The project Wege-Weiser was developed by the German Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community in 2021. The idea behind it is that, like any other employer, the Federal Administration has a great interest in keeping older employees healthy and motivated for as long as possible. After all, they have a wealth of knowledge and valuable experience. Measures for and age-appropriate work organisation and a health-promoting environment play a key role here. The public sector has a role model function. Therefore, different measures should be implemented in order that:

- Employers recognise the particular strengths of this group of employees. They are better than before, but they also utilise them so that employees continue to feel valued as experienced, often long-standing employees.
- Employees are informed about voluntary employment opportunities at an early stage of the remaining working years, the transition to retirement and the time after that.
- Both sides are enabled to plan transparently and structurally and to organise the remaining working years, the transition to retirement and the time afterwards smoothly (Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community 2021).

In *Spain*, the importance of data for management, the talent attraction program, the evaluation of the performance of the public employee’s program, etc. are making up an HRM strategy from the Spanish Secretariat for the Civil Service, all of them in line with introducing reforms to make the civil service more desirable to younger generations and attract specific professional profiles in the IT fields. In this sense, there is a framework document entitled “Consensus for an Open Administration”, developed by the Ministry for Digital Transformation and Civil Service, that, as a roadmap, includes the guidelines for inclusive public employment with better working conditions and strategic planning for the human resources, paying particular attention to count on social dialogue to get the results.

The *European Commission* has adopted in 2022 a well-elaborated Human Resources Strategy, presenting a common vision for a modern, flexible and values-driven organisation that empowers staff to deliver outstanding results for people across the EU and globally. The strategy addresses the Commission's need to perform at the highest level in the interest of Europeans, and the staff's need to have an attractive workplace and a fulfilling career where their excellence and efforts will be rewarded. The strategy focuses on the three strategic priorities to address the common challenges facing the Commission: attractiveness, selection and recruitment and career prospects (European Commission 2022).

As it can be seen from the additional answers, around half of the responding countries have an HRM strategy in place, and two more countries, Poland and Latvia, are preparing one. However, this does not mean that the other countries do not have a strategic framework for HRM at all. Austria, Denmark and Germany coordinate this task at a lower level due to their administrative structures, while Finland takes a life-cycle approach.

Ageing strategy in the central public administrations

For question Q10, we asked whether the central administration has a strategy regarding the ageing of personnel in central government administration (personnel management). The number of responses to this question was lower, with a *total of 8 countries* (Switzerland, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, France, Germany, Italy, Greece [N = 8]) and the European Commission; indicating that they had such a strategic framework. They typically cover the whole public administration, while in Germany, they cover the specialised branches under the control of ministries, and in Belgium they exclusively cover ministries or central agencies.

The *dates of adoption* of the current ageing strategy are very diverse. Belgium, Denmark and Italy adopted their strategy more than five years ago, Germany and Spain between three and five years, Greece, France and the European Commission between one and three years. In contrast, Switzerland adopted its strategy less than a year ago.

Greece, France and the European Commission *have not yet reviewed their strategy*, while Switzerland, Denmark and Spain have recently revised their strategy less than a year ago. Italy and Belgium reviewed their ageing strategies between one and three years ago, while more information is needed on the review of Germany.

The questionnaire also asked which of the *ageing objectives* the strategy prioritises. Belgium, Italy, Greece and the European Commission consider the area of attracting young people to the workforce to be of paramount importance, Denmark and Spain consider the continued employment of the older generation after reaching retirement age. In contrast, Switzerland, France and Germany consider these two elements equally important.

In terms of ageing strategy, the questionnaire offered several options (Increasing the required length of service for full/retirement pension; Reducing weekly working hours for individuals aged 60 and over by up to 15 hours, without adversely affecting future pension; Providing a flexible work schedule for more extended periods; Reducing working hours with a minor decrease in benefits; Performing mentoring tasks; Volunteering; Scholarships; Mentoring; Training/continuing education opportunities, and support for studies; Accelerating career advancement; Premium salary; Special benefits, e.g. Family Support Benefit; Favourable employment conditions, e.g. more flexible working hours, support for training, and additional leave for individuals raising children or starting a family; Mandatory retirement for senior government officials), but only few responses were received, so these are not examined in detail.

SUMMARY

Summarising the answers to Q9 and Q10, it can be concluded that although human resource management strategy is an essential element of human resource management in central administrations, it is only present in about half of the responding countries. However, the picture of HRM strategy is nuanced by the fact that, due to their constitutional setup and governance structure, some

countries need to address HRM strategy in a centralised way but at a sectoral or territorial level. Other countries, however, see the need to develop an HRM strategy and are working on it. Demographic changes and their impact on public administration require increased attention to generational issues. The responses to our questionnaire show that in about a third of the responding countries, this issue is already being addressed strategically, either in terms of attracting new generations into public service or knowledge transfer and retention linked to retirement. However, the main lines of the concrete supporting measures resulting from the strategy cannot yet be clearly outlined from the available data. The challenge and opportunity for development in the coming years will be to raise HRM issues to a strategic level and to continuously update and revise these strategies in response to rapidly changing external and internal operating conditions.

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MENTORING PROGRAMMES (Q11–12)

Theoretical framework

Mentoring typically pairs up individuals from different age groups, therefore, it can serve as a *bridge between generations*. Be it classic or reverse, one-on-one or group mentoring, the process promotes dialogue and mutual understanding. Various studies show that team composition matters for peer learning (DE GRIP 2024). Young employees can benefit immensely from knowledge spillover from their more experienced peers in the workplace. Having a mentor is one of the most crucial success factors in developing leadership characteristics. Its benefits include improved skills, knowledge and increased confidence (EHRICH–HANSFORD 2008). From the organisation's point of view mentoring is valuable in attracting and retaining talent. Mentoring can promote the development of specific parts of the staff (see the Portuguese best practice later). Moreover, it is an often-used tool to support underrepresented groups, such as women in higher positions (KUPERUS–RODE 2010; DUNBAR–KINNERSLEY 2011: 17).

The relevance of mentoring, the duration of the mentoring process

In the central administration of *Croatia, Denmark* and *the Slovak Republic* it is very typical to implement mentoring programmes to support the integration of new entrants. *Austria, Belgium, Lithuania, the Republic of Türkiye, Spain, Sweden* and *the European Commission* also place strong emphasis on mentoring. At the other end of the spectrum we find *Cyprus* and *Switzerland*, where there is no mentoring provided. *Portugal* is unique in this regard, as the trial period has elements similar to mentoring for new entrants.

Table 1
The duration of the mentoring programmes

Duration of the programme	Countries
1–3 months	Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, the Slovak Republic
3–6 months	The Czech Republic, the European Commission, Hungary
6+ months	Belgium, Croatia, Finland, France, the Republic of Türkiye, Slovenia
Special	Austria, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Poland

Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

The typical duration of the organised programmes is relatively short (1–3 months) in Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania and the Slovak Republic. In the Czech Republic, the European Commission and Hungary the programmes usually last longer (3–6 months). In Greece the mentoring programme is about 14 days long. For the newly appointed employees an onboarding programme is scheduled to help to adjust to the new working environment. This can extend to several month depending on the position and duties assigned to the participant. Belgium, Croatia, Finland, France, the Republic of Türkiye and Slovenia invest the longest time in the process, the duration of the programme in these countries exceeds half a year.

In *Austria* the mentoring programme for the new staff is provided by the individual ministries, therefore, no data on general duration can be provided.

HR Management in the *Polish* Civil Service is also *decentralised* with Directors General of each office responsible for policy and its implementation at the level of the office (including ministries, but also smaller or lower level offices). Specific offices can have different solutions implemented. Mentoring is set as a recommendation in the Ordinance of the Head of the Civil Service concerning the standards of HRM.

In *Ireland*, while mentoring is in use in parts of the Civil Service, at a central level there are currently no consistent mentoring programmes for all Departments, nor are there any mechanisms to monitor the use of mentoring. Mentoring is not reserved for the young, it can also target the development of

senior civil servants as well. It is offered as one element of the senior leadership programmes (*SPS*).

As it was stated previously in this report, the *ageing strategy* in the central public administrations of Belgium, Italy and Greece gives priority to attracting young people. In the questionnaire, the European Commission also indicated this option as a priority. Denmark and Spain, on the contrary, place more importance on continued employment of the older generation after reaching retirement age. For Switzerland, France and Germany both goals are equally important. Mentoring can be beneficial for all three groups of countries, because it promotes retention of older civil servants (mentors) in addition to attraction of young people (mentees).

The key role of leaders in the mentoring process is highlighted by multiple countries (Austria, Poland, Croatia, Latvia, the Republic of Türkiye, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Italy and Spain) as one of the elements of learning organisation.

Best practices of the EUPAN countries

The knowledge spillover can be illustrated by the example of *Spain*, where the candidates who have passed the civil service exams for the senior corps have to carry out a stage in units where they *learn-by-doing*, under the mentoring of the head of the unit (usually a member of the same corps of civil servants), and before/after that, their training includes some international visits abroad (to the European institutions, to international schools, etc.) where they can further develop both professional and human skills for their future leadership in the public administration.

In Greece, under Law 4940/2022, a new *skill-based assessment and evaluation system* focuses on continuous improvement through *Development Plans for employees and supervisors*. This collaborative approach can be likened to mentoring. Employees and their supervisors identify necessary skills and define development steps together, while supervisors offer ongoing support. Mandatory meetings between supervisor and the employee are scheduled three times a year. The January meeting focuses on yearly work planning and setting clear expectations and priorities. The May meeting reviews progress and allows for necessary

revisions to the Development Plan. The December meeting evaluates the year's performance and formulates the Development Plan for the following year. Development plans utilise targeted training activities and specialised administrative tools, aiming to improve individual and team performance, thus increasing organisational efficiency and productivity. In *Austria* an *interministerial mentor programme* supports women's career. As part of the Federal Civil Service's staff development programme, a cross mentoring scheme is available. Experienced managers such as directors and directors general coming from outside the mentee's organisation (from other Federal Ministries) act as mentors and support female colleagues interested in developing professionally and in advancing their careers. The mentors provide both career development and psychosocial functions. Not only do they pass on their knowledge and experiences and give advice on career planning but also facilitate the mentees' entrance into professional networks.

The trainees of the *Hungarian Public Administration Scholarship Programme* are assisted by mentors (officials employed by the host department) for 10 months (7 month in Hungary and an additional 3 months abroad). The mentors are responsible, in particular, for preparing the work placement programme, supervising the trainees work, as well as regularly evaluating them (see Government Decree 52/2019 (III. 14.) on the Hungarian Public Administration Scholarship).

Mentoring caters for different target groups and can be adjusted to various development programmes. In *Portugal* the Secretariat-General of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers has created a mentoring programme as part of a wider programme aligned with the concepts of organisational well-being and happiness. The *Projeto Bem-Me-Quer* supports the easier integration of new workers or people reassigned to other workplaces. Another specific mentor programme is the *Mentoring Programme for Innovation and Leadership*, led by the National Institute for Administration. The target audience here is workers and managers responsible for innovation projects; and the mentoring for leadership is aimed at top and middle managers.

SUMMARY

Mentoring serves as a bridge between the different generations in the central administration of many Member States. In addition to its classic function, i.e. attraction of young people (mentees), mentoring also promotes retention of older civil servants (who can pass their knowledge and personal insight on to the next generation as mentors). Senior civil servants, however, can be mentees themselves as well. Mentoring caters for different target groups and can be adjusted to various development programmes. The best practices offered by the EUPAN countries include programmes for women, leaders and participants of innovation projects. The key role of leaders in the mentoring process is highlighted by multiple countries as one of the elements of the learning organisation.

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EMPLOYER BRANDING STRATEGY (Q13–15)

Theoretical framework

The relevant scientific literature offers three main perspectives on employer branding. The primary perspective emphasises the crucial role employer branding plays in winning the “war for talent” and highlights its benefits for skilled workers in competitive labour markets (CHRISTENSEN HUGHES – ROG 2008). The second (the functional organisational perspective) stresses that employer branding provides a framework for career management programmes and offers a novel approach to the organisation’s talent management strategy or acts as a corporate communication tool (AVERY– MCKAY 2006; BACKHAUS–TIKOO 2004). Finally, according to the third perspective, the target group of employer branding is usually potential employees in the recruitment process and current employees waiting to be retained (CABLE–TURBAN 2001; EWING et al. 2002). In the context of the public sector, employer branding can be defined as “an approach to recruitment and retention that involves internally and externally promoting a clear view of what makes an organization uniquely attractive as an employer” (THEURER et al. 2018: 155).

Improving recruitment performance through favourable employer branding can reduce recruitment costs (BARROW–MOSLEY 2005; KNOX–FREEMAN 2010). Public employers need to be visible and distinctive in their employer branding, as potential recruits are often simply unaware of potential employers (BAUM–KABST 2014). However, being able to attract is as important as being able to create and sustain the loyalty of the current employees, since low job satisfaction leads to high employee turnover, thus lower productivity. Several advantages of brand building include rising number of applicants and growing employee motivation. It also attracts the attention and interest of potential employees from Generations Z and Y, and contributes to a drop in employee fluctuation. It is also noteworthy that employer brand building is a dynamic process which can also react to the changing social, economic and labour landscape; thus, it can (and should) be continuously tweaked and updated (KAJOS–BÁLINT

2014). In light of the above, it may seem that employer branding is primarily a private sector issue, but a well-founded and well-developed employer brand can work well in the public sector too, given that labour shortages and the need to attract and retain top performers are relevant in both sectors.

The aim of this part of the research is to explore whether the EUPAN member countries participating in the study are making themselves visible as employers and whether they are building an employer brand. If the answer is affirmative, what is the focus of the strategy? Is it attracting young entrants or retaining existing older employees? What factors contribute to their employer brand? Our research questions in this area were formulated as follows:

- 1) Do the public administration bodies have an employer brand? Do they carry out activities related to the creation of a brand?
- 2) What are the values that make public sector organisations attractive employers for the different generations?

At the outset of the research, we hypothesised that public sector organisations are most often recommended by employees for values such as stability and security, as well as for serving the community and the prestige of work.

Existing employer branding strategy

Among the responding EUPAN countries ($N = 26$), 11 are engaged in employer branding and have an *employer branding strategy* (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, the Slovak Republic, Sweden and Switzerland). 15 countries do not have branding strategy (Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Finland,⁵ Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Portugal, the Republic of Türkiye, Slovenia, Spain and the European Commission) or do not know if such a strategic document exists (Poland).

⁵ In connection with the internal employer image-branding, agencies of Finland rarely have separate practices. They believe that internal branding is built on good work and a good work community.

The European Commission utilises attractiveness measures rather than a targeted employer branding strategy.

As shown in Figure 17, half of the participants have an employer branding strategy in the public sector.

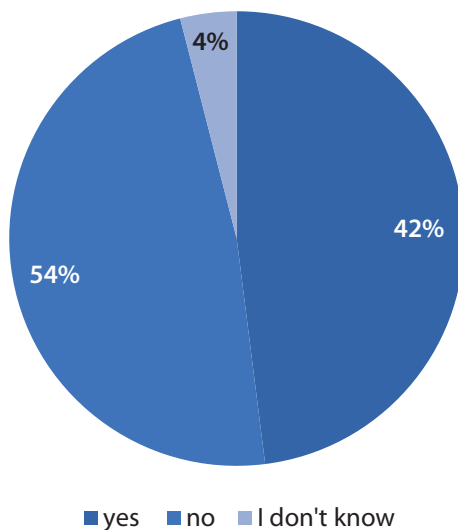


Figure 17

Employer branding strategy in the public administrations

Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

Development of employer branding strategy

For this question, we requested data from countries where public administrations have an employer branding strategy. Due to invalid data,⁶ the answers of the following countries are not included in the analysis: Hungary, Finland, Luxembourg, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain.

⁶ The data was considered valid if the answer to question 13 on the existence of an employer brand was “yes”.

Luxembourg has set up a central employer branding strategy for the civil service, all the while encouraging the ministries and administrations to set up their own employer brands. So far, they focus, within the strategy, on *image campaigns, (digital) content, targeted partnerships and recruitment events*.

Although in *Portugal* there is currently no employer branding strategy in place at the central public administration, the preparation of one is *underway*.

In *Spain*, it is not typical to have an employer branding strategy, but the Ministry of Digital Transformation has developed a *talent attraction programme*, and the civil service uses a specific brand to be more recognisable.

According to WÆRAAS and SOLBAKK (2009), branding in the public sector can be more complex than in the private sector. For example, it can be challenging to define a common brand identity because identity can be fragmented within public administrations. Others (KEPPELER–PAPENFUSS 2020) suggest that public sector employers should consider whether an integrated employer branding strategy can be more effective than isolated efforts by individual public sector employers. Apart from some functional advantages, some potential employees do not seem to differentiate between the brands of public organisations.

Some public sector organisations in EUPAN countries have *independent employer branding strategies*, but some responding countries have common objectives as recommendations or guidelines. The public sector organisations of Austria,⁷ Denmark,⁸ Italy,⁹ Latvia and the Slovak Republic develop their employer branding strategy independently; there is no shared approach to employer branding across central government.

⁷ The source of the data: Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, the Civil Service and Sport. There are other campaigns by individual ministries, but it is not possible to be more specific about their factors.

⁸ Since information of this sort is not centrally available, the answer to this question is an educated guess based on the information continuously gathered through research and discussions on the topic.

⁹ The Department for Public Administration of Italy launched a traditional and social media branding campaign covering the whole public sector. However, line ministries and agencies have their own specific strategy.

The employer branding strategy of Belgium, France, Ireland, Germany, Switzerland and Sweden is based on central guidelines. This takes several forms. Belgium has an employer brand at the federal level, while France, for example, has an interministerial brand.

Belgium launched an employer branding campaign in 2021 in order to increase interest in a career within the federal administration. An easy-to-understand name of their employer brand is “working for Belgium”. The aim was to clearly indicate what the administration represents and what it means to work here. In addition to public administration, the campaign has also focused on the IT and health sectors, where it is difficult to find suitable candidates for vacant posts.

In *France*, the employer brand was launched as part of a *multimedia communication campaign*. It is hosted on a website that brings together all the information available on public sector job offers, the various employers and the jobs available.

Innovation Fellowship Project of *Switzerland* is an innovative project that promotes innovation and also has a positive internal effect. The program integrates experts from the private sector or academia into the administrative divisions of the Federal Administration for one year with the aim of promoting innovation. Both sides benefit from this commitment: The administrative body will benefit from new ideas, expanded expertise and the important external perspective, while the fellows will broaden their horizons and can work on innovative projects for Switzerland.

The Government of *Ireland* has *brand directives* applicable to all departments and offices. There are also cases where the strategy contains central guidelines, but based on this, the individual organisations develop their own brand themselves.

In *Germany*, an *umbrella employer brand* has been developed for the federal administration. All federal authorities are free to use this as a *recommendation*.

In *Sweden*, the agencies are free to form their strategies individually but can use the common EVP (*employer value proposition*) as guidelines. The common EVP is created as an employer branding initiative for the government sector. The aim is to build a strong employer brand that can contribute to more people wanting to work within the public sector.

The definition provided by the questionnaire did not include local governments and the broader public sector (e.g. healthcare, teachers, police, military, justice, etc.). However, some respondents also mentioned some of these sectors. In *Portugal*, for example, employer branding strategies are mainly applied at sectoral level, such as the navy, the armed forces and security forces. Traditionally, these sectors have strategies to attract applicants to various recruitment and selection processes. The employer branding strategy of *Belgium* also focuses on the IT and healthcare sectors, where it is difficult to find suitable candidates for vacant posts.

To review, although half of the responding countries do not have a specific employer branding strategy, public administrations in the EUPAN countries address recruitment, talent attraction and retention in different frameworks, and try to make themselves visible.

Key factors of employer branding strategy

According to several studies (DEMMKE 2005; DONG 2014), an important mechanism for building an image of the public administration as an attractive employer is to emphasise those aspects of the job that are important to both job seekers and employees in the organisation. The central element of the functioning of public administration is that it contributes to the functioning of society by serving the community. This is its core mission. The main advantages of public administration are the stability and security of work, the possibility of reconciling work and private life, learning opportunities, and better job guarantees and long-term social guarantees.

24 EUPAN countries provided evaluable answers to this question (Based on the governing – current government personnel policy, on which factors do you build your employer branding?); in case of Serbia, Germany and Sweden we do not have data on the objectives of the employer brand. Each country participating in the survey was asked to rate its brand on a scale of one to six based on 19 predefined factors. Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2
Employer branding factors based on averages

Factors on which the employer brand is built	Averages
The idea of serving the community, social responsibility (CSR)	5.29
Training and development opportunities	5.27
Work–life balance (e.g. family-friendly, flexible working, home office, remote work, part-time work)	5.09
Employment security	4.83
Career opportunities	4.83
Information about employment opportunities and requirements (e.g. recruitment tools)	4.64
Competitive exams, other selection methods	4.10
Workplace atmosphere (e.g. community, physical environment, community events)	3.65
Creativity, innovation	3.52
Performance management system	3.52
Ability of leadership	3.50
Esteem of employees	3.40
Varied professional task system – work (e.g. rotation)	3.06
Competitive salary compared to the private sector	3.05
Opportunity to gain international experience	3.10
Appropriate handling of generational challenges	2.76
Other financial benefits (e.g. cafeteria, company car, laptop, telephone, reimbursement of travel costs)	2.50
Application of the possibilities offered by modern technology (e.g. chatbot, virtual assistant, vlog, use of social media)	2.40
Well-being services (e.g. swimming pool, gym, relaxation room, sports facilities)	2.23

Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

Based on the average scores of each factor, the responding EUPAN countries (N = 24) build their employer brand mainly on the following factors: work–life balance (e.g. family-friendly, flexible working, home office, remote work, part-time

work) employment security, training and development opportunities, the idea of serving the community, social responsibility (CSR). As shown in Figure 18.

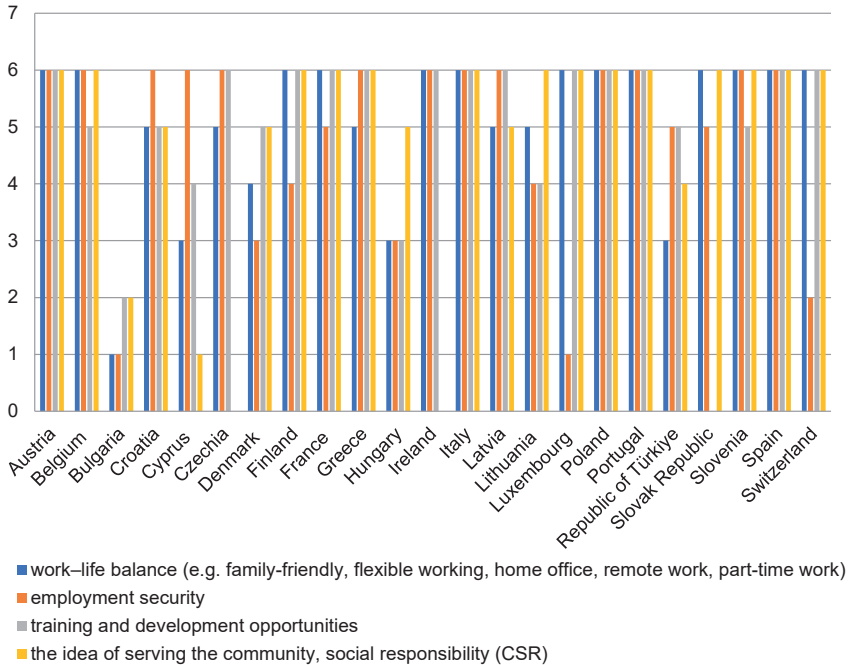


Figure 18
Employer branding factors in the public administrations 1
 Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

Based on the averages, the factors in Figure 18 (application of the possibilities offered by modern technology, well-being services and other financial benefits) are typically less common in the employer brand strategy of each respondent country.

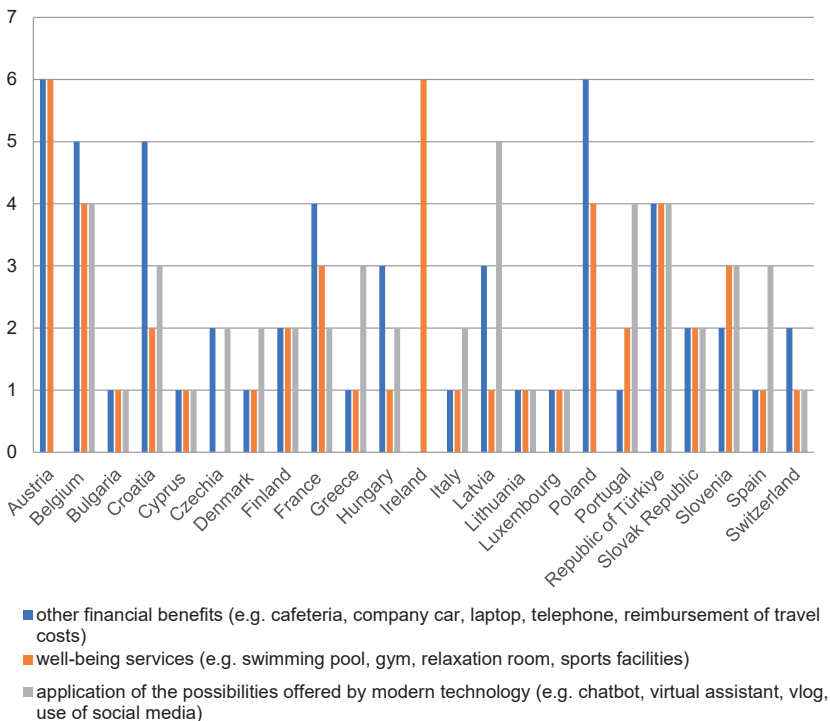


Figure 19
Employer branding factors in the public administrations 2
 Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

Public administrations in the responding countries typically build their employer brand on the values that distinguish public administration from the private sector, such as the importance of *employment security* or *service to the community*. They also formulate objectives that make them an attractive employer for the younger generation, such as *learning and development opportunities*, ensuring *work–life balance* or *career opportunities*.

Regarding the *European Commission*, the attractiveness measures are excellent *career opportunities*, *sophisticated selection* (e.g. competitive exams and other methods) as well

as the opportunity to gain *international experience*. EU officials are recruited across the European Union and communicate in 24 different languages.

Studies about generational issues have increased in the academic literature in recent years (COSTANZA et al. 2012; LYONS–KURON 2014; BENÍTEZ-MÁRQUEZ et al. 2022). The key idea of the existing research is that there could be significant differences between the generations currently present in the labour market. These differences can lead to internal conflicts in the workplace; thus, the functions of HR management need to be redesigned (REIS–BRAGA 2016).

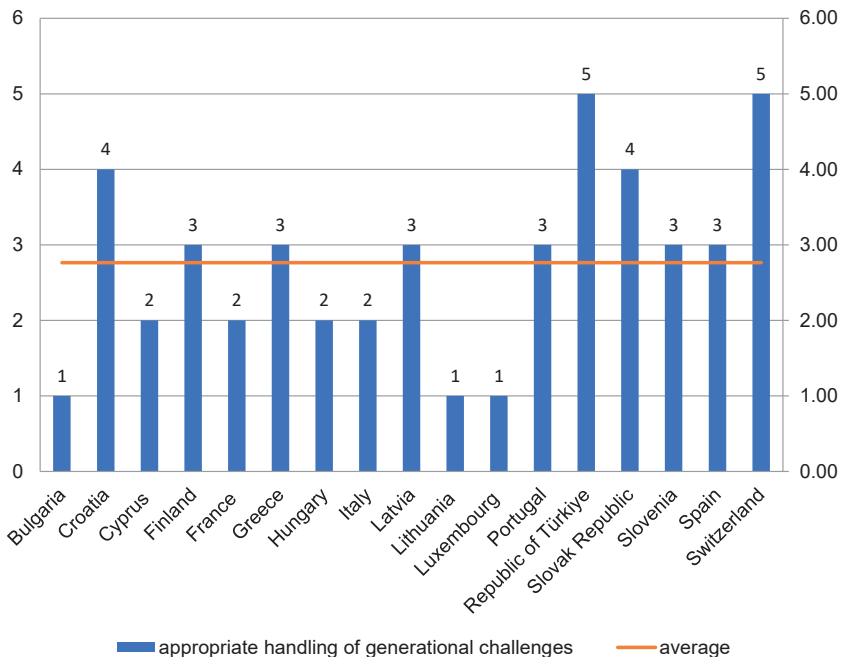


Figure 20
Handling of generational challenges in public administrations
 Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

Branding activities should consider the needs of different stakeholders. Academic research shows that attitudes about the brand of public sector employers are related to personal characteristics such as age and gender (KEPPELER–PAPENFUSS 2020).

Our research also looked at whether the employer branding strategy of central public administration organisations includes objectives to address generational differences. Figure 20 (N = 17) clearly shows that the employer branding strategy of 7 out of the 17 responding countries does not include goals for managing generational differences (below average).

Addressing generational challenges is an objective in the employer branding strategy of only a few responding countries. We compared this factor with the average age characteristics and age distribution of EUPAN countries' administrations but found no significant correlation. There is no clear trend as to whether generational challenges are more prevalent in organisations trying to attract younger generations or in organisations trying to retain older staff.

In *Ireland*, previous research indicated low awareness level concerning public service recruitment brands. This was exacerbated by a confusing brand architecture for recruitment, with many different brand names and logos. To address these issues and to enable greater clarity of their brand identity in today's recruitment market, all previous brand names were consolidated under the refreshed singular brand identity of "publicjobs". "Publicjobs" was introduced in June 2024. It aims to deliver a clear, consistent, modern and accessible visual identity for organisations with a view to increasing awareness about the services and driving recruitment activity. The mission of the program is to recruit diverse people with character, who are talented, and committed to achieving results in Ireland. The strategic priority is to achieve recruitment excellence. The refreshed identity comprises several key elements that come together to make the brand more recognisable. These include a new bilingual logo (English and Irish) and a distinctive, meaningful braid symbol. The intersecting colours of the braid symbol suggest a wide variety of perspectives and career pathways available in the public sector. The use of symmetry indicates that all communities can expect to see themselves reflected in the people who make up the public sector. The internal star shape created by the intersecting lines expresses excellence and collaboration toward common

goals. The refreshed brand is underwritten by comprehensive brand guidelines that detail how the brand should be used, including logo usage, colour palette, typography, imagery style and other elements. The tagline accompanying the refreshed brand is: "There's a public job for that." This supports the theme of diversity and the fact that there is a career in the public sector for you.

SUMMARY

Summarising the answers to Q13–15, employer branding usually focuses on attracting potential employees and retaining current employees. In this research, we explored the factors that contribute to the employer branding strategy of the responding EUPAN countries.

Some public sector organisations in EUPAN countries ($N = 5$) have independent employer branding strategies, but some responding countries have common objectives that serve as suggestions or guidelines. Even where there is no specific employer branding strategy, recruitment, retention and visibility are priorities. The attractiveness measures of the European Commission stand out because of the special nature of the EU institution. The responding EUPAN countries build their employer brand mainly on the following factors: work–life balance (e.g. family-friendly, flexible work, home office, telework and part-time work), job security, training and development opportunities, the idea of serving the community, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and career opportunities. These are the values that differentiate public administration from the private sector and make it an attractive employer.

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LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT (Q16–18)

Theoretical framework

In today's VUCA world, i.e. an era that is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous, offering a diversified learning and development (L&D) programme is quintessential for effective central administration. L&D plays a crucial

role in various areas: attracting and retaining a skilled workforce, increasing employee engagement, providing the workforce with skills, developing a strong, value-based culture, as well as branding (VAN DAM 2018: 3).

The relevance of learning and development methods

The respondents were asked to indicate the factors on which they build their learning and develop strategy taking into account their current personnel policy. Figure 21 (N = 21) concerns training and development opportunities (for the relevance of other factors, see the detailed chart on employer branding). On a 6-point scale (1: not at all, 6: definitely), the answers are as follows.

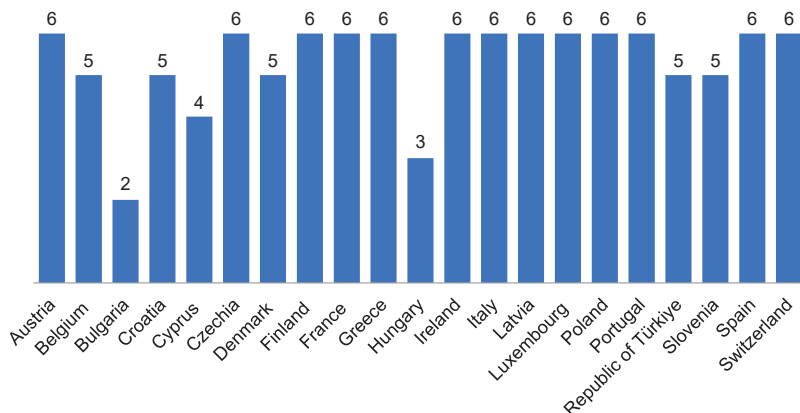


Figure 21

Training and development opportunities

Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

The majority of the responding countries recognises the strong impact of L&D opportunities on the attractiveness of the employer. In fact, when we look at the averages, it is the second most important among the employer branding factors. This is in line with the findings of a recent global Deloitte survey. “L&D opportunities” is amongst the top three factors for Millennials and Gen Z, when it comes to choosing an employer (DELOITTE 2024: 23–24).

Navigating the multigenerational workforce calls for sophisticated L&D systems. Items on the L&D toolkit are ranging from traditional to new. The list includes training, sabbatical, payback clause, individual learning account, study voucher, L&D plan, L&D credit system, coaching, knowledge sharing platforms, micro-credentials, independent learning, as well as AI. The respondents were asked to indicate the relevance of the tools at central administration in their country on a 6-point scale.¹⁰ Figures 22 and 23 on the relevance of learning and development methods offers a snapshot of the central administration landscape (N = 24).¹¹ It is noticeable that the responding countries (as well as the European Commission) have multiple strings to their bow. This is to be welcomed as, arguably, the more wide-ranging a package is, the more potential it has to meet the needs of the diverse, multigenerational workforce.

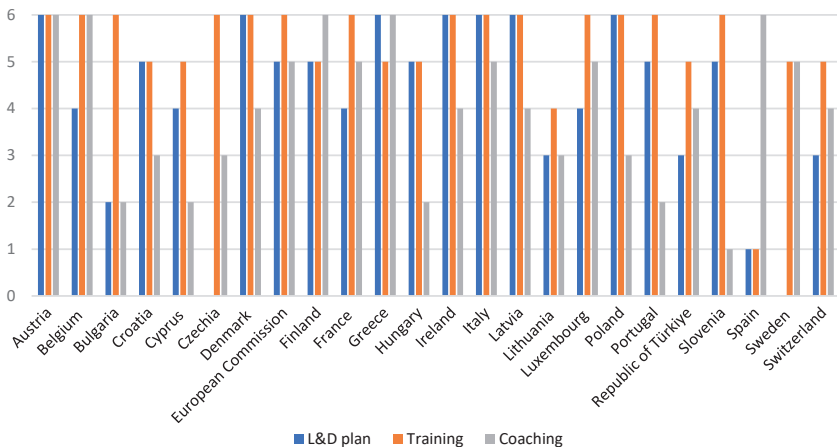


Figure 22
Learning and development methods available at central administration 1
 Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

¹⁰ In the following text 1: never, 2: rarely–seldom, 3: occasionally, 4: sometimes, 5: frequently, 6: very often.

¹¹ Only selected items are displayed. Agency and department-specific differences further elaborate the picture.

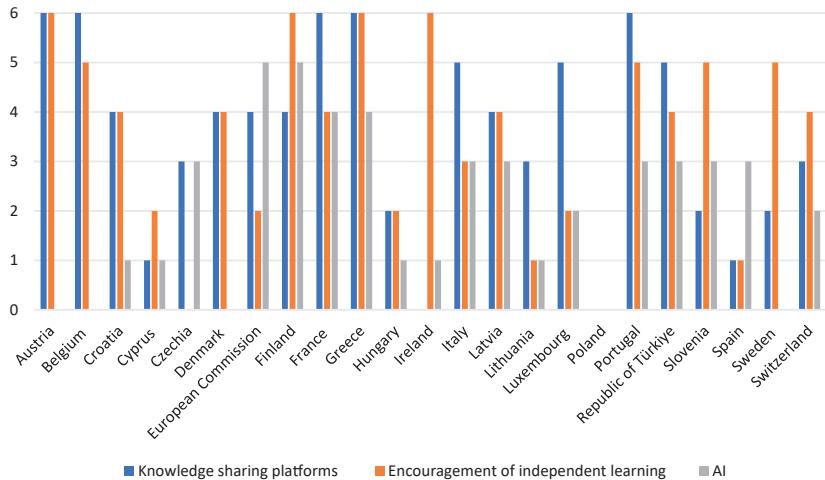


Figure 23

Learning and development methods available at central administration 2

Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

As we can see, *training* is by far the most often used method in the responding countries (with the exception of Spain). If fitted in a consistent system, training accompanies civil servants throughout their entire career cycle. In *Italy*, for instance, the training curriculum is linked with *personal career paths*. From a generation perspective the utilisation of trainings is vital, as these learning events oftentimes host a space for open dialogue between generations. Answering the question on exemplary practice, the *Slovak Republic* highlighted its *Centre for Education and Evaluation*, a centre that offers solution-oriented, comprehensive trainings for civil servants across all relevant offices.

An *L&D plan* is a tool that is especially important for those planning a long career in central administration. With regard to this category, the answers range from never to very often: never (Spain), rarely (Bulgaria), occasionally (Lithuania, the Republic of Türkiye and observer country Switzerland), sometimes (Luxembourg, Cyprus), frequently (e.g. Croatia, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia) and very often (e.g. Poland, Austria, Latvia, Denmark and Italy).

This distribution is interesting because it does not show a correlation with the average age of employees in central administration.

L&D requires *investment* in terms of time, money and energy on behalf of the central administration. If the fluctuation rate is high, this investment is wasted. According to the OECD, approximately 15–20% of young workers (i.e. under 30) transition to new jobs in a given year. Around 10% of them change occupations. Job and occupational mobility decline over the lifecycle, irrespective of gender and education groups. At mid-career (workers around the age of 45), only 7% of workers change jobs, and 3% change occupation, a proportion that remains relatively constant as individuals age (OECD 2024: 35–36).

One form of security is to apply a payback clause. The *payback clause* is an investment surrounded by protective rules stemming from acts, collective agreements, or individual agreements, depending on the given country's heritage. It also signals trust (or, shall we say, lack of trust) in the long-term cooperation of the parties concerned (KAJTÁR 2023). Payback clauses feature prominently in Ireland, the Republic of Türkiye, Hungary and also in the observer country Switzerland. If employees terminate the employment relationship within the agreed retention period, they can be requested to reimburse (a share of) the cost. This is a rather strict way to retain personnel as opposed to softer measures such as effective employer branding.

In the *Slovak Republic*, if the (direct) costs of training in one calendar year exceed EUR 3,500, the civil servant is obliged to remain in the civil service for one year. The *retention period* grows as the total cost increases; it is two years in case of +EUR 7,500 and three to five years in case of +EUR 10,000. If the civil servant's employment is terminated before the expiry of the fixed period, the civil servant shall pay the proportion of the costs exceeding 3,500 EUR. If the costs exceed 3,500 EUR in a calendar year and the civil servant agrees to continue the training, the civil service authority shall conclude a written agreement on competence training with the civil servant, specifying how long the civil servant is obliged to remain in the civil service after the training.

Sabbatical is worthy of our attention because it combines two classic functions: development and burnout prevention. The latter is significant regarding older civil servants, though burnout is sadly gaining relevance amongst younger generations, too. Spanish civil servants very often take advantage of sabbaticals (in fact, when we asked Hungarian civil servants to make suggestions on how to improve, one answer specifically referred to the sabbatical year in Spain). This tool is also often applied in the Republic of Türkiye. The possibility of taking a sabbatical can be appealing, especially for Millennials and Gen Z, who value more flexible and fluid forms of work–life balance (FODOR–JAECKEL 2018).

Portuguese higher education teachers and pre-school, primary and secondary school teachers with a permanent appointment are eligible for sabbatical leave without loss of rights, including the right to remuneration and meal allowance (Ministerial Decree 350/2008 of 5 May). This can be complemented with long-term unpaid leaves (Article 280 in LTFP – Law 35/2014).

However, traditional L&D tools alone no longer suffice. To meet the learning preferences of the younger generations, central administrations need to adapt their toolkit. This means more methods allowing self-directed and independent learning, individualised learning and inclusion of IT technology (CHILLAKURI 2020).

Employees are entitled to a *credit for professional self-training of 100 hours* per calendar year in *Portugal*, which may be exceeded when justified by the particular relevance to the job's activities. Self-training, when carried out during working hours, corresponds to effective performance of duties.

Individual learning accounts and study vouchers also offer more flexible and individualised ways of learning. The introduction of the Compte Personnel de Formation (CPF) in France was considered a milestone in the continuing training system in 2015. Individual or personal learning accounts (Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on individual learning accounts 2022/C

243/03) are still very often used in Belgium, Luxembourg, Greece and Ireland. However, they somewhat lost their relevance in France. They are sometimes or occasionally used in Latvia and Italy. The other responding countries offer no individual learning account at all.

The relevance of *study vouchers* (i.e. coupons of certain monetary value) is even less. So much so that these are the least significant amongst the methods examined. They are never or seldom used in 17 of the responding countries. A similar category is L&D credit system, exceptions being Greece and Hungary. In Hungary, the L&D credit system is indicated as the most frequently used tool.

Coaching is one of the most personalised methods. While its use is popular amongst Gen Z and Millennials, according to the responses, it is mostly applied to the development of civil servants in higher positions. In most countries, it is listed among the very often used (Austria, Belgium, Finland, Spain and Greece) or among the most frequently used tools (Luxembourg, Sweden, Italy, France and the European Commission). For the first time, coaching was introduced as an essential method for public servants' development in Greece.

When it comes to the use of IT, extensive use of *knowledge sharing platforms* is seen in Austria, France, Portugal, Greece and Belgium. It is a frequently used tool in Luxembourg, Italy and the Republic of Türkiye. These platforms are particularly relevant for younger generations. Their benefits include global and anytime access, up-to-date and constantly growing archive and variety of resources (e-manuals, videos, podcasts, etc.).

Research suggests that *microlearning* is an effective way to learn new information, particularly in workplace training and education. It can lead to improved recall and retention of information as well as increased engagement and motivation among Gen Z (CHOUDHARY–PANDITA 2024). Micro-credentials are relatively novel actors of the L&D scenery. Belgium and Croatia are pioneers in this respect. Currently, however, the use of micro-credentials is far from reaching its full potential in central administration. Countries such as Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania and Sweden have never used it. This might be due to the lack of proper quality control and recognition.

Informal learning is essential, and it can be a prime source for cost-effective intergenerational learning. In many responding countries, there is an awareness of its importance. The support of *self-directed workplace learning* (e.g. Google search, obtaining information on social forums, informal knowledge sharing, production, and/or sharing of professional podcasts) is particularly encouraged in the central administration of Austria, Finland, Greece and Ireland, but not at all supported in Bulgaria, Lithuania and Spain.

Digital transformation and the spreading use of AI are among the biggest challenges for L&D today. AI spans various domains, including, amongst others, generative AI technologies, such as Chatbot and natural language processing tools, virtual assistants, or the development of video content with AI. It can be used in various phases of learning, like design, delivery and evaluation of learning programmes. To give an example, AI can be adopted to measure learning effectiveness, help learners spot mistakes and suggest corrections. The use of AI means flexible as well as cost and time-effective elements in learning processes for a large group of civil servants (see the literature review of BHATT–ASHUTOSH 2023). The use of AI is most relevant in Finland and the European Commission (see the best practices later). It is the least relevant in Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Hungary, Ireland and Lithuania.

The *European Commission* has already developed a targeted *learning package* for generalists and policymakers to help colleagues *learn about artificial intelligence*. AI packages for managers and developers are also being formed.

Portugal: AI virtual assistant called “Vitor” greets the visitors on the DGAEP website, as well as on the public employment platform and supports them by speeding up searches in matters of administration, public employment and centralised recruitment.

The blend of old and new is exemplified in the questionnaire by observer country, *Switzerland*. The Federal Administration recently launched the *GoodHabitz digital learning library*. Wherever possible, the self-study courses are linked to existing programmes (face-to-face courses, events, workshops, campaigns, etc.).

An important feature of contemporary L&D in central administration is increased *partnership*. The principle of partnership is essential in the articulation and expression of the coexisting development needs. This translates to active participation in the different phases of the L&D process, including planning and evaluation. After-training-satisfaction online questionnaire is one small element (RODRÍGUEZ-FERNÁNDEZ – DíEZ-GUTIÉRREZ 2022). Civil servants are active actors; they oftentimes even become micro-content creators (see the best practices of the Finnish eOppiva or the Irish OneLearning platform later).

A notable example of partnership can be seen in *Latvia*. *The public service senior leadership competency framework was developed* in close cooperation with senior level managers themselves.

With today's increasingly multigenerational workplace, we can observe multiple shifts in workplace preferences and expectations. One fundamental shift relates to the location of work (i.e. an increasing need for remote work). Another noticeable shift is connected to the preferred ways of communication. In-person interactions are regularly replaced with communication through text, voice, or video. These shifts inevitably leave their mark on the design of L&D. Online platforms and informal learning are gaining more relevance. However, traditional methods such as training keep their key role. While individual forms of learning tend to be more flexible and personalised, collective forms (e.g. training, team coaching) may harvest the advantages of age-diverse groups, and the combination of multiple perspectives and talents. Partnership, in other words, involvement of civil servants throughout the learning process, also allows for a more custom-made system.

Organisational learning, learning organisations and the generational viewpoint

Besides mobility and the use of flexible working arrangements, the learning culture is identified as one of the three aspects of flexible public service by the OECD (OECD 2023). As we can see from the answers to question No. 16 – albeit to varying degrees – *organisational learning* (i.e. learning which takes place within an organisational context) exists in all responding countries. This, however, does not necessarily make the central organisations learning organisations. A learning organisation requires a deeper organisational commitment to learning, as an enabler of change. It indicates the capacity to adapt and to compete through learning (ELLIOTT 2020: 272). It is about expansive learning, constant evolution, taking risks and *embracing change* (including *generational risks and change*) (SENGE 2014; ANAND–BRIX 2022). *Learning organisation* is not a status, but a state which is continuously being striven for (RUPČIĆ 2024: 201–211; HODGKINSON 2000: 159, cited by GLENNON et al. 2019).

The participants were asked to indicate to what extent factors associated with learning organisation are true for their organisation. A 6-point scale was applied (1: not at all, 6: definitely). Figure 24 (N = 25) depicts average figures for how the responding countries perceive themselves in the effort mentioned above.

What is clearly visible is that most responding countries see themselves as actors who *strive for continuous learning*. In contrast, the process of development adapted to the different learning characteristics of the generations received the lowest average point. The *mentoring function* of the leaders was highlighted by Austria, Poland, Croatia, Latvia, the Republic of Türkiye, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Italy, Spain and the European Commission. The data underlines the key position of leadership development, especially the development of those skills related to the development of others (e.g. coaching, mentoring, motivation skills, talent management, etc.).

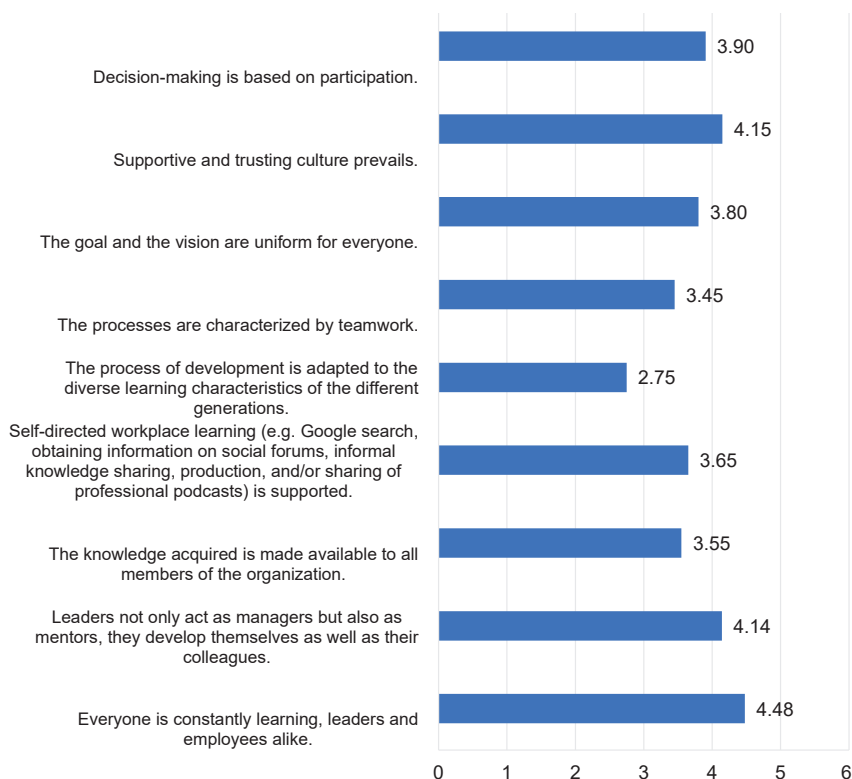


Figure 24

*Learning organisation averages**Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN*

Distribution of acquired knowledge to all members of the organisation is seen as a prime characteristic of the central administration of the Czech Republic and Ireland.

In *Poland* the Ordinance of the Head of Civil Service concerning the standards of human resources management in the civil service recommends the use of various forms of employee

development activities, in particular: *learning from other colleagues* (e.g. instructions, mentoring, coaching, consultations, study visits).

According to the self-evaluation, *uniform goals and vision* absolutely came to fruition in the central administration of Greece, Cyprus, Denmark, the Republic of Türkiye and Ireland.

Supportive and trusting culture received maximum number in Austria, Belgium, Ireland and Sweden.

When taking into account all classic learning organisation-related factors (in other words, all factors listed except the generation-related one), these weigh the most in Ireland and Denmark and least in Bulgaria.

A fine example is offered by *Latvia*, where the type of learning in central administration is both organisational and individual. The learning and development plan for public administration employees for 2021–2027 was especially developed to ensure the transformation of public administration into an *organisation that learns* and to make learning a daily habit for employees in public administration, as well as to make and horizontally integrate united and systematic knowledge management within the public administration. The plan defines five strategic priorities: 1. decent work in public administration; 2. innovation and co-creation for modern action policy and services in public administration; 3. leadership and effective change management; 4. digital transformation and data literacy; and 5. professionalisation of human resources and administrative capacity building (www.mk.gov.lv/lv/media/13067/download?attachment).

All but one factor in the questionnaire was related to organisational learning. This, in addition to one factor concerned *generation management*. Figure 25 (N = 21) offers country specific answers.

What stands out is that a specific ‘generation angle’ is only moderately or less used by most of the responding countries when they shape their L&D. Amongst the moderately generation-aware countries we find Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Latvia, Slovenia and observer country Switzerland (they gave 3 points out of 6).

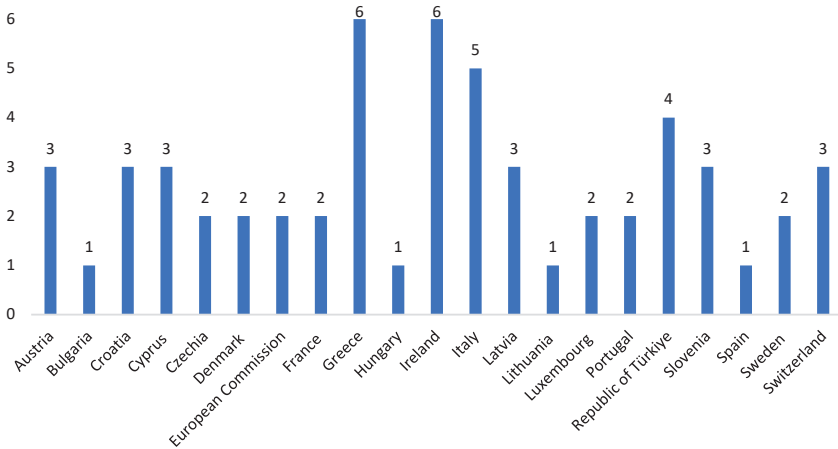


Figure 25

The generation perspective

Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

The Republic of Türkiye indicated 4, and Italy gave 5 points out of 6. Greece and Ireland are the most conscious of the generational differences when shaping their L&D systems. The process of development is not at all adapted to the diverse learning characteristics of the different generations in Bulgaria, Hungary, Lithuania and Spain; and only to a very little extent adapted in the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Luxembourg, Portugal, Sweden and the European Commission. This is not to say that characteristics of the different generations are completely ignored in these countries. *Elements* of the generational angle are present. The existing strategies regarding *ageing of personnel* and the *mentor systems* typically target specific age groups. Finland applies *life cycle management*. The importance of *digital transformation* – arguably one of the most prominent elements of the generational differences today – is also taken into account in most countries.

Innovative, exemplary learning and development practices

While some of the exemplary practices are typically (but not necessarily) aiming at supporting Gen Z (e.g. the *onboarding* system in France), other programmes target personnel with many years of experience (e.g. the *senior management leadership programmes* of Latvia and Ireland).

A complex strategic development programme with a backbone of a competency framework of top leaders were highlighted in Latvia. The *Strategy of Senior Management Leadership Programme's development of 2023* envisages different learning and development activities for the senior level managers, as well as provides the solutions for creating a supportive operating environment. The strategy was elaborated based on the Senior Civil Service System matrix and the Senior Civil Service System self-assessment questionnaire offered by the OECD. In addition to that a public service senior leadership competency framework with 12 core competences was developed in close cooperation with senior level managers themselves. The Senior Management Leadership Programme concerns approximately 270 senior managers of all 100 institutions of public administration.

Some programmes are targeting new entrants but are also available for those who simply 'want to brush up on their skills' (*basic training for government employees* in Sweden).

EU officials form a diverse, multicultural and multilingual team like no other in the world. As part of this international community, staff get an unparalleled chance to grow, expand their horizons and work with *colleagues from all walks of life* and all types of backgrounds. The Commission is committed to improve guidance on training by developing *targeted learning packages for specific expertise or interdisciplinary competences* that are in line with the Commission's learning and development priorities. By June 2024, learning packages, developed jointly with sponsor DGs have been rolled out for 17 broad job profiles covering over 80% of all Commission staff, based on the Commission's learning priorities. These one-stop-shops per job profile contain essential and highly recommended courses and make it easier for managers to support their staff with clear guidance on learning and development.

Development plans (Greece), *mentoring* (highlighted for instance by the questionnaire of Austria, France, Spain and Greece) affect both younger and older civil servants thus cater for multiple generations.

A collaborative development approach and the use of personalised tools, such as mentoring and coaching, gained relevance in Greece.

The workshop for innovation in *Slovenia* is open to all civil servants from different generations. The goal of the *Innovative.si* project is to make innovative approaches a daily routine in public administration and to strengthen the innovation culture. It strives to create partnerships between public administration, citizens, civil society and the private sector. The *Training for Innovation in Public Administration* programme aims to enable a change in working methods, especially in problem-solving and solution design, as well as effective communication. The training is intended for public administration employees and is conducted in the form of workshops with an emphasis on active participation.

A rich combination of L&D tools characterises *Ireland*. A range of L&D, *coaching and mentoring* supports are offered to senior civil servants through leadership programmes (SPS). The *OneLearningplatform* for Civil Service L&D offers both a centralised repository of e-learning and facilitated courses, as well as a platform for individual Departments and Offices to create and curate their own courses. Both OneLearning and SPS transferred to the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) in 2023 as part of a vision to create a centre of excellence for learning and development for Ireland's public service. A programme of *innovation* is underway, including knowledge sharing to the wider Public Service.

Digital platforms appear in many questionnaires (besides the aforementioned Irish example, see Poland, Finland, Latvia and Italy). In fact, generation management can be partly framed within the context of digital transformation. One of the most important difference between generations is their attitude to digital technology. Digitalisation has a very different impact on the learning of Gen Z and Y than on the learning of X, Baby boomers and veterans (KHRYKOV et al. 2023: 79–80; NICHOLAS 2020). Gen Z has a natural affinity to technology, they exhibit digital proficiency and are more likely to engage in mobile learning through their digital devices (NICHOLAS 2020).

The Digital Academy in Latvia delivers programmes to strengthen digital skills for 62,900 public administration employees. The programme running from 2023 to 2026 aims to implement training at three levels: basic skills in ‘Effective and Secure Work in the Digital Work Environment’, expert skills in ‘Planning Digital Processes and Services – User-Oriented and Data-Driven’ and management and policy planning skills in ‘Skilful Management and Implementation of Digital Transformation Processes’.

Italy’s plan is to provide training to 750,000 civil servants by 2026. They also revamp their e-learning platform, Syllabus. The Syllabus aims to describe the digital skills and knowledge required by all Italian civil servants to bring forward the digital transformation and it delivers a structured training programme (*Syllabus 2.0* www.syllabus.gov.it/portale/web/syllabus/).

It can also be a *strategic choice* to use a sophisticated digital learning platform as the main channel for developing the competence of central government personnel.

An example of a cutting-edge, constantly evolving *digital learning platform* is offered in *Finland*. *eOppiva* has strengthened the central government’s shared competence in a completely new way and the number of learning events is now twenty times higher. The majority of central government employees (around 82,000) have adopted it. In 2023, 185,000 students embarked on their training journey. Nearly 80% of the courses started were completed. The founder and owner of the service is the Ministry of Finance, and the entity is operated by the HAUS Development Centre. Thanks to the internal operation, the price can be kept as low as EUR 4.1/completed study attainment (in 2023). The website contains online courses, podcasts, microvideos and learning blogs. It provides government-specific learning content, but true to its slogan, ‘learning is for everyone’, it also provides content for the general public (130 out of 250 online courses are openly accessible). There are already more than 250 online courses and all government agencies can use it free of charge. Just like the OneLearning Platform of Ireland, *eOppiva* also allows individual agencies to create and manage their own content. Currently, Moodle has around 1,700 training content produced by nearly 70 agencies. The ingredients for outstanding success are financial commitment, strong cooperation within central government, pioneering spirit and enthusiastic people

trusting the process. To quote the Finnish Questionnaire: “We aim at being as creative and innovative as possible and, above all, cherish the joy of learning.”

The crucial takeaway from the scientific literature on generation management is the presence of *differences in terms of attitude (including attitude to digital technology), communication and work preferences* within the workforce. There are many factors behind these differences besides characteristics attributed to the different generations. The generation theory might be overly simplistic. However, it does highlight the fact that sharp differences are present within the workforce. L&D management needs to address this increasing heterogeneity. Acknowledging and addressing differences (either generation, age, life stage, personality, or any other related factor) requires adaptability and flexibility. We need to achieve both if we want a central administration that is ready for the challenges of the future.

SUMMARY

Navigating the multigenerational workforce calls for sophisticated L&D systems. Complex organisational learning exists in all responding countries. Items in the L&D toolkit range from traditional to new. The list includes training, a sabbatical, a payback clause, an individual learning account, a study voucher, an L&D plan, an L&D credit system, coaching, knowledge-sharing platforms, micro-credentials, independent learning, as well as the use of AI. It must be highlighted that the more wide-ranging a package is, the more potential it has to meet the needs of the diverse, multigenerational workforce. The majority of the responding countries see themselves as actors that strive for continuous learning.

The growing need for self-directed and individualised learning is recognised. Online learning platforms came visibly to the forefront in many countries. We can also find opportunities for offline human connection, intergenerational

dialogue and learning (e.g. mentoring, coaching and training). Training is by far the most often used development tool, while AI is not yet seen as a key factor.

While certain generation-related factors, such as age, career stages, etc. are taken into account, most of the responding countries only adopt a moderate 'generation approach' when they shape their L&D.

The crucial takeaway from the scientific generation management literature is the presence of differences in terms of attitude (including attitude towards digital technology), communication and work preferences within the workforce. L&D management have to address this increasing heterogeneity. Acknowledging and addressing the differences (be they generation, age, life stage, personality, or any other factor related) requires adaptability and flexibility. We need to cultivate both if we want a central administration that is ready for the challenges of the future.

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SATISFACTION AND PROGRESS (Q19–20)

Theoretical framework

Regularly conducting employee satisfaction surveys is crucial for organisations aiming to enhance performance, employee well-being and overall workplace culture. These surveys serve as diagnostic tools that provide insights into employee perceptions, motivations and areas requiring improvement. Scientific research underscores the significance of these surveys in fostering a productive and engaged workforce. Employee satisfaction surveys enable organisations to assess various facets of the work environment, including job satisfaction, engagement levels and organisational commitment. By systematically collecting and analysing employee feedback, employers can identify factors that contribute to job satisfaction and those that may lead to dissatisfaction or disengagement. This understanding is pivotal for implementing targeted interventions aimed at enhancing employee morale and productivity. Employee surveys, when effectively designed and administered, can lead to meaningful improvements in workplace dynamics and outcomes (GARRAD–HYLAND 2020).

Studies have demonstrated a positive correlation between employee satisfaction and organisational performance (COLE–COLE 2005). Research indicates that higher levels of employee satisfaction are associated with increased job engagement, workplace well-being and employee retention. These factors collectively contribute to a more motivated and committed workforce, which in turn enhances organisational effectiveness and reduces turnover rates (SYPNIEWSKA et al. 2023).

Regular administration of employee satisfaction surveys also facilitates effective feedback mechanisms. Providing employees with opportunities to express their views and concerns fosters a culture of open communication and recognition. This practice enhances higher job satisfaction and engagement levels (WALKER 2024).

An organisation must meet employees' expectations to retain them, or they will likely leave. Therefore, it is essential to holistically manage the relationship between the organisation and its employees, encompassing motivation, incentives and rewards.

Since the 1960s, the concept and significance of the psychological contract have increasingly come to the forefront of workplace research. Within the psychological contract framework, the employee and the employer mutually understand and accept the written and informal aspects of the employment relationship (ARGYRIS 1960). The psychological contract expresses the written, unwritten, spoken and unspoken expectations between the employee and the employer in their relationship (BAKER et al. 1985).

The “Generations in Public Administration 2024” research aims to understand how the psychological contract evolves and its effect on job satisfaction and commitment while exploring unique administrative patterns. The findings may offer valuable insights for enhancing HRM systems to better support employees in public administration. The topic is examined through international and domestic questionnaire-based research, supplemented by in-depth interviews and document analysis. During the international questionnaire-based research, we examined EUPAN countries' practices regarding satisfaction surveys and organisational development programmes.

Workplace satisfaction surveys can help reveal how much the psychological contract is fulfilled. The data collected from these surveys can highlight areas where employees' expectations are not being met, thereby assisting employers in improving the employee experience, increasing satisfaction and strengthening commitment. Regular workplace satisfaction surveys are positively associated with improved management practices and organisational culture in public administration (PARK 2020).

The culture and structure of the civil service system affect the likelihood of implementing formalised organisational development programmes, with some countries preferring more informal or decentralised approaches.

We found many useful connection points with the results of the report “Public Employee Motivation in EU Central and Federal Public Administrations: An Exploratory Approach”, prepared under the Portuguese Presidency in 2021.

*Workplace satisfaction survey at the
central level in the last five years*

Engaged employees perform better, take more initiative and are more innovative than those who are not engaged. Higher engagement leads to fewer sick days and better retention, influenced by good leadership, favourable working conditions and opportunities for career growth. The OECD *Government at a Glance* (2023) report found that 70% of the civil servants in seven countries were satisfied with their jobs, and 63% felt inspired by their work. Public sector organisations might consider strategies to enhance organisational attachment and ensure that all levels of staff feel valued and motivated.

Q19 investigated whether there have been workplace satisfaction survey at the central level in the past 5 years. Below, we have compiled the responses submitted by the EUPAN countries (N = 27).

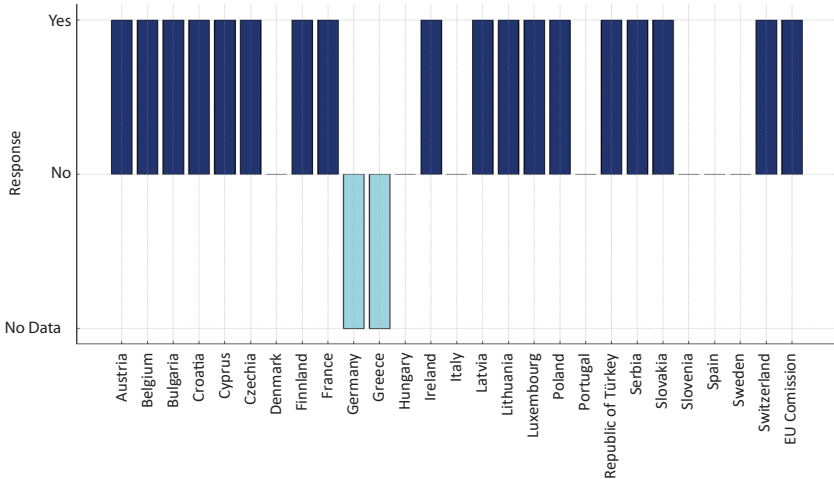


Figure 26

Workplace satisfaction survey in the last five years by country

Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

We can observe different practices among certain countries, satisfaction surveys are conducted *annually* at the central level (e.g. Bulgaria, Finland, Latvia), while in others, they occur *less regularly* (e.g. Lithuania every 2 years; Switzerland every three years), every few years, or rarely.

Out of the 27 responding countries, 18 confirmed that a *workplace satisfaction survey* for personnel was conducted at the central level within the last five years (Yes: 66.67%; No: 25.9%; No Data: 7.41%). This suggests that a significant majority, specifically 66.67 % of the surveyed countries, have taken steps to assess and improve employee satisfaction at a central level. The relatively high percentage reflects a common practice among these countries to monitor and address workplace satisfaction, which is crucial for organisational well-being and efficiency.

This data suggests that workplace satisfaction surveys are recognised as a strategic priority, with 66.67% of surveyed countries conducting them. This reflects a growing awareness of the link between employee well-being and organisational performance. The high percentage indicates a commitment

to fostering positive work environments, gathering employee feedback and addressing issues proactively. Additionally, it implies that these countries have established systems to regularly assess and improve workplace satisfaction, showcasing a mature approach to human resource management.

Based on the country examples, the *main focus areas* of employee satisfaction surveys are:

- Management practices: Leadership effectiveness, management satisfaction and organisational culture.
- Work environment: Physical and mental work conditions, job content and the overall work environment.
- Employee motivation and engagement: Motivation, engagement and commitment, including meaningful work, recognition and influence opportunities.
- Career development: Career prospects, professional development and training opportunities.
- Work–life balance: The balance between work and private life (flexible working hours and remote work options).
- Interpersonal relationships: Team dynamics, interpersonal relationships and organisational communication.
- Remuneration and benefits: Compensation, benefits and job security.
- Innovation and digitalisation: The impact of digital tools and the adoption of innovative practices.

Examining these areas is key to understanding and improving public administration employees' well-being, motivation and performance. It helps to highlight strengths and areas for improvement, ensuring a supportive work environment and efficient management.

We asked the respondents to provide a brief written explanation of their practice, which we present in short, summarised form.

Practices of the EUPAN countries

Austria: The Federal Employee Satisfaction and Motivation Survey, which had 27,759 participants (2023), showed that employees are generally satisfied with their work environment and motivated. However, there are concerns about work process efficiency, knowledge sharing and career development. Despite these issues, most employees plan to stay in their current departments and seek better communication.

Belgium: Employee surveys (2020–2023) in the Belgian federal administration are conducted every two to three years (at the request of each individual public service), covering nine key domains such as job content, work environment and career. These surveys typically have a response rate of 60–70%, and action plans are developed to address priorities identified in the surveys.

Bulgaria: The annual “Engagement Barometer” (2023) survey of the Institute of Public Administration has been conducted for six years. It focuses on leadership, goals, motivation, teamwork and remuneration among civil servants.

Croatia: Croatia conducted two key surveys on civil service management. The 2020 survey results are publicly available. The ongoing 2024 survey, part of an EU multi-country project (“EU Survey of Central Government Public Servants: Strengthening Evidence-based People Management Policies and Reforms” supported by the OECD [2023–2025]), aims to monitor civil servant well-being with a focus on working conditions and career development.

Cyprus: The survey aimed to assess employees’ perceptions of the efficiency and effectiveness of HR policies and tools within the public administration. Conducted electronically in 2020, the survey revealed that only a quarter of the respondents (2,256) believe that the available management tools are efficient and effective.

The Czech Republic: The Employee Satisfaction Survey (2024) of the Ministry of the Interior highlighted high satisfaction in work performance, management and workplace relations, while professional development and benefits were rated lower. The Czech civil service mandates annual surveys, though compliance varies across offices.

Denmark: Due to Denmark’s decentralised government structure, workplace satisfaction surveys are conducted decentrally. Local workplaces must legally conduct surveys of the physical and mental work environment (APV) at least every three years.

Finland: Finland has used a joint personnel survey since 2004 to measure employee satisfaction. In 2023, the survey covered 63% of government employees, with a 75% response rate. The results showed positive improvements across various areas like management, work content and remuneration. Over the past five years, all areas have shown improvement.

France: Over the past five years, multiple studies on working conditions have been conducted. The most recent FP+ consultation in 2023 involved over 110,000 civil servants, revealing a strong interest in reorganising working hours (73%) and developing digital tools for teleworking (45%). The typical respondent was a civil servant aged 36–49, in category A, and in a management position.

Ireland: The survey conducted by DPENDR and the CSO in September 2023 showed overall positive results, with a significant increase in newer staff, who now make up 52% of respondents. Civil servants generally feel optimistic about their work and development opportunities, but challenges remain in involvement, innovation, job demands and pay.

Latvia: Latvia's Public Administration Employee Engagement Survey (2022–2024), conducted every 18 months, measures employee engagement, burnout and motivation. The most recent survey was in 2022, with the next set of results expected in the autumn of 2024. The survey allows for international comparisons through OECD-standard questions.

Lithuania: Lithuania's Ministry of the Interior conducts an "Employee Opinion Survey" every two years. The latest survey, involving state agencies and institutions (ministries and institutions under the ministries, but not local government institutions), is currently ongoing, and results are expected by the end of 2024.

Luxembourg: Since 2020, Luxembourg has conducted standardised employee surveys across 36 administrations, with a 72% response rate. The 2024 survey focused on management practices and employee satisfaction, with a 69% response rate, highlighting the importance of leadership, communication and participation. Individual administrations use survey results to develop targeted improvement projects within their work programmes.

Poland: The "Your Civil Service" survey (2024) received over 23,000 responses, with respondents rating their job satisfaction at 4.36 out of 6 and their likelihood of recommending civil service at 4.14 out of 6. The survey results, currently under analysis, emphasise job stability, work–life balance and a sense of service as top reasons for valuing civil service work.

The Slovak Republic: The 2019 survey of nearly 9,000 central-level civil servants found that employees are generally satisfied with management, but satisfaction decreases with years of

service. While meaningful work and job security are key motivators, there is dissatisfaction with financial rewards and career development opportunities.

Switzerland: Switzerland conducts a triennial survey among central government employees (around 40,000), with the 2023 survey showing a 70% response rate. The survey (2023) indicated stable high satisfaction levels over the past decade, with improved work–life balance, remote working and leadership since 2020.

The Republic of Türkiye: A large-scale 2019 survey involving over 5 million public servants and 863,000 participants provided insights into the public sector workforce, contributing to evaluating the current state of public employment.

Serbia: The last (online) satisfaction survey was conducted in 2021 on a sample of 1.016 civil servants from state administration bodies. The overall range of satisfaction was 3.1 (on a scale from 1–5).

The European Commission: The latest Staff Survey conducted in 2023, with a record participation of over 23,500 employees (65% of the staff). Engagement remains high at 73%, and overall staff satisfaction has improved. The Commission maintains a solid employer brand among its staff.

Organisational development programme in the past five years

Q20 investigated whether there have been any organisational development programs at the central level in the past 5 years.

The data shows that 10 out of the 27 surveyed countries ($N = 27$) confirmed that an *organisational development programme* was implemented at the central level in the past five years (No: 59.26%; Yes: 37.04%; No Data: 3.7%). This means that a relatively small portion, precisely 37%, of the countries have undertaken central-level initiatives to improve organisational structures or processes.

The modest percentage indicates that organisational development at the central level may not be a widespread focus among the majority of these countries, it may also suggest potential areas for further growth or investment in this area.

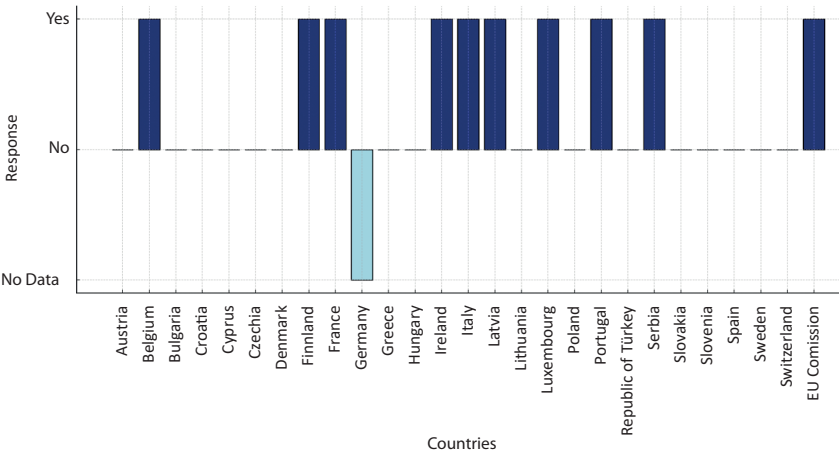


Figure 27
Organisational development programs
Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

Cultural differences might influence the emphasis placed on organisational development. In some countries, there may be preference for more informal or decentralised approaches to organisational improvement (e.g. Denmark).

The percentage may reflect the continuity of policies. Countries experiencing frequent government transitions or political challenges may less likely implement long-term programmes, such as organisational development, resulting in fewer initiatives at the central level.

The data could also suggest differing national priorities. Some countries might focus more on other areas, such as infrastructure, healthcare, or education, leaving organisational development at the central level as a lower priority.

The relatively modest percentage (37%) may suggest that some of the surveyed countries require more resources, such as funding. Countries with stronger economies or greater resource access might be more inclined to invest in such initiatives.

These ratios may mirror a combination of these factors, highlighting the complexity of implementing organisational development programmes at the central level across different countries.

We asked the respondents to provide a brief written explanation of their practice, which we present in a summarised form.

Practices of the EUPAN countries

Belgium: Various organisational development programmes are being implemented, focusing on leadership development, integrity enhancement, workforce planning, innovation and inclusion initiatives.

Finland: Organisational development programmes are specific to individual agencies and are not conducted at the central level.

France: The Occupational Health Plan (2022–2025) aims to improve social dialogue, quality of life, working conditions and the prevention system in the civil service.

Ireland: The Irish Civil Service has implemented an Organisational Capability Review Programme. Action 20 of the Civil Service Renewal Plan (2014) called for establishing this programme to foster a culture of regular evaluations of the capability of Departments and Offices in achieving their objectives. The programme has been in operation since 2016.

Latvia: The Learning and Development Plan (2021–2027) seeks to transform public administration into a learning organisation. Priorities include decent work, innovation, leadership, digital transformation and professionalisation of human resources.

Luxembourg: The “FP2025” initiative focuses on continuous improvement across nine areas of organisational development, including strategy, workforce planning and leadership.

Italy: The Public Employment Reform (2023) established a comprehensive framework for strategic HR management, performance appraisal and training, focusing on digital skills and the uniform implementation of policies across all government levels.

Portugal: The Strategy for Innovation and Modernisation (2020–2023) emphasises administrative modernisation through leadership development, performance management, technological governance and decentralisation of public services.

Serbia: The National Academy for Public Administration (NAPA) prepares and implements training programs for civil servants.

The European Commission: A Corporate Organisational Change unit (2022) and the Centre for Organisational Transformation (2023) support fundamental changes like flexible working and AI integration. Inter-service teams coordinate projects, providing guidance, training and communication. Key lessons include proactive communication and leadership. The Centre also offers consultancy and training in change management and participatory methods.

SUMMARY

This branch of the research aimed to understand how the psychological contract evolves and its effect on job satisfaction and commitment while exploring unique administrative patterns. During the international questionnaire-based research, we examined EUPAN countries' practices regarding satisfaction surveys and organisational development programmes (Q19–20). Regular workplace satisfaction surveys are positively associated with improved management practices and organisational culture in public administration. Many of the respondents have a well-established practice of regularly conducting satisfaction surveys. This indicates a commitment to fostering positive work environments, gathering employee feedback and addressing issues proactively. The culture and structure of the civil service system affect the likelihood of implementing formalised organisational development programmes, with some countries preferring more informal or decentralised approaches.

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PERSONNEL DECISION SUPPORT (Q21–23)

Theoretical framework

A recent survey suggests (Lattice 2024) that when it comes to demonstrating the impact of HR to other business stakeholders, European HR teams are ahead of the curve compared to their counterparts in other non-European

countries. There is no doubt that European HR solutions are very advanced (European Commission 2022; PAKSI-PETRÓ 2023), but it is questionable to what extent these solutions have been adapted by public administrations in the EUPAN countries and whether they are able to contribute to strategic decision-making and the achievement of administrative objectives using a wide range of HR strategy tools.

Decision support systems at central level

In relation to the existence of a human resources strategy, countries were also asked which decision support systems are used in central administrations for strategic personnel planning (Q21 Indicate what procedures are used in your organisation's strategic personnel planning!). In order to make the answers easier to analyse, we have also provided the answer options beforehand. The frequency of the responses is illustrated in Figure 28 (N = 24, multiple answers were possible).

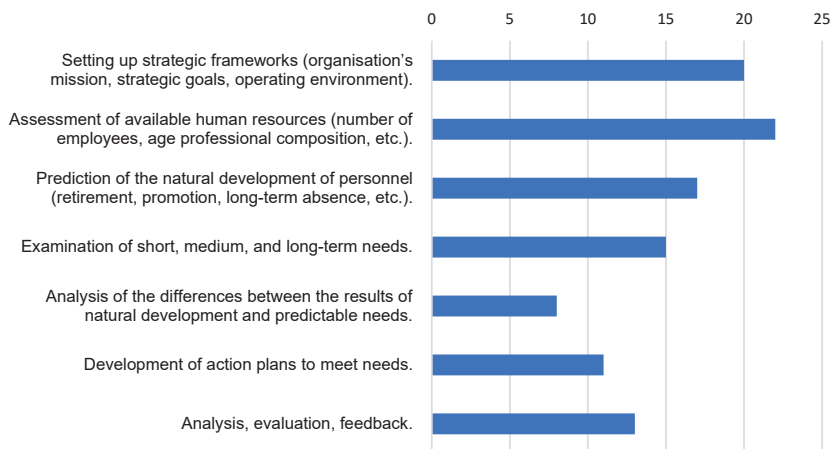


Figure 28

Frequency of categories used in strategic personnel planning in the central public administrations

Source: Compiled by the author based on EUPAN

As can be seen in Figure 28, the most frequently used category was the assessment of available human resources (number of employees, age, professional composition) option, with 21 mentions in total. Although five countries did not tick this option, there is reason to believe that some form of *Analysis and assessment of available human resources* is present in these countries. The second most frequent item selected by respondents was setting up strategic frameworks (organisation's mission, strategic goals, operating environment). Although the definition of strategic frameworks is one of the essential elements of planning, the responses suggest that the development of action plans to meet needs and the provision of feedback (analysis, evaluation, feedback) are less than half as frequent in EUPAN countries' responses as the definition of strategic frameworks. This may be due to the fact that HRM strategic planning processes are still in the midst of developing the framework (as in the case of Poland, which is preparing its HRM strategy) or to the fact that the development of action plans and the *Analysis and evaluation* of the results of their implementation are part of another process (e.g. HR controlling) outside the HR strategic planning process. Exploring this finding thus requires further research.

Another interesting correlation that can be drawn from the responses is that while *Prediction of the natural development of personnel (retirement, promotion, long-term absence, etc.)* and *Examination of short, medium, and long-term needs* are both important elements of the HR strategy toolbox of the responding countries, with 17 and 15 mentions respectively, *Analysis of the differences between the results of natural development and predictable needs* is much less present in the toolbox, with only eight countries mentioning such an exercise. In our view, this may indicate that while data-based forecasts are typically used in planning HR processes in central administrations, there is less capacity to analyse them and explore the causes and correlations in a deeper and more conscious way.

The survey also provided an opportunity to ask what factors characterise strategic HR planning. (Q22 On a 6-point scale, please indicate to what extent the following factors characterise your organisation's strategic personnel planning [1: does not characterise it at all; 6: completely characterises it]). In

order to assess the importance of these factors, the response options could be ticked on a scale. Based on the responses received ($N = 21$), the highest average score of 4.2 was given to the statement *Workforce planning is aligned with the organisation's strategic objectives*. In contrast, the statement that *the leaders' approach is characterised by strategic thinking* received an average score of 4.1. Respondents least agreed with the statement *Responses to the changes in the labour market are quick and flexible*. This received an average score of 2.8, suggesting that central administrations are less quick and flexible in adapting to changes in the labour market.

When comparing the responses to this question by country, we find that *the Republic of Türkiye, Finland, France, Ireland and Latvia* are the most prominent ones in terms of the strength of the factors. However, the responses are nuanced by the fact that several countries left this question blank, and respondents did not fill in all the boxes.

Using similar tools to the previous question, the research investigated the extent to which data and evidence-based decision-making are a feature of the organisations in the countries surveyed. (Q23 On a 6-point scale, please indicate to what extent the following statements characterise your organisation's data- and fact-based decision-making [1: does not characterise it at all; 6: completely characterises it]). The number of responding countries was also slightly higher for this question than for the previous one ($N = 24$ compared to $N = 21$), and the average number of responses was also higher than for the previous question. While the lowest average for the previous question was 2.8, the average for this question is between 4 and 5 for all answers. The highest average score of all the answers was for *Data tables available for management decisions*, with 4.9. This is partly because low scores for this question were almost non-existent, with the majority of responses in the range of 5 to 6 and a total of 16 countries indicating that using data tables for decision-making is almost or entirely typical. Also, a typical activity is *Reporting on personnel*, which is prepared regularly. This received an average score of 4.7 from the responding countries, slightly behind the 4.3 for *Data used for workforce planning and the public is regularly informed*. With regard to the latter value, two of the countries

indicated a value of 1, which means that, in their case, this activity is not at all familiar, and the public is not regularly informed about facts and figures on personal affairs. The lowest average score for this question was given to the option *Data is used for social dialogue*, with respondents giving an average score of 4.0 for using data in social dialogue.

In a country-by-country comparison, *Austria* was the top respondent, followed closely by *Spain*, *Denmark*, *Ireland* and *Switzerland*. It is also worth noting that many countries left the response options blank, and respondents needed to fill in all the fields, although the response rate for this question was higher than for the previous one.

SUMMARY

Summarising the answers to Q21, Q22 and Q23, it can be concluded that the responding EUPAN countries have made significant progress in assessing human resources, forecasting expected changes in the short, medium and long term, and developing strategic frameworks for HRM, but that there is still room for improvement in consciously analysing the context of these changes and strengthening their practical application. The challenge of adapting quickly and flexibly to changing labour market conditions appears particularly striking. At the same time, responding administrations are well-placed to develop and implement a data and evidence-based decision-making system. In the responding countries, this approach is expected. Although there are areas (e.g. social dialogue) where data-driven decision-making is still less common, the widespread use of data and facts suggests good administrative decision-making.

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Zoltán Hazafi

Generational Challenges in the Hungarian Public Service

RESEARCH CONCEPT

Background

From 1 July 2024, Hungary, as the rotating president of the Council of the European Union, will also hold the presidency of the European Public Administration Network (hereinafter: EUPAN) for a period of six months. EUPAN is an informal network at the expert and political level among EU member states in the fields of public administration and public service, aimed at sharing professional knowledge and experience. In EUPAN, Hungary is represented jointly by the Ministry of Public Administration and Territorial Development and the Ministry of Interior based on the division of governmental responsibilities. Accordingly, the staff of these two ministries jointly prepared the Hungarian presidency program, which prioritises generational management in public service. To facilitate discussions on this topic, the two ministries requested the Department of Human Resources of the Faculty of Public Governance and International Studies at Ludovika University of Public Service (University) to conduct scientific research and to present the research findings at the working group meeting and the directors-general meeting, as well as to prepare related studies.

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Topics

The research has included the following topics:

- the age group characteristics and composition of government administration employees, as well as the continuation of seniority
- the psychological contract
- generational management and employer branding
- development and talent management

Characteristics of the legal, regulatory and HRM environment of the Hungarian Public Service

Countries use different terms to describe public service, and therefore, the definition of public service varies by country.¹ This is also why the ratio of public service employment² relative to the active population in OECD countries shows significant variation (3.7%–33.4%). In countries where public tasks have been outsourced, the proportion of public sector employees is lower.

In Hungary, public service is generally interpreted in both a broader and narrower sense. In the broader sense, public service refers to the public sector, which includes all budgetary institutions. This means that when we use the term *public sector* (public service, government employment), we are referring to all

¹ For further details see PETROVICS 2019b: 86–113; LUDÁNYI 2017: 98–118.

² According to the OECD definition, public service employment includes federal, regional and local government levels, broadly interpreted public institutions, social security bodies and non-profit organisations controlled by public authority (OECD 2019: 86).

budgetary institutions and all individuals in employment relationships within them.³ The number of employees⁴ in budgetary institutions fluctuates between 700,000 and 800,000.⁵ The legal status of employees in the public sector⁶ is highly differentiated. Currently, 19 different legal relationships are recognised. The *narrower* definition of public service covers public administration. This includes government-controlled bodies, local government offices and special status, government-independent (autonomous) administrative bodies. The number of employees in these areas is about 120,000. The legal status of those working here is not uniform; they may hold one of eight different types of employment relationships.

Finally, we increasingly use the concept of *government administration*, which within public administration exclusively refers to the “governmental administrative bodies” under the control of the government (ministries,

³ Employment relationships in budgetary institutions established to perform public tasks [Public Finance Law, Article 3/A, para. (2)]. Government service relationships (Government Administration Act [Kit.]), employment contracts (Labour Code [Mt.]), professional and contractual service relationship (Law Enforcement Service Act [Hszt.]), military service relationships (Soldier Status Act [Hjt.]), public service relationships (Public Service Officials Act [Kttv.]), national defence employee (Law Enforcement Act [Hszt.]), defence employment relationships (National Defence Employees Act [Haj.tv.]), public service relationships established by appointment (Special Status Organs Act [Küt.]), public service relationships established by employment contract (Special Status Organs Act [Küt.]), other relationships (Act on State Audit Office [Üsztv.]), officer cadet relationships (Law Enforcement Service Act [Hszt.]), judicial employment relationships (Judicial Employees Act [Iasz.]), prosecution service relationships (Prosecution Service Act [Üsztv.]), judicial officer relationships (Judge Status Act [Bjt.]), public service relationship (Public Employee Status Act [Kjt.]), health service relationships (Healthcare Act [Eszjtv.]), tax and customs authority service relationships (National Tax and Customs Administration Act [NAV Szjtv.]) and public education employment relationships (Public Education Act [Puetv.]).

⁴ An employed person is a worker who has an employment relationship with an employer and, based on their employment contract or work agreement, is obligated to work at least 60 hours per month on average. For partial months, this is calculated as equivalent to full-month employment based on the specified working hours, and the work is performed in exchange for wages.

⁵ 774,500 in 2020 (Hungarian Central Statistical Office 2020).

⁶ For more on the concept of public service employer see PETROVICS 2017: 48–73.

government agencies, central agencies, metropolitan and county government offices).⁷ The number of government officials employed in these bodies is approximately 70,000. Their uniform legal status is regulated by Act CXXV of 2018 on Government Administration (Kit.). The research focuses specifically on the government officials employed in these bodies.

The Act on Government Administration brought a paradigm shift in the personnel policy of government administration. Although the unified legal regulation was preserved, the role of legal rules has significantly decreased, as the law implemented substantial public law *deregulation* and *decentralisation* of personnel (regulatory and competence) authority. The legislator dismantled the career system, thus eliminating seniority, the classification based on length of service or educational qualifications,⁸ and the merit-based, guaranteed career advancement.⁹ It has abolished the unified professional framework of requirements. The law also eliminated the uniform compulsory further training requirements, program certification and credit point system.

At the same time, the law empowered employers to define the professional requirements for filling positions. Within the salary ranges set by the law, the salary is determined by considering professional abilities, qualifications, experience and performance.¹⁰ The bodies themselves can define the required study points for the mandatory trainings of the reference year, as well as the value of the points for internal training programs.¹¹ Central and territorial

⁷ For further details see HEGYESI–LUDÁNYI 2021: 15–29.

⁸ Government Administration Act, Article 58, paras. (2)–(3).

⁹ The promotion in classification is most similar to job changes. However, job changes, unlike promotion in classification, are not automatic. In such cases, the employer exercises the right to transfer the civil servant from one position to another within the same government administration body. Therefore, it is also possible for the employer to place the civil servant to a position with a higher salary range, which could constitute a career advancement (see Government Administration Act, Article 59).

¹⁰ Government Administration Act, Article 58, para. (1) (b), Article 65, para. (3).

¹¹ Government Decree 338/2019 (XII. 23.) on the Mandatory Training, Refresher Training, Retraining and Public Administration Leadership Training of Government Officials in Government Administrative Bodies, Article 3, para. (4).

government administrative bodies¹² may set the procedure for approving their internally organised training programs in their public service regulations.¹³ Further training no longer has guaranteed career advancement consequences.

Thanks to deregulation and decentralisation, the employer's regulatory authority has increased, which allows for the enforcement of local peculiarities. Government administration bodies create internal rules in their public service regulations in nine areas (for example, codes of practice related to the establishment, modification, termination and cessation of government employment; bans on nepotism and conflicts of interest; and regulations on working hours, rest periods and vacation).¹⁴ In this changed legal environment, organisations autonomously develop their own HRM processes (such as recruitment, selection, career advancement, compensation, evaluation and development). This is not only an opportunity but also a necessity, as the absence of previous legal norms would leave human resource management unregulated.

The old paradigm was based on the fact that the status of civil servants and the conditions of their employment were regulated by legislation, meaning that organisations formed HRM processes within the unified legal framework, and the primary leadership expectation in personnel activities was the implementation of legal provisions and the adoption of employer measures in compliance with these laws. In contrast, the *new paradigm* adopts the conditions of the competitive market sector. Organisational human resource management is only influenced by framework legal norms, while specific rules are defined by internal regulations, guides, or various codes of conduct (KISS 2019).

¹² Regarding the officials of government offices see HEGYESI–JUHÁSZ 2021: 777–789.

¹³ Government Decree 338/2019 (XII. 23.), Article 5, para. (1); Government Decree 568/2022 (XII. 23.) on Metropolitan and County Government Offices and District (that of the Capital City) Offices, Article 14, para. (5).

¹⁴ Government Decree 88/2019 (VI. 23.), Article 19.

Research questions and hypotheses

Examination of age characteristics and composition of employees in government administration and the persistence of seniority

A common characteristic of developed countries is the *aging* of both the general population and the civil service workforce, with aging trends often more pronounced in the public sector than in society as a whole (HAZAFI 2009). As a result, “shaping” the age composition of the workforce is a key challenge not only for the HRM of today, but also for the future. However, the aging process does not affect every country equally, and in some places, the trend has even reversed, with younger employees becoming the majority and older employees decreasing. Each scenario has its advantages: an “aging” organisation values experience, while a “young” organisation tends to excel in digital skills, innovation and motivation (OECD 2021).

Organisations can especially benefit from generational diversity through intergenerational workgroups and mentorship programs. Nonetheless, intergenerational tensions pose significant challenges for HRM, as each generation has distinct ideas about work, methods and show varying attitudes toward hierarchy and technology (HAZAFI-KAJTÁR 2021). Each generation reflects the values of the era in which they grew up. However, studies (LING 2018) suggest that if generational divisions are simplified into two large groups (Baby Boomers + Generation X, and Generation Y + Generation Z), their perspectives on work-related issues are closer than generally thought. Career–life balance, self-fulfilment, job security, financial stability, freedom and flexibility are valued similarly. There is also consensus that professional success requires autonomy, innovation, patience and ambition. These findings indicate that the generational groups share similar values on several essential issues.

The Public Service Official Status Act, enacted after the regime change¹⁵ established the ideal of a protected and distinguished public service, introducing

¹⁵ Act XXIII of 1992 on the Legal Status of Public Servants.

a seniority-based career system. From a labour market perspective, this increased the comparative advantages of public administration over the private sector by offering greater employment protection than general labour laws, along with predictable, guaranteed promotion and salary to those choosing a civil service career. However, the Government Administration Act abolished the foundational institutions of the career system, relaxed employment protection guarantees,¹⁶ eliminated seniority and substantially increased the importance of discretionary employer decisions.

Research questions:

Q1: Is the aging of central government employees consistent across EU Member States, or are there significant differences among countries? If so, what factors explain these differences in generational composition?

Q2: What is the average age and age distribution of central government employees in EU Member States?

Q3: What trends characterise the age distribution in Hungarian government administration, and what has been the outcome of rejuvenation efforts since 2010?

Q4: Does seniority still persist in a latent way with respect to compensation and “classification”?

Q5: Do generational differences exist in terms of preference for a legally protected, rigid system versus a flexible, employer-discretion-based system?

Q6: In Hungarian government administration, what specific values characterise different generations in relation to work, public administration, communication technologies and labour market preferences?

Q7: Are there identifiable differences in the attitudes of Generation Z based on whether they work in government administration, outside it, or are still studying?

Q8: Is it also evident in Hungarian government administration that generational divisions may not be as deep as commonly perceived and can be simplified into two broad groups?

¹⁶ For more on the relaxed protection of employment protection see PETROVICS 2019a: 177–200.

Hypotheses:

H1: The aging of central government employees affects EU Member States similarly; however, each country pursues different strategies for workforce renewal. Despite these differences, common trends are identifiable.

H2: In Hungarian government administration, the main challenge is not attracting young talents but rather retaining them.

H3: The elimination of comparative advantages has adversely impacted the labour market appeal of government administration.

The psychological contract

Since the 1960s, the concept and significance of the so-called *psychological contract* have gained increasing attention in workplace studies. Within the framework of the psychological contract, employees¹⁷ and employers mutually understand and accept both the formal and informal aspects of their working relationship (ARGYRIS 1960). The psychological contract reflects both the explicit and implicit (either written or oral) expectations of employees and employers in their relationship (BAKER 1985).

If an organisation cannot meet its employees' expectations, it will struggle to retain them, and they will eventually leave. Therefore, it is essential to approach the relationship between the organisation and the employee comprehensively, encompassing motivation, organisational incentives and rewards.

This research section aims to examine how the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of the psychological contract affects the motivation, commitment and performance of civil servants working in government administration. The research is based on the understanding that the psychological contract and its fulfilment play a crucial role in shaping employees' workplace behaviour and their attitudes.

The research will employ a questionnaire survey among civil service officials to determine the content and interpretation of the psychological contract and

¹⁷ In this research section, "employee" refers broadly to any employed individual, not strictly the legal category as defined by the Labour Code.

measure workplace satisfaction and commitment. The data will be subject to statistical analysis to identify correlations.

Our goal is to understand how the content and interpretation of the psychological contract develop and change over the tenure of employment and its impact on employees' current workplace satisfaction and commitment. Additionally, we aim to identify any specific characteristics and unique patterns within the public sector.

The results of this research may yield important insights into the relationship between the psychological contract and civil servants' workplace behaviour, helping policymakers better understand and support their employees by developing an appropriate HRM system.

Research questions:

Q1: How do civil service officials perceive their relationship with their employer and any changes concerning this relationship?

Q2: How do civil service officials of different generations view the content and fulfilment of the psychological contract?

Hypotheses:

H1: Civil service officials generally view their relationship with their employer positively; however, certain deficiencies (such as in pay, benefits, or development opportunities) increase the risk of dissatisfaction.

H2: Since their employment began, working conditions and circumstances have generally improved slightly for civil service officials.

Generational management and employer branding (EB)

Employer brand represents a unique value that distinguishes an organisation from its competitors, showcasing the values it upholds as a workplace, what it's like to work there, the expectations for employees,¹⁸ and what the employee can expect in return for their work. The foundation of an employer brand is an employee value proposition aligned with the organisation's culture.

¹⁸ In this research section, "employee" refers broadly to any employed individual, not strictly the legal category as defined by the Labour Code.

A well-developed value proposition serves as a strategic tool, enabling the organisation to stand out among competitors, thus attracting a larger pool of skilled applicants. It can also enhance employee motivation, attract the younger Z and Y generations, and reduce turnover. To retain key employees and attract new talent, organisations must define their brand and craft a value proposition that current and potential employees perceive as part of an “outstanding workplace.” The channels and content through which these values are conveyed – what the employer promises and how these promises are communicated – are also important.

In this study, we will conduct a survey among government officials to determine what makes an organisation truly attractive to them and what drives their satisfaction with a workplace. This includes identifying the elements necessary for effective recruitment and the retention of experienced, high-performing staff. The data will undergo statistical analysis to establish correlations.

Our aim is to identify the unique values of government administrative bodies as employers, showcase the opportunities available to officials, and pinpoint areas in need of development to create an attractive employer brand. Through this study, we hope to reveal steps already taken to shape the employer brand, share best practices and identify unique public sector patterns.

The study’s findings could highlight the workplace and employer needs and expectations of employees within governmental administration, shedding light on potential generational differences. Additionally, the results may indicate HR functions that require development or change to enable the employer to be viewed as an attractive, positively rated workplace.

Research questions:

Q1: What values make government administrative bodies attractive employers for various generations?

Q2: What needs and expectations do officials working in governmental administration have regarding their workplace and the employing organisation? Are there generational differences in these expectations?

Q3: Which HR functions require modification or improvement to enable government administrative bodies to become top-rated workplaces?

Hypotheses:

H1: At government administrative bodies, factors related to working hours and the workplace environment tend to enhance employees' commitment to the organisation and aid retention (H1a), while factors related to benefits and job roles (positions) are less supportive and may even lead to turnover (H1b).

H2: Employees primarily recommend government administrative bodies to others for values such as stability–security, serving the community and prestige.

Training and development

With advancements in human resource management, the necessity of responding to environmental challenges, and the evolving nature of job roles, *development* has become an increasingly crucial area. Since human knowledge, experience and professional expertise are part of an organisation's assets, training and development hold strategic significance within organisations. Furthermore, training and development initiatives assist employees in advancing their careers and achieving their goals, thus turning them into powerful motivational tools. The foundation of human resource development lies in organisational culture and the composition of the workforce.

Adult employees generally have a strong desire for autonomy, as well as for a balance between work and personal life. This desire extends to learning, where they often seek greater freedom and autonomy, especially younger generations who show a strong inclination toward self-improvement. The complex challenges of today's world call for innovative educational and developmental approaches that differ from traditional methods.

Organisations must also respond to environmental challenges. They can do so by supporting high-quality work, preparing employees for continuous change and renewal, and managing organisational knowledge intentionally. For public administration, human resources represent the most critical capital, making the accumulation, retention and sharing of knowledge essential in meeting societal expectations. Internal development processes support organisations in becoming learning organisations. A learning organisation grows not only

from the knowledge of its employees but also positively influences employees' commitment to and motivation within the organisation.

Research questions:

Q1: How do various workplace learning and development methods address the specific needs of different generations?

Q2: How can workplace learning and development respond to the modern challenges facing public administration?

Hypotheses:

H1: Becoming a learning organisation aligns with an employer brand that attracts and retains the most suitable candidates in line with organisational culture.

H2: Workplace learning is increasingly self-directed, with the organisation's role being to facilitate this process.

H3: Training and development methods that consider unique and generational characteristics can effectively respond to a changing environment.

Knowledge transfer and mentoring programs

Reducing the risks of turnover and knowledge loss, as well as preserving knowledge capital, poses a significant challenge for public administration organisations today. Fluctuation, which is also present in public administration, and the resulting knowledge loss have a direct impact on the competitiveness of public administration. Therefore, factors influencing attraction and integration into public service are gaining increasing importance. The onboarding process, in particular, plays a crucial role in determining workplace commitment.

In recent years, several PACSDOP projects have addressed this issue. For example, the project entitled "Public Service Development Establishing Good Governance" (PACSDOP-2.1.5-CCHOP-16-2016-00001), which aimed to facilitate integration into the public service career path by supporting the onboarding of new entrants into administrative organisations. Another relevant initiative is the project entitled "Development of Human Resources in Regional State Administration Bodies" (PACSDOP-2.1.3-CCHOP-15-2016-00002),

which included the training of government window administrators. This project not only aimed to ensure more effective, faster and more standardised professional expectations in case management but also sought to contribute to workforce retention.

The research focuses on examining the methods used for knowledge transfer and onboarding processes within central and regional government administration. A questionnaire survey will be conducted among government administrative bodies to identify which job roles are most affected by turnover.

Our objective is to investigate whether government administrative bodies systematically address succession planning, what tools are used for onboarding processes, how knowledge transfer is implemented, whether mentoring programs are operational, and how mentors are prepared and supported in fulfilling their roles.

Research questions:

Q1: What turnover challenges do government administrative bodies face? What was the extent of turnover in the recent past (2023), and which job roles were most affected by turnover?

Q2: Is there a structured succession planning strategy within the organisation?

Q3: What methods are used by government administrative bodies to transfer knowledge capital?

Q4: What characterises public service mentoring programs (e.g. regulatory level, training, leadership commitment, etc.)?

Hypotheses:

H1: Turnover affects all government administrative bodies, though not to the same extent. Turnover is not inherently disadvantageous, as recruiting new employees brings fresh knowledge and perspectives into the organisation. However, organisational knowledge capital is diminished by turnover, especially in “sensitive” job roles where recruiting replacements is difficult.

H2: The methodology of knowledge transfer is of paramount importance for the efficiency of tasks performed by government administrative bodies.

H₃: Organisation-level mentoring programs that support onboarding can be effective tools for both attracting and integrating new employees while contributing to the systematic transfer of knowledge capital.

Research methods, data sources

The research utilised the following methods:

- document and content analysis
- statistical data analysis
- survey questionnaire
- interviews

We summarised the data requirements and sources needed to answer the research questions in tables, organised by topic. The EUPAN questionnaire, developed collaboratively with experts from the Ministry of the Interior, was completed by experts from EU Member States on questions related to generational management. The *domestic questionnaire* targets civil service officials and leaders within government administration, gathering their views on public administration, careers, values and their preferences in the labour market, among other topics. Statistical data from the Government Personnel Decision Support System (GPDSS) has been used to understand the characteristics of government administration and to identify correlations among them. Relevant literature has provided the theoretical foundation. In addition to the generational research survey, we have conducted in-depth interviews. For the study, we have sought insights into the personal experiences, perceptions and subjective opinions of selected senior executives to help answer our research question.

RESEARCH REPORT

Methodological considerations

This research examines the generational challenges within government administration. For the purposes of this study, *government administration* refers to organisations¹⁹ governed by the Government Administration Act (Kit.) and includes the National Tax and Customs Administration (NAV). The latter is governed by its own regulatory framework under Act CXXX of 2020 (NAV Act on the Organisation of Gambling), as the Government Administration Act does not apply to it, due to its unique legal status within government administration that applies to its personnel.

In line with these definitions, we distinguish between *central* and *regional* levels of government administration. The central level comprises ministries, main government agencies, central agencies and their decentralised offices, while the regional level includes metropolitan and county government offices and their district-level branches.

The term “government administration bodies”, equals state administrative organs, which had been in use before the Government Administration Act (Kit.) came into force. It covers the bodies that had been regulated by the Public Service Officials Act of 2011 (Kttv.) as public administration bodies. Therefore, comparisons of current government administrative data with past public administrative data are feasible since they encompass the same set of organisations. However, it is important to note that government administration does not include local municipal offices, the so-called autonomous state administrative bodies, which are independent of the government, or independent regulatory authorities.

¹⁹ Government Administration Act, Article 2.

In this analysis, we refer to government administration as “public administration”, aligning with the internationally recognised concept of “public administration”.²⁰

The data to be analysed came from several sources: the Government Personnel Decision Support System (GPDSS), OECD data collection (OECD data), and from a survey conducted in the EUPAN countries to study the generation management practices of these countries (EUPAN data).²¹ Past data on the Hungarian context come from the Civil Service Statistical Data System (KSA) and the Public Service Statistical Data System (KÖZIGDATA), both established in the 1990s to support government decision-making by providing the needed data. These systems contain data on public administration bodies governed by Act XXIII of 1992 on the Legal Status of Public Servants (Ktv.) (HAZAFI–SZEKÉR 2021). Since state administration bodies are the same as the government administration bodies covered under the Government Administration Act (Kit.) in addition to the National Tax and Customs Administration (NAV), demographic trends can be analysed by comparing data from both sources.

The research also incorporated electronic *survey data collection* (CAWI – Computer Assisted Web Interviewing), allowing respondents to complete the questionnaire at home or work, which is available as an interactive webpage, with the option to pause and resume as needed. This method automatically consolidates responses into a database, minimising data entry errors.

The above-mentioned method of recording data is highly cost-effective by eliminating the need for interviewers or other expenses (e.g. telephone or printing costs, etc.). Additionally, it is highly *advantageous* that results are

²⁰ Public administration in this context includes government-controlled or supervised organisations at central, regional and local levels but excludes local governments and the broader public sector (e.g. healthcare, education, police, the military and the judiciary).

²¹ Between 1 July and 31 December 2024, during the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the EU, a survey was carried out as a EUPAN project, to study the generation management practice of the member countries. Data from this research has also been used.

quickly accessible and processable, moreover, answers coming in from different segments can be monitored in real time throughout the data collection period.

However, the main *disadvantage* of this method is that it involves only a certain segment of the population (internet users) in the research. What is more, as in case of every self-completion questionnaire survey, the willingness to answer might be lower, and there can be more people who do not answer every question, thus do not complete the questionnaire.

In this case, however, the fact that all civil service officials under the GAA are active internet users, make the method viable for the entire target population, the entire sampling frame. The Ministry of the Interior distributed the questionnaire to all 77,000 employees, this way we did not have to narrow down the sampling frame, thus eliminating the need for a probability sample. Of the 77,000 individuals contacted, 12,500 completed the survey, and after data cleaning, 12,435 responses were included in the dataset.

Below is the distribution of the *cleaned dataset*. The “fact” column shows the distribution across different characteristics of the whole population, expressed in per mille.

The data collection was *representative*, as each member of the sample population was invited to participate, ensuring an equal opportunity to respond. There were no segment present who had no chance to fill in the survey. With 12,500 valid responses, the maximum margin of error is $\pm 0.8\%$ at a 95% confidence level.

The research also included seven *semi-structured* interviews involving four technical senior leaders (including two system-level leaders) and three political leaders asked to share their day-to-day experience. These interviews provide nuanced insights to complement the data collected from surveys, the GPDSS system, internal documents and relevant literature. These in-depth interviews employed a qualitative methodology and followed the structure of the national questionnaire while considering organisational specifics.

Table 1
The cleaned dataset

	Fact
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	288
Female	712
<i>Birth cohorts</i>	
Born 1995–2009	63
Born 1980–1994	386
Born 1965–1979	490
Born before 1965	60
<i>Public sector tenure</i>	
0–6 years	486
7–17 years	273
More than 17 years	240
<i>Position</i>	
Staff	893
Leadership	107
<i>Type of organisation</i>	
Central	464
Regional	536

Source: EUPAN survey

The key topics were:

- intergenerational cohabitation: generational challenges and opportunities
- knowledge management: loss, retention, generation and sharing knowledge within an organisation
- best practices for attracting and retaining younger employees

Demographic trends

The latest forecasts indicate that *population aging* will continue in the European Union over the coming decades.

The proportion of people aged 80 or older in the EU population may increase two and a half times between 2021 and 2100. However, the rate of aging varies across Member States. In Hungary, the proportion of people aged 65 or older is below the European average, but it is steadily increasing, with a growth rate slightly above the European average. It is also a general phenomenon that aging is more pronounced in the public sector than in other areas of society. Conversely, the public sector has the lowest proportion of young people.

At the same time, the age distribution within the *Hungarian public administration* diverges in several ways from European trends. The proportion of the middle generation is significantly higher, while the proportion of older individuals is lower than the European average. Changes in workforce numbers have affected the age composition of personnel in European states differently. In most states, as workforce numbers grew, the proportion of young people also increased. In contrast, some countries saw declines, and there were cases where both the workforce numbers and the proportion of young people decreased. In Hungary, despite workforce growth, there has been no increase in attracting young people compared to previous years; on the contrary, the proportion of older age groups has increased.

The age composition of the Hungarian public administration workforce is characterised by two opposing trends. In the early 2010s, several government measures aimed at *rejuvenating the workforce* were implemented, including the introduction of the Hungarian Public Administration Scholarship, “mandatory” retirement upon reaching the retirement age, and the option for women to retire early with preferential conditions. As a result of these initiatives, the average age decreased to 42.8 years, with an increase in the proportion of younger employees and a decrease in older employees. However, recent data indicate a shift in this trend: the proportion of young employees has significantly declined, while that of the older generation has increased.

The age composition of the workforce is once again *trending towards an older demographic*. This suggests that within the next 5 to 15 years, the Hungarian public administration will likely face a new wave of retirements – gradual rather than abrupt but considerable in scale. Based on statistical data analysis, it is evident that both attracting and retaining young employees has become increasingly challenging.

Managing generational challenges

Governments can influence demographic trends with an *age-conscious personnel policy*. Thus, it is crucial for governments to recognise demographic shifts and respond strategically to the personnel challenges related to generational management. This strategic approach – or the lack thereof – distinctly differentiates various countries.

Most OECD countries aim to maintain human capacity, employing different strategies to achieve this. A common goal is for the HRM system to better align with the needs of various generations, acknowledging that employees' needs vary across different life stages. A *flexible, long-term work scheduling system (working time framework)* is one tool for accommodating these diverse needs, aiming to extend active employment as long as possible. There are also incentives to retain older generations while they try to attract younger employees by building a public service brand. *New training opportunities* are offered along with *flexible working hours*. Structured knowledge transfer seeks to prevent the loss of implicit knowledge, which is often challenging to articulate and thus to transfer.

Creating an age-conscious personnel policy²² involves at least three areas (BOSSAERT et al. 2012). First, it includes the organisation's *HRM system*, which can only effectively address generational challenges if it is sensitive to age-related issues (age-conscious HRM), in other words, considers specific employment needs associated with different life stages. Second, age-consciousness requires

²² To learn more about present day human resource management policies see HAZAFI–LUDÁNYI 2022: 78–104.

health management that maintains employees' work capacity and well-being throughout their careers. Lastly, age-consciousness also involves a "lifelong career approach" which ensures continuous training and development. These together can increase motivation, job satisfaction and performance across the entire workforce.

An age-conscious HRM requires a *holistic approach* that considers both demographic changes and labour market trends. It regards workforce age as a characteristic (manageable in the long run) and thus seeks to address different employment needs associated with age. Its goal is to foster cooperation between various age groups and maximise workforce potential. Achieving this requires meeting several criteria:

a) *A life cycle approach*: HRM considers the distinct needs and preferences related to employees' life stages, striving to provide suitable working conditions and development opportunities for all age groups.

b) *Managing strengths and weaknesses*: Each generation has strengths and weaknesses. Age-conscious HRM actively leverages strengths while supporting the management of weaknesses.

c) *Supporting measures*: HRM policies include flexible working hours, continuous training, mentoring programs and age-appropriate work environments. These measures aim to support employees' development and satisfaction regardless of age.

d) *Training and development*: Age-conscious HRM emphasises ongoing training and development tailored to the distinct needs of different age groups. Programs should target technological adaptation for older employees while providing career development opportunities for younger employees (BOSSAERT et al. 2012).

e) *Diversity and inclusion*: Age-conscious HRM promotes workplace diversity and inclusion, recognising that employees of different ages bring varied perspectives and experiences that can enrich the workplace culture. Age diversity can also be leveraged to integrate different generational viewpoints into policies and programs, which can better address a wide range of citizen needs (OECD 2021).

Government Personnel Decision Support System (KSZDR) in Hungarian Public Administration

The foundation of government personnel policy is strategic planning, covering succession, training and social dialogue. A prerequisite for effective long-term planning is that data and information about personnel must be available (OECD 2017). Workforce planning considers demographic trends (in terms of both numbers and age composition) in the public workforce (HUERTA MELCHOR 2013).

In Hungary, multiple attempts have been made over the past decades to establish a statistical personnel records system within public administration, but none yielded lasting results. Recently, *data- and fact-based decision support systems* in public service have regained focus in government personnel policy, as changing labour market conditions have intensified the issue that without accurate data the government was unable to predict workforce trends, did not understand public service labour demands, and as a consequence, it was not able to plan the medium- and long-term succession in the public sector and handle the personnel effects of organisational and task changes (HAZAFI–SZEKÉR 2021). After several years of development, the KSZDR was established (HAZAFI – KOVÁCSNÉ SZEKÉR 2021: 67–82). Its information, analysis and evaluation capabilities enable faster, more flexible and well-founded decision-making in human resource management and organisational operations.

The KSZDR can support the government by:

- collecting and storing data on public service organisations, personnel and job structures, and generating reports
- tracking personnel activities and monitoring key personnel characteristics over time, with the ability to compare based on different aspects (e.g. across sectors, types of organisations and hierarchical levels)
- integrating a wide range of data and scientifically interconnected analyses and evaluations into government personnel decision-making
- enabling organisations to use stored data to model changes affecting organisational structures, tasks, job roles and personnel

Labour market preferences

The appeal of government administration in the labour market is influenced primarily by salary, work–life balance, a low-stress environment and job stability, with no significant generational differences observed. The Government Administration Act (Kit.) has eliminated the so-called *comparative advantages* of exactly these factors. Predictable career progression, legally guaranteed salary, heightened employment protection and a planned career path can also be mentioned along with the above listed ones. Government administration employees rated their *material and societal recognition* the lowest.

In a labour market where demand is high, *salary* has become a more significant factor in job selection, especially within a regulatory environment that allows for flexible wage negotiations between employers and civil servants. The wide range of wage negotiation options and the emphasis on salary can create an internal public administration labour market, where civil servants may seek better pay by transferring between ministries or government agencies offering higher salaries. This can lead to salary competition among administrative bodies for skilled professionals, complicating generational challenges at a governmental level since key compensation decisions are made at the ministry or organisational level. Under these conditions, if we consider the logic of the market, organisations with better financial resources are likely to “win” the salary competition. However, it must also be acknowledged that all civil servants are employees of the government, making the government responsible for personnel policies across all administrative sectors, which also applies to addressing generational challenges.

Our correlation analysis indicates a *stable yet weak* relationship between salaries and the age of civil servants. In contrast, within the *Ministry of Defence*, there is a *moderate correlation and significant relationship*. This may be related to the strong influence of military rank-based progression within the organisational culture, which also affects civilian employees. On the other hand, in the Ministry of the Interior, another “uniformed” ministry, results barely differ from the average, meaning the “rank-based approach” does not significantly

influence civil servants. This likely stems from the fact that the Ministry of the Interior covers substantial civilian policy areas in addition to law enforcement. Correlation levels *were significantly higher* in the *Prime Minister's Office* and the *Ministry of European Union Affairs*.

While the Government Administration Act (Kit.) has not only formally abolished seniority within a few years but also reduced its impact on organisational culture, the need for a legally guaranteed career path remains strong among personnel.

Psychological contract

The aging workforce underscores the growing importance of knowledge transfer and experience sharing. Enhancing intergenerational cooperation is essential, necessitating a personnel policy²³ that promotes collaboration between generations and capitalises on the opportunities afforded by age diversity. However, questions arise regarding whether the necessary personnel conditions are in place, how civil servants perceive their relationship with their employer and its evolution, and how they assess the fulfilment of their initial expectations of their employer, often referred to in the literature as the “psychological contract”.

We started with the assumption that civil servants generally view their relationship with their employer positively, though certain deficiencies (in salaries, benefits, development opportunities) increase the risk of dissatisfaction. On the other hand, we hypothesised that, since their initial employment, there has been minor improvement in their working conditions and circumstances

To explore generational differences, we used the concept of the *psychological contract* as a framework to evaluate various attitudes and work-related expectations. According to academic literature, a psychological contract is an implicit agreement (a set of expectations) between employer and employee,

²³ To learn more about present day human resource management policies see HAZAFI–LUDÁNYI 2022: 78–104.

encompassing the (often unspoken) expectations both parties have of each other. These expectations typically relate to job content, career opportunities, personal development options, income, work–life balance, the social environment and support, and job security. In exchange for these expectations, employees offer personal commitment as their “contribution” (DE VOS et al. 2011).

Research suggests that these factors often become points of contention between different generations. Significant differences exist between generations in terms of career prospects, flexibility, professional ethics and loyalty (DEAL 2007). However, it is also essential to recognise that sometimes these differences are only apparent, masking underlying similarities. For example, regardless of age, everyone needs respect, values a sense of identity and appreciates belonging, making the psychological contract a useful framework for identifying what unites generations and the added value intergenerational cooperation can bring to an organisation (DE VOS et al. 2011).

The findings of the study confirmed that various factors affecting work significantly affect civil servants’ attitudes and motivation. Most highly valued are *predictability* and the *handling of human relationships*. Respondents rated “predictable work”, “long-term planning”, “honest conflict management” and “human relations” as either “very important” or “somewhat important”. When selecting a workplace, they prioritise workplace stability.

There are no major generational differences in these views, indicating that all staff members, including Generation Z, regard public service as a career and view their employment as a stable, enduring commitment. This is an important observation because younger generations are often characterised by a willingness to change jobs quickly if they are dissatisfied (MERETEI 2017).

Emphasis on human relations suggests that public service employees are highly human-oriented, and organisational structure and task systems are less significant to them. As noted in the “human relations” performance motivation model, “recognition, security, meaningful human connections and prestige are at least as important to employee performance as financial incentives and working conditions” (MERETEI 2017). Consequently, their performance is less enhanced by “Taylorist” methods, which “break work processes down into

small, easily learned tasks, develop the most rational methods for these tasks, and encourage quicker task completion” (JENEI 2004).

At the same time, respondents feel that civil servants are not sufficiently *recognised financially or socially*, and they rate predictable *career opportunities* as only moderate. This poses a risk given the high importance they place on stability and predictability, as one of their critical expectations remains unfulfilled in their perceptions of public administration. If experiences reinforce this negative “prejudice”, the lack of predictability, stability and career opportunities could become a breaking point in the psychological contract.

Baby Boomers rate stability, predictability and career prospects of public administration the lowest. Likely, this is due to their status as the oldest generation, having witnessed the most organisational changes and downsizing and experienced existential insecurity. In contrast, Generation Z holds the most positive views on these aspects, likely due to their limited experience and opinions shaped mainly by hearsay.

Both *individual* and *organisational goal* achievement are rated as highly important, aligning with the prioritisation of stability and predictability. However, common organisational goals are seen as more important than individual ones, indicating a strong identification with organisational objectives and a desire to contribute to the organisation’s overall success. This likely reflects the culture of public administration, where assertiveness, personal career goals and consistent follow-through are less characteristic of the civil servant’s attitude. Organisational culture does not naturally support the management of individual goals by leadership or provide feedback on individual performance. Individual success depends more on organisational and community performance than personal ambition.

However, *loyalty to leadership* has increasingly become a determining factor in individual success. Over the past 14 years, organisational identity has been supplanted by personal loyalty to leaders. This means that when leaders “move” within the system, they often bring their subordinates with them. While this allows leaders to work with trusted subordinates and “filter down” their working methods and knowledge through colleagues, it also leaves

significant knowledge gaps where “teams” have departed.²⁴ However, it has to be added that the Government Administration Act (Kit.) has created the ideal legal environment for maintaining personal connectedness that leaves a wide opportunity for employers to determine wages.

However, there is a slight paradox here in that civil servants undervalue legally *guaranteed, standardised pay* and prefer performance-based, differentiated remuneration based on individual abilities. This likely reflects an aversion to uniformity and equalisation represented by “legally guaranteed, standardised pay” (HAZAFI 2025).

In terms of *commitment* to workplace and profession, there are significant generational differences. The Baby Boomer generation shows the highest level of commitment, and as age decreases, commitment declines. However, there are much smaller differences between generations when it comes to commitment to colleagues and leaders (STRÉHLI – PAKSI-PETRÓ 2025).

Data show that in both *managerial* and *subordinate* roles, most respondents consider factors like organisational goals and human relationships important. However, leaders place greater emphasis on human relations than subordinates. Leaders see performance-based remuneration as more important, while subordinates find legally guaranteed standardised pay more appealing. Both groups view honest conflict management as essential and value long-term planning.

Based on factor analysis, we identified three distinct civil servant attitude patterns. The first, associated with organisational stability, communal goals and central control. Those, who are characterised by this pattern, consider belonging to a community, realising the goals of the organisation and a stable, well-structured workplace important. We labelled them “Stronghold”. “Civil servants exhibiting this pattern are highly beneficial to the organisation as they provide the stability and predictability essential for organisational operations. As they are committed to realising community aims and long-term plans, they provide a strong support in maintaining organisational structures and ensuring efficient operation. “Strongholds” cope easily with strict rules and firm leadership,

²⁴ For details on the strengthening loyalty towards leaders see the in-depth interview with the leader responsible for system management.

thus they support the steady, continuous operation of the organisation, which is an expectation especially in organisations of the public administration”.

We named the second attitude pattern “Liberals”. “Individuals in this group prefer weak control and flexibility, dislike long-term planning and stability, and are less interested in communal goals. They favour non-permanent solutions to individual relationships and perform well in loosely supervised environments without close leadership control. These individuals are valuable to the organisation in situations where flexibility is needed, and when strict rules or hierarchy would hinder operation. As they are not attached to rigid plans, they adapt easily to changing environments and respond quickly to short-term goals or crisis situations”.

The third pattern, named “Survivalists”, encompasses those who “prioritise livelihood, guaranteed salary and predictable employment. They are not motivated by personal goals or renewal, seeking stability and benefits independent of performance. “Survivalists” are reliable, steady workforce, who do not seek innovation, but they do not fail to complete their tasks in a reliable manner. They thrive in stable, predictable work, which is important for an organisation in the long run when dealing with tasks requires stability and precision”.

In relation to the civil servant – employer relationship, it is notable that nearly half of the workforce feel disappointed with the promises regarding material recognition, about a third feel their work is unfairly assessed, and nearly a quarter believe they cannot count on a secure future in their organisation. These combined factors pose a significant risk as they may cast doubt on the psychological contract for those feeling such dissatisfaction. In other words, a promise made in the past is superimposed on a sense of injustice in the present, perceived as unfair, and a sense of hopelessness about the treatment of remuneration and future security. Taken together, they thus carry a considerable risk, as they may call into question the sustainability of the psychological contract in the circle of individuals mentioned.²⁵ Younger generations are less

²⁵ The respondents rated three factors the lowest, which negatively influence their expectations for the future and could therefore become breaking points in the psychological contract. These statements were: “I receive the salary and benefits I expected upon joining”; “My

pessimistic. However, the picture is nuanced by the fact that 62.5% of those surveyed believe that “my employer respects the conditions I set when I started work”. The younger the generation, the more likely they are to feel that their employer keeps its promises.

The Generation Z cohort reported the most positive experiences regarding maintaining a work–life balance. Their generally favourable assessments were also evident in other areas, such as support for professional development, overtime compensation and a good workplace atmosphere. The younger the age group, the more positively they rated the support they receive from leadership. This favourable outlook among young employees is likely tied to their relative lack of experience. Conversely, the Baby Boom and Generation X groups expressed the strongest attachment to their jobs, indicating they would find it hardest to leave their current positions.

Regarding changes since starting work, the majority of respondents stated that there had been no significant change, particularly in areas related to professionalism and opportunities for professional development, with nearly two-thirds indicating no change in these areas. Additionally, about half of the respondents felt that support for individual ideas and initiatives, interdepartmental collaboration, and responsible work practices had also remained the same since they started working. This reflects the common perception that public administration is characterised by both *change* and *constancy*. By age group, Generation Z views the situation less negatively, with the highest proportion of respondents in this group believing that work professionalism has improved, support for individual ideas and initiatives has increased and development opportunities have expanded.

Older employees (particularly Baby Boomers) view the changes in the technological support for work processes far more favourably, with 42% reporting improvement, while Generation Z remains significantly more critical. Over

contributions and performance are recognised and valued within the organisation”; and “I feel that I have a secure future within the organisation.” These statements received ratings of 1 (“does not reflect reality at all”) or 2 on a 6-point scale from 45%, 31.8% and 23.5% of respondents, respectively.

half of Generation Z respondents believe there has been no progress, and 15% even think the situation has worsened.

Overall, our research findings confirmed our assumption that officials generally have a positive view of their relationship with their *employer*. However, they place high importance on *stability* and *predictability*. From this perspective, it poses a considerable risk that employees rate their financial and social esteem as low and their career opportunities as only moderate. Among older employees, the lack of stability and predictability has further eroded their sense of security. These factors may test the strength of the “psychological contract”.

Generational management and employer branding

According to previous studies, entering public administration often does not occur after careful consideration; rather, individuals tend to choose this path based on spontaneous personal impressions, current life circumstances, or by following the example of others (BELÉNYESI et al. 2018). Still, we believe that with public service increasingly becoming a lifelong profession, conscious *career selection* is gaining importance. Thus, we explored which *values* make government agencies appealing employers for different generations. We also sought to identify the expectations officials have of their workplace and whether generational differences can be detected in these expectations. We outlined the HR functions whose development could most effectively help government agencies become top workplaces.

Our research began with the hypothesis that in government agencies, factors related to work hours and the work environment, atmosphere are more likely to strengthen employees' *commitment* to the organisation and aid retention, whereas factors related to benefits and job roles (position) tend to support turnover. Employees recommend government agencies primarily for values such as stability–security, public service and prestige.

Employees in government administration generally consider salary and benefits, work–life balance, a stress-free work environment and job stability the most important factors when *choosing a workplace*. In contrast, they regard the

employer's reputation, opportunities to use modern technologies, or creative and innovative work as less important. No major generational differences were observed.

Across all age groups, the majority (75–80%) consider *good cross-generational cooperation* at the workplace important.

Most respondents perceive *differences in generational mindsets*, with some noting that these differences can lead to conflicts. Different generations may not understand each other, holding distinct values, which is especially evident in communication styles and work attitudes. Differences are also observed in competencies, such as flexibility, dedication, loyalty, willingness to learn and stress tolerance. Often, they behave in a different way. Young people are seen as more dependent on their phones, less inclined to greet others and less likely to observe basic dress and behaviour standards. They struggle with adaptation and often lack humility. The biggest conflict arises from pay discrepancies between generations. New hires often enter the organisation with proportionally higher salaries, sometimes based on connections rather than qualifications. Compensation inequities can also create tension within the organisation, not only due to generational issues (new hires vs. old staff) if the pay determination process lacks fairness.

A *fair compensation system* meets three criteria: it provides appropriate pay levels, the employer follows a fair procedure in setting pay, and the requirements of accountability and transparency are met. The *first requirement* ensures that pay reflects the work's proportional contribution to the organisation's goals. It should follow the characteristics of the position and express the official's performance, offering compensation attractive enough to retain and recruit talented young people. The *second requirement* is that pay determination follows a stable framework and is based on factual evaluation rather than subjective considerations. Pay must reflect the role of the organisation within public administration and account for the wage gap between leadership and subordinates. The *third requirement* is transparency for citizens regarding employee pay (Hutton 2011).

Responses indicate that the current pay system is not motivating, as it allows positions to remain stagnant if the employer so decides. It *lacks transparency* and “fairness”, failing to reflect the actual work performed. “In some of the counties more wage is given for the same amount (in some cases for a job involving a lot less work) of work (according to the reasoning, in these regions the private sectors offers higher wages as well) [...] there are significant differences in the wage of the officials of government agencies, district offices in different counties. In underdeveloped regions, wages are unrealistically low. Banded pay generates tension due to unequal pay among employees within the same band, determined in subjective, non-professional way”. The biggest *challenge* of the Government Administration Act (Kit.) lies in how government agencies, as employers, can implement a pay system in line with the mentioned principles (HAZAFI–LUDÁNYI 2022: 78–104).

The responses highlight *strengths* that can form the basis of employer branding: predictable scheduling, encouraging leadership, a motivating workplace atmosphere and reimbursement for commuting expenses. Certain factors were clearly identified as areas of dissatisfaction among respondents, including the informal “prohibition” of remote work (perceived as not quite available by 81% of the respondents), competitive pay (perceived as not quite available by 77% of the respondents) and the lack of welfare benefits (perceived as not quite available by 75% of the respondents).

The most important takeaway regarding branding is that *anomalies in the pay system* not only affect the employer’s reputation but also hinder both individual and organisational performance. The “fairness” of compensation is one of the most critical motivational factors. Employees become demotivated and disillusioned if they feel that the principle of fairness is violated. In career systems, “fairness” is guaranteed by rules on classification, advancement and pay that apply to everyone equally. In these systems, fairness is often compromised due to the lack of differentiation. Even though roles (positions), competencies and individual performances vary, thus differentiation has to be ensured as it is essential to fairness. This is typically achieved by reducing regulatory restrictions and expanding employers’ discretionary power. However, discretion is not the

same as subjectivity; discretion is legally bound in the sense that the legislating body specifies the considerations and boundaries (FAZEKAS–FICZERE 2002).

The Government Administration Act (Kit.) grants employers discretionary power regarding *pay determination*. It requires employers to set salaries within legally defined ranges while considering professional skills, qualifications, experience and performance.²⁶ However, the regulation does not specify how professional skills, qualifications, experience and performance should be considered. Therefore, employers must develop procedures to ensure that these criteria are genuinely reflected in pay determination, applying the fairness principles already discussed.

Learning and development

Ensuring continuous development and supporting lifelong learning also influence an employer's attractiveness. We hypothesised that a *learning organisation* is part of an employer brand aimed at attracting and retaining the most suitable people who align with the organisational culture. Workplace learning is increasingly self-directed, with organisations able to respond to a changing environment through training and development methods that consider unique and generational characteristics.²⁷

The literature extensively addresses generational differences, especially since Generation Z entered the labour market, as these differences have become more distinct. From a development strategy perspective, the defining *traits of Generation Z* are as:

- digital generation
- strong visual orientation
- heightened work–life balance expectations
- more explicit needs articulation (occasionally expressed via online platforms)
- demand for rapid professional development opportunities

²⁶ Government Administration Act, Article 65, para. (3).

²⁷ See more in KAJTÁR–MAGASVÁRI 2025b.

- less respect for hierarchy (even in learning situations)
- shorter attention span
- increased need for feedback
- strong influence from peer groups
- pronounced need for impact and value creation

Workplaces must recognise and address these differences within their *development strategies*. The younger generations' specific traits can generally be addressed through trainings that incorporate digital tools, visual presentations, flexibility, support for professional development, multidirectional learning (vertical, horizontal), content broken into smaller learning units and feedback.

The *Scientific Council for Internal Affairs* has been examining generation-specific teaching for several years and has determined that a generation-specific teaching methodology is warranted in law enforcement training.²⁸ However, domestic practice in public administration has not yet aligned workplace development systems with the needs of different generations. At the same time, international practices also show delays. EU member states rate the management of generational differences in training and development slightly below average.²⁹

Mentoring and *coaching* are considered adaptable tools for addressing generational needs. The primary difference between generations lies in their relationship to *digital tools*, so a generationally aware development system should provide ample opportunities for digital tool use. *Forums* (such as interactive in-person training and professional events) where the members of different generation can share their experience facilitate knowledge sharing between

²⁸ Exploring the Possibilities for Establishing and Implementing Generation-Specific Teaching Methods – Integrating the Psychological Characteristics and Needs – e.g. continuous feedback, motivating with rewards, supporting the process of coming to age – of Generation Z and Alpha into the Law Enforcement Training and Development System (SABJANICS 2018).

²⁹ In the international EUPAN questionnaire, on a 6-point scale (where 1: not at all, 6: completely true), Hungary did not mark "1" at all. Considering the average score among EUPAN member states this was not exceptional (the value 2.75 is not lower due to the three outstanding marks).

generations. This type of cooperation enhances community cohesion. The most wide-spread form of development is *training*.

Among younger employees, autonomy and freedom are highly valued, opening opportunities for *self-directed learning* in the workplace. Methods for this include Google searches (databases) and information gathering through social networks, YouTube, podcasts and other platforms. However, using these tools for development purposes is uncommon in Hungarian public administration. This method is not supported by employers either possibly due to the challenge they face in filtering and verifying information sources. Nevertheless, individual learning – within a learning organisation framework, incorporating dialogue, critical thinking and reflection – is a valuable development approach (RUPČIĆ 2024: 105–129), with a potential that should be harnessed with safeguards and conditions for effective implementation.

Personalised development is important for all generations. This means that trainings take into account individual knowledge levels, learning speeds, interests, needs and requirements. Bite-sized learning and micro-certificates for short training sessions are particularly valued.

Another increasingly common development method, addressing burnout, is a “sabbatical” leave of several months, which allows individuals to reflect on their plans, invigorate their career aspirations, or build new professional and personal relationships. This form of professional personal development not only supports professional development but also satisfies the fundamental need to “be with oneself, in depth, and at peace”.³⁰ We would like to note that Act

³⁰ Since 2018, the Aquinói Szent Tamás Ökumenikus Közéleti Akadémia has offered a ten-month training program that allows students to deepen their knowledge in Hungarian literature and history, sociology, economics, theology, religious studies, science, engineering, communication, strategic thinking, self-awareness and social relationships through mentorship and notable guest lecturers. Participants focus on consecutive topics for 3 weeks, and the program also includes travel across the Carpathian Basin, community, spiritual and cultural programs, as well as the residential college system. The academy’s fundamental principle is that community life greatly impacts individual growth, thus the program is offered in a residential format. The venue in Piliscsaba provides the opportunity for the participants to immerse themselves in their studies and distance themselves from their everyday life (777 2023).

XXXVI of 2001 introduced the six-month-long recreational leave, however, it appears to have been premature, and it has not found its way through the system of human resources.

In summary, we can state that training diversification is necessary to meet the differing generational needs. Training packages should be developed in a manner to allow every generation to find development programs suitable for their age, life situation and job position. Personalised development is in demand among all generations. Responses – suggestions, criticisms and best practices – emphasise training (pro bono and others), knowledge sharing, mentoring and coaching.

In today's evolving world, workplace learning is a continuous need. *Alternative educational and development methods* are increasingly valued. There is a pronounced need for flexible schedules, online interactions, informal feedback and self-directed learning. The role of soft skills, innovation and creativity is also becoming more prominent. These challenges are being addressed rather slowly by the domestic system. Although the demand for self-directed learning is high, opportunities remain limited, with employers still acting more as directors than facilitators. Individual development efforts need improvement. This way development and training can become a crucial element of employer branding.

Our research findings confirmed our hypotheses. The learning organisation is an integral part of an employer brand that aligns with organisational culture. However, *training diversification* is necessary to meet generational needs. Training packages should be developed in a manner to allow every generation to find development programs suitable for their age, life situation and job position. Personalised development is in demand among all generations.

Knowledge transfer and mentoring programs

Reducing turnover and mitigating knowledge loss have become significant challenges for public administration organisations. Turnover not only disrupts operational continuity but also leads to the loss of valuable institutional knowledge, impacting overall efficiency and competitiveness. Knowledge

management plays a crucial role in addressing these challenges, particularly through effective knowledge transfer processes and structured onboarding programs. In recent years, several projects, such as the PACSDOP 2.1.5 and PACSDOP 2.1.3, have emphasised the importance of supporting new public service entrants through structured onboarding and mentoring initiatives. These programs aim to facilitate organisational integration, reduce turnover and preserve knowledge capital.

Turnover poses a significant risk to public administration, affecting both younger and older generations of employees. Recent data from 2023 highlight the variability in turnover rates across government offices, ranging from 7% to 30%, with an average employee flow rate of 23.5%. Specific roles, such as government window administrators, public employment staff and technical experts, are particularly vulnerable to high turnover rates. This variability demonstrates that turnover is not evenly distributed but heavily concentrated in “sensitive” positions where replacing skilled employees is especially challenging.

The impact of turnover on knowledge capital is twofold. Explicit knowledge – structured, transferable information such as processes, regulations and guidelines – can be preserved through documentation and digital systems. However, tacit knowledge, which stems from personal experiences, relationships and expertise, is far more difficult to transfer. The loss of experienced employees, particularly those in the 51–60 age group, highlights the challenge of retaining institutional memory. Simultaneously, younger employees in the 23–28 age group are also at high risk of turnover, undermining efforts to build a stable talent pipeline.

The study explored methods used by government organisations to facilitate knowledge transfer and integrate new employees. Key practices include:

- assigning mentors to support onboarding (reported by 32% of respondents)
- providing written briefings on organisational processes and regulations (23.5%)
- offering short internal training sessions to familiarise new hires with their roles

Despite these efforts, the study revealed that knowledge transfer often lacks a structured approach. Only 9 out of 20 regional government offices reported having a formal succession strategy, while central government ministries demonstrated even less consistency. Interviews with leaders underscored the reliance on ad hoc methods, driven more by organisational traditions and individual leaders' decisions than by formalised policies. The absence of unified onboarding processes across public administration highlights a critical gap in knowledge management.

Mentoring programs have emerged as effective tools for facilitating knowledge transfer, particularly during onboarding. These programs address the knowledge gaps created by turnover and support the integration of new employees. In regional public administration, mentoring initiatives have been more systematically implemented compared to central government offices. For instance, several regional offices have formal mentoring programs outlined in their organisational policies, lasting typically 5–6 months. Mentors play a key role in supporting new hires by transferring both explicit and tacit knowledge while fostering workplace integration.

However, the study identified several challenges in the implementation of mentoring programs. While mentors are often assigned to new employees, they frequently lack formal training to carry out their roles effectively. Additionally, mentoring responsibilities are not always formally recognised or rewarded, limiting their long-term sustainability. The findings also revealed that in central administration, mentoring remains largely informal, with senior colleagues or leaders providing ad hoc support to new hires.

Three key hypotheses guided this research:

Turnover affects all organisations but to varying degrees.

The study validated this hypothesis, demonstrating that turnover is widespread but unevenly distributed. While turnover can bring fresh perspectives and knowledge into organisations, it poses a significant risk to critical roles, particularly in technical and administrative fields.

Effective knowledge transfer is essential for organisational efficiency.

This hypothesis was partially validated. While leaders recognise the importance of knowledge transfer, the methods used remain inconsistent. Structured onboarding and mentoring processes are essential but often lack formalisation and support.

Mentoring programs are effective tools for onboarding, retention and knowledge transfer.

The study confirmed that well-implemented mentoring programs can play a pivotal role in attracting, integrating and retaining talent. Regional government offices have made progress in institutionalising mentoring, but central government ministries lag behind. There is also a clear demand for formalised mentoring programs, as evidenced by survey respondents' feedback.

Knowledge transfer and mentoring programs are critical tools for addressing turnover and preserving institutional knowledge in public administration. While regional government offices have demonstrated progress in implementing structured mentoring programs, the central administration still relies heavily on informal practices. A more unified approach to onboarding, combined with formal mentoring programs and training for mentors, can significantly enhance the retention of talent and the transfer of both explicit and tacit knowledge.

The research highlights the need for public administration organisations to prioritise structured onboarding processes, invest in mentoring programs, and develop succession strategies. By addressing these challenges, public administration can better manage turnover, retain institutional knowledge and ensure long-term organisational efficiency.

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Appendix 1. Questionnaire

Questionnaire on the HR Management of Public Administration Organisations in EU Member States, Observer Countries and the European Commission with a Special Focus on the Area of Generation Management

INTRODUCTION

The ageing workforce of public administrations makes it increasingly necessary to transfer knowledge and share experience; therefore, the performance of the organisational system is fundamentally influenced by the level of cooperation between age groups. An HR policy is needed that encourages cooperation between generations and takes advantage of the opportunities arising from age diversity.

The main topics of the questionnaire are:

- general data on the workforce composition
- general characteristics of employment in central administration, employer branding
- HR strategic decision support

If you would like to attach documents related to the questions below, please send them to the following email addresses: kszdr@bm.gov.hu and hucupan@ktm.gov.hu.

CONTACT DATA

We kindly ask you to fill out the data below:

1. Country

2. Organisation

3. Name and position of the contact person

First name

Last name

Position

4. Email

DEFINITIONS

Public administration: The organisational system under the control of the government or a member of the government at the central, regional and local levels (e.g. core ministries and agencies) and regional level. The definition does

not include local self-governments and the broader public sector (e.g. healthcare, teachers, police, military, judiciary, etc.).

Central administration: Core ministries and agencies of central and federal governments.

Regional–territorial administration: Sub-national levels of government.

Workforce: Government employees who work in public administration and are employed by way of various contractual mechanisms (e.g. civil servant statutes, labour law contracts – indeterminate or fixed-term).

D1, D2, D3 and D4 managerial categories based on the ILO International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08):

- *D1 Senior Managers:* Top public servants just below the Minister or Secretary of State/junior minister. They can be a member of the senior civil service and/or appointed by the government or head of government. They advise the government on policy matters, oversee the interpretation and implementation of government policies, and, in some countries, have executive powers. D1 managers may be entitled to attend some cabinet – council of ministers meetings, but they are not part of the Cabinet – Council of Ministers. They provide overall direction and management to the ministry – secretary of state, or a particular administrative area. In countries with a system of autonomous agencies, decentralised powers, flatter organisations and empowered managers, D1 Managers will correspond to Director Generals.
- *D2 Senior Managers:* They are just below D1 managers, and formulate and review the policies, and plan, direct, coordinate and evaluate the overall activities of the ministry or special directorate–unit with the support of other managers. They may be part of the senior civil service. They guide the coordination and management of the program of work and leadership to professional teams in different policy areas. They determine the objectives, strategies and programs for the particular administrative unit–department under their supervision.

- *D3 Middle Managers:* They are just below D2 managers and plan, direct and coordinate the general functioning of a specific directorate – administrative unit within the ministry with the support of other managers usually within the guidelines established by a board of directors or a governing body. They provide leadership and management to teams of professionals within their particular area. These officials develop and manage the work program and staff of units, divisions, or policy areas. They establish and manage budgets.
- *D4:* Just below D3. They formulate and administer policy advice and strategic and financial planning. They establish and direct operational and administrative procedures, and provide advice to senior managers. They control the selection, training and performance of staff; prepare budgets and oversee financial operations, control expenditure and ensure the efficient use of resources. They provide leadership to specific professional teams within a unit.

Payback clause: Legal instrument that allows the employer to bind employees for a certain period in compensation for the employer's investment in employees' training. If employees terminate the employment relationship within the agreed retention period they can be requested to reimburse (a share of) the cost of training.

Individual learning accounts: A budget for individuals to spend on training to improve their skills and employability.

Study voucher: Subsidy (coupon of certain monetary value) directed mainly to individuals but also companies, enabling them to access adult learning services and to choose training provider and/or content of services, timing, etc.

L&D plan: Professional development plan that allows monitoring, tracking and guiding the career progression of staff members.

Coaching: A form of development in which a professional coach provides personalised support for the client in achieving a specific personal or professional goal.

Knowledge library: A digital collection of knowledge, best practices, etc.

Sabbatical: Paid training–educational leave.

Micro-credentials: Documents that certify the learning outcomes of short-term learning experiences, e.g. a short course or training.

I. General data on workforce composition

(data should refer to 2023 if it is possible)

1. Employment of public administration

Level of employment	Headcount	No data available
Central administration		
Regional–territorial administration		

2. Average age of employees

Level of employment	Average age	No data available
Central administration		
Public administration		

3. What is the proportion of employment contracts in the public administration and central administration?

Level of employment	Ratio (%)	No data available
Central administration		
Public administration		

4. Is private law – labour law applicable regarding employment in public administration?

☐ Yes.

☐ No.

5. Gender ratio in the public administration (including managers D1–D4)

	Ratio (%)	No data available
Male		
Female		

6. Age composition in the public administration (including managers D1–D4)

Age categories	Headcount	No data available
18–34		
35–54		
55 and above		

7. The composition of managers (D1–D4) according to gender and age groups in the public administration (headcount)

Age categories	D1		D2		D3		D4	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
18–34								
35–54								
55 and above								

8. Retirement rate of the total number of employees in public administration in the last 5 years

	Managers (D1–D4) %	Other employees (%)	Total (%)	No data
2023				
2022				
2021				
2020				
2019				

II. Characteristics of employment in central administration

9. Is there an HRM strategy in the central administration?

☐ Yes.☐ No.

If yes:

- 9.1 If you have an available human resource management strategy in English, please share the link or send the document to our email address given above.

10. Do you have a strategy regarding the aging of personnel in central government administration (personnel management)? Please also consider if the strategy related to managing aging is part of the human resources strategy.

- ☐ Yes.
☐ No.

If yes:

10.1 *The delineation of the strategy is as follows:*

- ☐ It covers the entire public administration.
☐ It covers the specialised branches under the control of ministries.
☐ It exclusively covers ministries or central agencies.

10.2 *When was the current strategy related to the aging of personnel adopted?*

- ☐ Less than a year ago.
☐ One to three years ago.
☐ Three to five years ago.
☐ More than 5 years ago.

10.3 *How often is the implementation of the strategy reviewed?*

- ☐ Not reviewed yet.
☐ Less than a year ago.
☐ One to three years ago.
☐ Three to five years ago.
☐ More than 5 years ago.

10.4 *Which of the following objective is prioritised by the strategy?*

- ☐ Continued employment of the older generation after reaching retirement age. (A)
☐ Attracting young people to the workforce. (B)
☐ We consider both equally important. (C)

10.4.1/A. What measures are taken to achieve the goals, if the answer to the question 10.4 is “A”?

- ☐ Increasing the required length of service for full-retirement pension.
- ☐ Reducing weekly working hours for individuals aged 60 and over, by up to 15 hours, without adversely affecting future pension.
- ☐ Providing a flexible work schedule for longer periods.
- ☐ Reducing working hours with a minor decrease in benefits.
- ☐ Performing mentoring tasks.
- ☐ Volunteering.
- ☐ Other:

10.4.2/B A. What measures are taken to achieve the goals, if the answer to the previous question is “B”?

- ☐ Scholarships.
- ☐ Mentoring.
- ☐ Training–continuing education opportunities, and support for studies.
- ☐ Accelerating career advancement.
- ☐ Premium salary.
- ☐ Special benefits, e.g. Family Support Benefit.
- ☐ Favourable employment conditions, e.g. more flexible working hours, support for training, and additional leave for individuals raising children or starting a family.
- ☐ Mandatory retirement for senior government officials.
- ☐ Other:

10.4.3/C A. What measures are taken to achieve the goals, if the answer to the previous question is “C”?

- ☐ Increasing the required length of service for full-retirement pension.
- ☐ Reducing weekly working hours for individuals aged 60 and over, by up to 15 hours, without adversely affecting future pension.
- ☐ Providing a flexible work schedule for longer periods.

- ☐ Reducing working hours with a minor decrease in benefits.
- ☐ Performing mentoring tasks.
- ☐ Volunteering.
- ☐ Scholarships.
- ☐ Mentoring.
- ☐ Training–continuing education opportunities, and support for studies.
- ☐ Accelerating career advancement.
- ☐ Premium salary.
- ☐ Special benefits, e.g. Family Support Benefit.
- ☐ Favourable employment conditions, e.g. more flexible working hours, support for training, and additional leave for individuals raising children or starting a family.
- ☐ Mandatory retirement for senior government officials.
- ☐ Other:

11. To what extent is it typical for central administration to implement mentoring programs to support the integration of new entrants? Please indicate on a 6-point scale (1: not at all, 6: definitely). Please mark your answer with an “x”.

1	2	3	4	5	6	Do not know

12. What is the typical duration of the organised mentoring programs for the majority of organisations?

- ☐ 1–3 months
- ☐ 3–6 months
- ☐ More than 6 months
- ☐ I do not know
- ☐ Other: free text field

13. Is it typical that the organisations have an employer branding strategy (EBR strategy)?

☐ Yes.

☐ No.

☐ I do not know.

If yes:

13.1 How do organisations develop their employer branding strategy? Please choose from the following options:

☐ Independently

☐ Based on central guidelines

☐ Other (please specify):

14. Based on the governing – current government personnel policy, on which factors do you build your employer branding (among those listed)? Mark it on a 6-point scale (1: not at all, 6: definitely). Please mark your answer with an “x”.

Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	Do not know
Career opportunities							
Creativity, innovation							
Competitive exams, other selection methods							
Information about employment opportunities and requirements (e.g. recruitment tools)							
Competitive salary compared to the private sector							
Other financial benefits (e.g. cafeteria, company car, laptop, telephone, reimbursement of travel costs)							
Well-being services (e.g. swimming pool, gym, relaxation room, sports facilities)							

Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	Do not know
Work–life balance (e.g. family-friendly, flexible working, home office, remote work, part-time work)							
The idea of serving the community, social responsibility (CSR)							
Performance management system							
Employment security							
Training and development opportunities							
Workplace atmosphere (e.g. community, physical environment, community events)							
Ability of leadership							
Opportunity to gain international experience							
Varied professional task system – work (e.g. rotation)							
Application of the possibilities offered by modern technology (e.g. chatbot, virtual assistant, vlog, use of social media)							
Appropriate handling of generational challenges							
Esteem of employees							
Other (free text field)							

15. If you have well-established and/or innovative practices related to your internal employer branding, from which, in your opinion, other member states can learn, please share your experiences.

(link and/or max. 800 characters)

16. On a 6-point scale please indicate the relevance of learning and development methods available at central administration in your Member State (1: not used, 6: very often used). Please mark your answer with an “x”.

Methods	1	2	3	4	5	6	Do not know
Payback clause (study contract)							
Individual learning account							
Study voucher (coupon)							
L&D plan							
L&D credit system (with credit requirements)							
Training							
Coaching							
Knowledge sharing platforms							
Sabbatical							
Support for the collection of micro-credentials							
Encouragement of independent learning (searching for information, use of social media for learning purposes, etc.).							
AI (chatGPT, virtual assistant, development of video content with AI, etc.)							

17. On a 6-point scale please indicate to what extent are the following factors true for your organisation (1: not at all, 6: definitely). Please mark your answer with an “x”.

Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6	Do not know
Everyone is constantly learning, leaders and employees alike.							
Leaders not only act as managers but also as mentors, they develop themselves as well as their colleagues.							
The knowledge acquired is made available to all members of the organisation.							
Self-directed workplace learning (e.g. Google search, obtaining information on social forums, informal knowledge sharing, production, and/or sharing of professional podcasts) is supported.							
The process of development is adapted to the diverse learning characteristics of the different generations.							
The processes are characterised by teamwork.							
The goal and the vision are uniform for everyone.							
Supportive and trusting culture prevails.							
Decision-making is based on participation.							

18. Is there an innovative, exemplary learning and development practice that you are proud of and from which, in your opinion, the other Member States could also benefit? If yes, please share your experiences with us.

(link and/or max. 800 characters)

19. In the last 5 years has there been a workplace satisfaction survey for personnel conducted at the central level?

☐ Yes.

☐ No.

If yes:

19.1 Please provide a brief overview (personal scope of the survey, time the survey took place, conclusions reached, concrete developments resulting from the survey, max. 800 characters/link).

20. Have there been any organisational development programs at central level in the past 5 years?

☐ Yes.

☐ No.

If yes:

20.1. Provided the answer is affirmative, please give a brief overview (personal scope, time, conclusions reached, concrete development that took place, max. 800 characters/link).

III. Decision support system for strategic personnel planning

21. Indicate what procedures are used in your organisation's strategic personnel planning! Please mark your answer with an "x".

(multiple choice)

Setting up strategic frameworks (organisation's mission, strategic goals, operating environment)	
Assessment of available human resources (number of employees, age professional composition, etc.)	
Prediction of the natural development of personnel (retirement, promotion, long-term absence, etc.)	
Examination of short, medium and long-term needs	
Analysis of the differences between the results of natural development and predictable needs	
Development of action plans to meet needs	
Analysis, evaluation, feedback	

22. On a 6-point scale please indicate to what extent the following factors characterise your organisation's strategic personnel planning (1: does not characterise it at all, 6: completely characterises it). Please mark your answer with an "x".

Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6	Do not know
The leaders' approach is characterised by strategic thinking.							
Workforce planning is aligned with the organisation's strategic objectives.							
Competencies required for the performance of tasks are secured cost-effectively.							
Responses to the changes in the labour market are quick and flexible.							
Future changes are recognised, and organisational development needs are anticipated.							

23. On a 6-point scale please indicate to what extent the following statements characterise your organisation's data- and fact-based decision-making (1: does not characterise it at all, 6: completely characterises it). Please mark your answer with an "x".

Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6	Do not know
Reports on personnel are prepared regularly.							
Data tables are available for management decisions.							
Data is used for workforce planning.							
Data is used for training and development plans.							
Data is used for social dialogue.							
The public is regularly informed.							

Appendix 2. The research team



Zoltán Hazafi, PhD habil.

Head of Department
Associate Professor

Lawyer, graduate of ENA's international short training program. He has over 30 years of experience in public administration in various leadership and advisory roles. He leads the Department of Human Resources at Ludovika University of Public Service and the Public Service HRM Research Workshop. His primary research areas are public service law and public service HRM.



Gabriella Csóka, PhD

Master Teacher

Master teacher at Ludovika University of Public Service. She holds a Doctor of Law and Public Science degree, with a specialisation in European law, and is also a certified competency development trainer. At the university, she teaches courses in public service law, human resources management, integrity management and mentoring training. Since 2012, she has been serving as a member of the Public Service Decision Committee (Hungary).



Edit Kajtár, PhD habil.
Associate Professor

Associate Professor at Ludovika University of Public Service. Previously she worked at Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien, and the University of Pécs. She acquired LLM from Warwick University and PhD from the University of Pécs in law. She works also as a qualified business and resiliency coach. She believes in the power of human connections. She was awarded habilitation in 2023, after delivering a lecture entitled “Soulful Human Resource Development”.



István Kamrás
PhD candidate

He has a master degree in Public Governance, and he is a government official. He is a student at the Doctoral School of Public Administration of Ludovika University of Public Service. He works at the Government Office of the Prime Minister and is a member of the Ludovika Collegium Talent Programme. His research interests are HRM, performance evaluation, selection and artificial intelligence in public administration.



Dávid Ludányi, PhD
Assistant Professor

He has 7 years of experience in HRM, with a background in both academic and practical settings. He completed his BA and MA at Ludovika University of Public Service (LUPS), graduating as a public administration manager. He is a full-time lecturer at LUPS, teaching public service law and HRM. He obtained his doctoral degree in political science and law, focusing on public service personnel policy and legislation.



Adrienn Magasvári, PhD
Associate Professor

She has over 20 years' experience in public administration and law enforcement. She has practical experience in human resource management, strategic management, training and development. She graduated as a public administration manager and then obtained her doctoral degree in Public Administration. Her areas of research are the law enforcement profession, organisational change and recruitment. She is a full-time lecturer at Ludovika University of Public Service.



Péter Klotz, PhD
Associate Professor

He has more than ten years of administrative experience in the Hungarian central administration, during which time he has represented Hungary in several international organisations (OECD, OGP) on integrity management and corruption prevention. Since 2018, he has been teaching integrity management and corruption prevention as full time lecturer at Ludovika University of Public Service in undergraduate and master's programs, and he regularly publishes on these topics.



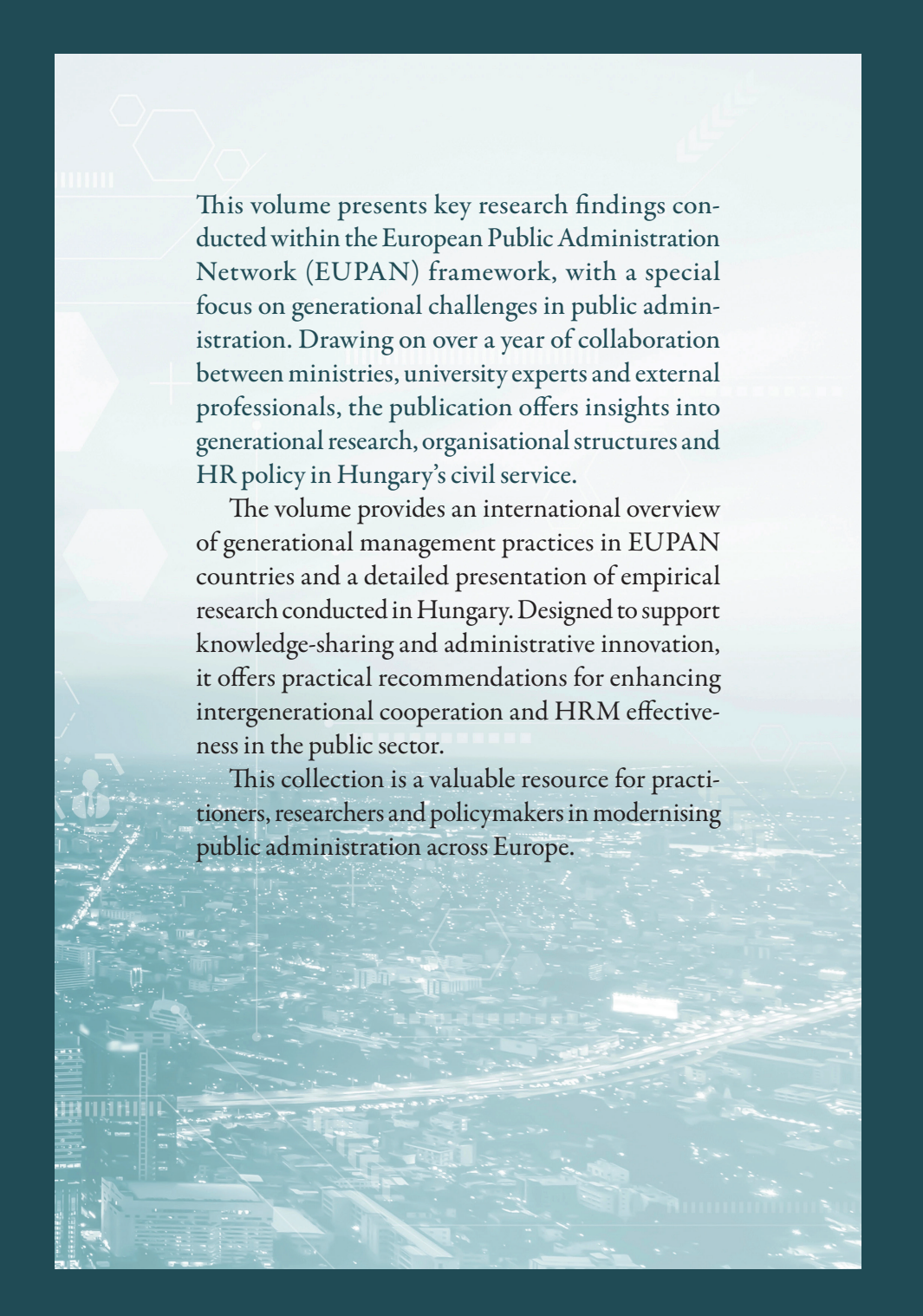
Csilla Paksi-Petró, PhD
Associate Professor

She has 15 years of experience in HRM, with a background in both academic and practical settings. She completed her BSc and MSc at Corvinus University of Budapest, graduating as a public administration manager. She is a full-time lecturer at Ludovika University of Public Service, teaching public service law and HRM and providing competency development trainings. She obtained her doctoral degree in Public Administration, focusing on public service personnel policy and leadership development.



Zsófia Káldor
Department Officer

She graduated as a librarian and worked in the profession for many years in elementary schools and then in university libraries. She always tried to help readers with their research essential to their work or studies, or simply to make good use of their leisure time. Currently, staying at the university, she works as a departmental officer, striving to support the daily lives of students and faculty members.

The background of the page is a dark, teal-toned aerial photograph of a city at night, with lights from buildings and streets visible. Overlaid on this image are several light-colored geometric shapes: hexagons of various sizes, some solid and some outlined, and a series of parallel lines in the top left corner. A faint, stylized graphic of a person's head and shoulders is visible on the left side, partially obscured by the geometric elements.

This volume presents key research findings conducted within the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN) framework, with a special focus on generational challenges in public administration. Drawing on over a year of collaboration between ministries, university experts and external professionals, the publication offers insights into generational research, organisational structures and HR policy in Hungary's civil service.

The volume provides an international overview of generational management practices in EUPAN countries and a detailed presentation of empirical research conducted in Hungary. Designed to support knowledge-sharing and administrative innovation, it offers practical recommendations for enhancing intergenerational cooperation and HRM effectiveness in the public sector.

This collection is a valuable resource for practitioners, researchers and policymakers in modernising public administration across Europe.