

## THE MECHANISMS AND TECHNOLOGIES OF IMPLEMENTING THE MERITOCRACY SYSTEM INTO PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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**Annotation:** The article discusses the mechanisms and technologies involved in implementing the meritocracy system in public administration. It emphasizes the importance of modern approaches in stabilizing a country and fostering political activism within society as public service has become the essential part of any country's policy. The introduction of a law on state civil service is highlighted as a crucial step towards serving the people effectively and incorporating meritocratic principles into the country's administration. Further discussion of the establishment of the State Services Development Agency and the reforms introduced to improve the personnel policy and public service system in Uzbekistan is also given in this article.

**Keywords:** meritocracy, public administration, civil service, personnel policy, State Services Development Agency, leadership training, reforms, professionalism, competency, open competitions, human resource development, career modeling, state civil service system, transparency, accountability, corruption prevention, training programs, leadership competencies, modernization, continuous improvement.

### INTRODUCTION.

There is a great demand today for modern approach towards not only stabilizing a country, but also making the society politically active, forming loving attitude of civil servant towards society, serving the people, achieving people's satisfaction, honesty, establishing justice on a large scale.

Therefore, introduction of the law on state civil service was one of the most important steps for enabling our country to serve its people properly and introducing the system of the meritocracy into the country's administration.

It's worth mentioning that, personnel issue had played a crucial role in the fortune of the countries during all ages. Because, any social activity, particularly, public administration is run by the individuals with special managing abilities and particular rights.

Admittedly, when talking about the rationalizing the public administration, the knowledge, skills, value and work ethic of the employees in the administration, as well as their selection and management (HRM system) are very important[1]. Furthermore, in each period, personnel and related policies were considered the driver of reforms, the leading force for making changes.

The head of our state, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, at the inauguration ceremony of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan for the first time in 2016, said: " The main task is to form a new group of leaders and officials who have high professional skills and modern thinking, who can make well-thought-out decisions and achieve the set goals"[2]. His words confirm that it is important for our country to properly train civil servants, to appoint worthy people to positions based on meritocratic principles, and establish a rational personnel policy in general.

After all, the effective mobilization of 118,000 state civil service employees towards the strategic goals of the Republic will be extremely important for the development of the nation, today and in the future.

The first processes of independence in Uzbekistan were connected with the formation of a new leadership training system that would meet the requirements of independence, realizing the nature of the newly formed socio-political and economic relations.

On January 7, 1997, based on the decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the "Umid" fund was established to support the education of talented young men and women abroad. With the support of this fund, during the years 1997-2003, a total of 828 youth studied in the fields of undergraduate and graduate education of prestigious higher education institutions of the world (USA, Great Britain, Germany, France, Japan, Canada, Italy).

However, the modern experience of development has shown that a number of systemic problems and shortcomings that lead to the insufficient supply of state bodies and organizations with qualified specialists, the incompatibility of quality of the decisions made in the personnel policy and the state civil service demanded new reforms in the system.

Since 2016, a new historical period has begun in the life of our country. The principle of "state-society-man", which has been used in public administration for years, has been replaced by the principle of "man-society-state", which reinterprets the essence and philosophy of the relationship between people and the state. It was confirmed that every reform is primarily for people.

In turn, in these political processes, a new approach to the issue of personnel in the public

service appeared. The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, firmly stated: "Practical efficiency and the realization of the interests of the people must be the main criterion for evaluating the activity of each member of the Government." Effectiveness can be achieved only through potential personnel who have a deep understanding of their scope of authority and job duties, and have the necessary skills and competencies.

The dynamism of today's time has created a need for personnel with the skills of leadership, time management and initiative, who can adapt to various changes, who can make quick and optimal decisions, who can think systematically and critically, and who have the skills of leadership, time management and initiative.

Therefore, in recent years, personnel policy and the state civil service system have been fundamentally improved[3].

On January 31, 2020, Shavkat Mirziyoyev signed Decree No. PF-5930 "On Reforming the State Civil Service System". Starting from 2020, admission to the civil service is carried out on the basis of an open independent competition. The State Services Development Agency was established under the President administration.

In the decree of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev dated October 3, 2019 No. PF-5843 "On measures to fundamentally improve the personnel policy and public service system in the Republic of Uzbekistan" it is said that it is necessary to adequately equip state bodies and organizations with qualified specialists in Uzbekistan. It is noted that a number of systemic problems and shortcomings remain, which lead to the lack of provision, the incompatibility of personnel qualifications with the established tasks and modern requirements, and the low quality of the decisions

being made. In particular, there is no current law which defines the comprehensive legal regulation of the civil service, including the procedures for selecting candidates based on an open independent competition, as well as the criteria for evaluating the activities and competencies of civil servants, and the requirements for improving their qualifications, the decree said.

The absence of an authorized body on civil service issues does not allow the implementation of a unified personnel policy in state bodies and organizations, effective management of personnel and development of personnel potential, formation of a competitive personnel reserve, and timely filling of vacant positions of civil servants.

In addition, “Transparent mechanisms for the selection of candidates for public service have not been established to ensure equal rights of all citizens in entry and promotion based on their professional qualities and special services”[4].

Measures are taken to ensure appropriate financial incentives and social protection of employees, to increase the prestige of public service at all levels among the population, especially among young people, and to prevent the appearance of corruption, formalism and bureaucracy. If it is not increased, it is listed in the decree.

In the decree, it was determined that a civil servant is a citizen of Uzbekistan who performs his activities in the positions entered in the state register of civil service positions. Its activity is regulated by legal documents on public service.

Foreign citizens and stateless persons can also occupy the positions of civil servants in accordance with the procedure established by separate decisions of the President of Uzbekistan.

Military service in the Armed Forces of Uzbekistan and service in law enforcement bodies is

a special state service and is regulated by separate legal documents.

The priority directions of improvement and reform of the public service were defined in the decree:

- application of the principle of meritocracy, which provides for the admission of the most worthy and capable persons to public service and their promotion based on a fair and objective evaluation of their professional qualities and special services;
- introduction of the "career model" of the civil service, which provides for the successive completion of the official stages of the career, with the regular improvement of personnel qualifications, as well as the division of civil servants into categories and the awarding of qualification levels;
- admission to public service on the basis of an open and independent competition, which allows for an impartial assessment of all the qualities and advantages of the candidate, including his moral and patriotic qualities; work based on the level of the state body and organization (republic, region, district and city), level of qualification and personal contribution introduction of a unified system of remuneration for the work of civil servants, which provides for the establishment of uniform requirements for the determination of wages.
- formation of an effective and competently prepared personnel reserve at the republican, branch and regional levels, active involvement of private employment agencies and use of modern forms of outsourcing to select the most qualified candidates for public service;
- introduction of modern information and communication technologies in the field of personnel management and human resources development in state bodies and organizations;

- introduction of an effective system of social guarantees, as well as incentives to improve the professional skills and efficiency of civil servants.
- The Presidential State Service Development Agency (ARGOS), which is responsible for the implementation of a unified state policy in the field of personnel management and development of human resources in state bodies and organizations, was established by decree.
- ARGOS is directly subordinated to the President of Uzbekistan and reports to him. The director of ARGOS is an adviser to the President on issues of mutual cooperation with civil service and representative bodies.

The main tasks of ARGOS:

- to develop an ideological platform for changing the public service, programs and projects for its development, as well as to ensure the practical implementation of an unified policy in the field of public service;
- coordinating the activities of state bodies and organizations in the field of state personnel policy;
- monitoring and analysis of trends and prospects for the development of public service, developing proposals for solving problems and issues in this field;
- introducing innovative methods of personnel management and development of personnel potential based on the principles of openness, professionalism and responsibility;
- managing the national personnel reserve, maintenance of the State Register of civil service positions, as well as creation and maintenance of a single open portal of vacancies for civil servants;
- introducing the system of measurable indicators (main indicators) for evaluating the

activities of civil servants and analyzing their results, studying public opinion and forming an open rating of the heads of state bodies and organizations;

- to identify and attract qualified and highly qualified specialists, including among compatriots living abroad, as well as to carry out systematic work on the widespread involvement of talented young people and women in public service;
- organizing the selection of the most promising personnel for public service on the basis of an open independent competition;
- formation of high professional ethics, anti-corruption culture and intolerant attitude towards corruption among public servants;
- introduction and consistent improvement of information and communication technologies in the field of public service, formation of a database ensuring the security of personal data of civil servants;
- to help protect the rights and legal interests of civil servants in their relations with employers, as well as to create suitable conditions for their work and social protection.

In the structure of the Presidential Administration, the post of Deputy Advisor to the President on issues of public service and interaction with representative authorities - Rector of the Academy of Public Administration under the President is being created.

Admission to public service in state bodies and organizations, with the exception of positions that are elected and appointed in a special order, will be carried out on the basis of an open independent competition in the following manner:

From January 1, 2020 - in trial mode, across the entire vertical - in state administration bodies and all state organizations in individual regions;

From January 1, 2021 - in all state bodies and organizations of the republic, which provide for public service.

Candidates may not be dismissed from their positions without the consent of ARGOS and its divisions.

Regulation of public service, including payment of wages and financial incentives for employees of state bodies and organizations, as well as changes in their organizational and staff structure, approved by the President or the Cabinet of Ministers in connection with the execution of drafts of regulatory legal documents, it is mandatory to comply with the procedure established by law.

The activities of the Academy of Public Administration under the President are coordinated by the departments of the President's adviser on relations with civil service and representative bodies.

Methodical management and coordination of personnel departments of state bodies and organizations is also carried out by ARGOS. Heads of personnel departments of state bodies and organizations are appointed and dismissed in agreement with ARGOS and its divisions, and are also certified by ARGOS every three years.

The decree also envisages the introduction of a procedure for state bodies and organizations to ensure that civil servants take annual short-term training courses (30-60 hours) outside of service.

In addition, retraining of civil servants and improving their qualifications, as well as training for new powers, is carried out at the expense of grants from the Fund, extra-budgetary funds of state bodies based on the order of the state body and organization. In this case, the civil servant retains the position, average monthly salary and seniority at the workplace;

Academy of public administration, scientific research and higher education institutions, as well as non-state educational institutions licensed in accordance with the procedure established by ARGOS, on the basis of the contract retraining of civil servants and improving their qualifications, as well as according to the new powers of state bodies participate in the organization of personnel training.

The Republican competition for the selection of promising management personnel "Taraqiyot" is now being held by ARGOS.

On September 25, 2018, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan established a decree No. PF-5545 named "On the organization of the activities of the "El-Yurt Umid" fund for the training of specialists under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan abroad and communication with compatriots".

The "El-Yurt Umidi" fund was declared the legal successor of the "Umid" (1997-2003) and "Iste'dod" (2003-2018) funds.

In accordance with the decision of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-3982 "On measures to further improve the state policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the field of cooperation with compatriots living abroad" adopted on October 25, 2018, "El-yurt umidi" fund was put in charge to strengthen communication with compatriots living abroad, who have modern knowledge and rich practical experience, invite them to work in various prestigious positions in Uzbekistan, help to effectively use their potential to further strengthen the positive influence of Uzbekistan in the international arena, as well as , was entrusted with the task of financing such events.

In accordance with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-5843 "On measures to radically improve the personnel policy and state civil service system in the Republic of

Uzbekistan" adopted on October 3, 2019, experts under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, "El-yurt umidi" fund for training abroad and communicating with compatriots was transferred to the State Service Development Agency under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

On February 11, 2021, with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-6168 "On measures to radically improve the system of training civil servants and specialists abroad and further increase their potential", the "El-yurt umidi" fund was transferred to the State Service Development Agency under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Charter of the fund was adopted.

In 2019, the State Service Development Agency under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan was established as a body responsible for the implementation of a unified state policy in the field of personnel management and human resources development in state bodies and organizations of the republic[5].

Agency is now responsible to coordinate the activities of the agency in the field of state personnel policy, to develop an ideological platform for the transformation of the state civil service, to develop programs and projects for its development, to introduce innovative methods in the field, to carry out systematic work on the widespread involvement of highly qualified specialists and the most promising personnel in the state civil service duties on formation and management of the National Personnel Reserve.

Another important aspect is that in the new personnel policy, the previous nomenclature approaches have been canceled and the "career model" has been introduced, which ensures the selection of personnel, the evaluation of the

effectiveness of the employees' activities, the improvement of their qualifications, and the promotion of personnel according to their talent, potential and qualifications.

The principle of "meritocracy" began to work through open independent selection mechanisms for entering the civil service, established by the agency. These new selection procedures eliminated nepotism, burglary and various corrupt factors in the industry. By now, about 1 million candidates have participated in open competitions for vacant positions, and 41,100 citizens have been accepted into public service[6].

Now, employees are chosen by not someone's recommendation or subjective opinion to state bodies. Independent competitions that are equal and open to everyone, minimized the human factor, and ensured healthy competition of the qualifications and professional competencies of each candidate are available at "vacancy.argos.uz". The most suitable candidates are selected through this electronic portal.

It is noteworthy that through open competitions, the opportunities for entering the public service for young people and women have increased. In particular, about 20,000 neighborhood youth leaders and neighborhood women were recruited through active competitions.

On this basis, it can be said that through this selection system, the potential "new generation personnel who will enter the arena as proactive reformers, who think strategically, who are educated and qualified" are entering the public service through fair and transparent tests.

In order to implement the initiative of the head of state to create a new generation of reserve personnel - "Leaders of the Future" from among talented young people, according to the results of the 4th stage competition, "Leaders of the Future" clubs

consisting of a total of 680 most worthy young people were established across the republic.

In addition, in order to prepare young people for public civil service, to select young personnel, to form a layer of young leaders with intellectual potential and an active civic position, who think deeply and have an independent worldview, within the framework of the "Leaders of the Future" program, the most worthy young people under the age of 30 were taught for leadership.

The main purpose of this is to manage new generation personnel based on a new system and prepare them step by step. Because a graduate of higher education will have certain theoretical knowledge only in his specialty. Such systems that prepare promising personnel serve as a practical school for working in public service for young people.

In the experience of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew was in charge of public service by recruiting young professionals between the ages of 20 and 30 according to their ability and potential, and sending the strongest school graduates to study at prestigious educational institutions around the world, and by forming such public servants noted that a new approach and modern thinking have emerged and served the country's development[7].

It should be noted that in the comprehensive formation of young professionals, the attachment of employees with many years of experience to young personnel based on the tradition of mentoring and apprenticeship will be a great experience for young people who have just entered the field to develop in this direction.

But currently, mentorship is often left as an official and professional procedure in personnel policy. For this reason, creating the conditions of true teacher-student communication, values, and manners between a young specialist and an

experienced civil servant who is worthy of the status of "mentor" is one of the important issues on the agenda.

The adoption of the Law "On Civil Service[8]" creates a solid legal foundation for the full realization of the vital principle that "the people should serve the people, not the state bodies, and the state bodies should serve the people."

The law establishes the legal status of the civil servant, job categories and qualification levels, the unified procedure for the entry, transition and termination of the civil service, professional and moral qualities and special services of the personnel based on the objective and fair assessment of service levels, provides guarantees of growth, regulation of the organizational and legal mechanism of the unified state civil service in general.

The adoption of the law fulfilled the long-awaited dreams of our citizens, who devoted their lives to public service, and focused on solving a number of systemic problems that have not been solved in the field.

In particular, a single system of rights, obligations and special restrictions related to the performance of the service of civil servants of all levels, as well as their legal status by dividing public civil positions into "political", "administrative" and "assistant" groups, was established.

Thus, the norms of this Law can be a legal solution to disputes about who is a state civil servant, what is his legal status, and what are his social guarantees.

Another important aspect of the law is that now it is not a right of a state civil servant to regularly develop his professional competences, continuous improvement of his qualifications, but a duty of service. Previously, training of employees was carried out as a rule, now training and developing

professional qualities of employees is the main and important factor in their growth in the ranks of the service.

Therefore, the Law envisages the introduction of an evaluation system based on the most important performance indicators (KPI) by introducing open and transparent mechanisms for the promotion of public civil servants.

For example, the effectiveness of civil service employees depends on a large extent on their high-quality professional training and regular qualification improvement[9].

As the volume of information is increasing every second in our rapidly developing age, assimilation of new knowledge and continuous development in these processes is the demand of the times. At this point, it is necessary to establish a training system aimed at developing the necessary skills of managers and employees at all levels based on the principle of "Lifelong learning".

Because in improving the public service, filling the need for potential personnel, improving the qualifications and retraining of civil servants are of great importance[10].

Issues of combating corruption, which is currently the biggest obstacle to the development of countries, are also reflected in the law. In particular, special measures for the prevention of corruption are being established for state bodies, as well as a number of obligations and restrictions for state civil servants.

For example, persons who have committed crimes related to corruption and are included in the open electronic registry should not be admitted to the state civil service, the state civil servant must comply with the rules of etiquette, not allow conflicts of interest, to be impartial. Obligations such as not to use one's service position for personal

purposes, to submit a declaration of one's income and property within the terms and in the order established by law are being established.

In addition, effective preventive mechanisms aimed at preventing corruption, such as mandatory rotation of state civil servants occupying positions with a high risk of corruption is being introduced.

In this, the term of office of state civil servants belonging to the "political", "management" and "assistant" groups, as well as specific rules for their vertical and horizontal rotation to another position are determined. Legal and social guarantees of rotated state civil servants are being introduced.

According to it, the obligation to provide housing and family members with work or education to state civil servants assigned to positions in other regions on the basis of rotation is being legally strengthened.

Now clearly defining restrictions on civil servants, such as not to engage in business, not to manage business entities through trusted representatives, not to receive gifts from interested parties, not to own property in foreign countries - to prevent crimes related to corruption in the field, to take preventive measures in time in addition to serving the implementation, it serves to form the culture of civil servants' loyalty to the profession, impartial and dignified service to the people.

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan established a comprehensive system of fundamental reform of the state civil service and defined 5 main directions that make up this system[11].

On the basis of this new system, openness and transparency in the selection, appointment, placement and career of personnel, the mechanism of "growing a civil servant from the neighborhood to the Republic", improving the quality of service on the basis of substantive changes in the working method, civil servant activity 2 essentially new



models of ensuring guarantees and training and improving the skills of employees were founded.

On the basis of this model, it is emphasized that not only demands are made on the civil servant, but also the guarantees of his activity are expanded, and how much money, effort, and time it takes to train each staff member and turn him into a subject of skilled management, even the civil servant himself it was emphasized that it is a limited resource.

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, which is an important aspect in expanding the powers of the civil servant, to improve the financial conditions of the employee, to pay additional increments and annual bonuses, to provide life and health insurance, to retire decently for civil servants who have worked honestly and cleanly emphasized that special attention should be paid to the provision of transfer guarantees.

Consequently, it is these possibilities that open the way to the guarantee of activities directly related to the work of a civil servant. Performance guarantees, as specifically noted by the head of state, put the implementation of the following principles on the agenda as necessary tasks:

- making working to please people the content of one's activity
- conduct activities honestly, cleanly, in compliance with the rule of law, with conscience and justice;
- to serve public policy, people's interests with loyalty and dedication;
- to consider high professionalism, mutual cooperation, transparent implementation of activities, ensuring efficiency and quality of work as the main indicators of their activity.

The training, retraining and upgrading of management personnel in the formation of a fair, professional, result-oriented public administration

system and "mobile management apparatus" are urgent issues for Uzbekistan. In this regard, the Academy of Public Administration under the President should be the only place of higher education and the intellectual core of the policy of forming a reserve of highly qualified personnel in the country, introducing the system of meritocracy in working with human resources.

It should be noted that the activity of the Academy has been reformed four times over the past years. A single analysis, in 2018-2021, a total of 267 trainees completed the master's degree of the Academy of Public Administration. However, more than half of this contingent does not work in the state civil service.

In addition, the head of state emphasized the issue of training staff on the basis of a transparent and fair system for effective enforcement of the law on public civil service, and the issue of staff qualification, "the Academy of Public Administration is the most important institution in this regard." It will be transformed on the basis of advanced foreign experiences"[12], he emphasized.

Based on this, it is necessary to implement the following reforms in the Academy based on the requirements of improving public administration in Uzbekistan:

- ~ transformation of personnel training and scientific-research processes and modernization of the material and technical base;
- ~ organization of the educational process based on the credit-module system and the use of modern digital technologies in accordance with foreign educational standards and national leadership values;
- ~ development of measures for continuous development of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, professional morale of civil servants;

~ organization of convenient, short-term and short-term forms of the master's degree, scientific and methodological assistance to further increase the professional potential of personnel through retraining;

~ attracting foreign specialists to educational and research processes and establishing joint educational programs with leading foreign and local higher education organizations.

Through this, students will be able to develop the skills of systematic analysis and strategic planning, initiative, innovative thinking, creative thinking, working for results and making optimal decisions in non-standard situations, modern management and leadership of newly trained executives, and open communication with the people. It will be possible to improve competencies such as project management and public speaking.

In particular, to launch training programs for the "President's Reserve Personnel" for those who are included in the National Personnel Reserve as candidates for the posts of Minister, Mayor and their deputies, and further encourage the systematic preparation of young people for management work and orientation to public service. "Future Leaders" will be able to form a potential new generation of reserve personnel by establishing the Institute for the Training of Prospective Personnel. The most important thing is that the Academy of Public Administration serves to constantly update the professional knowledge and competencies of the four levels of public service personnel, to continuously improve and retrain the skills of civil servants.

In all times and places, the fate of countries is closely related to the activities of management personnel, and therefore this direction remains a decisive aspect of state policy. After all, each field should be implemented by mature individuals with

special professional competencies and spiritual and moral qualities.

In today's Uzbekistan, the personnel policy of the state is to transform the role and influence of this historical heritage and fundamentally reform the goals and principles and the content of practice, which determine the content and directions of the selection, training and placement of civil servants and leading personnel. It also expresses that.

Today, the training of leading personnel and young public servants into national and modern leading personnel in accordance with the requirements of the development of Uzbekistan is one of the conditions of the fierce competitive struggle in the world. In order for this activity to bear its fruit, it is very important to achieve a harmony of world and national experience - to scientifically study, restore, modernize the traditions of master-apprenticeship in the training of leading personnel, and to create modern management values

In conclusion, by ensuring the effective implementation of the norms of the Law "On State Civil Service" aimed at solving systemic problems that have not found their solution in the civil service, the only procedure that meets the advanced international standards in the field of regulating the civil service will be formed and the necessary legal conditions will be created for actively attracting qualified personnel to the state civil service, increasing their potential, with educating them as selfless, people-loving and competitive personnel.

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