



Romania: Developing a Unitary Human Resources Management System within the Public Administration

An evidence-based model for the new recruitment system in Romanian civil service

Concept proposal

Options for the architecture of the national competition

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

1. The Government of Romania (GoR) is seeking to implement a new model for a nationwide recruitment competition for civil service vacancies as part of their broader effort to develop a unitary “Human Resources Management (HRM) System” in the Romanian public administration.

In this context, the World Bank (the Bank) is collaborating with the GoR by providing technical inputs through a Reimbursable Advisory Services (RAS) in support of the implementation of the Strategy for Strengthening Public Administration (SSPA 2014-2020) and the Strategy for the Development of the Civil Service (SCSD 2016-2020) in Romania.

2. The HRM RAS includes the following six components:

- a. Component 1 – Public Policy (Output 1);
- b. Component 2 – HRM guidelines and procedures (Output 2);
- c. Component 3 – Competency framework (Output 3);
- d. Component 4 – Recruitment system (Output 4);
- e. Component 5 – Performance Management System (Output 5); and
- f. Component 6 – Stakeholder Engagement (cross-cutting).

3. The current concept note is part of the proposed framework for the implementation of Component 4 – Recruitment system of the HRM RAS. The Bank will support the GoR in the design of a new model for the national competition in line with the public administration reform agenda. This concept note presents the following:

- (1) A brief overview of the **context** in which the model is proposed;
- (2) The **methodology** used in analyzing the current recruitment system and in developing the new recruitment model, including the methodology for costing;
- (3) The **main structural problems of the current recruitment system** that the new model will address;
- (4) The **options for the new recruitment model**; advantages and disadvantages; cost estimates;
- (5) The **recommended option**; process mapping and institutional responsibilities;
- (6) The **structure of the final report**;
- (7) **An overview of next steps** in delivering this output and supporting implementation.

4. Competency-based recruitment is a key pillar of the HRM reform efforts in the Romanian public administration. The process to introduce competency-based recruitment is also supported by the European Union (EU) requirements on professionalization of public administration staff

and more broadly on administrative capacity development. The strategic framework laying the foundations for the HRM reform in the public administration was developed to cover an EU ex-ante conditionality on “the existence of a strategic policy framework for reinforcing the Member States' administrative efficiency including public administration reform”¹. The development of a recruitment system that is transparent, meritocratic, and competency-based is therefore, at the heart of the reform process described in this strategic policy framework.

5. The Strategy for Civil Service Development (SCSD) 2016-2020 includes as a key measure the introduction of a transparent national recruitment competition for positions in the central public administration. The strategy envisages a two-phased recruitment system for civil service positions in central public administration: a nationwide competition, followed by position-based recruitment. Only the candidates who are successful after the first stage of the recruitment process would be able to enter the second stage. The SCSD 2016-2020 also establishes that the implementation of the new recruitment system would be evaluated to inform a possible roll-out of the system to other job categories in the public administration. The SCSD poses a significant shift from the current model in place (focused mostly on testing the applicants' capacity to memorize legal texts) towards a competency-based recruitment. The SCSD also aims at improving transparency in the system: testing should be conducted using a centralized IT system securing efficiency and effectiveness gains, but also ensuring meritocracy and transparency of the recruitment process².

6. The competency framework is to become the backbone of the new recruitment system. The SCSD 2016-2020 envisages the development of a competency framework for civil service positions to cater for the needs of a result-oriented public administration and be implemented in line with established mandates and strategic objectives of institutions. The competency framework would provide a common understanding of the needs of the recruitment process based on a commonly agreed set of skills, knowledge and behaviors. Furthermore, a competency framework will provide the foundations for building career paths, for orienting performance management practices, and for designing personal development plans.

7. The Administrative Code³ includes the introduction of a national competition as a first phase of the recruitment system for civil service positions in central and territorial public administration. Two pilot competitions are expected to be organized by the National Agency for Civil Servants (NACS) for debutants and high-level civil servants until 2021. The model proposed

¹ Annex XI of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006.

² SCSD 2016-2020, pp. 32-34.

³ The Emergency ordinance on the Administrative Code was adopted by GOR on June 25th and published in the Official Gazette by the time the current Concept Note was drafted.

under the HRM RAS is expected to be operationalized through these pilot competitions and to be further rolled out to be applied for recruitment on all general civil service positions.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

8. Building upon the HRM RAS Baseline Diagnosis, a more comprehensive analysis of the current recruitment process for civil service positions in central public administration was conducted in March-April 2019. The Bank conducted a thorough review of the recruitment process in order to diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of the existent system, to inform possible solutions and to offer an evidence-based foundation for the new recruitment model.

9. The analysis focused on general civil service positions, including high level civil servants. As such, the rules and regulations applicable to civil servants working for the Romanian Parliament, the Presidential Administration, the Legislative Council, the diplomatic and consular services, custom border, police and other bodies of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as well as any other civil servants enjoying specific statutory norms (e.g. public managers, etc.) were not part of the scope of this analysis.

10. The methodological approach applied ensured access to extensive qualitative and quantitative data from various sources:

➤ Analysis of **national legislation** on recruitment in public administration in relation with existing practices;

➤ Analysis of the **international experience**, focusing primarily on good practice from: Belgium, Estonia, European Commission, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, UK;

➤ Consultation of **different public webpages**

which provided factual data about the recruitment process in Romania. For instance, the official webpages of the NACS and of line ministries provided information relevant for identifying where and how job vacancies were publicly advertised. The Report also benefits from the analysis of the national job advertisement portal, namely: <http://jobs.gov.ro/>.

➤ **Production and validation of process maps of the current recruitment process**, with support from HR staff from line ministries and NACS;

➤ **Analysis of recruitment statistics extracted from NACS database**, which offered detailed information for calculating the cost, based on the number of recruitment procedures, candidates, tests and selection committee membership. The values were calculated based on data covering 2017- 2019;

- Legislation & documents review
- International practices review;
- Job announcement review;
- Semi-structured interviews;
- Focus-groups;
- Costs assessment and cost model determination

➤ **Seventeen semi-structured interviews** were conducted with representatives from 12 ministries, the National Institute of Administration (INA), NACS and the Competition Council. 10 of the interviewees had previously served as members in exam commissions, and 7 performed HR tasks in the recruitment process;

➤ **Two focus groups to provide input into the costing model** were organized with staff from 12 line ministries.

11. The Bank designed a data collection template based on detailed process mapping and developed a costing model for the current recruitment process. The data collected from all the various sources mentioned in paragraph 8 above informed a detailed process mapping of the current recruitment process implemented to determine and calculate the costs. The logical model used for process mapping is captured in **Error! Not a valid bookmark self-reference.** below. For each phase the team collected metrics to capture in detail each stage and to generate quantitative data. The mapping was adjusted and agreed upon with the HR experts in central public administration during the focus groups, who also provided feedback on qualitative parameters.

Table 1 Generic process map developed for collecting metrics and validating process stages with HR Staff

MAIN PHASE								
(example: public institutions request assent from NACS to organize a recruitment competition for a civil service position at execution level in central public administration)								
No	Short description	Institution responsible (PI or NACS)	People involved: Who? How many?	Processing time (actual work)	Cumulative time (Min. and Max. – including waiting time)	Other costs involved (type, quantity)	Candidates involved in this step? How many at start and finish?	Issues/ VARIATION
Key steps	1	TRIGGER	PI	1, HR staff, execution level	0	...
	2	...						
	3	...						
						
	X	DONE	What document/ action indicates that the phase is over?					

12. In determining the cost of the recruitment process two detailed models were compiled, one for managerial and one for execution civil servants. Each phase consisted of several activities, which were quantified for the salaries of staff involved and other costs. The wage bill was measured through variables including: (i) number of people involved; (ii) work duration per person; (iii) median wage for execution level/managerial level civil service positions in central public administration, and (iv) a multiplication coefficient usually related to number of candidates. Other costs included those of advertising of recruitment and the functioning of selection/appeal committees, namely allowances, travel, accommodation and services.

13. For each quantitative variable used in the costing, the following assumptions were used:

- a. The number of people involved in each step in a procedure measures the number of civil servants responsible for implementing the activity, as indicated by the participants in the focus groups.⁴
- b. The duration per person (in hours) was defined as the effective time of work dedicated to the activity.
- c. The average hourly wage was calculated based on median monthly gross wage for execution and managerial civil servants in central government.⁵
- d. The multiplication coefficient was used for adjusting the cost of duplicative activities which depend on the number of candidates⁶.
- e. A multiplication coefficient was also used to reflect the probability of specific selected activities, whose likelihood was less than 100%, such as the pre-qualification tests and various appeals.

14. The activities in the recruitment procedures were associated with qualitative variables to support data analysis. The qualitative variables were conceived using diverse criteria to reflect the most important features of the recruitment process:

- The function served by the activity: eight generic phases were devised to cover the recruitment process cycle, for both current system and new proposed model.
- Variability was used to show whether the cost associated with the activity was fixed or variable⁷.

⁴ For activities involving the selection/ appeal committees, the number of persons was equal to the committees' statutory memberships. The calculation of the cost of committee membership allowances relied on the average number of members throughout the recruitment process, which was estimated based on NACS data and also included committee member turnover.

⁵ Divided by the number of working hours in a month, i.e. 168.

⁶ Such as appraisal of job applications, written test papers or appeals etc

⁷ Variable costs depended on the number of candidates, while fixed costs were independent.

- Repeatability indicated whether activities included in the reform scenario were recurrent or one-off.
- Civil servant category designated the category of the civil servant expected to implement each activity: execution or managerial.

15. For the new recruitment model, the same methodological approach was used with minor adjustments to inform the designing of evidence-based reform options and to determine the costing in comparable terms. The format of the logical model for process mapping was used with minor adjustments to allow identifying opportunities for process improvements through the new recruitment model compared to the baseline (current recruitment model).

16. Furthermore, the WB team reached out to Romanian HR specialists from the private sector to identify good practices in terms of process design for the assessment center. One key organization that provided relevant input in the national context and costing estimates was the HR CLUB, a professional association of HR experts.

17. In perspective, following the initial consultation process, the WB team will use expert review of the emerging recommendations in terms of process mapping, responsibilities and resource allocation to verify applicability prior to the piloting phase. HR experts from central public administration will be consulted on feasibility and opportunity of the proposals.

II. THE CURRENT RECRUITMENT SYSTEM

2.1 CENTRAL AND TERRITORIAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AS A RECRUITER

18. **Civil service positions in Romania accounted for 11 per cent of Government employment in 2018, almost half of them at central and territorial level.** Out of 135,916 civil service positions occupied in accordance with the NACS data⁸, 46% are registered in central and territorial public administration. 8% in the total civil service positions at central and territorial level are managerial, and only 54 positions are filled in by high level civil servants⁹.

- Few entry-level positions filled
- Few high-level civil service positions permanently filled
- Aging of the public employee corpus
- Low attractiveness of public sector jobs, despite the advantages offered by the status

19. **At national level, Romanian civil service faces two key challenges: (1) a reversed seniority pyramid at execution level, with almost 15% of staff concentrated at junior level (debutant and assistant)¹⁰ and 70% at senior level and (2) a high vacancy rate, with 10% of total positions being unoccupied at central and territorial level¹¹.** The rate is especially high for “debutants” (entry-level Civil Servants), with 59% of debutant positions being vacant in 2017 at national level; vacancy rates for managerial and execution level Civil Service positions are roughly similar. The *Baseline diagnosis* drafted under the HRM RAS argued that the high vacancy rate could signal low attractiveness of public sector jobs, as NACS data for 2015-2017 suggests that for 18% of recruitment competitions organized by NACS there were no candidates.

20. **The legal framework¹² applicable at the time of the analysis sets the general framework and assigns institutions responsibilities for the recruitment of civil servants.** For general Civil Servants at the central and territorial level there are two types of competitions: 1) competition organized by the NACS (for management positions at central level as well as selected positions at the local level); and 2) a competition for execution level positions approved and monitored by NACS through a direct representative on the selection committee, namely a procedural officer. For the latter the NACS has the right to refuse approval or ask for a postponement of the

⁸ NACS Activity report (2018). Available at:

<http://www.anfp.gov.ro/R/Doc/2019/rapoarte%202019/Raport%20de%20activitate%20ANFP%202018.pdf>.

⁹ Overall, almost 70% of the total number of high-level civil service positions are filled in temporarily. The temporary appointments are not captured in the numbers mentioned in this report.

¹⁰ 2,3% at debutant level and 12,2% at assistant level in 2017.

¹¹ The rate is higher at national level, with around 17% of total positions being unoccupied, based on 2017 data from NACS.

¹² Primarily the Law 188/1999.

competition until the problems identified are resolved. The NACS's endorsements are a way to monitor/ensure that legal requirements regarding recruitment of Civil Servants are fulfilled.

21. The Administrative Code has modified the recruitment process and assigned new responsibilities to different public institutions. The NACS is tasked with organizing a national competition as a first phase in the recruitment process for civil service positions at central and territorial level public administrations, while at the local level only the second stage job-based recruitment will be applied.

22. In practice, the recruitment processes are largely delivered on an ad-hoc basis, limiting the possible efficiency gains of a yearly planning process. Previous analyses conducted by the Bank indicate that the workforce planning in the Romanian civil service focused on compiling the total number of vacancies, while the frequent hiring freezes (2009-2012 and again mid-2017 and throughout 2018) have led to a “stop-and-go” pattern in recruitment and a decrease in number of competitions organized in the past 3 years (*Table 2*). As mentioned on the HRM Baseline Diagnosis during these hiring freezes institutions used other methods to fill vacancies, such as transfer, temporary appointment or promotion etc., while also preferring to recruit on more senior positions.

23. Historical data for 2016-2019 shows that on average a standard recruitment competition is organized for two positions, as the process itself is largely decentralized. The planning and initiation of the recruitment process relies primarily on public institutions in central and territorial public administration, with the NACS acting as a legal gatekeeper. While the NACS is responsible for managing recruitment competitions for managerial civil service positions, even in this case the agency acts based on a prior request for launching the procedure formulated by the hiring institution. Therefore, the NACS has limited power to influence the planning of recruitment competitions.

24. An average 23 per cent of applicants are successful in completing the whole recruitment process¹³. Based on NACS data, 93% of the applicants are able to pass the eligibility phase and

Table 2 Evolution in number of competitions

➤ Number of competitions organized for managerial civil service positions			
	competitions	positions	candidates
2017	161	479	814
2018	140	192	505
2019 (June)	45	55	97
➤ Number of competitions for civil service positions at execution level endorsed by NACS			
	competitions		
2017	1740		
2018	763		
2019 (June)	806		

¹³ Based on NACS data, applicable for certain competitions (managerial positions and some execution level positions)

eventually the supplementary testing and enter in the written test; 32% of those are called for interviews¹⁴.

2.2 MAIN STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS OF THE CURRENT RECRUITMENT SYSTEM

25. The HRM Baseline Diagnosis¹⁵ highlighted that the current recruitment system for civil service positions does not support the matching of hiring needs with required skills, expectations and motivation. Among the main challenges, the report focused on the following:

- the poor correlation with HR planning and job descriptions;
- reduced capabilities of the selection committees to assess other types of skills beyond memorizing legal texts;
- reduced capabilities of line managers to define job descriptions and job announcements – absence of a competency framework;
- resource-intensive recruitment processes for all parties involved;
- “stop-and-go patterns” of recruitment due to lack of strategic HR planning and to hiring freezes;
- an increased number of temporary appointments for managerial positions.



Lack of strategic workforce planning

26. The current recruitment process for civil service positions is not part of a strategic workforce planning process. This finding was discussed at length in the HRM Baseline diagnosis stressing that currently there is no systematic process to identify staff and skills needs based on organizational mission and priorities. Therefore, the 2018 elimination of the annual workforce plan compiled by the NACS had a limited impact to the system, as indicated during interviews conducted by the WB team.

27. The absence of strategic workforce planning has made the recruitment for high level civil service positions the exception rather than the norm. Furthermore, the lack of a merit-based recruitment process has affected the credibility of this cadre as top professionals in public administration. As highlighted in the HRM Baseline Diagnosis, the opportunity to organize recruitment competitions for high level civil servants’ positions has been limited by the excessive

¹⁴ Based on 2016-2019 data compiled from NACS’ database.

¹⁵ World Bank, Baseline diagnosis of the HRM system in the Romanian public administration, April 2019.

use of temporary appointments. No recruitment competitions have been organized for high level civil servants since 2015.

28. Adding complexity to the processes, the eligibility requirements for high level civil servants may be suffering from the discretionary use of qualification criteria that is not fully fungible, or the exercise of de facto prerogatives. For instance, one of the conditions for entering a competition for a high civil servant vacancy is to have completed the specialized training program for high civil servants provided by the Institute of National Administration (INA) or to have exercised a full mandate as a parliamentarian. Attending a specialized program cannot be considered equivalent to the experience gained as a parliamentarian. Likewise, INA selects the participants for the specialized training program and conducts interviews in this process. These interviews, that are not a legal requirement focus on testing the candidate's knowledge of Romanian and European institutional and regulatory framework.¹⁶ As such, INA acts de facto as a pre-selection body and this should be carefully considered while designing the new recruitment model.

❖ **Low coordination & and recruiting capabilities**

29. Low coordination capacity in managing recruitment of civil servants hinders long-term professionalization perspectives. Despite the NACS' role in guiding and monitoring the recruitment process for civil service positions in central and territorial public administration, a horizontal concern that transpired through all the interviews is that there the process is fragmented, including:

- Lack of coordination in the central administration to support evidence-based planning, recruitment and selection of HR needs,
- De facto v. de jure processes and criteria. Despite the unitary legislation, plurality of interests and capacities in selecting the right candidates persist (e.g. there is little evidence of professionalization in the case of exam commissions and appeal boards and testing the candidates may differ from memorizing legal texts to solving complex problems that may arise in a working environment).
- Fragmentation in central administrative capabilities: ministries capabilities differ, they have different budget allocations and organizational cultures: these impacts how HR departments are organized and their ability to conduct all possible recruitment steps (e.g. publicize the job announcements on multiple platforms, participate to job fairs, train the exam commission

¹⁶ The Romanian Constitution, civil service related laws, transparency related laws, government organization related laws, as well as the EU Treaty, Treaty on the functioning of the EU, Charter of fundamental rights of the EU, amongst others.

and appeal boards, organize additional tests for assessing specific skills associated to the job, etc.).

30. In this context, HR departments take up different roles in the recruitment process, ranging from legalistic gatekeepers to strategic partners. There seem to be three main roles HR departments play in central administration in Romania, namely:

➤ **“gate keepers”** – HR departments are accountable for their compliance with the legal regulations in the organization of the recruitment processes. As such, complying with an intricate set of rules that suffer constant amendments (e.g. GD 611/2008 was modified 8 times, while Law 188/1998 was amended 28 times) is one of the core responsibilities of HR officers. This seems to result in an overly legalistic approach to compliance, especially in cases where there are hierarchical / political pressures to fill vacancies as flagged during the interviews conducted in March and April 2019.

➤ **“silent partners”** – This role plays both internally and externally; for managers, a silent HR department identifies solutions for solving vacancies issues, performs its legal administrative duties in the recruitment process (usually by re-enacting the same scenario as in previous similar situations) and recruits the desired number of civil servants / contractual employees as indicated. Externally, the HR departments support candidates as established by law, and once the recruitment process has finalized, they draft the necessary documents for work-integration. This role was described by staff in 4 of the 12 ministries interviewed.

➤ **“strategic players”** – Scholars in HR management and development have largely argued in favor of HR departments taking a strategic role in organizations, especially in those such as ministries and other central administration institutions. In Romania, as the interviews show, only a few HR departments (1 from 12 ministries and 1 in an autonomous authority) fulfil this role and when they do, their performance is visible only inside the organization. Strategic players plan the vacancies with the heads of different units usually one year (or more) ahead of the actual need for personnel arising, initiate trainings and prepare guidelines for exam commissions and appeal boards, provide “best practices” for selecting the “best and brightest”, and even offer their services for mentorship of debutants.

31. The inconsistencies of requirements for recruitment, in the case of similar jobs, are also flagged in the practices assessed. The job announcements assessed show that there are different requirements in terms of studies, bibliography and type of core tasks for similar jobs. This leads to variations in terms of results.



Burdensome processes

32. The application process is burdensome and time consuming for both candidates and public institutions. The process is paper-based involving the physical submission of paper copies of the application and relevant documents or forms as required by legislation, including a medical certificate. Interviews revealed that the selection of files is largely perceived as an administrative duty, reduced to checking the eligibility criteria as presented in the job announcement, with limited value added.

33. The job announcements are incomplete and lack information. Job announcements tend to be “shopping lists” of duties and responsibilities as copied from the job descriptions, often in contrast with the level of the professional grade being recruited (for example announcements for a junior position includes the same complex tasks as the job descriptions for more senior position). Moreover, as the salary rights are not mentioned in the announcement (because the pay levels are considered to be publicly available in the public sector and therefore easy to be consulted), this entails a separate research effort for the candidate, without having the guarantee that the pay level identified would actually be applicable in his/her case.

34. The proposed bibliography consists almost exclusively of legislation/normative acts (The Romanian Constitutions, laws, regulations, decisions, etc.) and it rarely aims to generate a competence diagnostic. As a consequence, the assessment is mostly legalistic. Candidates are questioned on their knowledge of legal norms such as the Constitution and other regulations rather than on their competencies for the job. This makes appealing challenging. Interviews indicated that this approach is also meant to ensure that an (eventual) appeal is difficult to win.

❖ **Ineffective advertising campaigns**

35. The current publicity process for recruitment competitions is ineffective in reaching out audiences beyond job seekers who periodically consult the NACS’ website in search of jobs. The authority or public institution is bound to publish the competition announcement within 30 working days (for permanent positions) or 10 working days (for temporary positions) to the written test: at its headquarters, in the Official Gazette of Romania, in a widespread circulation newspaper and on its webpage – optional. Public administration thus misses the opportunity of using other advertising instruments (in addition to publishing the vacancy), such as: participation at job fairs, recruitment from university campuses, using social media instruments, using job hunting specialized websites and announcement portals.

❖ **Ineffective testing design and implementation**

36. The testing system is outdated and focused on memorization rather than on assessing skills and competencies. All interviewees (17 out of 17) concurred that while the knowledge of applicable laws is important, memorizing them doesn't entail understanding them. Memorizing laws and regulations on a short period of time is only a proof of determination and good short-term memory but is a poor predictor for post-selection performance as there is no guarantee that the candidate will be able to use this theoretical knowledge in practical situations. Competency-based tools and psychometric testing have proved to be better predictors for general performance. Fifteen interviewees supported the idea of introducing additional psychometric tests, while only half of the respondents supported a multiple-choice question test.

37. The interviews are often limited to a duplication of the written test. Almost all the HR representatives interviewed in April 2019 reported that the interview is more about testing the theoretical knowledge about the laws and less about assessing candidates' motivation and competencies. This is strongly related to the limited capacity of selection panels to conduct proper interviews. The most common complaint raised during the interviews conducted was that selection panels have standardized guidance to guide their recruitment interviews.



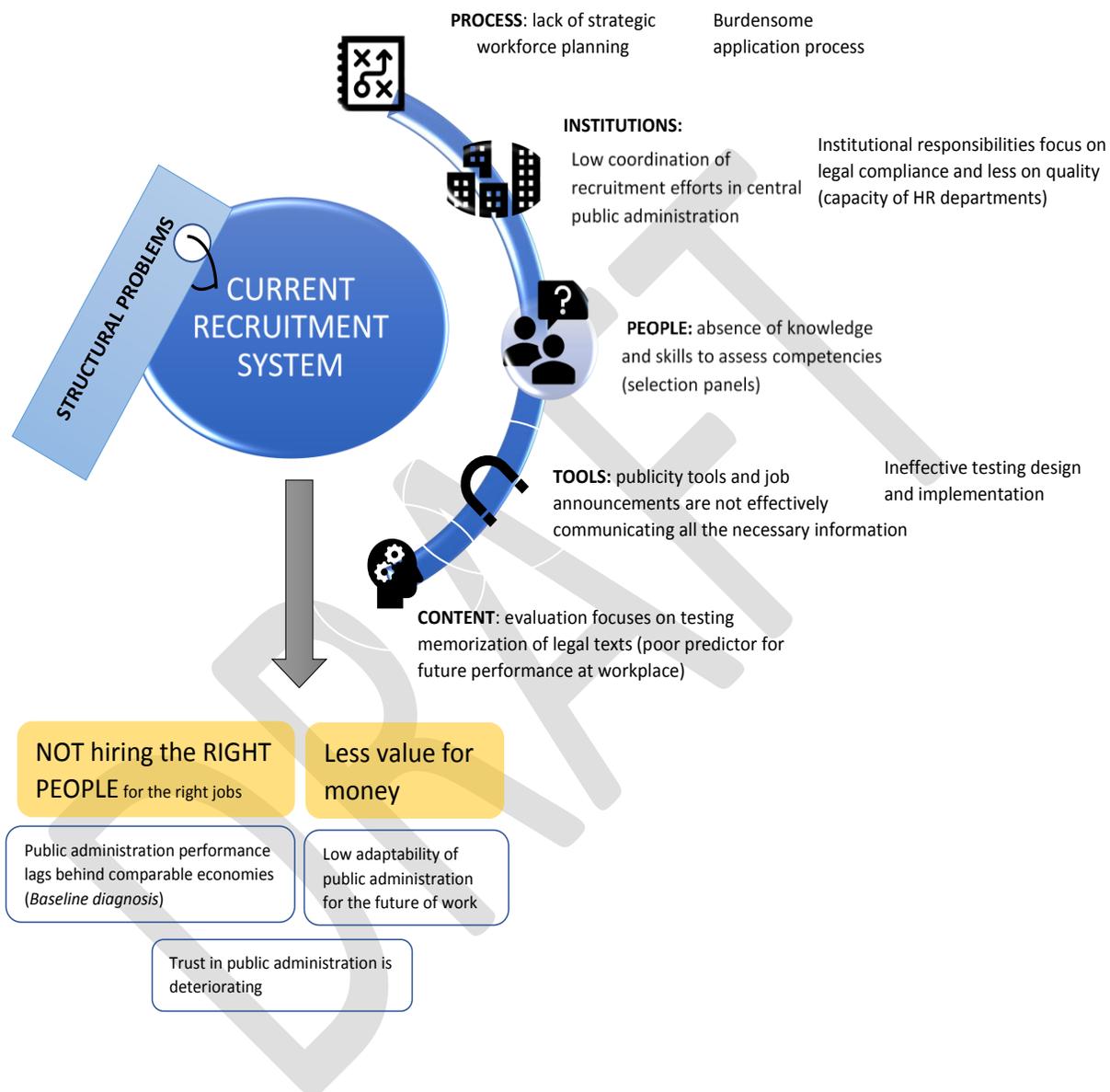
Limited safeguards on ensuring the quality of the process

38. The oversight role that the NACS plays in general in the recruitment process is mostly interpreted as a “safeguard for integrity”, rather than that of a strategic player that can influence the quality of the recruitment process. While the need to wait for an official endorsement (“aviz”) from NACS as a preliminary step in initiating the recruitment competition was perceived by the interviewees as time consuming, the presence of the NACS experts in the selection panels was seen as an assurance for legality. However, the NACS has limited instruments and ability to influence the overall quality of the recruitment process, which relies heavily on the capacity of the HR departments of the recruiting institution.

39. The quality of the selection process is impacted by the absence of specific training/skills required to act as a member of a selection panel or of an appeals board: 1) there were no cases of specialized training for the members in the exam commission or the appeal boards in the past few years (at least 4), despite the fact that GD 611/2008 clearly defines this obligation in article 36; 2) Participation in the recruitment process is time-consuming and the perspective of the monetary benefits (an allowance equal to 10% of the national minimum guaranteed basic wage) is not a real incentives, confirmed by most interviewees answering that this participating is rather a nuisance. This fact sometimes translates into the selection of whomever is available or less busy (4 respondents) or the same people repeatedly despite their previous performances (5 respondents).

40. An overview of the main structural problems identified in the current system are represented in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 Structural problems of the current recruitment system



❖ **Different entry points into the civil service**

41. In addition to structural process-related challenges, the legal framework allows for **double standards in recruitment**. Besides the competitive recruitment process described in the legal framework, there is a second track for becoming civil servant: the conversion of contract-based positions into civil servant positions. Such practice raises concerns of double-standards in

recruitment. In order to obtain this conversion, the NACS needs to assent and the holder of the contractual position needs to comply with the civil services eligibility requirements. Still, through this process it could be interpreted that becoming a civil servant can be simply a matter of administrative compliance and political will. The Administrative Code limits this practice.

2.3 THE COST OF THE CURRENT RECRUITMENT SYSTEM

42. In terms of costs, the cost for an average recruitment is high if compared to other public administrations in the EU for which data is available. The current cost in Romania averages 11,777 lei (about 2,505 Euro/recruit) for managerial level recruitment and 5,746 lei (about 1,220 Euro/recruit) for execution level recruitment. The cost of an average recruitment process for leading civil servants is 9,156 lei¹⁷, while for execution civil servants it is 8,934 lei¹⁸. The average cost per recruit is much higher than the average cost per recruit in Slovakia, which is about 675 Euro¹⁹, and is close to the average cost per recruit in UK, which was estimated between £1,400 (1,560 Euro) and £2,676²⁰ (2,973Euro).

The average cost per recruit is high:

- 11,777 lei (about 2,505 Euro/recruit) for a managerial position
- 5,746 lei (about 1,220 Euro/recruit) for a position at execution level.

43. In 2017 the recruitment competitions organized by the NACS for managerial civil service positions at central and territorial public administration amounted to 427,000 Euro. For all competitions endorsed by the NACS for positions at execution level in central and territorial public administration, the total cost reached a peak of 3,46 million Euro in 2017. The cost was calculated based on the average cost of a recruitment competition for managerial civil service positions, which is 9,156 lei and a total number of competitions of 220.

Publicity costs are high compared to impact:

- NACS spends on average between 5,000 and 8,000 Euro/month on publishing competition announcements

¹⁷ Based on data available from NACS for 2017-2019, an average recruitment procedure is organized for 2 positions and an average of 2 candidates register for the procedure. For execution level positions an average recruitment procedure covers 2 positions and an average of 4 candidates register for the procedure.

¹⁸ The cost includes only staff costs and the cost for publication of competition announcements, as other costs pertaining to printing materials and the use of IT equipment could not be isolated.

¹⁹ Silvia Lorincova, *The Improvement of the Effectiveness in the Recruitment Process in the Slovak Public Administration*, 2015, in *Procedia Economics and Finance* 34 (2015) 382 – 389. This cost does not include the onboarding and training of the recruits, which was detailed in the study, to allow the use of a comparable model.

²⁰ The Institute for Government, UK (2019), *Moving On: The costs of high staff turnover in the civil service*, p. 18

44. The publicity costs are high compared to the results obtained, averaging approx. 40,000 Euro/month for all recruitment competitions for civil service positions in central and territorial public administration²¹. The NACS spends on average between 5,000 and 8,000 Euro/month²² for publishing competition announcements in two publications which are ineffective in reaching the target group. On average, the publicity cost for one competition campaign is 623 lei (approx. 130 Euro). This includes both the cost for publishing in the Official Gazette and in a national newspaper and the costs of staff involved in all sub-activities pertaining to the publicity phase. When restricted to publication in the Official Gazette and national newspaper, the cost is 360 lei per competition. Considering that one competition leads on average to two people being hired, the average publicity cost per hire is of 312 lei (65 Euro). At institutional level, the NACS spent for publishing competition announcements on average 25,800 lei/month (about 5,500 Euro/month) in 2018 and 36,700 lei/month (about 8,000 Euro) in 2017. At system level, for civil servants in central and territorial public administration for which data was available, in 2018 the cost for publicity in the two publications averaged 185,190 lei/month (approx. 40,300 Euro/month). While publication in the Official Gazette is mandatory under applicable legislation, the choice of the second publication is left at the discretion of the public institutions. The focus groups revealed that the collaboration with *Bursa*, a business newspaper, should be reviewed as its audience size and relevance are not appropriate²³. Likewise, interviewees mentioned that publishing in the Official Gazette was futile as the Gazette is not read by the targeted group.

45. The highest share in the total cost of an average recruitment procedure pertains to the functioning of selection panels (see Error! Reference source not found.). The functioning of the selection panels includes all the staff costs pertaining to setting up the selection panel as well as the allowances paid to its members for their participation in the recruitment procedure²⁴. The differences in cost for selection panels between recruitment procedures for execution or managerial level stem from the bigger number of members and the additional travel and accommodation costs needed for managerial positions recruitment managed by the NACS. Conversely, the costs of the written test and the applications' appraisal are higher for execution civil servants because an average recruitment process includes more candidates and the durations

²¹ Based on NACS data for 2017-2019.

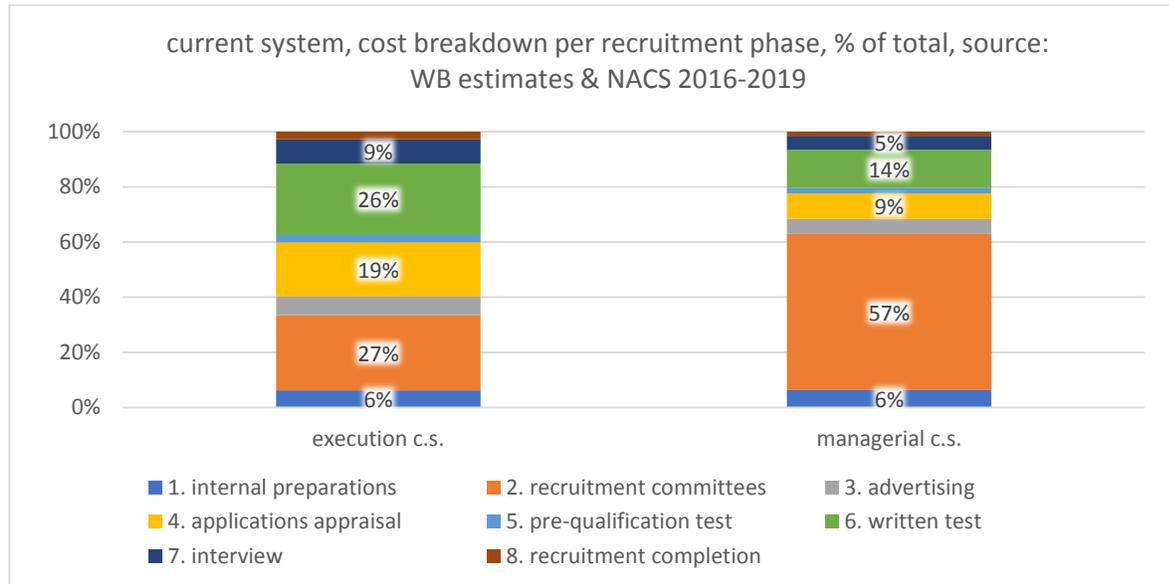
²² Based on data extracted from NACS database for 2017-2019.

²³ Based on audit data from BRAT (Romanian Bureau for Auditing Newspapers' Circulation).

²⁴ The number of members in the selection panel is 3 in the case of recruitment procedure for civil service positions at execution level and 5 for positions at managerial level. A participation allowance of 10% of the minimum gross wage at national level is paid to all the members in the selection panels and appeal boards. More than half of the members in the selection panel are replaced during the procedure due to lack of availability; their involvement in the initial phase of the procedure still grants them the right to receive the allowance. As such, in the case of a procedure for execution level, the average number of members in a selection panel is 5 and the average number of members in the appeal board is 3 (including the secretary); in the case of a recruitment procedure for managerial positions, the average number is 8.3 and 5 respectively.

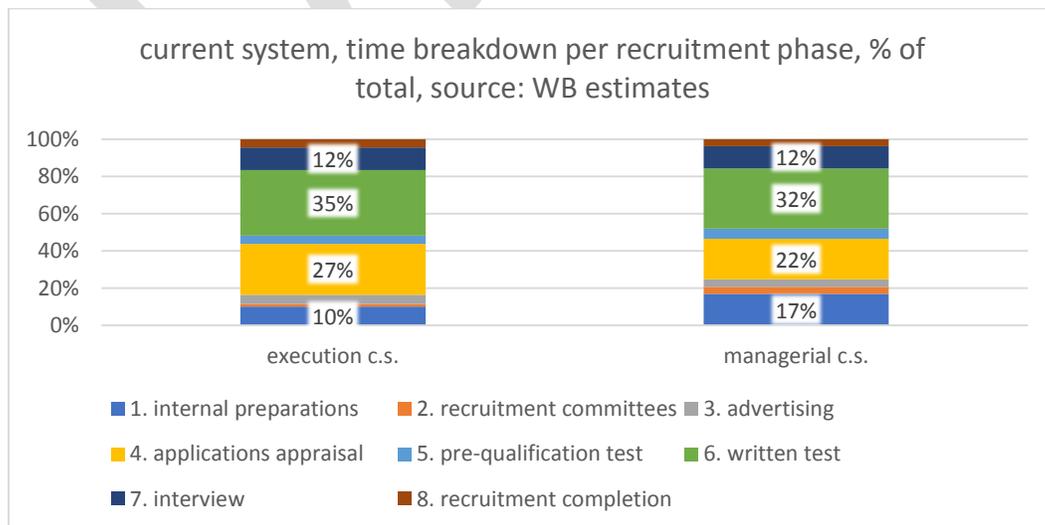
required for internal communication through various steps is longer in decentralized recruitment processes if compared to the processes managed by the NACS which result in efficiency gains.

Figure 2 Cost breakdown per recruitment phase, % of total, source: WB estimates & NACS 2016-2019



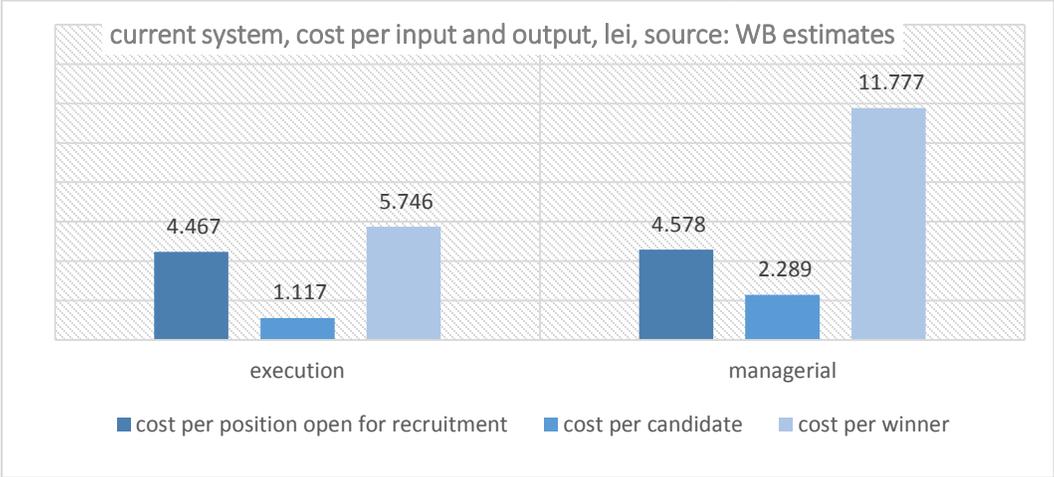
46. **The paper-based culture of the recruitment competitions impacts the efficiency of the process**, the total staff working time required to complete a recruitment process is 91 hours for managerial positions and 151 hours for execution level positions. The phases requiring the highest share of total staff working time are the written test and the applications’ appraisal.

Figure 3 Time breakdown per recruitment phase, % of total, source: WB estimates



47. **Figure 4 below presents the cost of the current system per input and output. The cost per recruit for managerial positions is significantly higher.** The cost per output is impacted by the success rate in filling in the two positions open for competition in an average recruitment process, which leads to selecting 0,8 candidates on average following a recruitment procedure for a managerial position and 1,6 candidates on average following a procedure for positions at execution level.

Figure 4 Current system: cost (in LEI) per input and output



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III. REFORM OPTIONS

3.1 BACKGROUND

48. The recruitment process reform efforts are marked by several challenges, as noted in the HRM Baseline Diagnosis and in Chapter II of the present Concept Note. Although the recruitment process is regulated and the NACS acts as a “guaranteeing” institution of legal and procedural compliance (for certain civil service positions), the main challenges of the current recruitment system appear to be: (i) insufficient planning, (ii) limited identification of the needs and skills required by the public institutions, (iii) an excessive focus on testing legal knowledge (through memorization) rather than assessing other types of competences, and (iv) resource intensive and burdensome process for all the actors involved.

49. The Administrative Code foresees the implementation of a new recruitment system for civil servants corelated with a competency-based approach. The next steps in operationalizing the process, and particularly the national competition, requires building on the following recommendations²⁵:

- Focus the national competition on assessing analytical and problem-solving skills, and relevant competences, publish recruitment competitions on a single centralized site, and take advantage of digital platforms and automation of certain steps;
- Create a pool of recruiting experts (within and outside public sector) or provide training to members of HR departments to conduct the processes;
- Consider alternative ways to ensure compliance with requirements and principles for the second stage of recruitment, conducted at the institutional level (“selection”) (e.g. performance audits, licensing of institutions);
- Implement a “value-for-money” approach by analyzing the right balance between accountability, flexibility and costs in the recruitment of contract-based personnel;
- Strengthen the link between recruitment and HR planning.

3.2 PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE REFORM

A. Meritocracy

50. Merit-based recruitment in the public administration requires the establishment of a set of principles to guide the selection process, including transparency, the application of

²⁵ See recommendations of the Baseline Diagnostic, World Bank, 2019

objective criteria of selection focused on performance and the implementation of checks and balances. It entails the selection of the best person for any given job, made through recruitment or promotion based on explicit merit rules that are publicly understood and can be challenged if a breach is suspected²⁶.

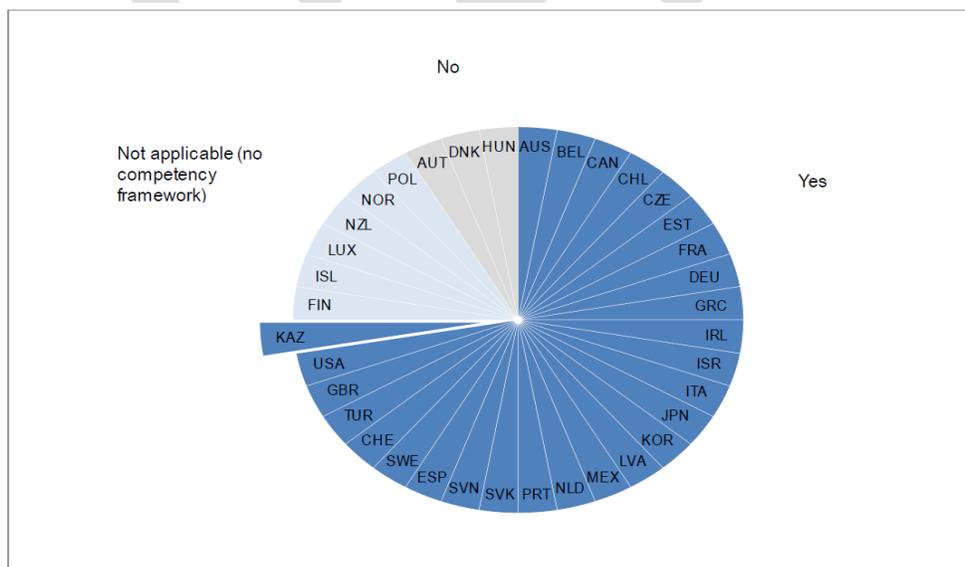
51. To ensure the meritocracy when recruiting in the public administration, the process needs to be designed based on objective selection criteria (reduce the discretion in selection) and the competitive examination to be developed so that it assesses and rewards competence²⁷. To answer to this challenge, clear principles must be in place and robust recruitment methods to be used.

- Principles for a merit-based recruitment
- professionalism
 - independence
 - integrity
 - political impartiality
 - transparency
 - service to the public

B. Competency-based approach

52. Alongside the merit-based principles, the recruitment should be designed so that skills needed to boost public administration capacity are attracted and selected into the civil service. Many of OECD countries are basing their recruitment on a **standard competency framework**²⁸.

Figure 5: Using a competency framework to recruit and select civil servants



²⁶ World Bank note on recruitment and promotion <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PUBLICSECTORANDGOVERNANCE/Resources/285741-1345485407865/Recruitment.pdf>

²⁷ Sundell, Anders. (2014). Are Formal Civil Service Examinations the Most Meritocratic Way to Recruit Civil Servants? Not in all Countries. Public Administration Vol. 92, No. 2, pp. 440–457

²⁸ Using skills and competency frameworks to attract, recruit, develop and promote Kazakh civil servants – BENCHMARKING CIVIL SERVICE REFORM IN KAZAKHSTAN © OECD 2018

53. The OECD countries define the skills of the civil servants as pillars for performance, innovation, productivity and value creation in the public sector³⁰. Competency management is introduced and used on a larger scale by the public administrations.

Why competency management*?

- help create a common language;
- strengthens consistency across the public service;
- ensure continuity in monitoring the careers of public servants;
- provide a future-oriented perspective on personnel management;
- support a culture of continuous self-development

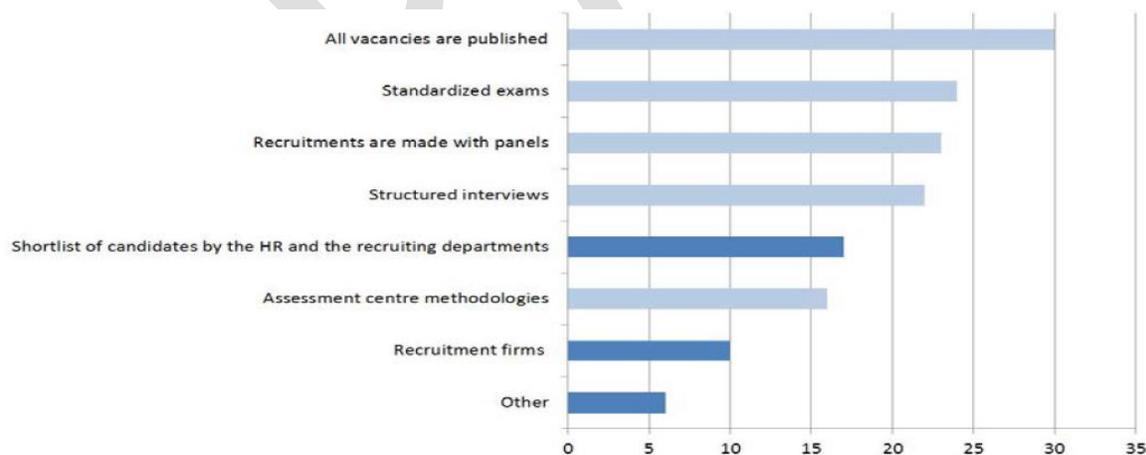
*Adapted after OECD (2018)³¹

C. Building trust

54. The instruments and methods used in the recruitment system should be developed and implemented with professionalism, transparency, independence, integrity so that the public and all the stakeholders can trust and rely on the results of the system.

55. Several methods are successfully implemented across OECD countries, among which, publication of the vacancies, standardized exams, evaluation panels, structured interviews, assessment center methodologies, represent some of the most commonly used ones, to safeguard the merit principles and the trust of the public in the results of the recruitment process.

Figure 6. Guaranteeing merit-based recruitment at entry level³²



²⁹ OECD (2016a), "Survey on Strategic Human Resources Management in Central/Federal Governments of OECD Countries", OECD, PARIS,

³⁰ Using skills and competency frameworks to attract, recruit, develop and promote Kazakh civil servants – BENCHMARKING CIVIL SERVICE REFORM IN KAZAKHSTAN © OECD 2018

³¹ Idem 18

³² Responses of 35 OECD countries to Survey Q35: Which methods are used at the entry-level to guarantee merit based recruitment in the selection process?, 2016, in Using skills and competency frameworks to attract, recruit, develop and promote Kazakh civil servants – BENCHMARKING CIVIL SERVICE REFORM IN KAZAKHSTAN © OECD 2018

D. Simpler procedures focused on performance

56. **The recruitment methodology should be carefully considered and operationalized³³.** To tackle the current shortcomings of the recruitment processes among others, the tedious filling of vacancies; testing misaligned with required skills; rewarding mechanical exercises for tests rather than abilities. The focus of the recruitment system should fall on attracting high performers into the public administration and streamlining procedures and processes to make them simple to implement.

Merit-based recruitment arrangements draw from eight³⁴ key elements that need to be correlated with a competency-based approach:

- An assessment of needs leading to a written job description containing clear tasks, as well as the competencies the selected person will need
- an advertisement disseminated to eligible groups, including a summary of the job description
- standardized application forms
- a scoring sheet based on objective criteria and the competency framework
- a short-listing methodology to reduce applications, if necessary, to a manageable number
- a final selection procedure based, again, on the competency framework, and including a panel interview
- an appointment procedure based on the scoring scheme
- notification of results to both successful and unsuccessful candidates

3.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE REFORM OF THE RECRUITMENT SYSTEM

Building upon the general monitoring framework proposed in the Baseline diagnosis, the new recruitment model requires a set of objectives to be monitored based on indicators that should be collected by NACS. A proposed list of specific objectives is included in **The Bank designed a data collection template based on detailed process mapping and developed a costing model for the current recruitment process.** The data

³³ Sundell, Anders. (2014). Are Formal Civil Service Examinations the Most Meritocratic Way to Recruit Civil Servants? Not in all Countries. Public Administration Vol. 92, No. 2, pp. 440–457 and OECD (2017), Skills for a High Performing Civil Service, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264280724-en>

³⁴ World Bank. (n.d.). Recruitment & Promotion Brief. <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PUBLICSECTORANDGOVERNANCE/Resources/285741-1345485407865/Recruitment.pdf>

collected from all the various sources mentioned in paragraph 8 above informed a detailed process mapping of the current recruitment process implemented to determine and calculate the costs. The logical model used for process mapping is captured in **Error! Not a valid bookmark self-reference.** below. For each phase the team collected metrics to capture in detail each stage and to generate quantitative data. The mapping was adjusted and agreed upon with the HR experts in central public administration during the focus groups, who also provided feedback on qualitative parameters.

57. Table 1 below.

Table 3 Proposed objectives for monitoring the new recruitment system in central and territorial public administration.

No	Objective	KPI
1	Increased use of strategic workforce planning in relation with the competencies required in central public administration	% of vacancies included in the recruitment plan for which a justification was formulated in relation with the competency framework and the institutional needs.
2	Increase the number of new recruits on junior positions to address the challenge of the reversed seniority pyramid	% vacancies at debutant and assistant level for which a competition is open as share in total number of positions targeted in the annual competitions.
3	Ensure merit-based recruitment	% of staff/candidates who perceive that the new model ensures merit-based recruitment
4	Improve the efficiency of the recruitment process	% of time savings per candidate/per recruit Cost per candidate Cost per successful candidate in the national competition Cost per recruit
5	Improve the efficacy of publicity methods used to advertise recruitment competitions	% increase of the number of candidates per position
6	Improve the adequacy of newly recruited staff to the requirements and expectations of the employer institutions	% of turnover of newly recruited staff % of managers satisfied with the result of the selection 6 months after.
7	Improve the skills of the members of the selection panels for assessing competencies	% of members of selection panels who received recent (<i>at least on year prior to the competition</i>) and relevant (<i>targeting competencies assessment</i>) training

3.4 THE NEW RECRUITMENT MODEL AND THE PROPOSED OPTIONS

58. **Based on the assumptions discussed earlier and the provisions of the strategic and legal framework, the new recruitment model is aimed at improving “value for money”.**

59. **A new recruitment model is foreseen in the Administrative Code with the aim to bring a competency-based approach to recruitment.** The new model for central public administration will be structured around two main phases:

- A national competition, as a first step, allowing to create a pool of successful candidates (similar with the model applied by the European Commission);
- On the job selection, organized by each public institution.

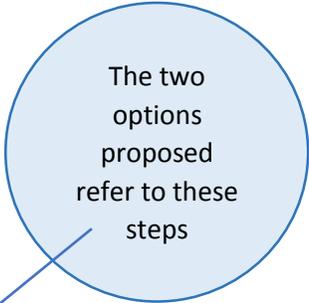
60. **Given the general context of the reform³⁵, the current document focuses on the national competition and proposes two policy options.** Both options are interconnected in terms of procedural and organizational arrangements and aim to support the full operationalization of the recruitment process, whether they are implemented in standalone fashion or in a sequential approach.

61. **The key steps of the new recruitment model are the same for both options but require differentiated tools and methods when operationalizing the actions in steps VI and VII below (a description of the stages is developed in Annex 1).** Divided into two main sequences, the steps of the recruitment process can be summarized as:

a) PHASE I: NATIONAL COMPETITION:

- i. Planning of the recruitment process (workforce planning and recruitment plan);
- ii. advertising campaign;
- iii. selection and appointment of the selection panel;
- iv. application process;
- v. eligibility check;

The two options proposed refer to these steps



³⁵ Strategy for consolidating the Public Administration 2014-2020; Strategy for the development of public function 2016-2020; Draft of the Administrative Code,

- vi. preliminary testing (including aptitude tests; language tests; computer knowledge tests; general knowledge about public administration tests);
- vii. advanced testing/assessment center;
- viii. management of the pool of successful candidates.

Section 3.6.1 of the current Concept Note provides information on the 8 steps of the national competition procedure, beginning with the workforce planning and ending with the management of the pool of successful candidates

Annex 1 presents the details of the process steps specific the national competition.

Each selection stage where the candidates will participate will include specific actions related to appeal procedures.

b) PHASE II: ON THE JOB SELECTION:

- ix. Advertising and invitation send to successful candidate from the pool managed by the NACS;
- x. appointment of the selection panel;
- xi. interview, including appeal procedures;
- xii. appointment on the job position.

62. The current concept note focuses on the design and operationalization of the national competition (the first phase of the recruitment process).

63. Irrespective of the option to be implemented:

a) the recruitment process must be linked to a strategic human resources management. This means that the public administration must adopt a transversal and common personnel planning procedure, based on a competency framework (a generic procedure is detailed below).

b) the administrative process supporting the recruitment procedure (including the application collection, candidates' database, test results, etc.) should be streamlined, standardized and when applicable, digitalized.

64. The results of the analyses conducted for the two recommended options are summarized in the next sections with more details included in the annexes:

- **Option 1** incorporates a phased approach for a full implementation of an assessment center
- **Option 2** envisages incremental changes to the current recruitment system, keeping the focus on a merit-based and competency-based recruitment.

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3.4.1 Overview of the options: Assessment center vs incremental changes of the current recruitment system

Table 4: Overview of the options

	OPTION 1		OPTION 2
	Option 1.1.: Fully in-house recruitment process	Option 1.2: Combination of in-house with outsourced advanced testing	Option 2: incremental changes to the current process
General aspects	The option envisages the implementation of an in-house assessment center and constitutes the most advanced in terms of complexity and demanding alternative. It can also be considered as the final and long-term goal for the desired recruitment system.	Option 1.2 proposes the combination of an outsourced assessment center and in-house testing , whereby the advanced testing is carried out externally by a competent organization and the preliminary, more generic, testing is done in-house.	Option 2 puts forward an improved in-house testing, i.e., to include differentiated testing methodologies that will allow for competency-based assessment.
Brief description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assessment center is a department in NACS, with fully dedicated logistics, staff (administrative and experts); • An independent selection panel will be called upon for each selection (including members from different organizations – see more in the next sections); • Full technological requirements should be operational at NACS; • Specialized staff on assessment centers should be employed; • Intensive training on assessing based on competencies should be carried on; • Strong and innovative communication department should be developed, dedicated to the assessment center; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selection procedures are organized and coordinated by NACS; • Most of the stages of the recruitment will be directly run by NACS; • The assessment center is outsourced to an external organization; • NACS appoints an independent selection panel to be in charge of the selection procedure (for both in-house and outsource stages of the selection); • Technological requirements in place, at NACS premises, for the implementation of the stages run by NACS (see a detailed description in the next section) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existing testing procedures will be improved to focus on a competency-based approach; • Pool of selection panel members will be created and intensively trained; • Technological requirements to ease the application, eligibility check and preliminary testing will be implemented in NACS.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confidentiality, data protection and cybersecurity measures should be ensured at the highest level. <p>(see a detailed description in the next section)</p>		
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low running costs Ensures the highest level of expertise and technical conditions to recruit the staff based on competencies and, more generally, to assess complex competencies (including other purposes, as: performance appraisal, training, career development); Offers integrated operationalization of the national competition by NACS; Develop the capacity of NACS to assess a complex range of competencies; Create all the conditions to ensure the sustainability and the transfer of knowledge towards all categories of public employees that can use NACS facilities and expertise; Reduces administrative burden for candidates, NACS and for central public institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure access to specialized centers, with high expertise, able to assess complex competencies and to implement various assessment tools; Increases NACS capacity to run specific stages of the recruitment process and reduces the administrative burden; Increases NACS capacity to assess competencies, in general and to transfer the knowledge in a long-term perspective; Reduces administrative burden for candidates, NACS and for central public institutions; Offers flexibility to NACS and to other potential beneficiaries; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be implemented in a relatively short period of time; Implies reduced costs in the short term compared to option 1.1.; Improve the focus of the current tests to assess a larger range of competencies; Simplify the application procedures.
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher initial costs; Longer time to operationalization (to fulfill all the requirements for functioning); Challenges for retaining the specialists that will be in charge of the entire selection process; The control of the entire process is placed in one organization – generates risks for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher rolling-out costs; Requires periodical procurement procedures – generates risks of delays or of different quality of services offered by the contracted authority; Challenges to oversee the assessment centers – generates risks on security and confidentiality of data; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not allow the use of the tools and methods implemented in an assessment center – therefore, the level of a competency-based assessment is basic; The testing on paper will be kept, therefore maintaining the heavy procedures for assessment and the burden on the selection panel and the secretariat;

	confidentiality, security of data, transparency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires medium-long time to fully implement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact on improving the quality of the employees attracted in the civil service will be reduced, being improved gradually, on a long-term perspective, when the selection panel will acquire the skills and the experience to assess based on competencies.
Implications on a short and mid-term perspective	<p>Short term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large investments to establish the center (suitable building; equipment; stationaries; hiring experts; development of the batteries of tests; piloting the batteries of tests; training for the staff involved in the assessment center; training for the pool of experts that will be part of selection panels; acquisition of the preliminary tests; etc – see details in the next sections); • Intensive advertising, awareness and branding campaigns; • Approval of secondary legislation and working procedures with the other stakeholders; • Develop the expertise inside NACS to manage all the processes <p>Mid-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the tests based on the experiences in applying the competency-based assessment; • Periodical training for the staff involved in the process; • Maintenance of the systems; • Deliver training for other institutions; 	<p>Short term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement procedures to select the providers of the assessment centers and the equipment for the other stages of the recruitment process; • Intensive training for members of the selection panels and NACS staff; • Approve the secondary legislation and the working procedures; • Implementing the advertising and awareness campaigns. <p>Mid-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement on selecting the providers of assessment center services; • Updating the working procedures; • Training for NACS staff and for the members of the selection panels; • Maintenance and update of the systems 	<p>Short term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement procedure for the equipment; • Developing the tests to answer competency-based approach; • Training for NACS staff and members of the selection panels; • Adoption of secondary legislation and of the working procedures. <p>Mid-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance and update of the existing systems; • Longer and gradual training for the NACS staff and for selection panels; • Implementing mechanisms to check the quality of the selection tools used in relation to competency framework

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking with other institutions and partnerships for further implementation of the assessment centers tools. 		
Estimated costing (initial and running cost)	<p>INITIAL: 307,700 lei³⁶ Running costs³⁷: 148,400 lei</p> <p>+ cost per candidate/recruit, as detailed in section 3.5</p>	<p>INITIAL: 34,500 lei Running costs: 349,900 lei</p> <p>+ cost per candidate/recruit</p>	<p>INITIAL: 174,700 lei Running costs: 235,100 lei</p> <p>+ cost per candidate/recruit</p>

! All indicative costs DO NOT include the IT ones related for the *e-Recruitment application* and integrations, cybersecurity, privacy etc.

As a specific point to Romania, the IT security setup (only for the case of on-premise solutions) is typically established with Special Telecommunications Service (STS). NACS has already a partnership with STS for its existing solutions.

³⁶ It does not include the cost of the e-recruitment application and the IT equipment such as desktops and cost of renting rooms. This will be determined based on an estimation of the volume of candidates per competition and per year, in agreement with NACS.

³⁷ The running costs were determined for the IT tool for the AC (cost of maintenance), tests (yearly licenses/price per test) and trainings required for delivering the pre-selection stage and the AC process. It does not include the cost of the maintenance of the e-recruitment platform and security costs.

3.4.2 Brief presentation of each option



Option 1 – Assessment center – two approaches for effectiveness

65. **Option 1 entails the incorporation of the assessment center as part of the recruitment process, the most consistent part of the selection being implemented through the assessment center.** The option explores two possibilities of development: one focuses on developing an in-house assessment center and the second investigating the possibility of combining of an outsourced assessment center and in-house testing. To have a clearer view on the two approaches, each alternative is described below.

66. **The development of an in-house assessment center (option 1.1.) aims at creating an assessment center, with all the functionalities and resources, as part of the NACS.** The assessment center becomes a separate department created in NACS and empowered with clear functionalities and tasks on managing the recruitment process. As seen in other international practices, when this option is chosen, the mandate for the recruitment is given to a public agency with the legal mandate and expertise that allows the effective implementation. The NACS will have complete ownership and responsibility in the management of the recruitment process. (see the overview of the option in Annex 3).

- **Clear mandate for the NACS;**
- **Adequately equipped and staffed;**
- **In-house high-level expertise;**
- **Complex tools and methodologies for a competency-based assessment;**
- **Independent selection panel;**
- **Simplified procedures through IT tools;**
- **Diversified and sustained advertising campaigns.**

67. **The newly created department will need to have all the conditions required for the operationalization of a recruitment system:**

- clear regulations establishing its organization and functioning;
- Full-time dedicated experts and administrative staff with specialized functions in recruitment and selection, competency assessment and multi-method test development;
- Advanced training for the dedicated staff in competency assessment and multi-method test development;
- suitable facilities with all the necessary arrangements (including multiple rooms suitable for exam-type testing, group testing, computer-based testing, interviews, etc.);

- Materials and ICT equipment necessary to conduct its functions including computers, projectors, whiteboard, paperboard, office supplies, etc.

68. An independent selection panel will be called for each recruitment and will have the responsibility of the selection procedures. The NACS will call members from different institutions and organizations to develop a pool of experts for the selection panels. The NACS will organize intensive training for this pool of experts on assessing candidates based on competencies.

69. Each stage of the recruitment process will be clearly defined and operationalized through formal procedures. The NACS will have the responsibility of developing and endorsing the formal procedures.

70. A dedicated site for the national competition will be developed and updated with relevant information. In addition, a communication and branding plan will be developed and implemented. The aim of these actions is to: increase the awareness of the public on the new recruitment system, attract the potential candidates to the future vacant positions, inform the public and the institutions on the procedures and the news, build trust of the public and of the institutions in the new system, develop networks and partnerships with other public institutions to use as an option the NACS's center for recruiting staff.

71. Secondary legislation and the working procedures will be drafted by the NACS and approved by the Government, in order to make the new recruitment system functional.

72. The development of a combination of outsourced assessment center and in-house testing (option 1.2.) aims to keep the focus on a complex competency-based approach in the recruitment and addressing the shortcomings that might be generated by the implementation of the first options (*such as: difficulties to attract and retain experts in the assessment centers; higher initial costs; difficulties in managing a complex process in one organization with limited resources*).

- Clear mandate for NACS;
- Outsourced parts of the testing procedures;
- Complex tools and methodologies for a competency-based assessment;
- Independent selection panel;
- Simplified procedures through IT tools;
- Diversified and sustained advertising campaigns.

73. The NACS has the mandate and responsibility of the recruitment process but will outsource the assessment center parts of the recruitment to a specialized supplier. In this respect, the following conditions need to be in place:

- secondary legislation defining the system adopted;
- clear definition of the stages and of the outsourced parts;

- clear requirements from the supplier;
- mechanism in place to check the quality, confidentiality and security of data;
- training for NACS staff and the members of the selection panel;
- Technological requirements, including computers, projectors, for the stages implemented by NACS;
- Material requirements, including whiteboard, paperboard, paper, pens, etc, for the stages implemented by NACS.

74. An independent selection panel will be called for each recruitment process and will have the responsibility of the selection procedures. The NACS will call members from different institutions and organizations to develop a pool of experts for the selection panels. The NACS will organize intensive training for this pool of experts on assessing based on competencies.

75. Each stage of the recruitment process will be clearly defined and operationalized through formal procedures. The NACS will have the responsibility of developing and endorsing the formal procedures.

76. Procurement process needs to be planned and organized in a timely and consistent manner to attract the best suppliers (see the overview of the option in Annex 4).



Option 2 – improvements to the current system – competency-based approach

77. The second option proposes an incremental change of the current recruitment system, the focus being placed on improving the tests and the testing skills. It is considered that the capacity to implement and manage an assessment center is not yet acquired, therefore, a transitory approach is presented.

78. The operationalization of this option requires:

- basic tools and methodologies for a competency-based assessment;
- Training for testing development and test assessment based on competencies;
- Training for the pool of selection panel;
- Independent selection panel;
- Simplified procedures for application;
- Diversified advertising campaigns.

- Secondary legislation adopted to set up the system;
- Formal working procedures approved;
- Intensive training for the NACS staff and the members of the selection panels;
- Very strong quality assurance mechanisms to keep the focus on a competency-based approach when recruiting;
- Technology needed to implement on-line application.

79. An independent selection panel will be called for each recruitment process and will have the responsibility of the selection procedures. The NACS will call members from different institutions and organizations to develop a pool of experts for the selection panels. The NACS will organize intensive training for this pool of experts on assessing based on competencies.

80. Each stage of the recruitment process will be clearly defined and operationalized through formal procedures. The NACS will have the responsibility of developing and endorsing the formal procedures.

81. Procurement process needs to be planned and organized in a timely and consistent manner to attract the best suppliers. (see the overview of the option in Annex 5).

82. The options proposed were considered in strict relation with the principles mentioned in the previous chapter and aimed to answer in the most efficient and effective manner to the objectives of the reform.

83. The differences may impact:

- the costs (initial and long-term implementation), and
- the quality of the outcomes of the recruitment.

The table below underlines the key steps of the process and the impact of the two different options. When taking into consideration the process, the differences appear in three stages: preliminary testing, advanced testing and interview (for the situations when the interview done by the NACS is considered as an option by the selecting institutions).

84. All the steps in the table below are described in Annex I.

Table 5: Overview of differences between the proposed options – process related

Steps	Option 1.1. Assessment center	Option 1.2 Outsourcing	Option 2 Improved testing
Workforce planning		No difference	
Recruitment plan		No difference	
Advertising		No difference	

Selecting and appointing the selection panel	No difference		
Application process	No difference		
Eligibility check	No difference		
Preliminary testing	In-house based on the licensed programs		Selection panel and licensed programs
Advanced testing	Assessment center	Outsourced	
		Selection panel	
Managing the pool of selected candidates	No difference		

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85. In terms of impact, seven impact criteria have been considered to differentiate between the options proposed. The preliminary assessments, made with a reduced group of experts, indicate that **the option with a highest impact in the long-run is option 1.1.**

Table 6: Overview of differences between the proposed options – impact related

Criteria to measure impact	Right matching between required competences and selected staff	Simplification of procedures	Transparency of the recruitment process	Accountability	Sustainability	Further opportunities for improvements in the second phase/other institutions	Initial costs	Recurrent costs – long term perspective (yearly costs!) ³⁸	Total
Option 1.1. Assessment center	High level of expertise in assessing complex range of competencies; High flexibility in adapting the assessment instruments to different profiles and to different HR processes (needs);	Faster in application; Faster check of the documents; Faster check of the eligibility requirements; Faster reporting; Faster communication with the candidates; Faster assessment of a	Use of various channels to communicate and ensure transparency; Clear messages to a range of stakeholders	Checks and balances in place to ensure access to information; The IT system in place would allow clear traceability of implementation;	Full in-house high level of expertise; Capacity to adapt the assessment instruments to different type of needs;	Increased capacity to transfer the know-how to second stage of the recruitment process and towards other interested institutions; NACS can brand itself as a partner of choice for public institutions in central and	307,700 lei	148,400 lei	

³⁸ It does not include the standard cost per candidate which is detailed in section 3.5

	different profiles and to different HR processes (needs) depending on the quality of communication channels established between the private provider and NACS	Ease the process of assessing the complex – competencies; the selection of committees specialized in assessing competencies depend solely on the private contractor	the access to information; Clear messages to a rage range of stakeholders	to ensure the audit trail. (the reports generated for each candidate)						
	4	5	5	3	2	2	5	3	29	
Option 2 Improved testing	Incremental improvements to the level expertise in assessing complex range of competencies; Limited flexibility in adapting the assessment instruments to different profiles and to different HR processes (needs);	faster application; Faster check of the documents; Faster check of the eligibility requirements; Ease the planning of the selection committees Less equipped for assessing a	Use of various channels to communicate and ensure transparency; Check and the balances in place to ensure the access to information; Clear messages to a rage range of stakeholders	Traceability of implementation is facilitated for the pre-selection stages; the more advanced testing would face challenges similar to the ones of the current system	Incremental improvements on the capacity to assess complex competencies;	Reduced capacity to adapt the existing assessment instruments to other type of profiles or HR processes;	174,700	235,100 lei		

wide range of competencies								
3	2	5	3	2	2	4	4	25

For the evaluation of the impact, a scale from 1 to 5 was used, where 1 represents the lowest score and 5 the highest.

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86. Depending on the availability of resources, the importance given to the quality of the outcomes of the recruitment process and the costs on a long-term perspective, the implementation of the options can be made in a sequential manner and through a building block approach, upon the decision on the preferred option.

3.5. BRIEF COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE ON THE NEW RECRUITMENT MODEL AND THE CURRENT SYSTEM. Implications in terms of cost per recruit

87. Table 5 below offers a brief overview of the main differences between the current system and the proposed model, in relation to the function of the recruitment phase which was used in the cost model.

Table 5 Comparative overview of the new model and the current system

Recruitment phase	Current status	Reform
1. internal preparations	Positions are open for recruitment on a case by case basis or in small clusters. Execution positions are recruited by each employer, while managerial positions by NACS. On average two positions open for recruitment per process.	An annual recruitment plan in central government and deconcentrated services is drafted by NACS with inputs from employers. The recruitment process consists in several national competition sessions, divided by civil servant category, which assess candidates for competencies. The recruitment competition (first stage of selection) is carried out by NACS for all civil servants in the central public administration.
2. recruitment committees	3-member committees for execution civil servants; 5-member committees for managerial civil servants. No training required.	The members of the selection panel have the required knowledge and skills to act as assessors. The selection panel for the eligibility phase and the preliminary phase can range between 3 and 5 members, depending on the type of competition open. For the assessment center, 2 assessors per candidate are needed. Training of committee members is envisaged.
3. advertising	Limited to Official Journal, one newspaper and the employer/NACS web page. Announcements also published on www.posturi.gov.ro	More diverse and intense: all advertising in the status-quo, plus social media, targeted news outlets, job fairs etc. Additionally, information available and updated in the e-recruitment portal.
4. applications appraisal	Filling, appraisal and appeals carried out in meetings of the recruitment committees.	Filling, appraisal and appeals carried out using the e-recruitment portal.

Recruitment phase	Current status	Reform
5. pre-qualification test	Selective for IT and foreign languages. Tests carried out in person.	Selective for abilities, IT, foreign languages and general knowledge. All candidates tested for abilities. Tests undertaken through the e-recruitment portal.
6. written test	Tests carried out on paper.	Tests carried out using e-recruitment system as part of pre-qualification.
7. interview	Included in the recruitment process.	Not included. Reserved for the last stage of the process, implemented by the employer.
8. advanced testing	Not available.	The Assessment Center allows assessment of core competencies required. The variation in process within the AC is determined by the complexity of requirements for the job categories targeted by the competition.
8. recruitment completion	The winner of the recruitment process fills the vacancy.	The selected candidates are invited by public institutions to the second phase process.

88. The new model allows for significant economies of scale in terms of cost per successful candidate³⁹, mainly due to streamlining and use of ICT tools. However, this cost was determined without accounting for the annual running costs on license renewal and ongoing training. The running cost is included in **Table 4**, section 3.4.1. As reflected in **Figure 5**, the cost per candidate for managerial positions decreases under any of the proposed options, while the cost per candidate increases. Still, the cost per candidate under the new system is expected to be actually lower than estimated in these figures, considering that the calculations for the hypothetical procedure were based on a low number of candidates (70).

Table 6 Comparative overview of the cost per candidate in various scenarios

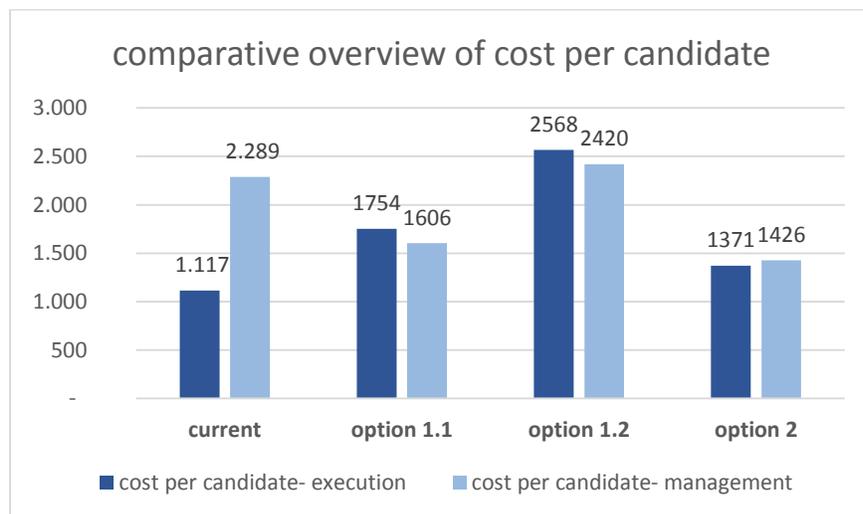
	OPTION 1.1		OPTION 1.2		OPTION 2		CURRENT SYSTEM	
	execution	managerial	execution	managerial	execution	managerial	execution	managerial
Cost per candidate excluding AC	1168	1020	1168	1020	1168	1020	1,117	2,289
Additional cost per candidate depending on AC format ⁴⁰	586	586	1400	1400	203	406	NA	NA

³⁹ Considering that the national competition is the first phase of the recruitment process, the successful candidates are not to be considered recruits, but successful candidates. They join a pool of selection candidates who are eligible to apply for the second stage recruitment process (job-based competition).

⁴⁰ The additional cost is highly dependent on the number of candidates. A more accurate simulation can be run after the initial consultation on the proposed options. The additional cost calculated was determined based on an average number of 1000 of candidates.

Total cost per candidate	1754	1606	2568	2420	1371	1426	1,117	2,289
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Figure 5 Comparative overview of cost per candidate in the various scenarios



89. Based on simulations developed for a hypothetical procedure⁴¹ the Bank team calculated the cost per successful candidate for option 1.1 and this cost is below 60% of the current cost in the case of execution positions and below 40% of the current cost for management positions. A comparative perspective of the cost per inputs and outputs for the current system and the new model is captured in Figure 6 and Figure 7 below, with the caveat that the cost of the new recruitment system was estimated based on a generic theoretical model, based on assumptions, while the costs of the current system were based on statistics and consultations in focus groups. The efficiency gains are obvious especially for procedures targeting managerial positions.

Figure 6 Cost per input and output in the two systems (current and new) for execution level positions (in lei)

⁴¹ Simulated for 70 candidates.

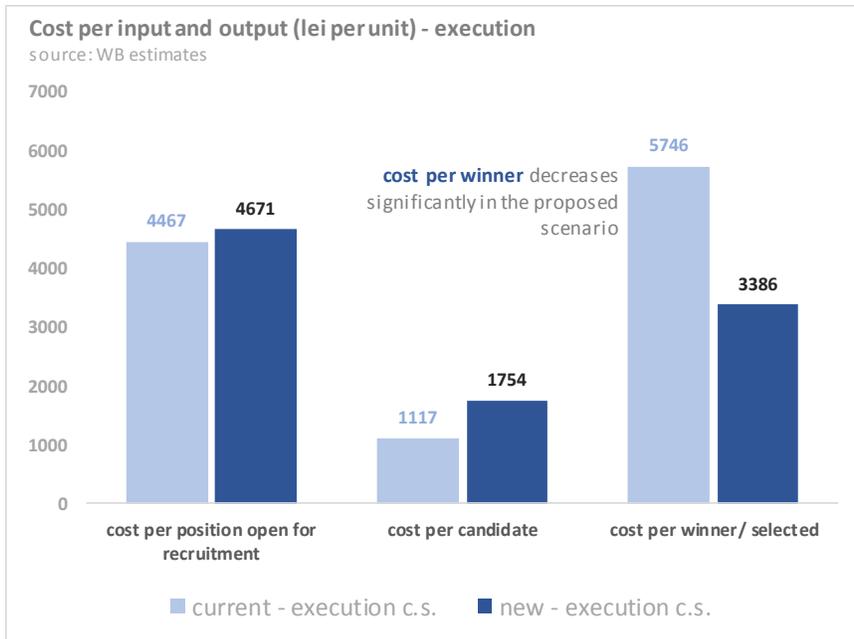
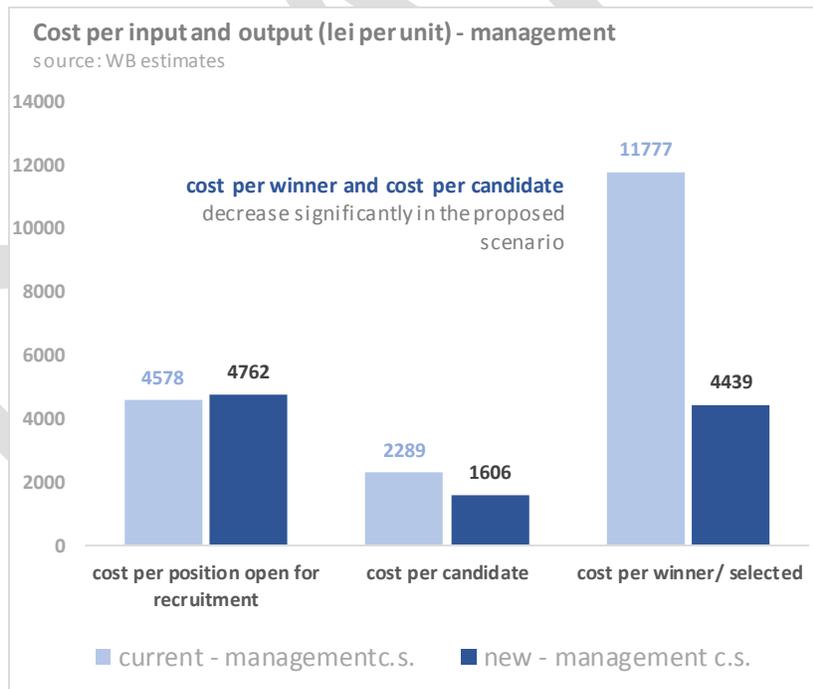


Figure 7 Cost per input and output in the two systems (current and new) for managerial positions (in lei)

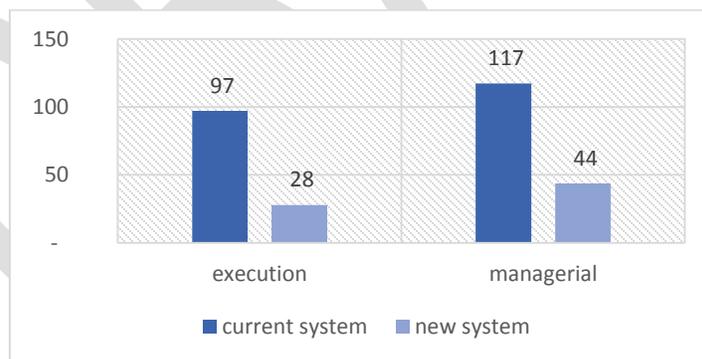


90. When estimating the total cost per recruit in the new recruitment system including the second stage job-based recruitment process, the costs per inputs and outputs still remain below the ones established for the current system. The cost for the recruitment process for the second stage job-based competition was estimated under the assumption that: (1) no major improvements would be operated compared to the current system; and (2) the second stage

process will mainly consist in interviews, which allowed using the costs determined for the current system. On average, for the new proposed model, in the case of managerial positions, the cost per candidate increases on average by 406 lei and the cost per recruit increases by 1500 lei. In total, that leads to a new cost per candidate of 2,012 lei and a new cost per recruit of 5,939 lei, still below the current levels.

91. The new system allows for greater efficiency, mainly because the use of an online application and assessment tools decreases the duration of recruitment procedures⁴². The duration per output (winning or selected candidate) or the total staff working time required for completing a procedure (expressed in hours) is still significantly lower than for the current recruitment system even when the new model is simulated under cautious scenarios. The differences in favor of the reform scenario stem mainly from the shortening of application filling and appraisal activities and the written tests, all of which are carried out electronically in the reform scenario. The total staff working time required for completing the recruitment procedure under the new model is at 30% of the total staff working time required in the current system. Even when adding the additional total staff working time required for the second stage competition, the cumulated staff working time per successful candidate under the new model remains at 50% of the values determined for the current system.

Figure 8 Time per winner in the current system/ selected candidate of the national competition (hours), source: WB estimates



92. The costs provided are rough estimates. More detailed costing estimates will be provided for the two pilot procedures which are expected to be conducted as per the Administrative Code, once the details of the model are agreed upon with the relevant stakeholders, mainly in relation to the estimated number of positions subject to annual competition and the estimated number of candidates.

⁴² The current process was calculated for an average procedure conducted with 100 candidates for a competition targeting execution level and for 70 candidates for a procedure targeting managerial positions.

3.6. RECOMMENDED OPTION

93. Development of a full in-house assessment center (option 1.1) represents the goal for the effective operationalization of the national competition. Although it will require a higher initial investment, the benefits on a long-term perspective in terms of quality, sustainability and transferability of the know-how is also higher. The next sections picture the stages of the process needed for the full implementation of the national competition, maps the responsibilities, the actors and the risks. More details are provided in annex 1 and 2 and further details will be included in the final report.

3.6.1. Brief presentation of the process

94. The national competition will be structured around 8 stages, beginning with the workforce planning and ending with the management of the pool of successful candidates. Each stage will be operationalized through detailed guidelines, working procedures and “equipped” with necessary tools that will allow for a successful implementation. The stages are briefly defined in the table below and presented with more details in the annex 1.

95. As highlighted in the previous chapters, the prerequisites for the successful implementation consists in:

- having competency-based approach in the recruitment and
- streamlining and use of ICT tools.

96. In addition, initial preparations need to be carefully considered so that the implementation will be made possible in all the details.

Table 7: Steps of the recruitment process – the national competition

Step 1: Planning of the recruitment.	The workforce planning, the elaboration and the endorsement of the recruitment plan represent the starting point of the entire recruitment process. The results of this stage will determine the type of skills and knowledge that will be further attracted and selected for the public administration in general, and for each institution. Therefore, an increased emphasis should be given to the quality of this stage. Workforce planning and the recruitment plan represents the cornerstones influencing the profiles of the future public employees.
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Step 1.1. Workforce planning	Workforce planning can be defined as a systematic identification and analysis of what an “organization will need in terms of the size (number), type, and quality of workforce to achieve its objectives. It enables governments to have the right number of people with the right skills at the right place. Such practices help governments increase efficiency, responsiveness and quality in service delivery” ⁴³ .
Step 1.2. Recruitment plan	The recruitment plan represents a centralized document including the workforce needed and vacancies planned for recruitment in the central public institutions for maximum 3 years. The recruitment plan is drafted by the NACS and approved by the Government
Step 2: Advertising	This stage entails the publication of the vacancies and implementation of awareness and advertising campaigns aiming to attract the candidates for the upcoming recruitment procedures.
Step 3: Selecting and appointing the selection panel	In order to prepare and fully operationalize the entire recruitment process, a selection panel will be selected and appointed on the earlier stages. The selection panel will be in charge for the implementation of the selection stages and decide on the ranking of the candidates.
Step 4: Application process	The procedure for application should be online, to optimize its management and reduce issues like lost or misplaced documentation, processing errors, etc. Therefore, an IT platform must be conceptualized, developed and implemented, allowing for the collection of applications and feeding of a management database that will incorporate all successive steps in the recruitment procedure (test results, shortlisting, pooling, etc.).
Step 5: Eligibility check	The eligibility check refers to the verification of all the pre-conditions required from a candidate to meet before entering the testing of general and specific competences. This stage is eliminatory. The Appeal phase is included.
Step 6: Preliminary testing	This stage consists in administering the preliminary tests aiming to check general competencies considered as mandatory for a specific group of jobs/position. In this category can be included the mastering of a foreign

⁴³ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2017), Skills for a High Performing Civil Service.

	language, computer skills, other specific aptitudes etc. This stage is eliminatory. The Appeal phase is included.
Step 7: Advanced testing/assessment center	This stage aims to assess the core general competencies defined for the job profile for which the recruitment was opened. It can be operationalized on paper, using the traditional assessment methods or it can be done through an assessment center, with complex assessment instruments adapted to each job profile. The Appeal phase is included.
Step 8: Managing the pool of selected candidates	This stage refers to the management of the pool of candidates selected through the national competition. Although the competition will not be finalized with the appointment of the successful candidates, clear working procedures and interactions with the institutions should be developed and regular exchanges between NACS, the successful candidates and the institutions should be maintained to keep the pool of candidates updated in the system.

97. The strong point of this option consists in fully implementation of an assessment center.

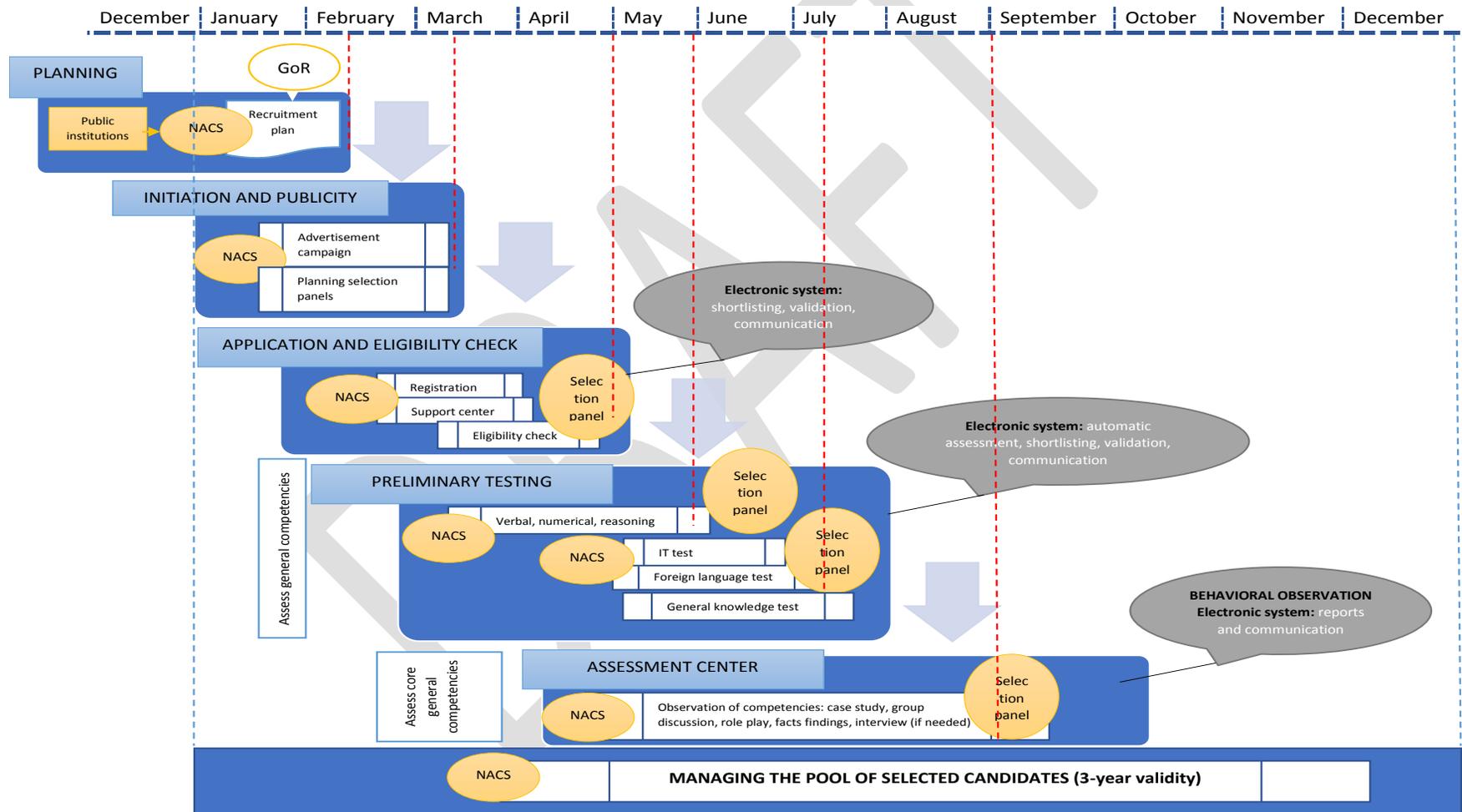
This means that a diverse spectrum of competences can be tested by using different tools and instruments. Moreover, the entire development of tests and the assessment will be done by professionals. Annex 2 provides more details on the operationalization and functioning of an assessment center.

98. Given its complexity, the national competition will require very good planning and time.

Figure 8 shows the stages of the process, the responsible institutions and the timeline recommended for a proper implementation.

3.6.2. Mapping of the process

Figure 9 PROCESS MAPPING of the new recruitment model



3.6.3. Actors and responsibilities mapping

99. The previous chapters offered detailed information on the actors involved, described the tasks and the implications at institutional level. The matrix below summarizes the actors involved in the process and highlights their main responsibilities.

Table 7 Actors and responsibilities matrix

ACTOR	MAPPING OF RESPONSIBILITIES
General Secretariat of the Government (GSG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - active role in negotiating the recruitment plan and conducting the consultation processes; - involvement in advertising campaigns for the national competition
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve the recruitment plan and the strategic documents
Line ministries and deconcentrated institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct job analyses and identify the recruitment needs; - Prepare the workforce planning; - Develop specific job descriptions; - Propose representatives in the pool of members for the selection panels; - Organize the second phase of the recruitment panel – on the job recruitment; - Maintain active contact with NACS with regards to the pool of successful candidates;
NACS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare the recruitment plan; - Participate in the negotiation and consultation process of the recruitment plan; - Organize the pre-advertising and advertising campaigns for the national competition; - Select the pool of evaluators that will be part of the selection panels and manage their ongoing training; update their list as needed - Organize all the stages of the national competition; - Communicate with the candidates; members of the selection panel; line ministries; other interested parties; - Manage the Assessment Center - Provide specialized assistance through a support center - Develop guidelines and FAQs as needed - Manage the pool of successful candidates - Monitor indicators for the new recruitment model - Offer support to line ministries/other central agencies for the second stage recruitment process (job-based recruitment) to become partner of choice.

Private suppliers	- Participate in tender procedures launched by NACS for the acquisition of specialized platforms (for language testing, computer skills testing; aptitude tests, assessment center tools, etc)
Selection panel	- Responsible for assessing the competences of the candidates based on the job profile. - Responsible for continuous development of their skills
HR Council	- Role in decision-making on strategic policies and interventions - Provide opinion on the recruitment plan - Include relevant monitoring data in its annual report
Trade unions	- participate in negotiations on the recruitment plan

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3.6.4. Risk mapping

100. The recommended option provides details on the benefits and challenges to address on a medium - term perspective. In addition, specific risks are identified, and mitigation measures will be developed to address identified risks in the most suitable manner.

Table 9: Risks mapping

Lack of expertise	The competency-based approach on the recruitment will generate a change in terms of approaching the entire system. The high level of expertise in developing tests and assessing the staff based on competencies needs to be onboarded mainly in NACS as well as in the line ministries.
Lack of investment funds	The implementation of the recommended option requires an important initial investment. Lack of allocation of funds will hamper the success of the reform.
Lack of maintenance and rolling-out funds	The sustainability and reliability of the reform is determined by the continuous implementation and calibration of the recruitment system based on competencies and job profiles. In order to have this dynamic, the systems developed and purchased at the initial stage needs to be maintained and upgraded constantly.
Rejection from the line ministries and trade unions	The new recruitment system will imply a shift in the overall approach on the selection of the staff needed by the central public institutions. If not communicated properly, a rejection from the line ministries and trade unions can occur.
Fluctuations in the political support	There is a strong commitment on implementing the reforms from the current political leaders. Constant support needs to be attracted in order to ensure the sustainability.
Low interest for the national competition from the general public	One of the key success factors of the new system consists in attracting as many candidates as possible in order to allow for bigger pool of candidates. If the communication and the dissemination of the information is not done in a constant and

	complex manner, the risk will be to have a reduced number of applicants and to be unable to fill in the vacancies.
Unclear role of the institutions and lack of coordination	Lack of coordination and diffused definition of responsibilities among the main actors involved in the process can humper the successful implementation of the reform.

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IV. FINAL REMARKS

4.1 The proposed structure for the final report

101. The final report will provide a more detailed presentation of the proposed model with the practical implications for implementing it. An overview of the main chapters and sections of the final report is included below.

- I. CONTEXT
 - 1.1 The recruitment function within the HRM system in the Romanian public administration
 - 1.2 The Strategic framework
- II. INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE
- III. CURRENT RECRUITMENT SYSTEM FOR CIVIL SERVANTS
- IV. REFORM OPTIONS
 - 1.1 Recruiting the right people. Main principles and general safeguards.
 - 1.2 The reform options
 - 1.3 Result of the consultation process
 - 1.4 The way forward: framing the recommended option
- V. THE NEW RECRUITMENT MODEL
 - 1.1 new policy. objectives and commitment
 - 1.2 Implications on Workforce planning
 - 1.3 Detailed process-mapping. The assessment center as key pillar
 - 1.4 This is not a one size fits all
 - 1.5 Phased implementation process of the new model
 - 1.6 Institutional arrangements. Role of NACS, role of HR departments.
- VI. EMPLOYER BRANDING AND COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS
 - 1.1 Central public administration as an employer of choice
 - 1.2 Communication requirement
- VII. THE WIDER PICTURE. THE MODEL IS NOT AN END IN ITSELF

4.2. Next steps: Mapping of the next activities (consultation, training, awareness)

Activities	Description	Deadline
Draft detailed report on the general framework for the national competition	The detailed report on the framework for the national competition is drafted and circulated for feedback	30 October 2019
Draft a manual of procedures for the recruitment process	Detailed procedures for each stage Application forms Tools and exercises to be used based on different job profiles Correlation with competency framework Considerations on the operationalization of the second phase of the recruitment (recommendations on a Code of practice to guide the institutions and on the key elements of proper audit system)	31 December 2019
Training plan for the selection panels – especially on competency approach Pilot one training sessions for a group of members of selection panels	Prepare training materials and deliver practical training sessions to the pool of selection panel on the use of competency framework	February – March 2019

Annexes

Annex 1: Stages of the recruitment process

Stage 1: Planning of the recruitment process. The workforce planning, the elaboration and the endorsement of the recruitment plan represent the starting point of the entire recruitment process. The results of this stage will determine the type of skills and knowledge that will be further attracted and selected for the public administration in general, and for each institution in particular. Therefore, an increased emphasis should be placed to ensure quality at this stage. Workforce planning and the recruitment plan represents the cornerstones influencing the profiles of the future public employees. Given their importance, these sub-stages will be further detailed in the chapter elaborating on the recommended option. Below, there is a brief description of the main actions.

Workforce planning can be defined as a systematic identification and analysis of what an “organization will need in terms of the size, type, and quality of workforce to achieve its objectives. It enables governments to have the right number of people with the right skills at the right place. Such practices help governments increase efficiency, responsiveness and quality in service delivery”.⁴⁴.

Stage 1.1.	Workforce planning
Main actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ each institution identifies its institutional needs in terms of workforce, including vacant positions and recruitments;➤ the institutional needs for recruitment are sent to the NACS (the NACS is responsible for the approval of the recruitment plan – see stage 1.2.);➤ based on approved recruitments, each institution drafts specific job descriptions, including the reference to the relevant(s) competency framework(s).
Prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ existence of harmonized guidelines on conducting job analyses and workforce planning;➤ training of the HR departments to coordinate workforce planning in their institutions;➤ correlation with the Institutional Strategic Planning;

⁴⁴ <https://www.oecd.org/gov/pem/workforceplanningandmanagement.htm>

	➤ competency framework and standard job descriptions in place
Timeline and duration	Yearly, at the end of the year for the next year (with a projection for 3 years). From September to November (1 month)
Responsible actors	HR departments from each institution Line managers from the institution The head of the institution
Costs	<p>Initial costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - training for HR departments on job analyses, workforce planning, elaboration of job descriptions based on competencies; - guidelines and methodologies developed and disseminated. <p>Process costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - coordination of the process inside the institution, initiating the process, collecting data, analyzing the data, preparing the draft plan, consult the plan with the supervisors, developing the specific job descriptions for the vacant positions opened for recruitment: 1-2 people from the HR department – 10 working days (approx. 45 institutions per year)

The recruitment plan represents a centralized document including the workforce needed and vacancies planned for recruitment in the central public institutions for maximum 3 years. The recruitment plan is drafted by NACS and approved by the Government⁴⁵.

Stage 1.2.	Recruitment plan
Main actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ NACS receives the workforce needs defined by the institutions; ➤ NACS groups vacant positions by job category and specific areas, where applicable, and plans the recruitment campaigns for the year, including timeframes, resources, test development, selection panels' composition, etc.; ➤ When pertinent, and depending on the available pool of candidates, vacant positions can be filled by selecting candidates from reserve lists established through previous recruitment and selection procedures; ➤ The proposed plan is consulted with the main actors and quota will be negotiated (governmental actors, trade unions, councils foreseen by the law); ➤ The recruitment plan is approved by the Government.

⁴⁵ See details in art. 408 (r) and art. 467, alin. 5 from the Administrative Code

Prerequisites	➤ Standard job descriptions and competency framework in place
Timeline and duration	In November - December, each year, for the next year. Duration: - 1 month for elaboration - 1 month for consultation procedures
Responsible actors	The NACS – to collect, draft and consult the recruitment plan Government – to consult, negotiate and to approve
Costs	- Collect data, draft the document – 1 specialist – 3 working days - Consultation process – 1 specialist – 3 working days

Stage 2: Advertising. This stage entails the publication of the vacancies and implementation of awareness and advertising campaigns aiming to attract the candidates for the upcoming recruitment procedures.

Stage 2	Advertising
Main actions	<p>➤ After the approval of the recruitment plan, the NACS prepares the plan for the advertising campaigns, including, at least, the following channels: participation to job fairs, organizing awareness campaigns in Universities and other professional environments, organizing Social media targeted campaigns, organizing open-days, publication in large-circulation newspapers; dedicated internet websites for jobs in the public administration; ; official gazette; networking with professional associations and headhunting agencies, etc.;</p> <p>➤ Pre-advertising campaigns should be initiated as soon as the recruitment plan is approved.</p> <p>➤ The official advertising campaign is opened at least 30 days before the application process is opened;</p> <p>➤ The announcements published during the pre-advertising and advertising campaigns should include information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Job title*</i> ● <i>Organizational setting (description of organization and service/bureau) *</i> ● <i>Location</i> ● <i>Job duties*</i> ● <i>Qualifications*</i> ● <i>Competency framework*</i> ● <i>Salary and benefits</i> ● <i>Working conditions</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Selection procedure (timeframe, stages, assessment criteria, etc.)</i> * <i>derived from the job description; detailed based on the phase of the recruitment process</i>
Prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implementation and use of standard job descriptions and of competency framework; ➤ Package of communication materials prepared; ➤ Networks with different professional communities established
Timeline and duration	<p>Pre-advertising campaigns (at least 2 campaigns per year) duration 1 month each;</p> <p>Advertising campaigns (before each recruitment session) duration 30 days</p>
Responsible actors	The NACS in partnership with the center of the government and/or line ministries (depending on the vacancies opened for recruitment)
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparing the campaigns, announcements and other informative materials; - 2 specialists/3 working days - Participating in advertising meetings – 2 directors/ 5 working days - Paid adds on Social media and on official gazette

Stage 3: Selecting and appointing the selection panel. In order to prepare and fully operationalize the entire recruitment process, a selection panel will be selected and appointed on the earlier stages. The selection panel will be in charge of rolling-out the selection stages and decide on the ranking of the candidates.

Stage 3	Selecting and appointing the selection panel
Main actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The NACS drafts a plan on operationalizing the selection panels throughout the year, indicating alternate members as needed; ➤ The NACS will initiate the procedure to select the members of the selection panel from the existing pool; ➤ The plan to operationalize the selection panels is endorsed electronically by central public institutions through the online platform for the national competition (which should have a module for the HR specialists which were trained and have the competencies to be members of selection panels) ➤ kick-off training delivered
Prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Set up a pool of potential members of selection panels with representatives from the public administration, academia, professional associations;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Organize intensive training on assessing competencies for a pool of experts from the public administration; ➤ Competency framework in place; ➤ Guidelines for selection and operationalizing of selection panels adopted; ➤ The recruitment plan
Timeline and duration	<p>In January- February each year; Duration: 10 days for selection, planning and endorsement</p> <p>Allocation by selection panels to be firmly confirmed 2 weeks before the selection procedure will be opened</p>
Responsible actors	NACS
Costs	<p>Initial cost: training program for HR experts who will be members of selection panels (at least 40 people from the NACS and central public institutions – 5 days training; 10 people/group).</p> <p>Running cost: 1 expert from the NACS with a lead role on the National Competition (National Administrator) – 5 wd 1 HR expert from the line ministries/other central public institutions which are targeted by the Recruitment Plan (approx. 15) – 15 minutes each. kick-off training – 2 wd for 1 trainer</p>

Stage 4: Application process. The procedure for application should be online, in order to optimize its management and reduce problems such as the loss or misplacement of documentation, processing errors, etc. Therefore, a digital platform must be conceptualized, developed and implemented, allowing for the collection of applications and feeding of a management database that will incorporate all successive steps in the recruitment procedure (test results, shortlisting, pooling, etc.).

Stage 4	Application process
Main actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The NACS elaborates the <i>Guidelines for applicants</i> to be published on its website together with the advertising announcement. The Guideline will provide details on how to fill in the application form online. ➤ The NACS will ensure that mock tests are available online for potential candidates

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A dedicated support center will be ensured the by the NACS for the competition⁴⁶. ➤ Once the application process is open, the NACS will send reminders to members of selection panels to ensure their availability during the assessment period. ➤ A reminder of the closing date for the application process will be published on the NACS' website two days in advance. ➤ Receiving and registering the application documents (on line; for the cases where access to online platform is not possible, paper documents are accepted); ➤ Communication to candidates
Prerequisites	<p>The strategic and operational documents produced in the previous stages</p> <p>The IT system required to organize the national competition</p>
Timeline and duration	<p>Probably twice a year/yearly</p> <p>Duration: 15 calendar days</p>
Responsible actors	NACS
Costs	<p><u>Initial costs:</u></p> <p>Drafting the Guideline for applicants – 10 wd, 1 expert</p> <p>Preparing the mock tests: 5 wd, 1 expert</p> <p>Training session with staff from the support center: 2 people in the center, 1-day training session (+1 consultant)</p> <p><u>Running costs:</u></p> <p>Updating the Guidelines for applicants for each competition: 1 expert, 2 wd</p> <p>Operationalization of the support center: 2 experts available upon request (estimated 10 wd each)</p> <p>Publication of relevant updates on NACS' website: 1 expert, 2 hours</p>

Stage 5: Eligibility check. The eligibility check refers to the verification of all the pre-conditions required from a candidate to meet before entering the testing of general and specific competences.

Stage 5	Eligibility check
Main actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Verification of documents (only electronically)

⁴⁶ In the initial phase the support center would be equipped with landline and dedicated e-mail. It could progress towards a multimodal support center, allowing for multiple channel interaction with the “clients”.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Verification of requirements (only electronically) ➤ Shortlisting (only electronically) ➤ Communication with the candidates (only electronically) ➤ Appeal procedure
Prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IT system in place ➤ Guidelines for applications and forms clearly defined and communicated
Timeline and duration	Immediately after the application process ends. Duration: 2 weeks
Responsible actors	NACS
Costs	2 experts for 4 working days each (for an average of 100 candidates)

Stage 6: Preliminary testing: This stage consists in administering the preliminary tests aiming to check general competencies considered as mandatory for a specific group of jobs/position. In this category can be included the mastering of a foreign language, computer skills, etc. This stage is eliminatory.

Stage 6	Preliminary testing
Main actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Calling in the candidates for the tests ➤ Test application (electronically or on paper] ➤ Test assessment [elimination] ➤ Shortlisting ➤ Communication to candidates ➤ Appeal procedures
Prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Test development or acquisition of the valid programs ➤ Competency framework in place ➤ Standard job descriptions used
Timeline and duration	At least 2 weeks after the eligibility check is finished; Duration: 1 day
Responsible actors	The NACS
Costs	Initial costs: Process costs: 1 working day for 1 expert (if the tests are implemented electronically) 3-5 working days if the tests are implemented on paper) for 3 experts (for an average of 100 candidates) 4 members of the appeal panel for 3 hours each

Preliminary testing aims to assess a specific or general set of skills and comprises multiple-choice questions and a specified time frame in which to complete them. They will be conducted electronically.

Preliminary testing should include:

- I. **Aptitude tests** (for all the positions);
- II. **IT test** (for some job categories)
- III. **Foreign language tests** (for some job categories)
- IV. **General knowledge tests** (for all the positions) - to assess general knowledge required to work as civil servant, but not focused on knowledge of specific legal texts.

Preliminary testing (usually aptitude tests)

- Numerical reasoning test. Used to identify how candidates interpret data.
- Verbal reasoning test.
- Inductive reasoning test. These require candidates to identify trends or patterns.
- Logical reasoning test. Aims to evaluate candidates' skills in reaching a conclusion or decision, based on provided information.
- Error checking test. Assesses the ability to quickly identify any errors in complex data sets.

Stage 7: Advanced testing/assessment center: This stage aims to assess the core general competencies defined for the job profile for which the recruitment was opened. It can be operationalized on paper, using the traditional assessment methods or it can be done through an assessment center, with complex assessment instruments adapted to each job profile.

Stage 7	<u>Advanced testing/assessment center</u>
Main actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ invitation of the candidates ➤ Preparation (rooms for individual, group and interview meetings, technical and support equipment and supplies) ➤ Test application ➤ Test assessment ➤ Shortlisting ➤ Communication to candidates ➤ Pooling [candidate reserve list for future recruitment needs]
Prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Test development (this can be implemented as part of the planning procedure) ➤ Training of the selection panel ➤ Confidentiality and conflict of interest safeguards ➤ Competency framework in place
Timeline and duration	At least 2 weeks after the preliminary tests were administered Duration: 5-10 working days (based on the group of jobs opened for recruitment, for an average of 100 candidates)

Responsible actors	Selection panel The NACS
Costs	See the details in chapter III of this Note

Stage 8: Managing the pool of selected candidates: This stage refers to the management of the pool of candidates selected through the national competition. Although the competition will not be finalized with the appointment of the successful candidates, clear working procedures and interactions with the institutions should be developed and regular exchanges between the NACS, the successful candidates and the institutions should be maintained.

Stage 8	Managing the pool of selected candidates
Main actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ NACS manages the database of selected candidates ➤ NACS transmits an electronic copy of the list of selected candidates to the recruiting central institutions ➤ Central institutions will be able to consult the individual profile of the selected pool of candidates in NACS database (IT system for the national competition will provide the technical conditions for this)
Prerequisites	All previous steps The IT system in place
Timeline and duration	Ongoing. The selected candidates will be eligible for the second stage recruitment procedure for a period of 3 years
Responsible actors	NACS
Costs	NACS expert sending the list to the recruiting institutions (5 minutes/competition – that is maximum twice a year) NACS expert to manage the database (30 min/month maximum)

1. The results of the national competition will be registered in NACS data base being kept and updated for a 3-year period. The candidates declared successful will be informed on the regulations and the working procedures for updating their profile and for applying to selection procedures opened by the line ministers, as a second phase of the process.
2. NACS should develop clear working and communication procedures with the line ministries and deconcentrated institutions, subject to the second phase of the recruitment process.
3. Regular informative notes should be sent by NACS to the successful candidates and to the institutions.

The Assessment Center is one of the selection techniques used in organizations to measure the knowledge, skills & abilities (KSA) of a candidate. The concept is used to designate two different concepts:

- a recruitment and selection process, involving different assessment focuses and techniques, and
- the arrangement in which the process is implemented, i.e., the physical place, assessment supervisors and other staff involved, technical requirements, and other resources.

The *Guidelines on the Design, Implementation and Evaluation of Assessment and Development Centers*⁴⁷, developed by the British Psychological Society highlight that good Assessment/Development Centers provide the following benefits:

- Highly relevant/observable and comprehensive information.
Effective decision-making, including workforce planning.
- Added fairness from multiple judgements (versus single judgements).
- An enhanced image of the organization from use.
- An effective preview of the role/job level.
- Developmental payoffs to candidates/participants arising from self-insight obtained.
- Developmental payoffs to assessors/observers arising from involvement in the process.
- A legally defensible selection system.
- A method of assessment that predicts work performance.

This method allows supervisors to directly and simultaneously observe the behavior of several candidates in real scenario simulations, often in high pressure situations and in interaction with each other, and to measure performance objectively against specific criteria or competencies considered relevant for the job. Assessment centers involve more than one evaluator (both in the design and evaluation phases), which ensures higher levels of objectivity and impartiality.

Assessment centers are used for personnel recruitment, for talent identification for defining development needs, for evaluation of performance progress and for implementing restructuring processes.

⁴⁷ Available at:

https://ptc.bps.org.uk/sites/ptc.bps.org.uk/files/guidance_documents/assessment_and_development_centres1.pdf

In comparison to an Assessment Center, a Development Center has both an evaluation objective and a development plan design objective. The same competencies profile can be used for both Assessment and Development Center.

Assessment Center objectives:	Development Center objectives:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To show current level of competencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify needs for development (individual and teams)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To define a development plan

The operationalization of the assessment centers requires the implementation of specific steps and several conditions to be settled, describes in the next paragraphs.

The first stage of the assessment center requires the definition of the competencies as a set of observable behaviors.

Examples of competencies profiles that can be considered:

For civil servants in execution positions:	For civil servants in management positions:	For high civil servants:
Maximizing results Planning and organizing Problem solving & decision making Communication	Maximizing results Planning and organizing Problem solving & decision making Communication People Management	Maximizing results Problem solving & decision making Change Management Communication People Management Strategic Planning

Example of a competence described in observable behaviors.

Maximizing results
Makes decisions following long term results
Has a rapid work rhythm / a high energy level
Answers rigorously to all tasks
Remains focused on the objective when confronted with obstacles, others' attempts of postponement or discouragement

The proposals he/she makes are based on efficiency criteria
Proposes ways to improve performance - at team and processes level.
Sets ambitious goals
Takes initiative in completing the tasks
Asks for the others engagement for the proposed solutions
Presents his/her personal involvement / contribution in achieving results

The second stage requires that the set of assessment instruments will be designed, based on competencies and observable behaviors listed in the previous stage.

- These activities are highly specialized and are fulfilled by specialists with experience in designing competencies assessment instruments. It is essential that the set of assessment instruments is developed to highlight in the best way the behaviors defined above. The success of the assessment Center relies mainly on the quality of the assessment’s instruments and the training and calibration of the assessors.
- **The candidates go through a sequence of exercises designed to highlight the actual level of each evaluated competence.** During the assessment day a limited number of competencies can be rigorously observed, the recommendation being to assess a maximum of 6 competencies. Each competence will be defined in approximately 10-15 observable behaviors.

Various type of tools and instruments can be used to evaluate complex competencies. The table below summarizes different categories usually considered:

Type of exercises that can be used during the assessment center:

Structured Interview	based on a set of predefined questions, the participants will individually answer to the assessors demonstrating their previous professional experience by giving relevant examples from their activity. This way they are proving indirectly the competencies included in the profile.
Case-Study / In-tray exercise	the participants will receive a set of detailed information about a complex /problematic situation which requires decision making, designing an action plan, budgeting, assigned resources, priority setting, activities delegation etc. The plans and the proposals created as a result of the case-study may be presented in writing or verbally during an individual interview or a presentation (with assessors as audience).

Group Discussions	the participants receive some information about a theme/a project and they have a common mission, but in the same time each of them can have an individual set of information which could position participants differently and generate different objectives during the discussion. In the end all the participants have to make a group decision. In this exercise, then following competencies might be analyzed: leadership, team communication, assertiveness, decision making, innovative thinking etc.
Role play	based on a provided scenario the participants, individually, will have to prepare and play a meeting with a potential client or with a subordinate/colleague. In this kind of exercises, we observe skills that are required for persuasion, identifying client's needs, performance evaluation, giving feedback, coaching etc.
Facts-finding	participants must rapidly look through a consistent documentation to select the relevant information from it and to discover the missing data in order to make a quality decision. They can ask assessors questions and these questions will be marked and noted in the individual report. Based on all this information, the participant decides keeping in mind the aspects that she/he considers essential in that situation.
Presentation	based on a situation / case-study the participants will individually present to the assessors a proposal, an action plan, a changing plan etc. The competencies we observe in this exercise may be: presentation skills, communication with an audience, assertiveness, interaction, leadership etc.
Other type of tests and type of skills tested	
Administrative aptitude test	Assesses the candidate's capacity to effectively and correctly organize, control and classify multiple information.
Planning aptitude test	Assess the candidate's capacity to plan their own work, as well as the work of others; This test can focus on different issues, from the planning of the office's monthly workload to the optimization of geographical routes.

Drafting skills test / Written essay	Assesses the candidate's drafting skills, in particular spelling, lexical and grammar (not their knowledge of the topic dealt with in the composition).
Technical competencies test	Assesses the capacity to find a solution for a technical problem. This type of test varies greatly, depending on the job description of the vacant position; it can be multiple-choice, open questions, translation, technical drawing, etc.
Field-related/Specific knowledge test	Assesses the candidate's inherent competence to perform the duties required for the specific profile; it's usually composed of a series of multiple-choice questions and each question is based on a textual scenario linked to different answer options, only one of which is correct.
Personality tests	evaluate the candidate's suitability based on his/her behavior and the way in which he/she approaches the work, determining how well the candidate will fit into the organization and its culture. Assessors look at many factors during this process, from the candidate's knowledge and experience to his/her aptitude in areas such as decision making and teamwork.

For specific competences on-line testing can be applied (such as, language test, computer skills tests, aptitude and cognitive tests. The list of skills that will be assessed through online platforms and those to be assessed through an advanced assessment center will be decided at the earlier stages, after the competencies are defined.

The international review also highlights the type of tools and methods used in the assessment centers for specific type of competences.

Assessment centers' tools and methods use

Tools/methods	Belgium	European Commission	France	United Kingdom
<i>Interactive</i>				
Interview	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Role-playing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Collective action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Case-study (analysis and presentation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Computer-based				
Situational judgement/Field related	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Verbal reasoning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Mathematical reasoning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Language test*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mail test (organising and prioritizing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Specific technical competencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Abstract reasoning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Specific public finance test	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

* Language tests are extensively used in the European Commission due to its multi-national character, in Belgium due to the bilingual arrangement of the federal government, and in France due to its international approach in most programs.

The third stage refers to the assessment of the defined competences and behaviors assessed during the implementation of the exercises. Behavioral observation is the process of identifying and registering information about the participant during the Assessment Center.

The assessors write down everything the candidates say (or as much as possible), these notes represent the behavioral proofs that will be used for evaluating and scoring the candidates performance.

The scoring of the behaviors will follow the chosen methodology. For this a scoring sheet will be used. The scoring sheet includes all the competences detailed in behaviors, the recommendation being to score at behavioral level. The scoring sheet may include the evaluated competencies, the list of behaviors encompassed by each competency and special boxes to fill in the score. The observation/scoring sheet is useful for the observer to ensure that he/she follows

all the targeted behaviors and that the data is collected in a structured manner that makes it easy to interpret later.

Each competence is an assessment priority in at least one of the exercises and is assessed based on a specific observation sheet.

After observing the exercises, the assessors will analyze the behavioral proofs for each competence and will give a score for each behavior. The recommendation is the use of an on-line platform that will facilitate the generation of the final score for each competence on a chosen scale. The most used scales in evaluating performance are from 1 to 5, 1 being the minimum and the 5 the maximum and 1 to 4, 1 being the minimum and the 4 the maximum.

The activities the candidates are involved in can last from half an hour to one hour.

Example of matrix competence/exercises:

Competencies	Activities			
	Facts Finding / presentation	Study-case/ debrief	Managerial Role-play	Interview
Maximizing results	X	X		
Planning and organizing		X	X	
Problem solving & decision making	X		X	X
Communication	X	X	X	X
People Management			X	X

For each type of civil servants there will be a different matrix, following the designed competencies model.

The methodology implies a rigorous evaluation at behavioral level; all the evaluators are previously trained and calibrated in order to ensure the highest quality process.

The fourth stage represent the development of the individual reports. The individual reports will offer a detailed perspective on each candidate's strengths and key development opportunities. It will also include some suggestions and recommendations of development activities to be used for increasing his/her performance.

The individual report can include the following chapters:

- Overview of the evaluation process;
- General individual profile – overview about the participant;
- Detailed competencies evaluation – with strengths and development areas on each competence;
- Development areas and recommendations.

The fifth stage refers to result communication. During this stage the assessors send the Assessment Center results to the Assessment Coordinator (roles presented below).

Information included in the individual reports:

- the individual reports that will be issued after the evaluation will contain relevant, concrete and clear information, easy to be transferred into development/training objectives; they are focused on behavior level and reveal individual and group training needs if needed;
- The individual reports contain data that is easy be compared, understood and used by participants, HR specialists or direct managers.

As previously mentioned, the operationalization of the assessment center requires the careful planning and implementation of specific logistics and specialized human resources.

To facilitate the initial planning and the detailed arrangements, the following flow can be considered for running an assessment center:

1. Announce the assessment Center objective & structure (communication)
2. Define the participants lists
3. Book the location (conference rooms etc.)
4. Invite the participants to Assessment Center
5. On-line platform set-up (if needed)
6. Materials printing (exercises, agendas)
7. Assessors appointment & calibration based on the competencies model to be observed
8. Timekeeper appointment & preparation
9. Assessment Center roll-out (introduction, observation, role-playing, scoring)

10. Individual reports generation
11. Results communication
12. Development recommendations (optional in case of Development Center)

All staff members of any assessment center must be qualified and adequately trained to carry out their functions consistently, accurately, and effectively. They should be:

<i>Assessment Center Coordinator</i>	<i>Assessment Center Administrator</i>	<i>Evaluators</i>	<i>Timekeeper</i>	<i>Candidate</i>	<i>IT support</i>	<i>Assessment Center Expert</i>
oversees all the assessment center operations	Responsible for administrative tasks	evaluates the candidate's performance according to the competencies profile agreed for the respective civil servant position. They always work in teams of minimum 2 people.	supervises the candidate's preparation during the Assessment Center	participates to the Assessment Center for the position he/she applied	assures the electronic security, safety and IT support when needed	This person is responsible for designing the exercises according to the competencies profile for each position

The roles can be cumulated, one single person can cover multiple tasks if needed.

Assessment Center Coordinator	Assessment Center Administrator	IT support	Evaluators	Timekeeper	Assessment Center Expert
	X			X	
X			X		
			X		X

An example of planning and allocation of the human resources needed in an assessment center based on the profile of the candidates and the number of competences that need to be assessed can be visualized in the matrix below:

Position	Number of competencies	HR for 1-day Assessment Center	Number of hours per day	Number of candidates/day/team
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Execution level	4	Assessment Center Coordinator	4	8
		Assessment Center Administrator	2	
		IT support	1	
		Evaluators (2 per team)	8/each Evaluators	
		Timekeeper	8	
Managerial level	5	Assessment Center Coordinator	4	4
		Assessment Center Administrator	2	
		IT support	1	
		Evaluators (2 per team)	8/each Evaluators	
		Timekeeper	6	
High civil servants	6	Assessment Center Coordinator	4	3
		Assessment Center Administrator	2	
		IT support	1	
		Evaluators (2 per team)	8/each Evaluators	
		Timekeeper	6	

All the staff mentioned above will require initial and continuous training important for the rollout of the evaluation and for the results and the outcomes of the process. However, the previous professional experience of the evaluators is essential for ensuring the objectivity and the quality of the assessment. To ensure knowledge, skills and abilities of the assessors it is important that they participate to specific training and that they exercise the new required competencies and receive individual feedback.

Guidelines, forms and clear instructions will need to be prepared and largely disseminated among all the actors with a role in assessment center. In the same time, the mission and the functioning of the assessment center should be largely promoted outside the institution, so that the other line ministries and the general public can understand the scope and the added value of this selection tool.

Annex 3: Overview of the process of Option 1.1. – in-house assessment center

Stage/Action	Actor	Description
Planning of the recruitment		
Workforce planning		
	Line ministries	Job analyses; Identification of workforce needs; development of specific job descriptions; Communication to the NACS
Recruitment plan		
	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Draft the plan; consult with the main actors; plan approved by the Government
Advertising		
	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Draft the recruitment ad; publish in the selected media; implement awareness and advertising campaigns
Selecting and appointing the selection panel		
	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Select the members from the pool of experts; schedule their meetings/interventions/organize kick-off training
Application process		
	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Done electronically, through an on-line application platform; call center to provide clarification and information to the applicants
Eligibility check		
Verification of documents	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Check for completion of applications and appended documentation Eliminate candidates whose application is not complete (or request

		candidates to submit missing information/ documentation)
Verification of requirements	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Check that requirements are met Eliminate candidates that do not meet the requirements
Shortlisting	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Draft a list of the candidates admitted
Communication to candidates	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Inform the admitted candidates and call for preliminary testing
Preliminary testing		
Test development	NACS - through the licenses bought	Draft tests and assessment criteria
Preparation	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Arrange rooms, equipment and materials for the different tests
Summoning candidates	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	<i>(usually part of the previous stage)</i>
Test application	NACS - through the licenses bought	Reception and briefing to candidates Tests deployment under controlled conditions
Test assessment	NACS - through the licenses bought and Selection panel	Evaluation and grading according to previously determined criteria
Shortlisting	Selection panel and NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Elimination of candidates that did not pass Draft a graded list of candidates that passed
Communication to candidates	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Inform candidates that passed and call for advanced testing
Advanced testing		

Test development	Assessment Centre of NACS and Selection panel	Draft tests and evaluation criteria Design multi-method selection procedures and evaluation criteria
Summoning candidates	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	<i>(usually part of the previous stage)</i>
Test application	Assessment Centre of NACS and Selection panel	Reception and briefing to candidates Tests deployment under controlled conditions
Test assessment	Assessment Centre of NACS and Selection panel	Evaluation and grading according to previously determined criteria
Shortlisting	Assessment Centre of NACS and Selection panel	Elimination of candidates that did not pass Draft a graded list of candidates that passed
Communication to candidates	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Inform candidates that passed and call for interview
Pooling	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Include candidates that passed in the database for reserve list of candidates
Managing the pool of selected candidates		
	NACS	Update of the information; regular correspondence with the successful candidates and with the institutions.
Appointment/Contract (not part of the national competition)		
	Recruiting organization (Head of organization)	Draft appointment notice / contract Acceptance / Signature ceremony Publish in the official gazette

Annex 4: Overview of the process of Option 1.2. – outsourced assessment center

Stage/Action	Actor	Description
Planning of the recruitment		
Workforce planning		
	Line ministries	Job analyses; Identification of workforce needs; development of specific job descriptions; Communication to the NACS
Recruitment plan		
	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Draft the plan; consult with the main actors; plan approved by the Government
Advertising		
	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Draft the recruitment ad; publish in the selected media; implement awareness and advertising campaigns
Selecting and appointing the selection panel		
	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Select the members from the pool of experts; schedule their meetings/interventions/organize kick-off training
Application process		
	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Done electronically, through an on-line application platform; call center to provide clarification and information to the applicants
Eligibility check		
Verification of documents	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Check for completion of applications and appended documentation Eliminate candidates whose application is not complete (or request

		candidates to submit missing information/ documentation)
Verification of requirements	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Check that requirements are met Eliminate candidates that do not meet the requirements
Shortlisting	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Draft a list of the candidates admitted
Communication to candidates	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Inform the admitted candidates and call for preliminary testing
Preliminary testing		
Test development	NACS - through the licenses bought	Draft tests and assessment criteria
Preparation	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Arrange rooms, equipment and materials for the different tests
Summoning candidates	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	<i>(usually part of the previous stage)</i>
Test application	NACS - through the licenses bought	Reception and briefing to candidates Tests deployment under controlled conditions
Test assessment	NACS - through the licenses bought and Selection panel	Evaluation and grading according to previously determined criteria
Shortlisting	Selection panel and NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Elimination of candidates that did not pass Draft a graded list of candidates that passed
Communication to candidates	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Inform candidates that passed and call for advanced testing
Advanced testing		

Test development	External Assessment Centre and Selection panel	
Summoning candidates		
Test application		
Test assessment		
Shortlisting	Selection panel	Elimination of candidates that did not pass Draft a graded list of candidates that passed
Communication to candidates	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Inform candidates that passed and call for interview
Pooling	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Include candidates that passed in the database for reserve list of candidates
Managing the pool of selected candidates		
	NACS	Update of the information; regular correspondence with the successful candidates and with the institutions.
Appointment/Contract (not part of the national competition)		
	Recruiting organization (Head of organization)	Draft appointment notice / contract Acceptance / Signature ceremony Publish in the official gazette

Annex 5: Overview of the process of Option 2. – incremental improvement of the current recruitment system

Stage/Action	Actor	Description
Planning of the recruitment		
Workforce planning		
	Line ministries	Job analyses; Identification of workforce needs; development of specific job descriptions; Communication to the NACS
Recruitment plan		
	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Draft the plan; consult with the main actors; plan approved by the Government
Advertising		
	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Draft the recruitment ad; publish in the selected media; implement awareness and advertising campaigns
Selecting and appointing the selection panel		
	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Select the members from the pool of experts; schedule their meetings/interventions/organize kick-off training
Application process		
	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Done electronically, through an on-line application platform; call center to provide clarification and information to the applicants
Eligibility check		
Verification of documents	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Check for completion of applications and appended documentation Eliminate candidates whose application is not complete (or request candidates to submit missing information/ documentation)

Verification of requirements	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Check that requirements are met Eliminate candidates that do not meet the requirements
Shortlisting	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Draft a list of the candidates admitted
Communication to candidates	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Inform the admitted candidates and call for preliminary testing
Preliminary testing		
Test development	NACS - through the licenses bought and Selection panel	Draft tests and assessment criteria
Preparation	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Arrange rooms, equipment and materials for the different tests
Summoning candidates	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	<i>(usually part of the previous stage)</i>
Test application	Selection panel	Reception and briefing to candidates Tests deployment under controlled conditions
Test assessment	Selection panel	Evaluation and grading according to previously determined criteria
Shortlisting	Selection panel	Elimination of candidates that did not pass Draft a graded list of candidates that passed
Communication to candidates	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Inform candidates that passed and call for advanced testing
Advanced testing		
Test development	Selection Panel	Draft tests and evaluation criteria
Summoning candidates	NACS	<i>(usually part of the previous stage)</i>
Test application	Selection Panel	Reception and briefing to candidates

		Tests deployment under controlled conditions
Test assessment	Selection Panel	Evaluation and grading according to previously determined criteria
Shortlisting	Selection panel	Elimination of candidates that did not pass Draft a graded list of candidates that passed
Communication to candidates	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Inform candidates that passed and call for interview
Pooling	NACS – department in charge of recruitment	Include candidates that passed in the database for reserve list of candidates
Interviewing (not for the national competition – in the case NACS assessment center is used by the institutions also for the second phase)		
	Selection panel	Final interview, usually motivational and non-structured Evaluation and grading according to previously determined criteria Final selection Communication to the NACS and recruiting organization
Managing the pool of selected candidates		
	NACS	Update of the information; regular correspondence with the successful candidates and with the institutions.
Appointment/Contract (not part of the national competition)		
	Recruiting organization (Head of organization)	Draft appointment notice / contract Acceptance / Signature ceremony Publish in the official gazette