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Reimbursable Advisory Services Agreement to Support to the National Agency for Civil Servants on Human Resource Management Reforms in Romania (P503309)

Deliverable 5: Report on the content, delivery and evaluation of the Capacity Enhancement Program

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ASE	Academy of Economic Studies in Bucharest (Academia de Studii Economice din București)
BoD	Board of Directors
CDPARPA	Competency Development Program for Accelerating Results in the Public Administration
COR	Classification of Occupations in Romania
DG	Director General
DPFS	Directorate of Specialized Training Programs (Direcția Programe de Formare Specializată)
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EECA	European Ethics & Compliance Association
ETC	Estimated Time Commitment
FS	Specialized Training (Formare Specializată)
GD	Government Decision
GEO	Government Emergency Ordinance
GIS	Geographic Information System
GO	Government Ordinance
GoR	Government of Romania
GSG	General Secretariat of the Government
HLCS	High Level Civil Servant
HRM	Human Resources Management
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LTSA	Learning Transfer System Analysis
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDPWA	Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration
ME	Ministry of Education
MER	Ministry of Education and Research
MLSS	Ministry of Labor and Social Solidarity
NACS	National Agency for Civil Servants
NIA	National Institute of Administration
NQA	National Qualifications Authority
NR	National Register
NRAVTP	National Register of Authorized Vocational Training Providers
NRPP	National Register of Postgraduate Programs
NRRP	National Recovery and Resilience Plan
NRUP	National Register of Unauthorized Providers
OMDPWA	Order of the Ministry of Development, Public Works, and Administration
OMER	Order of the Ministry of Education and Research
OPNIA	Order of the President of the National Institute of Administration
OR	Operational Regulations
PTA	Professional Training for Adults
RAS	Reimbursable Advisory Services

RDA	Romanian Digitalization Authority
ROD	Organization and Delivery Regulations
SNSPA	National School of Political and Administrative Studies (Şcoala Națională de Studii Politice și Administrative)
STPHLCS	Specialized Training Program for High Level Civil Servants
STPPR	Specialized Training Program for Prefects and Sub-Prefects
TTS	Total Time Spent
UBB	Babeş–Bolyai University (Universitatea Babeș–Bolyai)
UGAL	Lower Danube University of Galați
UNIBUC	University of Bucharest
UVT	West University of Timișoara (Universitatea „Dunărea de Jos” din Galați)
WB	World Bank

Executive Summary

The World Bank is providing technical assistance to the Government of Romania (GoR) to support its efforts, led by the National Agency for Civil Servants (NACS), to improve human resource management (HRM) in public administration[1] . The current technical support builds on previous reforms developed by NACS aimed at professionalizing, consolidating and improving the meritocracy and performance-orientation of the civil service in Romania. These include the introduction of a general competency framework for all civil servants in public administration and a new national recruitment and selection process for civil servants based on the general competency framework. Under this RAS, the Bank is supporting the NACS in enhancing and expanding these reform efforts through five inter-connected workstreams on consolidating the position of high-level civil servants (HLCS) by modernizing the operating model;[2] developing, implementing, and evaluating an executive development program for secretaries-general, deputy secretaries-general, and directors-general based on the general competency framework;[3] improving strategic workforce planning and its competency-based approach;[4] calibrating the national recruitment competition in line with the general competency framework;[5] and developing a fit-for-purpose strategic framework for competency-based HRM and for personnel data governance. [6]

This report represents Deliverable 5 under this RAS and provides a detailed description and evaluation of the Competency Development Program for Accelerating Results in the Public Administration (CDPARPA)[7] pilot, as well as a related package containing the final training materials used during the CDPARPA pilot phase.[8] This report evaluates the CDPARPA pilot, analyzing its curricular design, pedagogical logic, and participant experience through quantitative and qualitative data. It details module structure, trainer roles, and the effectiveness of practical activities, while incorporating final project evaluations and interview results. Finally, the report provides recommendations for replicating the program by the NIA, academia, and private providers.

Description of the CDPARPA pilot

The program was built around the general competencies required to perform the roles of high-level civil servants in public administration[9]. The curriculum content was developed with the aim to cover the critical issues faced by HLCS and DG. The curriculum integrated modules dedicated to leadership and strategic governance, digitization and administrative transformation processes, strategic planning and management, crisis management, performance monitoring, budget planning, and the use of data for decision-making. Each module was designed to provide a coherent combination of information, tools, and

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[1] Through the Agreement for Reimbursable Technical Assistance Services to Support the National Agency of Public Servants on Human Resource Management Reforms in Romania (P503309).

[2] This is covered by RAS Deliverable 4.

[3] This activity is covered by Deliverable 1 and, partially, by this deliverable.

[4] This activity is covered by RAS Deliverable 2.

[5] This aspect is covered by Deliverable 6.

[6] Covered by RAS Deliverable 3.

[7] In the RAS legal agreement, the program is referred to as the ”Capacity Enhancement Program”, but for the piloting conducted under this RAS, the name of ” Competency Development Program for Accelerating Results in the Public Administration” was used for the program.

[8] The package related to the final training materials is sent separately due to the large file size.

[9] Unlike the program run by the NIA for HLCS, which assesses and certifies candidates for appointments into such positions, this program focuses on developing the specific competencies needed by HLCS and DG to fulfill their roles as leaders and operational coordinators. Consequently, the proposed program is not intended to replace or serve as an alternative to the mandatory specialized training required by law for entering the HLCS category.

practices relevant to public management, enabling participants to address complex issues and strengthen their capacity to coordinate policies, institutions, and administrative practices.

The pedagogical approach of the program focused on experiential learning and practical applicability, being adapted to the specificities of training adults with high-level responsibilities. The methodology combined case studies, hands-on exercises, simulations, guided reflection, exchange of experience between participants, and personalized support mechanisms, such as coaching and mentoring. The trainers acted as facilitators of the learning process, and the course materials were designed as working instruments integrated into practical activities, rather than as exhaustive theoretical support, thus supporting the transfer of skills to real professional contexts.

The implementation of the CDPARPA pilot involved an intensive 162-hour program over five months, that combined training sessions, mentoring sessions, experience sharing sessions, and self-learning, continuously adjusted to reflect the participants' schedule constraints. Participants were selected by NACS based on specific criteria to public management functions, and an initial assessment process was carried out using established tools such as skills analysis, pre-assessment questionnaires, and clarification discussions to evaluate each participant's level. The schedule of the training sessions was altered several times to accommodate government meetings and operational variations in the institutions. The organizing team opted for shortening or rescheduling some of the sessions. Also, 2–3-hours online modules were introduced, while retaining both the content and the total number of hours provided for in the program.

The implementation process was supported by a collaborative adjustment and validation mechanism between NACS and the World Bank, which allowed for rapid adaptation of materials, sessions, and delivery formats based on participants' work pace and lessons learned as the pilot progressed. This operational flexibility made it possible to pilot both elective modules, expand the mix of learning formats, and introduce new coaching and experience-sharing sessions, strengthening the program's practical nature. Detailed documentation of the implementation, including the adjusted schedule, changes made, and logistics for each stage, is presented in the dedicated table and in Annex 1, providing a complete picture of this first testing cycle and lessons relevant for future editions.

Evaluation of the CDPARPA pilot

The CDPARPA pilot evaluation methodology is based on the Kirkpatrick model, adapted to executive programs in public administration, and integrates both quantitative and qualitative methods to measure participant experience and learning outcomes. The evaluation uses a coherent set of tools, including satisfaction questionnaires, structured feedback forms, analyses of practical applications, in-class applied knowledge questionnaires, trainer observations, and qualitative information from coaching sessions, to obtain a robust picture of the quality of the training process, learning progress, and pedagogical coherence of the program. The analysis is substantiated by score comparisons between modules, distribution examinations, interpretation of detailed participant comments, and triangulation of data from multiple sources, which allows for the identification of design elements that work well and those that require adjustment. In addition, the evaluation also addresses operational dimensions such as implementation feasibility, timeliness, logistics quality, and organizational adaptability, which are critical issues for future editions of the program.

A key element of the methodology is anchoring the evaluation in the general competency framework for HLCS and DG, used both as a reference for content design and as a conceptual grid for interpreting the results. This framework integrates knowledge, skills, and attitudes into an operational model focused on institutional performance, allowing the program to be evaluated not only in terms of content and satisfaction, but also in terms of its contribution to the development of behaviors related to leadership roles. The evaluation uses the competency framework as an analytical structuring mechanism, assessing the extent to which training experiences have supported participants' ability to analyze, decide, and act in real institutional contexts. This integration between methodology and competency framework ensures consistency in evaluation and provides a solid basis for recommendations for improvement and for possible subsequent evaluations of transfer into practice and institutional impact.

At Level 1 of the Kirkpatrick model, the evaluation of the CDPARPA highlights a high degree of satisfaction among the participants. The evaluation includes both quantitative data (average scores, distributions, comparisons between modules) and qualitative information from detailed comments, trainers' observations, and reflections from coaching sessions, which allow for an in-depth understanding of the training experience. Participants appreciated the quality of the trainers, the practical nature of the exercises, and the opportunity to work with tools that are directly applicable to their institutional work. Quantitative feedback confirms that all modules achieved a consistent level of satisfaction, and qualitative data highlights consistent engagement, active exchange of experiences, and a clear perception of the usefulness of the content. The only differences between the modules were related to the pace and amount of information, but the learning dynamics were generally solid, and the participants' engagement remained high throughout the program.

The analysis of results achieved following the piloting of the CDPARPA (Kirkpatrick Level 2) shows that participants consistently acquired knowledge and skills relevant to their leadership roles, demonstrated through hands-on exercises, case studies, and regular tests. In all six modules, participants demonstrated visible progress through hands-on activities, case studies, and exercises that allowed them to use specific tools for planning, strategic analysis, crisis management, performance monitoring, and budget correlation. The learning curve was influenced by how relevant the topics were to each participant's context, but overall, the program strengthened targeted competencies such as critical thinking, informed decision-making, team leadership, and prioritization when dealing with complex situations and institutional pressure. Experiential methods and sessions such as coaching contributed significantly to the internalization of knowledge and the development of a results-oriented way of working. Triangulated data analysis shows that learning was facilitated by the experiential design of the program and the use of concrete tools that can be applied in real live.

The evaluation identified a number of factors that contributed to positive perceptions and outcomes at Levels 1 and 2 of the Kirkpatrick model. Factors influencing outcomes at Levels 1 and 2 included both pedagogical design elements and external organizational variables. Among the positive factors highlighted are the expertise of the trainers, the relevance of the topics, interactivity, the usefulness of the instruments, and organizational flexibility. These supported the learning process on a large scale, while limitations such as attendance and operational pressures in institutions affected the pace of work at certain times. The assessment shows that these constraints did not compromise the overall quality of the learning process, but they represent important lessons for future editions, particularly for enhancing participation and optimizing the module load. Overall, the results indicate that the program has a solid foundation for expansion and improvement, with the potential to become a central pillar of leadership development in central government.

Sustainability of the CDPARPA

The assessment of the available options for ensuring the sustainability of the program is grounded in an analysis of the regulatory and procedural frameworks, quality standards, and operational requirements associated with the three main potential providers: NIA, universities, and private training providers. The assessment takes into account the compatibility between the specific nature of the program and the profile of each provider, the feasibility of integrating the program into the current offering, the approval, accreditation, or authorization procedures, as well as the costs and resources required to organize a program of similar volume and complexity. The comparative analysis identifies strengths, limitations, and risks for each scenario, including elements related to the selection of trainers, admission criteria, quality control, and operational flexibility.

The first option evaluated is the takeover of the CDPARPA by the NIA as a specialized training program (ST), a scenario in which the program would be directly integrated into the existing institutional architecture and into the regulated flows of approval, promotion, selection, organization, and certification. The analysis highlights that the National Institution for Administration (NIA) meets all the technical and procedural requirements to organize such a program, having solid experience in training strategic groups (HLCS, prefects, management-level civil servants), a mature administrative infrastructure, and comprehensive institutional quality assurance mechanisms. Approval procedures are fast, administrative costs are low (zero fees for ST programs), and the training materials and pedagogical standards can be adapted efficiently.

The second option analyzed is the implementation of CDPARPA in universities as a postgraduate program specialized training program for continuing professional training and development, which would involve more complex accreditation, internal approval, and curriculum adjustment procedures. Universities must meet an extensive set of academic requirements, such as curriculum, course descriptions, council and senate approvals, and the process takes significantly longer than the other options analyzed. There are also advantages, like academic reputation, access to academic teaching staff, and the option to get certified under education law. However, there is less flexibility, and the costs for participants are higher.

The third option is to replicate the CDPARPA through an authorized private training provider, a scenario that offers high flexibility in terms of the operational design, pace, schedule, and additional services (coaching, accredited tools), but requires going through the authorization procedures and standards related to specialization programs. Private providers can quickly adapt the program structure and integrate modern assessment mechanisms, but skills certification and maintaining authorization involve periodic monitoring visits and strict standards. Costs are generally higher, and the constitution of partnerships is limited by the legislative framework.

Improving the effectiveness of the CDPARPA

The institution that will take over the CDPARPA will need to develop a robust ongoing system of medium- and long-term evaluation to measure both the effectiveness of learning process outcomes and the real impact on beneficiary institutions. This approach involves regular data collection on the use of acquired skills, the evolution of professional performance, and changes generated in organizational processes. It also requires the use of quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze this information. Based on these evaluations, the program must be recalibrated iteratively, adjusting the curriculum, teaching methods, evaluation standards, and support mechanisms for participants, to better respond to the real needs of the administration, and maximize its impact over time. These assessments involve analyses at Levels 3 and 4 of the Kirkpatrick model.

Monitoring and evaluating the transfer of skills requires a robust, multidimensional system, that would enable the analysis of changes at a personal and institutional level. The transfer cannot be evaluated using a single method, as the roles of HLCS and DGs involve highly complex strategic, managerial, and relational responsibilities. The evaluation should be carried out through an integrated system, consisting of four complementary tools: (1) adapted 360° evaluation, which enables the analysis of behavioral changes in leadership and communication; (2) a structured transfer questionnaire, which documents the effective application of the tools and frameworks presented in the program; (3) a questionnaire for diagnosing barriers and enablers, which would help explain why application is possible or limited; and (4) qualitative interviews, which provide a contextual and narrative understanding of the reported changes. Together, these tools allow for the identification of both instrumental and conceptual, and behavioral transfer.

The actual level of transfer depends on the existence of certain favorable institutional conditions, not only on the quality of training, and the diagnosis of barriers and enablers is essential for a correct interpretation of results. A series of factors can influence how the participants implement the new skill: the premises of transfer (relevance of content, clarity of tools, real opportunity to apply the knowledge), the motivation and self-efficacy of participants, as well as the organizational environment, (normative flexibility, peer support, and the cultural legitimacy of modern practices). Participants may exhibit different transfer profiles: strong, moderate, or absent, depending on the frequency with which they apply the new skills and perceived impact. Thus, in the absence of an institutional context that supports this transfer, the acquired skill risk remaining at a conceptual level, without operational benefits, and program adjustment interventions must be correlated with organizational support interventions.

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

1. **The World Bank is providing technical assistance to the Government of Romania (GoR) to support its efforts, led by the National Agency for Civil Servants (NACS), to improve human resource management (HRM) in public administration[10].** The current technical support builds on previous reforms developed by NACS aimed at professionalizing, consolidating and improving the meritocracy and performance-orientation of the civil service in Romania. These include the introduction of a general competency framework for all civil servants in public administration and a new national procedure for the recruitment and selection of civil servants based on the general competency framework. Under this RAS, the Bank supports the NACS in enhancing and expanding these reform efforts through the following inter-connected workstreams:

   (i) Strengthening the positions of high-level civil servants (HLCS) in public administration by improving the HRM frameworks, policies, and tools. This includes reforming the HLCS 's operating model to stimulate the delivery of results to citizens by public administration[11]

   (ii) The design, development, implementation, and evaluation of a development program to enhance the competencies of secretaries-general/deputy secretaries-general and civil servants at the level of directors-general (DG) in central public administration, as part of the initiative to introduce the general competency framework for learning and development (L&D) activities applicable to the HLCS and management positions in public administration, complementing the specialized training program for HLCS, coordinated by the National Institute of Administration (NIA)[12] .

   (iii) Improving strategic workforce planning in public administration through better integration of the general competency framework and better use of data[13] .

   (iv) Facilitating the integration of the competency framework into the national competition, based on data-driven assessments and recommendations[14] .

   (v) Developing a strategic framework aimed at improving data-driven HRM in the public administration through coherent and functional data governance mechanisms[15] .

2. **This report represents Deliverable 5 under this RAS and includes a detailed description and evaluation of the CDPARPA pilot, as well as a related package with the final training materials**

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[10] Through the Agreement for Reimbursable Technical Assistance Services to Support the National Agency of Public Servants on Human Resource Management Reforms in Romania (P503309).
[11] Activity covered by RAS Deliverable 4.
[12] This activity is covered by Deliverable 1 and this report.
[13] This activity is covered by Deliverable 2 – *Report on the use of strategic workforce planning for fiscally sustainable staffing levels in priority/selected areas* and, in part, by Deliverable 6.
[14] This activity is covered by Deliverable 5 of the RAS.
[15] Covered by Deliverable 3 – *Report with technical contributions and recommendations on the Strategy for the Civil Service, including on the development of a comprehensive data governance framework for public administration.*

used in the pilot[16] **.** The report analyzes the pilot of the CDPARPA in detail, and evaluates how the program was designed, delivered, and perceived by participants, as well as the quality of the learning processes. The report outlines the curriculum content, pedagogical approach, types of competencies targeted, the structure of the modules, the role of the trainers, the dynamics of the learning activities, and how participants interacted with the materials, case studies, and practical exercises. The report also presents quantitative and qualitative data on the participants' experience, the difficulties encountered, the level of complexity of the activities, the relevance of the content, and how the design elements supported the skill acquisition set out in the general competence framework and targeted by the CDPARPA. At the same time, the report substantiates the ways in which the CDPARPA can be replicated by different categories of training providers, namely NIA, universities, and private providers.

1.2 Methodological approach for the evaluation of the CDPARPA pilot

3. **The evaluation of the CDPARPA piloting was designed as a systematic approach with a dual function: formative and summative.** The formative dimension was related to the ongoing enhancement of the learning process throughout the program, by collecting feedback after every session and module analyzing the level involvement of the participants, and adjusting the content, methods, and pace of work in real time. The summative dimension aimed to assess the end of program, by analyzing the participants' experience, learning acquisitions, and the competencies acquired in relation to the objectives set, but also the needs for competencies that stem from the general competency framework for HLCSs and DGs.

4. **The evaluation was carried out against the general competency framework for HLCSs and DGs, which was used as a common reference for program design, training activities, and for the interpretation of the results**. In this sense, the evaluation was not limited to measuring the participants satisfaction level or the quality of the service, but sought to highlight the extent to which the training experiences supported the development of the skills necessary to perform the roles of HLCSs and DGs in complex scenarios, characterized by strategic responsibility, and focus on results of public interest.

5. **The results of the evaluation serve a dual purpose.** On the one hand, they provide a substantiated basis for adjusting and optimizing future versions of the CDPARPA by identifying the elements that work well and those that can be improved, in terms of content, methodology, and organization and delivery. On the other hand, the evaluation contributes to strengthening a coherent approach to the professional development for the HLCSs, by providing relevant information to the decision-makers and the institutions involved in the design and implementation of training programs, in line with the competency framework and the logic of career development.

6. **The methodology was built on the Kirkpatrick model**[17]**, which assesses the effectiveness of the training programs on four levels:**

    1. Participants' reaction (satisfaction and perceived relevance);
    2. Learning process (acquisition of new information, skills, and behaviors);
    3. Behavior (implementing the new competency in the workplace);
    4. Results (impact on institutional performance).

[16] The package with the final training materials is sent separately due to the large file size.
[17] Kirkpatrick, D. L., & Kirkpatrick, J. D. (2006). Evaluating training programs: The four levels (3rd ed.). Berrett-Koehler Publishers. For a detailed description of the model, see: https://www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/the-kirkpatrick-model/

7. **In this report, the analysis focused on the levels 1 and 2 of the Kirkpatrick model, namely the experience of the participant and the learning acquisition process.** This focus is in line with the evaluation framework defined in Deliverable 1 of the RAS, which recommended a phased approach for the evaluation process, correlated with the implementation stage of the CDPARPA and the availability of relevant data. According to this approach, the initial evaluation of the program aims to document the quality of the training experience and the learning progress, as a necessary basis for subsequent evaluations of the transfer of skills into practice and of the institutional impact. Levels 3 and 4 of the Kirkpatrick model were not systematically addressed at this stage, given the nature of the program (first implementation) and the lack of post-program data needed to analyze the workplace behaviors and the institutional outcomes.

8. **The assessment was also supported by a set of cross-cutting factors used for the consistent interpretation of the collected data:**

   - **Relevance** of content in addressing the targeted competency gaps;
   - **Strategic alignment** with the priorities of the Romanian public administration and the general competency framework for HLCSs;
   - **Quality of the program design and delivery**;
   - **Applicability and transferability** of the targeted competencies **in practice**.

9. **The analysis combined quantitative and qualitative methods from several main data sources**. The analysis was based on data from the following sources, collected from participants and expert trainers:

   - **Feedback forms** filled in by participants at the end of each module, providing quantitative (level of satisfaction, usefulness, clarity and interactivity scores) and qualitative (open comments on content, methodology, and relevance to professional activity) information;
   - **Trainer logs**, containing observations on group dynamics, engagement, effectiveness of training methods used, adjustments made during sessions, and recommendations for improvement;
   - **Knowledge questionnaires** used in the classroom, used to assess participants' progress in acquiring basic knowledge between key training moments and to identify topics that generated the highest or lowest level of learning.
   - **Qualitative information resulting from individual coaching sessions associated with the use of the leadership skills assessment tool**, source of insight into how participants reflect on their own leadership styles and the areas for self-development they have identified.
   - **Qualitative information** resulting from interviews with pilot participants[18] and HR managers from the institutions invited to nominate participants for the pilot.[19]

   The evaluation was based on an analysis of the score distribution, a comparison of the average values between modules, and an interpretation of the qualitative comments and observations from participants and expert trainers. The cumulative use of these sources and methods allows for a balanced interpretation of the data, providing a coherent picture on the quality of the training process and learning progress.

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[18] A total of five semi-structured interviews were conducted online with pilot participants between 20 and 30 January 2026.

[19] A total of five semi-structured interviews with HR representatives of five institutions invited to nominate participants for the CDPARPA pilot. The interviews were conducted by telephone between January 10-24, 2026.

10. **The evaluation also addresses a number of operational issues that can inform the effective implementation of future editions.** These issues are related to the pace of delivery, the training and assessment methods used, inviting relevant guests in the field to give presentations, facilitating the exchange of experience, and the identified obstacles that prevented the participants from engaging in the activities of the program. The evaluation also highlighted the participants' wish to contribute as mentors or resource persons to strengthen the skills of future groups, as well as the possibility of expanding the target group. Moreover, options for ensuring the sustainability of the program were explored, including providers who could take over the activity.

11. **The evaluation was conducted in the specific context of a pilot program, with certain limitations that must be taken into account when interpreting the results.** The relatively small number of participants and irregular turnout, due to institutional constraints and government emergencies, limit the extent to which the conclusions can be generalized. At the same time, these conditions provide valuable information on the feasibility and sustainability of the program, indicating areas that need to be adjusted in order to be able to replicate and expand the program on a larger scale.

12. **The report is structured to cover the design, implementation, evaluation, and replication of the CDPARPA pilot in a logical manner.** The document is structured as follows:

    - **Chapter 2** provides an overview of the curriculum structure, content, participant profile, and delivery mechanisms of the CDPARPA pilot

    - **Chapter 3** consists of the evaluation of the CDPARPA pilot, based on participant satisfaction scores, quality of learning, and consistency of design.

    - **Chapter 4** explores options for continuing and expanding the CDPARPA;

    - **Chapter 5** proposes a general framework and some recommendations for improving the CDPARPA in the medium and long term;

    - The **annexes** include methodological instruments, questionnaires, a database with questionnaire results, analytical summaries, and supporting materials used in the evaluation process.

2. Description and implementation of the CDPARPA pilot

2.1 Curriculum structure and targeted competencies

13. **The program structure was designed based on the general competency framework for HLCSs, with competencies serving as the basis for structuring the content and the training process.** The curriculum was conceptualized as a behavior-oriented architecture, focusing on the development of analytical and decision-making capacities and the skills necessary to perform HLCSs roles, rather than as a succession of general theoretical topics or disciplines. The training modules were used as practical instruments, in which participants practiced skills relevant to their professional activity in situations comparable to those encountered in institutional practice, with an emphasis on identifying concrete ways of transferring and applying them in their current work. For example, trainers asked questions such as *"What do you think could be implemented starting tomorrow?"* in their concluding discussions.

14. **The competency framework used in structuring the program integrates behaviors, knowledge, and skills into a coherent exercise, oriented toward the effective exercise of HLCSs functions**. In this approach, competencies are not treated exclusively as normative or axiological benchmarks, but as operational structures that can be developed through analysis, decision-making, and actions, in specific institutional contexts. This perspective has allowed for the direct correlation of learning content and activities with the required behaviors and competencies to perform effectively in HLCS functions within public administration.

15. **The starting point for the design of each model was the general competencies. The topics, content, and learning activities were developed to highlight the direct link between the targeted competencies and the specific situations addressed**. This approach made it possible to structure a learning path, that ensures both the depth of skills development and their practical applicability in relevant institutional contexts, in full coherence with the target competency framework for HLCSs.

Table 1. Curriculum structure and competences targeted by each module

Module	Module title & topics covered	Competencies targeted by the module
Module 1	*Generating Impact in Public Administration through Transformational Leadership and Corporate Governance*– focused on the role of the leaders in shaping a productive, citizen-oriented organizational culture. The module provides an approach on how to bring clarity to the institution's mission and vision, communicating the strategic direction in an inspiring way, and building a culture of integrity, accountability, and psychological well-being. It also covers topics such as leadership in the public sector, the role of the public leader in shaping a positive, citizen-oriented organizational culture.	Strategic thinking, Accountability, Strategic agility, Fostering commitment
Module 2	*Implementing Digitalization and Reorganizations in Public Institutions*– focuses on leading digital and organizational transformation processes, change management, and coordinating the institutional modernization processes.	Strategic planning and management, Vulnerability management, Accountability

Module 3	*Shaping Institutional Strategies to Achieve Results for Citizens and the Business Environment (Elective)* – focused on formulating and implementing strategies oriented towards results- inter-institutional collaboration, and the relationships with beneficiaries and stakeholders.	Strategic thinking, Strategic communication, Fostering commitment
Module 4	*Resolving Crises and Complex Situations in Public Institutions through Anticipation and Negotiation (Elective)* – develops the ability to analyze, decide, and respond in the event of a crisis, conflict, or highly uncertain situation.	Vulnerability management, Conflict mediation, Strategic agility
Module 5	*Monitoring the Performance of Institutional Strategic Plans and Investment Projects*– focuses on strategic performance management, accountability for results, and the use of data in management decision-making.	Civic responsibility Resource and process management Accountability
Module 6	*Applying Performance-Based Budgetary Management in the Public Sector*– aims to correlate budgeting with strategic objectives, efficient use of resources, and sound financial decision-making.	Resource and process management Strategic planning and organization Civic responsibility

16. **Each module was designed to create a direct link between the competencies required for HLCS positions and real-life situations, at management level, tackled across a range of contexts in terms of complexity and responsibility.** The modular structure is underpinned by a logical flow of learning, starting with defining the role of the public sector leader and the ability to generate impact through transformational leadership and corporate governance (Module 1), continuing with developing the ability to lead change processes through digitalization and institutional reorganization (Module 2). The program then moves on to the development and implementation of results-oriented strategies for citizens and the business environment (Module 3). The next module focuses on the management of crisis and handling complex contexts, which require anticipation, negotiation, and decision-making, in an environment dominated by uncertainty (Module 4). The final modules consolidate the operational and managerial responsibility dimension of public service by monitoring the performance of strategic plans and investment projects (Module 5) and by applying budget management correlated with institutional strategic objectives (Module 6).

17. **In order to highlight how the targeted competences are developed not only in a specific manner, but also transversally throughout the program, a competence-module distribution analysis was carried out**. This perspective allows for the observation of the competences approached as a priority in each module, as well as those complementary consolidated in different learning contexts, reflecting the progressive and integrated logic of the curriculum.

Table 2. Distribution of the general competencies for HLCS targeted by the CDPARPA modules (● primary; ○ complementary)

HLCSs competences	M1 Transformational leadership	M2 Digitization & reorganization	M3 Strategy shaping	M4 Crisis resolution	M5 Performance & investments	M6 Budget management
Strategic thinking	●	○	●	○	●	○
Accountability	●	●	○	○	●	○
Strategic planning and management	○	●	○	○	○	●
Strategic communication	○	○	●	●	○	○
Conflict mediation	○	○	○	●	○	○
Civic responsibility	○	○	●	○	●	●
Vulnerability management	○	●	○	●	○	○
Resource and process management	○	○	○	○	●	●
Team development	●	○	○	○	○	○
Fostering commitment	●	○	●	○	○	○
Strategic agility	●	○	○	●	○	○

18. **The distribution of the competencies across modules highlights the fact that the program does not pursue a fragmented approach to competency development, but rather a progressive consolidation, through repeated exposure in contexts of different complexity and accountability.** This curriculum structure is aligned with the logic of the general competency framework, where competencies are seen as ongoing professional development and a common reference point for designing training programs. In this sense, linking learning content and activities to a rigorously defined competency framework should not be an isolated feature of this program, but an approach that can also be used in other training initiatives for HLCSs, ensuring consistency and continuity in professional development.

2.2 Pedagogical approach and methodological options of program

19. **The pedagogical approach of the program was deliberately tailored to respond to the complexity of HLCS roles in the public administration, and the specific nature of adult training for professionals with strategic responsibilities.** The pedagogical approach of the program was based on the need to move beyond traditional teaching models, which focus on content delivery, and to create a participant-centered learning environment geared toward immediate applicability and reflection on professional practice. The methods selected were designed to integrate the participants' existing professional experience, to stimulate the active involvement in the learning process, and to facilitate

the transfer of competencies to real institutional situations specific to the exercise of HLCS functions in contexts characterized by uncertainty and interdependence. Within this framework, the program used a coherent set of methods, tools, and learning formats, which included:

- Hands-on methods such as case studies, practical exercises, real-life scenarios, active learning projects;

- Reflective learning and self-awareness tools, used as support for self-development;

- Contextual learning and experience-sharing formats, such as study visits between institutions participating in the CDPARPA pilot and experience-sharing sessions with high-level international practitioners;

- Personalized mechanisms for the support of individual development, such as mentoring and individual executive coaching sessions.

20. **From a methodological point of view, the general competency framework for HLCS served as a benchmark for the selection of learning objectives, concepts addressed, and types of learning activities.** The methods used were designed to coherently link the theoretical knowledge, working tools, and skills practiced during the sessions under the umbrella of the targeted competencies, so that each training sequence contributed to the development of behaviors and capacities relevant to HLCS roles. In this regard, practical exercises, case studies, guided reflections, the exchange of experiences between participants, and the use of working materials were aligned with skills such as strategic thinking, accountability, strategic communication, vulnerability management, and fostering organizational commitment. Through this methodology, competencies were tackled not only at a conceptual level, but through analysis, decision-making processes, and real-life situations that are similar to those encountered in everyday practice, ensuring consistency between the competency framework, the training path, and the activities carried out during the program.

21. **Experiential learning was the central pedagogical approach of the program and was intentionally used as a process for developing competencies, particularly leadership skills, by directly involving participants in analysis, problem solving, and decision-making situations in contexts relevant to their professional activity.** The approach was based on the following methodological characteristics:

- **Direct exposure of participants to certain problematic scenarios, before introducing concepts** – the learning process was designed so that participants were initially placed in contexts involving decision-making, tension, or ambiguity, similar to those encountered in their institutional roles, without first receiving theoretical any frameworks, explanatory models, or "recipes" for action. The exercises, case studies, and simulations were designed to generate authentic reactions, real dilemmas, and responses based on the participants' existing patterns of thinking and behavior. This approach allowed for the activation of the emotional and behavioral dimensions of learning.

- **Trainers as process facilitators, not providers of solutions -** during the experiential exercises, the trainers only stepped in to clarify the task and context, without indicating solutions or the "right" course of action. Their role was to support exploration through authentic questions and challenges integrated into the exercise, while maintaining decision-making responsibility at the participant level.

- **Learning through action and guided reflection** – the learning process was built on action and experience, followed by structured reflection on the decisions made and their consequences, before introducing theoretical concepts. For example, after a case study on a management decision, or after an exercise where a real life situation of inter-institutional coordination was simulated, or after an exercise that involved solving a real problem brought up by participants, the trainers were guiding the reflection with simple and direct questions*: What decision did you make? How did you motivate the decision? Where there any alternatives ? What were the effects? What would you do differently based on these findings? etc*., helping the group understand what happened and why they chose or rejected a particular course of action, before introducing the theoretical concepts or examples of good practice prepared by the trainers.

- **Flexible experiential cycles in terms duration and depth** – the methodology was implemented in learning cycles, the duration of which varied depending on the type of competency targeted. Some cycles were short, lasting 30–45 minutes (quick decision-making exercises or structured discussions on a managerial dilemma). Other cycles took place over one or two consecutive sessions (complex case studies or simulations that required in-depth analysis, teamwork and subsequent reviews of the proposed solutions).

- **Explicitly connecting concepts to professional practice and facilitating transfer** – after reflecting on the exercises, concepts were introduced, based on participants' observations and directly linked to real situations in their work frame. The transfer was facilitated by questions such as: *"How does this understanding change the way in which you are going to make similar decisions in your institution?", "What would you do differently in a real context?"* or *"What behaviors should be adjusted for this concept to be effective?*". This way, the concepts were used as practical tools for analysis and decision-making, immediately applicable in real leadership contexts.

22. **In addition to experiential learning, the program deliberately integrated knowledge co-creation and peer learning mechanisms, leveraging the professional experience of participants as a learning resource.** Trainers created structured spaces for dialogue and exchange of experience, in which participants were encouraged to bring examples from their own institutions, compare practices, and analyze solutions applied in similar contexts. Through small group work, facilitated debates, and plenary discussions, individual experiences were transformed into collective learning, and the content was constantly enriched with perspectives and good practices relevant to public administration, shared by the participants. In this process, trainers systematically used exploratory and reflective questions such as *"How does this situation look like in your institution?", "What approaches have you used in similar contexts?"* or "*What results did your actions generate?"* to stimulate comparative analysis and mutual learning among participants.

23. **Active facilitation and flexible learning activities were used to support the processes of knowledge co-creation and the real involvement of participants in the construction of learning.** Trainers acted as facilitators of the process, adapting the structure and sequence of activities to the objectives of each session and the dynamics of the group. The exercises were organized in different formats—individual work, small groups of 2–4 participants, facilitated debates, and plenary discussions—to allow for the exploration of multiple perspectives and the integration of participants' professional experiences. The working themes and examples analyzed were adjusted according to the interests and areas of applicability identified by the group, so that the learning process remained relevant, contextualized, and connected to their institutional realities.

24. **Another methodological aspect taken into account was the design of course materials as working tools integrated into the learning process, rather than as exhaustive theoretical support.** These were provided in the form of worksheets, delivered during different stages of the sessions, closely

linked to practical exercises, case studies, and moments of reflection. Trainers used the materials to structure the observations and conclusions formulated by participants, to synthesize the key ideas resulting from discussions and to support the formulation of concrete directions for use. Through this approach, the materials used supported the experiential process and the transfer of learning, avoiding overload with theoretical content without context.

25. **Furthermore, the program was structured in an intensive modular format, suitable for participants with leadership roles and limited time availability.** The training sessions were organized in compact modules, delivered over short, well-defined periods, which allowed the participants to focus on the targeted skills and their relevant applications. Between modules, participants had intervals dedicated to applying the concepts and tools in their own institutional contexts, transforming their current professional activity into a space for experimentation and consolidation of learning. This deliberate alternation between learning and application supported the continuity of the development process and the progressive integration of skills into leadership practice.

26. **The assessment process was used as an integral part of the learning process, with questionnaires that were not only meant to collect feedback, but also to facilitate the reflection and sedimentation of the learning process.** The items in the questionnaires provided at the end of each module were formulated in such a way as to invite participants to reflect on their experiences, the formulated decisions and their relevance to their own professional practice. During the sessions, the responses served as starting points for guided discussions, in which each question allowed for the clarification of concepts, alignment of perspectives, and the consolidation of a common understanding of the topics addressed. Thus, the questionnaires served as tools for structured reflection, helping participants identify what they had learned, how they could use these insights in their current work, and which aspects needed further exploration. Thus, the evaluation process actively contributed to the learning process, not just documenting it, but supporting the progressive integration of the skills developed throughout the program.

2.3 The implementation of the CDPARPA pilot

2.3.1 The selection of participants and the assessment process

27. **The registration and selection process for the CDPARPA pilot was based on a methodology developed by the NACS and the World Bank teams.** The methodology included eligibility and selection criteria for participants, a description of the selection process, the timetable for its implementation, and the required documents. The principles applied in the selection of participants were equal treatment, objectivity, equal opportunities, confidentiality, and transparency. For this program, 21 places were allocated for participants from the 16 ministries, the General Secretariat of the Government, and central public administration institutions that coordinate NRRP investments and reforms. Subsequently, the list of eligible institutions was expanded to include institutions and agencies that support the implementation of the NRRP and manage complex administrative processes, which are subordinate to/coordinated by/under the authority of ministries and Parliament.

28. **In order to fit the purpose of the CDPARPA, the NACS and WB teams established eligibility criteria meant to narrow down the target group to HLCS and DG positions with substantial experience in the role.** The eligibility criteria referred to whether the applicant fits one of the following categories: (i) SG/DSG in office, with at least 3 years of professional experience in HLCS and/or DG positions in the last 5 years, and (ii) DG in office within the institution, with at least 3 years of professional experience in HLCS and/or DG positions in the last 5 years. Priority was given to those who passed the first stage of the National Competition for a position in the HLCS category and to

nominated participants who held or hold, at the time of enrolment in the program, the position of NRRP investment and reform coordinator. Completion of the specialized training program for a public position in the HLCS category run by NIA was an advantage in the selection process. Each eligible invited institution had the opportunity to submit two nominations: the first for the place allocated to the institution, subject to compliance with the eligibility and selection criteria, and the second one, in case some places remain available after the submission of applications.

29. **Among the requirements for entering the program referred to meeting the deadlines for submitting the application and providing the required documentation for the nomination of participants in the CDPARPA pilot.** The selection criteria established were: registration within the deadline mentioned in the NACS request for registration, providing all the information and data, and submitting all the required documents, as well as meeting the quantitative requirements, with one participant from each eligible institution. The methodology included a provision that if all 21 places available were not filled after the applications had been submitted, the NACS would verify if the eligibility and selection criteria were also met for the second person proposed. The list of documents to be submitted included an updated curriculum vitae for the nominated participants, identifying the specific period(s) and dates during which the candidate held of HLCS or DG in the last 5 years, an individual application form, which includes consent for personal data processing and the designation letter signed by the head of the institution.

30. **Following the submission of the application and the evaluation process, NACS confirmed 26 eligible applications from the institutions concerned.** There were 31 applications submitted to NACS the CDPARPA pilot program – 26 of which were eligible, while 5 did not meet the eligibility criteria. Of the selected participants, 4 did not confirm their place, and 1 person withdrew. After filling the places, NACS drafted the List of participants selected for this program (which consisted of 21 participants) and sent an information message to each registered person regarding the outcome of the selection process.

2.3.2 Timeline and implementation process of the CDPARPA pilot

The drafting of learning materials

31. **The learning materials were drafted by the WB team, based on the learning objectives and training plans defined together with the NACS in Deliverable 1 of the RAS.** After NACS validated the detailed training plans for each of the six modules in Deliverable 1 of the RAS (which included topics, training objectives, performance criteria for describing the hands-on activities, agendas, and descriptions of the hands-on activities), the WB team drafted the set of training materials to support the module. The training materials were based on a set of standard preparation guidelines and included course materials, PowerPoint presentations, detailed hands-on activities, including instructions for use and delivery during the course, worksheets, and multiple-choice tests. The training materials addressed and described the most important managerial processes relevant to the topics of the modules, as well as the tools or methods used for this purpose. At the same time, the course materials include clear examples and references regarding their application at the level of central public administration. The materials included details on the stages of implementation of the processes and methods, recommendations of use, but also challenges, and problems encountered in practice. To draft the hands-on exercises, the WB team defined the associated training objectives and detailed the work task, specifying the context, any limitations in terms actions, working timeline, and resources available. Each application provides enough background information to enable the fulfilment of the requirements to be met and includes the necessary forms and worksheets for participants.

32. **The learning applications were developed to respond to the regulatory framework in force in the Romanian public administration, as well as to the regulated instruments and good practices identified in their application.** The WB team developed the learning applications based on the following criteria:

- Usefulness of the tools and methods presented, in terms of the administrative processes they support, including applicable legislation;
- The use of relevant examples where the tools and methods have been successfully implemented, but also cases where the desired results have not been achieved;
- The quality level of the use process and the results;
- Common errors encountered in practice and the possible implications;
- Provide participants with a safe and appropriate framework for asking questions and sharing relevant situations from their work; and
- Formulate conclusions and recommendations that may have an impact on participants' work.

33. **The learning materials were reviewed and validated iteratively, based on the NACS technical contributions.** During the drafting stage, the NACS and WB teams met during regular working meetings, for written observations and quality analysis. The finalization process included one or two rounds of feedback, depending on the specifics of the materials.

Implementation of the CDPARPA pilot

34. **The CDPARPA pilot consisted of 162 hours of learning over five months (August-December 2025), divided into 114 hours of training through six modules, 30 hours of mentoring and exchange of experience, and 18 hours of self-learning**. The proposed schedule for the 162 hours of learning underwent some changes in order to (i) harmonize the training sessions with the participants' agenda and the government meetings in which most of them were involved, and (ii) respond to the request of several participants to take both elective modules. Those adjustments are presented in the table below, and the detailed implementation schedule is presented in Annex 1. The adjustments were discussed and agreed upon between the NACS and the WB teams and concerned the following aspects:

- Dividing certain training days that amounted to 6 hours of training into 2 sessions of 3 hours each;
- The introduction of pilot online sessions lasting between 2 and 3 hours; and
- Changing the time slot for certain training days and rescheduling some modules to allow participants to attend both elective modules.

The adjustments did not affect the total amount of time measured in days and hours of training corresponding to each module and each development activity established, which facilitated the active participation of the target group. The length of the program measured in days and hours of training remained the same.

Table 3. Proposed schedule and adjustments made during the implementation period

Planned activity	Activity carried out	Duration (days/training hours)	Proposed schedule	Delivered schedule
Opening conference	Opening conference	0.5 days/ 3 hours	26.08.2025	26.08.2025
Module 1. Generating impact in public administration through transformational leadership and corporate governance	Module 1. Generating impact in public administration through transformational leadership and corporate governance	7 days / 42 hours	23.08.2025	22.08.2025 23.08.2025 29.08.2025
			4.09.2025 5.09.2025	4.09.2025 5.09.2025
			12.09.2025 13.09.2025	12.09.2025 13.09.2025
Module 2. Management and acceleration of public investment programs	Module 2. Digitization of the public institutions and reorganization	3 days / 18 hours	2.10.2025 3.10.2025 4.10.2025	30.09.2025 1.10.2025 3.10.2025 4.10.2025
Module 3. Implementing digitalization and reorganization in public institutions	Module 3. Shaping institutional strategies to achieve results for citizens and the business environment (elective)	3 days / 18 hours	23.10.2025 24.10.2025 25.10.2025	21.10.2025 22.10.2025 24.10.2025 25.10.2025
Module 4. Applying performance-based budget management in the public sector	Module 4. Addressing crises and complex situations in public institutions through anticipation and negotiation (elective)	3 days / 18 hours	13.11.2025 14.11.2025 15.11.2025	31.10.2025 01.11.2025 5.11.2025 07.11.2025
Module 5. Shaping institutional strategies for citizen outcomes (elective)	Module 5. Monitoring the performance of institutional strategic plans and investment projects	3 days / 18 hours	4.12.2025 5.12.2025 6.12.2025	18.11.2025 19.11.2025 21.11.2025 22.11.2025
Module 6. Solving crises and complex situations in public institutions through anticipation and negotiation (elective)	Module 6. Applying performance-based budget management in the public sector	3 days / 18 hours	4.12.2025 5.12.2025 6.12.2025	02.12.2025 03.12.2025 05.12.2025 12.12.2025
Leadership style assessment and executive coaching for interpreting results	Leadership style assessment and executive coaching for interpreting results	0.5 days / 3 hours	18.08 – 25.09.2025	22.08 – 15.10.2025
Exchange of experience session 1	Exchange of experience session 1: Digital transformation in the public sector	0.5 days / 3 hours	06.10-10.10.2025	14.10.2025
Exchange of experience session 2	Exchange of experience session 2:	0.5 days / 3 hours	03.11-07.11.2025	04.11.2025

	Results-oriented public sector reforms			
Exchange of experience session 3	Exchange of experience session 3 of exchange of experiences: The role of the HLCSs in managing reforms and the skills required in OECD countries	0.5 days / 3 hours	24.11-28.11.2025	25.11.2025
Technical mentoring sessions	Technical mentoring sessions	1 day / 6 hours	Throughout the program, up to 4 1.5-hour sessions	Throughout the program, up to 4 1.5-hour sessions
Study visits to institutions represented by participants	Study visit 1. Partner: Romanian Court of Accounts	0.5 days / 3 hours	Not included in the initial schedule	15.01.2026
	Study visit 2. Partner: Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure	0.5 days / 3 hours	Not included in the initial schedule	Scheduled for February 2026
	Study visit 3. Partner: Ministry of Investment and European Projects	0.5 days / 3 hours	Not included in the initial schedule	17.02.2026
	Study visit 4. Partner: Ministry of Culture	0.5 days / 3 hours	Not included in the initial schedule	Scheduled for March 2026
	Study visit 5. Partner: Ministry of Internal Affairs	0.5 days / 3 hours	Not included in the initial schedule	Scheduled for March 2026
	Study visit 6. Partner: National House of Public Pension	0.5 days / 3 hours	Not included in the initial schedule	Scheduled for March 2026
Presentation of active learning project results	Presentation - results of the active learning project	0.5 days / 3 hours	15.12.2025	20.01.2026 26.01.2026 (1) 26.01.2026 (2)
Closing conference	Closing conference	1 day / 6 hours	17.12.2025	27.01.2026

35. **As part of the groundwork for the CDPARPA pilot, participants received structured assessments and counseling, to help them evaluate their own mindset and behavior styles related to leadership competencies.** With the help of a certified assessment tool and certified assessors, participants had the chance to see how they fit into different leadership types. Subsequently, participants were invited to attend individual executive coaching sessions, dedicated to analyzing and interpreting their results, in order to facilitate understanding. The executive coaching sessions were conducted according to the participants' schedule. Of the 22 sessions allocated, 21 participants completed the questionnaire. Due to the participants' busy schedules, in the case of 6 people, the executive coaching session was rescheduled and took place at a later date. Thus, the organization of the executive coaching sessions

was adapted to the participants' schedule, being perceived as flexible and efficient in terms of length and scheduling. These sessions focused on leadership competencies were complemented by individual sessions aimed at applying the other specific competencies targeted by the program, as described in the following paragraphs.

36. **The use of the self-assessment tool, complemented by individual executive coaching sessions, was perceived by participants as a relevant and valuable approach to the process of self-awareness and professional development**. All participants appreciated the value of the information provided in the generated reports, the clarity of the explanations, and the safe environment created during the feedback sessions, which helped them reflect on their own mindsets and behavior styles. Participants' intention is to apply the feedback they received in practice to improve communication and relationships, in particular by increasing empathy, adjusting their discourse and attitude, and optimizing their communication style in difficult or crisis situations. Furthermore, the participants expressed the willingness to reinforce constructive behaviors such as collaboration, teamwork in identifying solutions, and developing a favorable working environment, while reducing functional behaviors associated with defensiveness. These intentions indicate a good understanding of the logic behind the tool, and of the link between individual mindsets and styles and collective performance.

Table 4. Schedule for the analysis tool and executive coaching sessions

Activity	Date	Length	Training hours	Total hours	Location	Attendance
Instrument implementation	August 22, 2025-October 17, 2025	According to each participant's agenda	Maximum 2 hours	3 hours	In person, online	21
Executive coaching session	August 25, 2025-October 17, 2025	According to the schedule set by the expert and participants	Maximum 1 hour		In person, online	20

37. **The modules in the CDPARPA pilot were complemented by three sessions of exchange of experiences, in the form of *fireside* talks, with high-level international practitioners.** The exchange of experiences sessions took place according to the schedule presented in the table below and had the following objectives:
    - Facilitating the exchange of practices and knowledge with international experts in relevant fields of activity
    - Generating opportunities for structured *networking* within the group, based on current topics of broad interest to participants; and
    - Encouraging reflection on the progress made in significant projects and reforms carried out to date, but also on the challenges encountered, and ways to address them.

    Every session was also attended by international experts with extensive experience in implementing major program portfolios, dignitaries and specialists from the Prime Minister's Office and the General Secretariat of the Government of Romania, and by experts from the World Bank.

38. **The first session focused on digital transformation in the public sector, with the participation of international experts in the field** of **digitization.** Discussions were structured around reforms for the digital transformation in the public sector, with a focus on the strategic and operational levels, with topics such as strategic leadership and partnership with the senior management, preconditions for digital transformation, creating an enabling and supportive framework for digital transformation, digital transformation in difficult times, planning, implementing, and adapting digital reforms in restrictive

budgetary contexts, and tools used internationally to support digital transformation. The reforms were illustrated with real-life examples, presenting both positive and negative cases, as well as ways in which specific methodologies and tools developed by the World Bank were applied.

39. **The second session was dedicated to orienting public sector reforms towards results and impact. During the session, the invited experts presented tools and approaches for** integrating and evaluating the results and impact of programs and projects in the public sector. The experts presented latest trends in the use of AI in evaluation, and examples of good practices in the development and implementation of dashboards, highlighting the challenges encountered at the strategic and operational levels.

40. **The third session focused on inter-institutional coordination of reforms and the mandatory skills required for the HLCS position in the OECD member states**. Experts discussed the leadership requirements for effective coordination at the level of central government and ministries, the role of the central government in identifying and coordinating priorities across the government, and the correlation between strategic planning and budgeting and policy implementation functions. Particular attention was paid to the role of the HLCS in strategic planning, priority setting, policy implementation, as well as the professional developments of HLCSs. The dialogue between the guest speakers and the participants also provided a ground for further discussion on the topics presented and on Romania's ongoing accession process to the OECD, as well as the ongoing governance reforms.

Table 5. Calendar of the experience-sharing sessions during the CDPARPA pilot

Activity	Date	Duration	Duration	Location	Attendance
Session 1: Digital transformation in the public sector	14.10.2025	4:00 p.m. – 7:30	3 hours	In person	13
Session 2: Evaluating results and impact	November 4, 2025	4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	3 hours	In person	9
Session 3 The role of HLCS in managing reforms and the skills required in OECD countries	November 25, 2025	5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	3 hours	In person	9

41. **The implementation of the CDPARPA pilot was monitored by the NACS team using a standardized form applied to each activity.** To monitor the progress of the pilot and the quality of the activities, NACS used a structured monitoring tool, presented below. This was filled in by each member of the NACS project team who participated in the training sessions. At the end of the modules, NACS sent the completed forms to the WB team for incorporation of the recommendations and suggestions into the activity.

Table 6. Form used by NACS to monitor the implementation of activities within the CDPARPA pilot

No.	Aspect monitored	Addressed		Comments
		YES	NO	
1.	The topics included in the training plan were addressed and distributed evenly throughout the day			
2.	The practical applications mentioned in the Training Plan were carried out during the training day			
3.	The training objectives were achieved			

4.	The trainer clearly presented the tasks of the hands-on exercise and the expected results			
5.	Participants received the necessary support materials to carry out the exercises			
6.	Participants were actively involved in solving the tasks, in presenting the results, and providing feedback			
7.	The debriefing sessions included key messages and lessons learned that were useful for the participants' work			
8.	The trainer emphasized the relevance of the competencies covered in the General Competency Framework			
9.	Number of participants	**Attendance list**		
10.	Observer data	**Attendance list**		**Signature**
Suggestions and recommendations:				

42. **The centralization of participant experiences, collected through feedback questionnaires at the end of each module, indicated that the program was perceived as highly useful for future professional development**. At the same time, participants particularly appreciated the clarity of the explanations and the examples provided by the facilitator to deepen the learning process.

Table 7. Centralization of participant experience collected through feedback questionnaires

Evaluated Characteristic	M1.1	M1.2	M2.1	M2.2	M3	M4	M5	M6
Overall usefulness of training sessions	4.9	4.6	4.6	4.85	4.9	5.0	5.0	4.7
The facilitator explained clearly	5.0	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.7	5.0	4.5
The facilitator engaged the participants	4.9	4.5	4.5	4.7	4.4	4.8	4.3	4.7
The facilitator provided relevant examples	4.8	4.2	4.2	4.7	4.7	4.9	4.9	4.8
Content was easy to understand	5.0	4.4	4.4	4.8	4.9	5.0	4.8	4.7
Content is useful in professional activity	4.9	4.0	4.0	4.7	4.8	4.9	4.4	4.7
Content is valuable for professional development	4.9	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.9	4.8	4.9	4.7

Notes: M1.1: Leadership in the Public Sector M1.2: Corporate Governance M2.1: Digitalization M2.2: Reorganizations M3: Strategy Modeling M4: Crisis Resolution M5: Monitoring ISP (Public Internal Audit/Internal Control) Performance and Investment Projects M6: Budgetary Management

43. **The WB team systematically evaluated the relevance and complexity of the learning tools used in the training program to ensure that they effectively support the achievement of learning objectives and are suitable for the level of proficiency of the participants**. WB experts assessed the complexity of the applications using a standardized tool, presented in Annex 1 for each module. The assessments conducted by the experts shall be used to (i) select or adapt applications according to the profile of the learners and the objectives of the program, (ii) calibrate the difficulty level of the exercises and case studies, (iii) adjust the teaching sequence (gradual introduction vs. advanced use), and (iv) support decisions on further investments in digital tools or teaching methods, thus, contributing to the increased effectiveness, coherence, and relevance of the training program. Trainers evaluated each practical application in the training plan using the following criteria:

- Level of complexity of the tasks to be solved, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1-very low complexity, 3-medium complexity, 5-very high complexity);

- Level of engagement and involvement of participants in solving the tasks, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1-very low, 3-moderate, 5-very high);

- Quality of the results achieved after solving the practical applications, on a scale from 1 to 10;

- Participants' view on the applicability of the application to their professional activity, on a scale from 1 to 5 (1-very low, 3-moderate, 5-very high).

44. **To complete the program, participants drafted an active learning project in which they applied the competencies targeted by the program to a specific situation in their own institution.** Drafting and presenting the final project was one of the conditions for completing the program and obtaining the certificate of participation. The stage will consist of a 15/20-minute presentation for each participant, followed by questions and recommendations for improvement from colleagues and trainers. The objectives of the active learning project are:

    - To facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills acquired within the program;

    - To assess whether the competencies acquired can be applied in a clearly defined institutional context, with a high probability of being applied or capitalized on in the near future;

45. **In drafting the active learning project, participants had access to up to four, 90 minutes mentoring sessions with the team of trainers, adjusted to their needs**. These sessions took place online or in person, depending on the participants' preferences. The mentors were the same trainers who were involved in the preparation and implementation of the pilot. The role of the mentors was to guide the participants throughout the drafting of the project, to support them in integrating the topic into the institutional context, and to provide advice on the correct application of the tools, according to the methodology presented in the course support material and/or in the relevant legislation. At the beginning of each mentoring session, the objectives were agreed upon together with the selected mentors. All 22 program participants accessed the mentoring sessions.

46. **In the drafting of the active learning project, the participants had to demonstrate the application of at least one tool presented in the program**, in an institutional context in which the participant works or has worked, with a high probability of applying or capitalizing on it in the near future. Capitalization of results refers to how said results can be integrated and replicated in certain administrative processes. Participants selected topics either from the list of suggested topics provided in the pilot launch brochure, or from topics recommended by the training team during the program. The topic was adjusted based on the institutional priorities and/or the area of personal competency development. Some projects focused on the project development and/or reforms currently being finalized or implemented, or on methods to ensure their sustainability. Each participant had the opportunity to choose their topic, the only essential requirement being to use at least one of the tools presented during the program.

47. **In drafting the active learning projects, the participants had to follow the structure proposed by the NACS and the WB teams.** The proposed structure included the following recommended sections: objectives, importance and relevance for the institution, current situation, methodology, challenges encountered in using the tool (if applicable), the results achieved after applying the tool, the results achieved after implementation, the action plan for implementation, the resource requirements and the

main risks identified, the relationship between the topic and the other modules in the program, and details about the skills covered by the general skills framework. The table below contains the proposed guidelines for approaching each section.

Table 8. Guidelines for approaching each section of the final active learning project

No	Section	Aspects to be covered
1.	Objectives, importance, and relevance for the institution	What made you choose this topic? What are the objectives of this project? What do you want to achieve by implementing it? Why do you consider this project to be important or a priority for your institution? How is the project useful for the institution you represent?
2.	Presentation of the current state	Present the current context using data and information from valid and verifiable sources. You can include tables, graphs, process diagrams, images, etc. to support your statements. How many people are affected by this situation? How many institutions/structures/employees/processes are affected by this situation? What consequences may arise if the issue is not addressed?
3.	Methodology	The tool used in the program. You can use and combine several tools from the program. What were the steps in applying the tool(s)?
4.	Challenges in using the tool (if applicable)	What challenges did you encounter while using the tool? (E.g., lack of data, lack of reference values, etc.) How did you overcome these challenges? What solutions did you apply that could be useful to other colleagues interested in applying this tool?
5.	The output achieved by applying the instrument	Include output achieved after implementing the instrument (e.g., designed TO BE process diagram, revised set of indicators, analysis, plan, revised set of indicators, revised performance report)
6.	Results achieved following implementation	What results do you anticipate following the implementation of the project? How will you measure success? What indicators could you use?
7.	Action plan for implementation, necessary resources, and main risks identified	List the main activities for project implementation and the associated deadlines. Estimate the resources needed to carry out the planned activities Identify the main risks associated with the implementation of the project and the control measures. Note: The action plan may cover both implementation within the institution through its own resources, within a timetable designed to ensure the sustainability of the initiative, and access to sources of funding for projects involving the procurement of IT services, etc.
8.	Link the topic to other modules in the program	What other tools from other modules covered in this program could you use in the implementation of your project and for what purpose?
9.	Competencies from the General Competency Framework	What are the competencies and sub-competencies you have practiced in preparing your active learning project? Provide specific examples, using the behavioral indicators from the general competency framework, adapted to this context.

48. **The WB team drafted a set of proposals for the methods and tools that can be used in the drafting of the active learning projects, combining content from several modules covered by participants in the CDPARPA.** Thus, participants were able to choose (recommended, but not mandatory) between the following tools and methods:

- Organizational diagnosis
- Institutional development plan
- AS IS – TO BE process analysis
- Digital transformation plan
- Stakeholder analysis
- Strategy implementation monitoring
- Tool for presenting and justifying normative acts
- Integration of the views expressed by CCEIAN
- The process of preparing for and conducting institutional negotiations
- Analysis of the vulnerabilities of a public institution
- Institutional continuity plan
- Annual performance report on the implementation of budget program indicators
- Template for ISP indicators: impact, result, and immediate achievement
- The monitoring process concerning the implementation status of the project portfolio
- Budget programming process
- Analysis of a public investment program
- Cost-benefit analysis.

49. **The World Bank team provided feedback on each of the active learning projects against seven pre-defined criteria, applied uniformly.** The seven criteria are as follows:

- Correct use of the tool, as per the methodology presented in the corresponding module
- Compliance with the indicated structure
- Relevance of the project for the institution,
- Supporting arguments with data from valid and verifiable sources,
- Degree of applicability,
- Feasibility of the intervention (in the case of large-scale projects involving reforms or investments) and
- General competencies developed.

For each criterion, the WB team formulated the corresponding descriptors, listed in the table below.

Table 9. Details of the analysis criteria used for the active learning projects prepared by the participants in the CDPARPA pilot

No	Assessment criteria	Details of the Assessment criteria
1.	Correct use of the instrument, according to the methodology	Is the instrument used correctly, according to the methodology presented in the course material and/or in the relevant legislation?
2.	Compliance with the indicated structure	Does the project comply with the recommended structure? Does the project cover the required aspects?
3.	Relevance of the project for the institution	Is the project relevant and useful for the institution, for its established priorities or for the challenges it faces?

4.	Supported by data and information from valid and verifiable sources	Is the description of the current situation supported by data and information from valid and verifiable sources?
5.	Degree of applicability	Can the proposed project be implemented in the institution in the near future? Can the project be capitalized on within the institution through the effective use of results and their integration into certain administrative processes?
6.	Feasibility of the intervention (in the case of large-scale projects involving reforms or investments)	Is the established implementation schedule realistic? Do the estimated resources cover the planned activities and are they well-founded?
7.	General competencies developed	In drafting the project, were any of the general competencies practiced?

50. **The final project presentations were held across three sessions: January 20 (13 participants), January 26 (2 participants), and January 26 (7 participants).** Although three hours were initially scheduled for all presentations, the actual time significantly exceeded the allocation, reaching a cumulative total of over 10 training/development hours, due to high participant interest, numerous questions, and discussions regarding the impact of the proposals and their institutional replication potential. The team of trainers involved in developing and delivering the modules attended the final presentations, asked questions, provided suggestions for improvement regarding institutional application, and facilitated the exchange of experience among participants. To complete their projects, participants utilized tools and methods from all five "technical" modules within the program and addressed current, relevant themes for their respective institutions.

Table 10. Centralization of active learning final project topics and the modules from which the tools and methods were selected

No.	Active Learning Final Project Topic	M2.1	M2.2	M3	M4	M5.1	M5.2	M6
1	Institutional development plan for the substantiation and drafting of normative acts in the Ministry of Internal Affairs		●	●				
2	Digitalization and optimization of anti-doping testing		●	●				
3	Integrated Human Resources Management System		●					
4	Digital transformation plan for the new Integrated Information System of the National Public Pension House		●	●				
5	Renegotiating the NRRP (National Recovery and Resilience Plan)			●				
6	Utilization of viewpoints formulated by CCEIAN			●				
7	Digital transformation of the Romanian Army			●				
8	Drafting of normative acts within the Ministry of Investments and European Projects			●				
9	Conflict mediation and rebuilding trust. Case study: The PREVENT Project				●			
10	Analysis of vulnerabilities of the General Directorate responsible for managing the NRRP, the Modernization Fund, and the Institutional Continuity Plan				●			

11	Crisis Management and Business Continuity Planning for European projects in the Ministry of Investments and European Projects to increase resilience				●			
12	Increasing the Institutional Resilience of the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure through Integrated Crisis Management and Continuity Planning				●			
13	Conclusion of an Agreement with Germany based on Art. 41 of Regulation (EC) No. 883/2004 on the reimbursement of the cost of benefits in kind granted to Romanian workers in Germany				●			
14	Resilience of the Supreme Audit Institution during the Covid-19 pandemic				●			
15	Management of consular crises at the level of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs				●			
16	Reflecting the activity of the National Agency of Civil Servants in the Institutional Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Development, Public Works, and Administration					●		
17	Analysis of the Institutional Strategic Plan for 2026-2029 developed by the Ministry of Education and Research					●		
18	Vision for calculating performance indicators according to the National Public Procurement Strategy					●		
19	Investment maturity assessment tool – applications at the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure						●	
20	Beyond numbers: Monitoring and increasing investment performance in the National Energy System (SEN) of Romania						●	
21	Comparison of the old ALOP (OMFP 1792/2002) with the new ALOP (OMF 1140/2025)							●
22	Monitoring the 2023-2025 budget execution at the Ministry of Culture							●

Notes: M1.1: Leadership in the Public Sector M1.2: Corporate Governance M2.1: Digitalization M2.2: Reorganizations M3: Strategy Modeling M4: Crisis Resolution M5: Monitoring ISP (Public Internal Audit/Internal Control) Performance and Investment Projects M6: Budgetary Management

Communication strategy and plan for the pilot

51. **The communication strategy[20] for the pilot edition of the program proposed by the WB team was aimed at increasing awareness, involvement, and credibility.** The goal of the strategy was to not only attract eligible participants based on the selection methodology, but also to get the institutional and political leadership support needed to make sure they stay involved during the program and then apply the acquired skills they learn at work.

52. **The communication strategy implemented by NACS, at the proposal of the WB team, included branding elements (visual and narrative identity), a replicable communication plan, and a set of**

[20] According to section 3.3.1 of Deliverable 1 of the RAS.

measurement and evaluation indicators. The visual identity of the program was integrated into NACS's broader efforts to ensure the visual consistency of MRU initiatives and reforms managed under the NRRP.

53. **The implementation of the communication strategy was aligned with NACS's existing communication strategies and with the approach to promoting reforms and investments financed through the NRRP[21].** The different structures involved were assigned with communication responsibilities, with coordination at the level of the External Financing and Public Policy Directorate, with the support of the NACS Communication and International Relations Service and with the involvement of NACS management.

54. **In evaluating the CDPARPA pilot communication strategy, the team took into account the objectives, activities, and indicators defined in the Communication Strategy and Plan**[22]. The analysis included in this report reflects the results achieved in the three phases of the program communication, namely (i) before the pilot and (ii) during the pilot, and (iii) after the pilot. The communication evaluation was carried out taking into account the quantitative and qualitative data collected during the implementation phase**.**

Table 11. Performance indicators statistics for the CDPARPA pilot communication strategy

Phase and objective	Communication channels	Performance indicators
Before pilot: Raising awareness and ensuring institutional support	- Letters to the eligible institutions to nominate participants - Letters to the head of the institutions - Publication of the presentation brochure on the NACS.gov.ro website - Webinars for nominated persons	**- 23 institutions targeted by tailored information efforts.** **- 15 participants in web seminars** presenting the program. **- 90 questions and requests for** additional information **- Involvement in terms of promotional materials:** **-2,520 visits** on the website, **-613 downloads** of the brochure
During the pilot: Ensuring engagement and supporting the learning experience	The launch of the pilot was communicated through: - An opening conference event (26.08.2025) - Press release by the NACS on their respective website and social media channels - Content on social media	**- Social media activity indicators** (approx. 50,000 views, approx. 250 reactions). **- 6 articles in the media** **- 80% of participants** attended at least one informal networking event.
After the pilot: Ensuring sustainability and graduate involvement	The end of the pilot was communicated through:	**- 50 participants at the closing conference** **- Number of distributions and uses of the promotional kit** by HLCS

[21] Strategy for promoting and communicating the reform measures and investments of the National Agency for Civil Servants financed from the National Recovery and Resilience Plan for the period October 2024 – June 2026 https://www.NACS.gov.ro/media/3amf21rj/strategia-de-promovare-%C5%9Fi-comunicare-a-m%C4%83surilor-de-reform%C4%83-%C8%99i-investi%C8%9Biilor-NACS-finan%C8%9Bate-din-pnrr.pdf

[22] Ibid.

	- Informative newsletter to participants and heads of institutions - A closing conference and graduation ceremony - Workshop to disseminate best practices following the pilot to potential training providers (02.02.2026) - Content on social media	providers, mentors, and stakeholders. **- 10 success stories and testimonials collected**

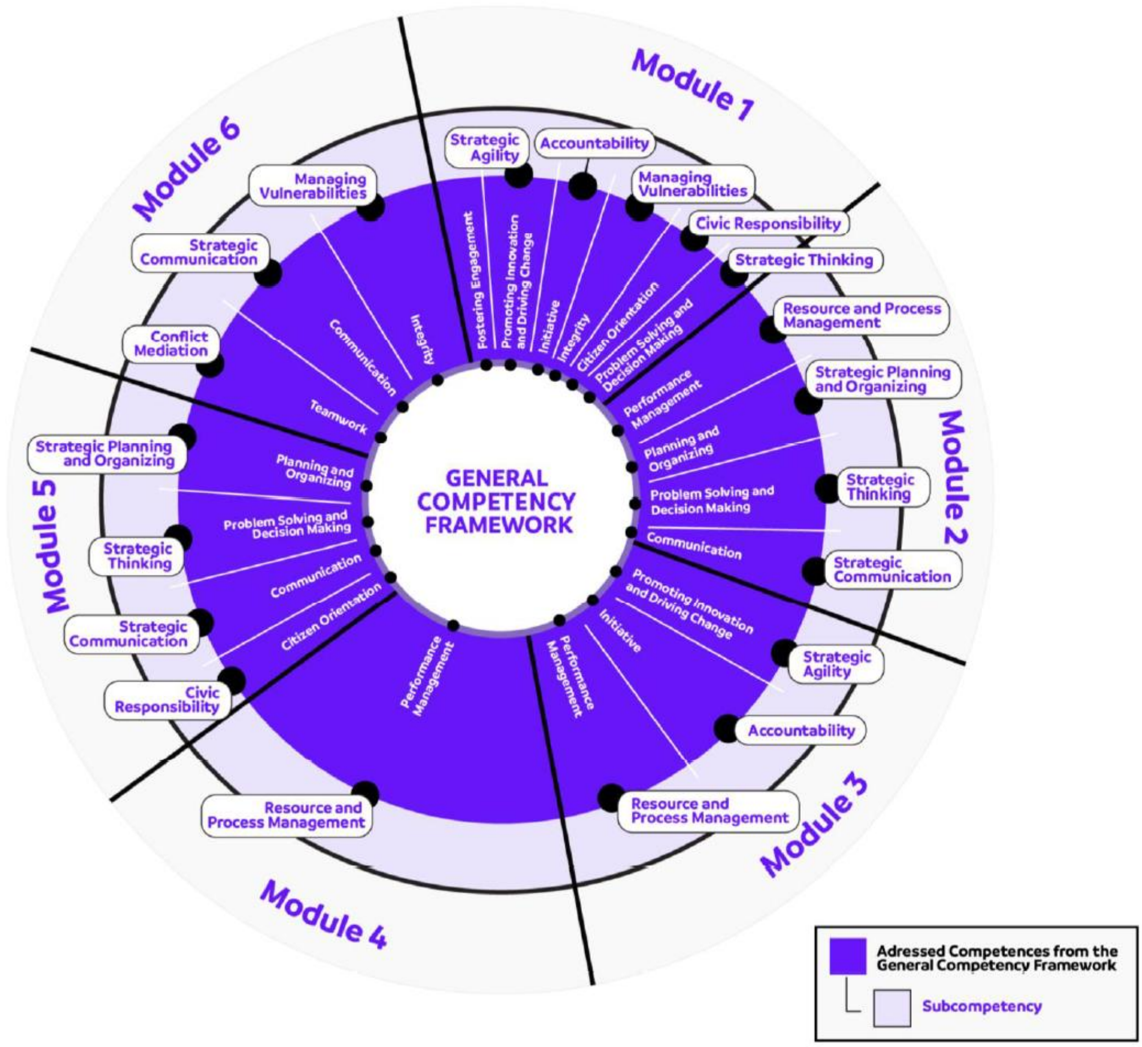
55. **The visual identity of the program was designed to ensure consistency, recognition, and alignment with NRRP requirements (Figure 1)**. Compliance with the visual identity guidelines in force was ensured (use of the purple color associated with NACS projects in the field of human resources management and the integration of visual elements related to NRRP). The materials were designed to convey professionalism, clarity, and strategic relevance, avoiding visual overload, and insuring readability and information structuring.

56. **The decision not to design a special logo for the program was determined by NRRP communication constraints and obligations**. Instead of a distinct logo, the visual identity was built through a set of recognizable graphic elements, used consistently in all communication and learning materials, both on physical media, such as A3 posters, and on digital media, such as the presentation brochure, infographics, and social media posts.

Figure 1. Cover of the pilot presentation brochure

57. **A central element of the visual identity proposed by the WB team was a representation of the general competencies targeted by each module (Figure 2 and Figure 3).** The visual breakdown of the competencies targeted by each of the modules allowed for a clear understanding of the program structure and of the direct link between the training content and the objectives of the modules.

Figure 2. Illustration of the link between the general competency framework and the CDPARPA modules



Module 1: Generating impact in public administration through transformational leadership and corporate governance

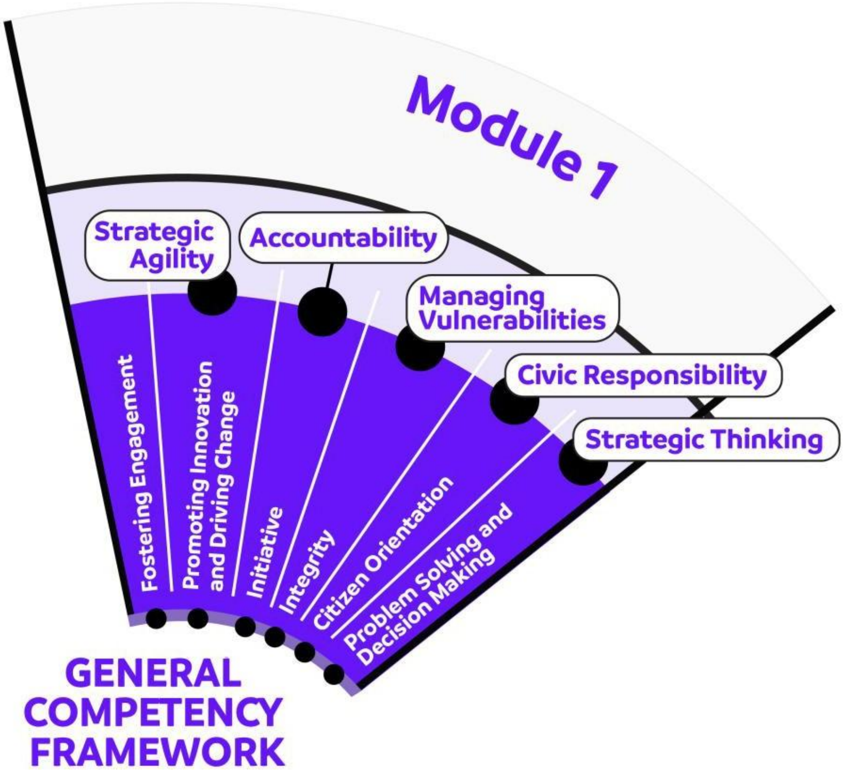
Module 2: Managing and accelerating public investment programs

Module 3: Implementing digitalization and reorganizations in public institutions

Module 4: Applying performance-based budget management in the public sector

Module 5: Shaping institution strategies for results for citizens (elective)
or
Module 6: Solving crises and complex situations in public institutions through anticipation and negotiation (elective)

Figure 3. Presentation of the competencies targeted per module. Here, module 1.



58. **The verbal identity of the program was built around the full name "Competency Development Program for Accelerating Results in Public Administration."** The name was used consistently in all materials, institutional communications, and public appearances, reinforcing the program's positioning as a strategic executive development initiative. At the same time, the verbal identity was reinforced by key messages proposed by the WB team, to be used by NACS in all communications forms on the pilot (Box 1).

59. **For digital and social media communication, the NACS team used hashtags in line with the program's identity and the NRRP context.** Hashtags such as #DezvoltareCompetente, #AdministratiePublica, #Leadership, #functionaripublici, #competenta, #AdministratiePerformanta, #PNRR, and #Jalon419 were used to ensure message consistency, content visibility, and a clear association of the program with ongoing reforms.

Box 1. Key messages used by NACS for external communication about pilot

- **The National Agency for Civil Servants, with the support of the World Bank, is piloting the Competency Development Program for Accelerating Results in Public Administration**, from August to December 2025
- **This is the first development program dedicated to strengthening the skills of SG/DSG and DG in public administration**, developed in line with general skills framework applicable to public service, regulated by the Administrative Code (Annex 8).
- **The main objective of the program is to increase the performance of public administration** to effectively and efficiently implement budget programs and structural reforms in order to achieve the results citizens expect from public institutions.

- **The program is closely linked to Romania's reform priorities**, as defined in the 2025–2028 Government Program, and to the commitments made under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), particularly those related to the modernization of public administration through improved human resource management.
- **The pilot edition allows 21 civil servants** in SG/DGA and DG positions with substantial professional experience from ministries, the General Secretariat of the Government, and institutions that serve as reform and investments coordinators for the NRRP **to participate free of charge.**
- **The program contributes to the improvement of institutional performance by strengthening the competencies needed for**:
  - coordinating and implementing reform and public investment programs;
  - planning and using budgetary and institutional resources to achieve strategic targets;
  - preparing and implementing operational, organizational, and digital transformation initiatives;
  - applying appropriate intervention models, and conducting negotiations to manage critical, urgent, or complex situations.
- **The program incorporates best practices from similar programs for high level civil servants in OECD and EU member states** and has been fully adapted to the training and development priorities of the Romanian public administration.
- The program is designed in accordance with the learning and development standards for adults[23] and with the training guidelines for the Romanian public administration[24] .
- **The implementation of the program contributes to the achievement of Milestone 419 of the NRRP**, related to Component C14 – Good Governance, Reform 3 – Effective Human Resource Management in the Public Sector[25].

60. **The communication plan was implemented in accordance with the structure and objectives defined in Deliverable 1 of the RAS, with the aim of ensuring visibility, consistency, and institutional support for the program (Figure 4)**. The communication activities were organized in stages by the NACS and aimed to raise awareness, facilitate the involvement of the target audience, and support the sustainability of the program.

[23] ISO 2993:2017, SR ISO 210001:2019, and ISO 30432:2022.

[24] According to the National Institute of Administration (2022), Decalogue of Quality in Training – Pocket Guide, developed under the SIPOCA 617 project "Strengthening the INA's capacity to develop studies/analyses with an impact on the professional training system in public administration".

[25] Currently, Milestone 418 - The entry into force of the legal acts for the adoption of merit-based and competency-based human resources management frameworks in the central public administration, within the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), as updated according to Council Implementing Decision No. 14452/25 of November 13, 2025.

Figure 4. Communication plan implemented for the pilot edition of the program

Comunication Activity	2025						2026
	iul	aug	sept	oct	nov	dec	ian
1. Programm Launch							
Published the presentation brochure on anfp.gov.ro							
Email sent by NACS to eligible central institutions/ inter-institutional communication							
Online webinar	25.Jul						
NACS social media posts							
Digital presentation brochure (RO/EN)							
FAQ document							
Opening Conference NACS, WB, EC		26.Aug					
Press Release (RO/EN)		26.Aug					
NACS Newsletter about the programe							
2. During the Project							
LinkedIN/Facebook content							
Media - HR, careers, leadership							
3. End of Programm							
Closing Event, NACS, WB, EC, OCDE Ceremony							
Key figures infographic							
Kit for sharing on social media for participants							
LinkedIN/Facebook content - key figures							
4. Monitoring and evaluation							
Reports, KPI, lessons learned							

61. **Before the launch of the pilot, communication focused on providing information, institutional mobilization, and ensuring support at the decision-making level.** The messages were designed to provide clarity on the program's objectives, participant profile, potential benefits, and implementation framework. The messages were disseminated through institutional channels, through direct dialogues with representatives of the eligible institutions, and on the website anfp.gov.ro. The increased interest in the program is also reflected by the high number of downloads of the presentation brochure (613)[26]. At the same time, the launch conference represented a key moment, during which the pilot was positioned as a strategic development initiative for the HLCS. The representatives of the MDPWA, NACS, the World Bank, and the European Commission who opened the launch conference contributed to positioning the program as a key point for leadership skills development with a view to contributing to the reforms undertaken under milestone 419 of the NRRP.

62. **Communication peaked during the official launch of the pilot.** Over 50 participants from public institutions, universities, and the private sector attended the launch conference. In terms of numbers, five social media posts, six articles in the general press, and over 2,000 visits to the anfp.gov.ro website contributed to the goal of raising awareness. Another important aspect was the number of photos and video presentations used for the launch conference, but also the unified key messages.

63. **During the implementation stage, communication was supported by regular posts from NACS, especially the posts and articles posted on the NACS.gov.ro website and on social media, after each module**. These posts helped maintain the visibility of the program and mark the phased progress of the pilot edition. Compared to the initial plan, which called for one post per month, or five posts in total, NACS published a total of 21 posts, with a peak during the launch period. The increased outreach was enabled by the communication materials developed by NACS in collaboration with the WB team (presentation infographics, innovative carousel formats, and videos). Thus, the constant presence on social media and the use of a unified visual and verbal style supported the recognition of the program.

64. **After the program ended, the communication efforts were focused on sharing the results and supporting sustainability.** The messages highlighted key figures from the pilot edition and helped people see the program as a benchmark for developing leadership competencies in public administration. Communicating the results and involving graduates through testimonials created the premise for maximizing the experience gained for future editions.

[26] Based on statistics reported by NACS.

65. **The communication channels identified in the initial strategy proved to be suitable for reaching the target audience.** Official institutional channels ensured visibility among HLCSs, DGs, and policy makers, while digital media and social networks facilitated the dissemination of messages to a wider audience, generating over 250 interactions and an estimated reach of 50,000 people[27] .

66. **The clarity of information was evaluated at a very high level of understanding of the key elements of the program**[28]. The program objectives and the benefits of participation for the institution obtained an average of 4.67, and the profile of the targeted participants was evaluated with a maximum score (5.00). The calendar and the volume of time required recorded the lowest average (4.33), due to the communication of changes along the way.

Table 12. Qualitative evaluation of inter-institutional communication for the pilot, according to the interviewed representatives of the public institutions invited for the pilot

Evaluated Dimension	Average Score	Observations
Clarity of program objectives	4.67	The program objectives were clearly communicated and understood by the respondents.
Clarity of the targeted participants' profile	5.00	The profile of the participants was communicated very clearly, without ambiguity, facilitating the nomination process.
Clarity of the benefits of participation for the institution	4.67	The benefits of the program were perceived as being well-explained and relevant to the institutions.
Clarity of the calendar and the volume of time required	4.33	The calendar and the volume of time were generally clear; changes and adjustments along the way were considered unclear by one respondent.
Usefulness of the program brochure in the nomination process	5.00	The program presentation brochure was evaluated as being very useful; all information was considered relevant for the nomination decision-making.
Clarity of the participant selection methodology	4.67	The selection methodology was perceived as clear and coherent, with a very good level of understanding.
Clarity of eligibility criteria	5.00	Eligibility criteria were communicated very clearly, without generating interpretation difficulties.
Clarity of the selection process	5.00	The selection process was described clearly and completely, being easy to follow.
Clarity of required documents	5.00	The requested documents were communicated clearly and explicitly.
Clarity of the selection calendar	5.00	The selection calendar was perceived as being very clear and well-structured.

67. **Respondents unanimously mentioned that there was no missing or insufficiently explained information that would hinder the nomination decision**. The program brochure was evaluated as being very useful (average 5.00), all included information being considered relevant for the analysis of

[27] According to statistics reported by NACS.

[28] Based on 5 semi-structured interviews with representatives of 5 institutions invited to nominate participants for the CDPARPA pilot. The interviews were conducted by telephone between January 10-24, 2026, with HR representatives of these respective institutions.

the invitation and the decision-making process. No suggestions were made regarding the need for a restructuring or additional clarification of the presentation materials.

68. **Interaction with the NACS to request additional information was evaluated positively, being perceived as clear, accessible, and efficient**. Respondents confirmed that it was clear whom to address, that they had the opportunity to formulate questions, and that the answers received were useful and transmitted on time.

69. **Information regarding the selection methodology was perceived as clear and coherent, with maximum scores (5.00) for eligibility criteria, selection process, necessary documents, and the selection calendar**. The methodology for selecting participants obtained an average of 4.67, being appreciated at a very good level of clarity. No respondent reported difficulties in verifying or documenting the eligibility criteria, which indicates a functional and easy-to-apply methodological framework at the institutional level.

70. **The participant nomination process was an internal one, based on compliance with the communicated methodology and on hierarchical decision, involving the institution's management, human resources departments, and eligible participants.** In most situations, the process proceeded quickly and without significant difficulties. The only specific challenge mentioned was the lack of time and the existence of competing priorities, especially in an electoral context, without these affecting the completion of the nomination process.

71. **The experience of the pilot edition indicates that the communication strategy provides a solid basis for future editions of the program.** Future adjustments should focus on refining performance indicators, extending alumni involvement mechanisms, and consolidating the role of institutional leadership in supporting the application of developed competencies at the workplace.

72. **For future editions of the program, communication should consolidate the coherence of the identity built during the pilot edition.** Maintaining the visual and verbal elements already established contributes to the recognition of the program and to the consolidation of its credibility. In parallel, key messages can be refined to highlight more clearly the impact of the program on institutional performance and the added value for participants and institutions.

73. **Also, communication would benefit from a more visible and coordinated involvement of institutions with a strategic role**, such as the Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration, the General Secretariat of the Government, and the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, especially at key moments of launch and dissemination of results, by delivering and amplifying key messages in their own communication, to consolidate support at the government level, inter-institutional coordination, and reform objectives.

74. **At an operational level, communication could benefit from a more strategic use of digital channels and more active involvement of key actors.** Integrating video formats, consolidating the presence on professional platforms such as LinkedIn, and encouraging the voluntary participation of experts and participants in disseminating messages can extend the visibility of the program and increase the authenticity of communication. These adjustments can support the sustainability of the program and amplify the impact of communication in future editions.

3. Evaluation of the CDPARPA pilot

75. **The main role of the evaluation was to generate useful information to continue the ongoing process of improving the design and delivery of this program, as well as to consolidate a common benchmark for the alignment of training programs for the HLCS.** The assessment of the achieved results aims not only to assess the level of satisfaction or current performance, but also to provide a factual basis for informed decisions on adjusting the content, training methodologies, and organization of future development interventions, in line with the competency framework and career development logic.

76. **The results of the evaluation are used both operationally and strategically.** At the operational level, they allow for the identification of design and delivery elements that work effectively and areas that need optimization (e.g., session structure, applicability of exercises, or pace of work). At the strategic level, the evaluation contributes to the consolidation of a coherent training model for HLCS, in line with the competency framework and geared towards developing the competencies required for this professional category in public administration.

77. **To ensure a well-structured comparative analysis, the evaluation of the pilot was carried out in line with the Kirkpatrick model, which allows for the results to be examined at various complementary levels.** The following chapters include an analysis of the results in terms of participant experience and level of satisfaction, as well as learning outcomes and skills developed. In addition, we will explore the potential for transfer and the requirements for practical applicability, as well as the potential implications for institutional performance, to the extent to which the available data allows for analysis. This structure reflects a realistic approach, appropriate for the current stage of implementation.

78. **The results of the assessment are interpreted in line with the pedagogical approach of the program, which focuses on experiential learning, knowledge co-creation, and the applicability of the acquired competencies in real contexts for HLCS positions.** In this sense, the evaluation focuses on how participants perceived the relevance of learning experiences, the usefulness of practical exercises, the quality of the delivery, and the practical value of the conclusions drawn from reflection on their own professional activity. These dimensions provide relevant insights into the potential for transfer of learning and subsequent impact in institutional contexts.

3.1 Level 1 of the Kirkpatrick model: Participant experience and the level of satisfaction

3.1.1 Module 1. Generating impact in public administration through transformational leadership and corporate governance

79. **Module 1 was structured in two complementary parts.** Part 1, that covered six days, was dedicated to the leadership in the public sector, with a focus on the role of the HLCSs in shaping the strategic direction, mobilizing teams, and managing change in complex institutional contexts. Part 2, that covered one day, was dedicated to corporate governance and focused primarily on familiarizing participants with the conceptual, institutional, and operational framework for exercising the role of supervisory authority for state-owned enterprises.

80. **In Part 1, participants were given a self-assessment tool for leadership styles, followed by structured individual feedback**. This approach was designed to enable awareness of their own

leadership patterns and to facilitate reflection on how leadership styles influence decision-making, the relationship with the team, and the ability to generate institutional impact. The feedback provided was used as a starting point for practical activities and for correlating the leadership dimensions covered in the module with concrete situations from the participants' professional practice.

Section 1. Leadership in the public sector

81. **The participants' responses to Section 1 indicate a high-quality learning experience, relevant to the role of HLCS and well anchored in their strategic responsibilities.** Participants consistently appreciated the clarity of the structure, the coherence of the topics covered, and the practical usefulness of the concepts discussed, perceiving the program as being tailored to their level of responsibility and directly connected to the realities of institutional leadership. The experience was described as "interactive and in line with the expectations" and "easy to follow and with a high degree of applicability to their current work environment," indicating a good fit between the program design and the professional profile of the participants.

82. **From a relevance perspective, feedback indicates that the topics on leadership were perceived as being relevant to the participants' real needs related to exercising leadership roles in the public sector.** Participants particularly valued the clarification provided on the role of HLCS in relation to the mission and direction of the institution, as well as the reflection on how leaders influence the organizational culture, accountability, and team commitment. The facilitated exercises and discussions were perceived as useful for exploring and practicing behaviors associated with the skills targeted by the module, especially topics such as strategic thinking, accountability, strategic agility, and engagement, in contexts specific to public administration. The relevance of the activities was frequently associated with the possibility of correlating the concepts discussed to real-life contexts in their own institutions and identifying realistic adjustments in the way leadership is exercised, both in communicating a strategic direction and in supporting a climate of integrity and psychological safety.

83. **The observations recorded in the facilitators' log support the views of the participants regarding the quality of the learning experience and the relevance of the activities carried out.** The trainers describe a positive, open, and interactive learning climate, characterized by a high level of involvement and interest on the part of the participants, with sustained dialogue throughout the sessions. It is explicitly mentioned that *"the level of engagement and involvement of the participants was very high,"* and the proposed exercises were perceived as relevant to the professional context of the group, with one trainer noting that "*the participants highlighted the high relevance of the exercises*." These observations support the conclusion that the format and content of Section 1a were appropriate for the profile of the participants and facilitated an active, coherent learning experience that was well integrated into the group dynamics.

84. **At the same time, the trainers' logs highlight several recurring operational challenges arising from the specific roles of the participants.** Temporary absences due to urgent institutional obligations, such as attending government meetings or signing official documents, required adjustments to the pace and sequence of activities. Trainers note, for example, that "*we went through the concepts without allowing time to consolidate the content of the following days in a solid knowledge base*" or that "*the time dedicated to the day's applications was reduced to accommodate the content moved from day 4*." To ensure the continuity of the learning process, recaps and occasional reorganizations of the flow of activities were made, without these adjustments being associated with the need to change the topics, content or types of exercises used.

85. **The feedback gathered from participants who attended the first six days of Section 1 - Leadership in the Public Sector suggests that the learning experience was perceived as relevant, clearly structured, and applicable to the professional environment.** The participants appreciated the coherence of the topics covered and the quality of the facilitation, but especially the high degree of interactivity of the exercises and the opportunities for practical application, noting that "*the course was interactive and in line with the expectations*" and that the proposed activities were "*easy to follow and with a high degree of applicability in public institutions*." The responses highlight a high level of satisfaction regarding the practical nature of the sessions and the way in which the examples and exercises were correlated to the realities of public administration, with some participants emphasizing the usefulness of case studies and discussions based on real situations in their institutions. In this context, the participants perceived the learning experience as a forum for self-reflection on their own leadership practices and for exchanging perspectives. One participant described the sessions as being "*dynamic*" and "*very useful for providing clarity over how I implement the leadership models in my current work*."

86. **The open feedback also included specific suggestions, particularly about dedicating more time for exercises and diversifying the application examples**. The feedback received indicates a high level of engagement and increased expectations for the experiential component of the program. Overall, these observations paint a picture of a well-delivered section, tailored to participants' needs, with a clear focus on applicability and contextual relevance. The opinions expressed in the open feedback are supported by the results of the quantitative participant evaluations, presented in the following table, which indicate a high degree of satisfaction and engagement across all dimensions evaluated.

Table 13 . Quantitative feedback from participants on days 1–6 of Section 1. Leadership in the public sector

Dimension evaluated	Average score[29]	Comments
Overall usefulness of the training	4.	Perceived as very useful and relevant for the professional activity
Facilitator – Explained clearly	5.	Clear explanations, excellent presentation structure
Facilitator – I felt involved	4.9	High level of involvement and interaction
Facilitator – Provided relevant examples	4.8	Useful examples, well anchored in the institutional reality
Content – Easy to understand	5	Clear, well-organized, and accessible content
Content – Useful in my professional activity	4.9	Perceived as directly applicable in leadership roles
Content – Valuable for my professional development	4.9	Perceived as adding value to long-term professional development

87. **Section 1 of Module 1 was considered to be relevant to the participants' strategic leadership roles, with a clear focus on practical applicability and quality of facilitation.** The alignment between open feedback, trainer observations, and quantitative assessments suggests a high level of engagement and a positive perception of the value of the learning experience, associated with stated intentions to apply it in professional practice.

[29] Average scores given by all participants. Scores were given on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = minimum level and 5 = maximum level of participant appreciation.

88. The quantitative assessments confirm these trends, and the average score of 9.7 obtained for the NPS question[30] "*How likely are you to recommend this program to a colleague?"* indicates consolidated satisfaction and a high willingness to recommend the program among participants.

Application of a psychometric instrument with feedback

89. In Section 1, competency development was also supported by the use of a self-assessment questionnaire, which was sent to all participants. After that, the participants were invited to individual feedback sessions. This component supported personal reflection on the leadership styles and provided a structured framework for discussing their relevance for certain behaviors, team relationships, and decision-making. The questionnaire-based feedback was integrated into the module's training path and contributed to deepening the learning experience perceived by participants.

90. The opinions expressed in the open feedback are supported by the results of quantitative assessments, which indicate consistently high scores for the of usefulness, clarity, and practical relevance. The average scores obtained on a scale of 1–5 highlight a positive assessment of the tool's usefulness for understanding one's own leadership style (average 4.88), the extent to which the feedback session facilitated a deeper understanding of the questionnaire results (average 4.88), as well as the clarity of the information provided and the psychological safety framework created by the facilitator (averages of 4.63). The recommendation indicator (NPS = 9.82) indicates a very high probability that participants will recommend both the tool used and the associated feedback sessions, confirming the perceived value of this component within the training program.

91. Regarding the organization of those feedback sessions, most participants (13 out of 16) did not make any suggestions for improvement, and considered that the program "was well adjusted" and that the current format is adequate. However, a few specific comments were made that indicate possible areas for optimization, such as the need to dedicate more time for feedback, as well as the need to organize two sessions (one for introduction and a more in-depth one). There was also the request for more detailed information. These comments suggest that, for some participants, a single feedback session may be insufficient to fully explore the implications of the questionnaire report, especially in the case of more complex leadership profiles.

Section 2. Corporate Governance

92. The participants' feedback on Section 2 of Module 1 suggests that overall, the participants found the topics covered to be relevant and the key concepts to be clearly presented, with a more noticeable difference in terms of the immediate applicability of the content. The participants appreciated the importance of the governance framework discussed in understanding the roles, responsibilities, and decision-making mechanisms specific to public administration, particularly in relation to leadership structures, managerial responsibility, and the regulatory framework.

93. From a learning perspective, the participants considered that this section broadened their understanding of the role of leaders in public administration, shifting the focus from the internal management of the institution to its functioning, within a broader framework of governance, accountability, and public control. Participants pointed out the usefulness of clarifying the principles

[30] NPS used a scale from 1 to 10. In this report, the score is interpreted by the average value of the responses, as an indicator of satisfaction and willingness to recommend, without applying the classic Net Promoter Score formula (promoters vs. detractors).

of corporate governance applicable to the public sector, including in terms of decision-making transparency, separation of roles, accountability for results, and the relationship with supervisory and control actors.

94. **In terms of immediate applicability of the content, there are different opinions, depending on the specific responsibilities and institutional position of the participants.** For some participants, corporate governance had a predominantly strategic and framework value, being appreciated as a source of good practices that can be adapted and transferred to public administration, especially in terms of clarifying roles, decision-making responsibility, and the relationship between management, supervision, and results. The level of involvement reported reflects this specific nature of the topic, characterized by a higher degree of abstraction and cross-cutting applicability. This is also reflected by the qualitative comments, where participants mentioned that the topics discussed are "useful for understanding governance as a whole," but would benefit from "more concrete examples, adapted to the type of institution."

95. **Despite these differences, Section 2 was assessed as coherent, well-structured, and relevant for developing a good understanding of the role of public leaders within the institutional architecture.** Participants recognized the value of this section in strengthening a strategic perspective on accountability, civic responsibility and institutional functioning, even in situations where immediate transfer into practice is influenced by one's position in the system. The opinions expressed in the open feedback are consistent with the trends reflected by the quantitative assessments. The corporate governance section was evaluated favorably, with perceived usefulness differentiated by role and an NPS of 9.1, indicating a high level of overall satisfaction.

Table 14. Quantitative feedback from participants in Section 2. Corporate Governance

Dimension evaluated	Average score	Comments
Overall usefulness of the training	4.6	Perceived as useful, with varying applicability depending on role
Facilitator – Explained clearly	4.6	Good clarity of presentation, with requests for additional context
Facilitator – I felt involved	4.	Good level of involvement, slightly lower than in Section 1a
Facilitator – Provided relevant examples	4.	Valuable examples, but considered insufficiently adapted to all types of institutions
Content – Easy to understand	4.	Clear content, but with a higher degree of abstraction
Content – Useful in my professional activity	4.	The degree of applicability varies, depending on the specific duties of the participants
Content – Valuable for my professional development	4.6	Recognized value for understanding the governance framework

3.1.2 Module 2. Implementing digitization and reorganization in public institutions

96. **Module 2 was structured into two complementary sections.** Section 1, that lasted one day, was dedicated to the topic of digitization in the public sector, while Section 2, that lasted for two days, addressed the topic of reorganization in public institutions in Romania.

Section 1. Digitization in public institutions

97. **The participants' reactions to Section 1 indicate that the learning experience was considered relevant and well-structured, with a high level of interest in the topic of digital transformation in the public administration.** Participants appreciated the clarity of the proposed conceptual framework and the way in which the content was organized, to facilitate understanding of the digitization processes, even in institutional contexts, characterized by complexity and regulatory constraints.

98. **In terms of relevance, the participants' feedback highlights the importance of the topic for understanding the challenges and opportunities associated with digitalization in the public sector.** Digitization was perceived not only as a technical process, but as a tool that could support organizational transformation and could have an impact on the decision-making processes, the relationship with citizens, and the ability of the institutions to deliver efficient public services. The participants also stated that the sessions provided clear guidelines for understanding the steps and conditions necessary for implementing digital transformation initiatives.

99. **The learning experience was also evaluated positively in terms of the clarity of the facilitation and structure of the sessions.** Participants highlighted the trainers' clear explanations and their ability to maintain a high level of interactivity. Those comments were supported by the high scores awarded for engagement. One participant mentioned that "*the support is well thought out and easy to follow*," while another emphasized that "*the topic is clearly explained, even for those who do not work directly in IT*."

100. **At the same time, the feedback expressed indicates a clear need to explore the topic in** greater **depth, particularly by expanding the practical component**. Participants requested more case studies and longer sessions, highlighting the fact that digitalization is an area that requires additional time to consolidate concepts and explore concrete examples. Suggestions such as "for a better understanding we should dedicate several days for this module" or "it would be helpful to have more case studies, even if this means having longer sessions" reflect the increased interest in the practical application of the content.

101. **The participants also included in the feedback operational comments, particularly on the format of course materials and the structure of sessions.** They expressed the need to have access to materials in digital format and for the materials to have a clearer structure, with summaries at the end of sessions. The participants' opinions were different, reflecting the specific constraints of institutional activity, but most of them appreciated the effort to adapt the sessions to the existing work schedule. The opinions expressed in the qualitative feedback are supported by the quantitative assessments of the participants, which indicates a high level of satisfaction with the quality of facilitation, the clarity of explanations, and the level of involvement.

102. **The scores confirm the level of helpfulness and relevance of the section for developing the required skills to manage digital transformation processes in public administration.** Overall, Section 1. Digitization was evaluated very favorably, with a maximum NPS score (10), which reflects

a high degree of satisfaction and an increased level of interest in continuing and exploring this topic more in depth.

Table 15. Quantitative feedback: participants' experience with Section 1. Digitization in Module 2

Dimension evaluated	Average score	Comments
Overall usefulness of the training	4.6	Perceived as useful, with requests for more in-depth coverage and extension over several days
Facilitator – Explained clearly	4.	Very clear explanations
Facilitator – I felt involved	4.	Maximum level of involvement and interaction
Facilitator – Provided relevant examples	4.2	Appreciated examples, considered relevant to the topic
Content – Easy to understand	4.	Clear content, with suggestions for additional structuring (summaries)
Content – Useful in professional activity	4.0	Highly useful, correlated with practical applicability
Content – Valuable for my professional development	4.6	Recognized value for the development of digital skills

Section 2. Reorganization in public institutions

103. **The participants' feedback highlights a learning experience perceived as relevant, pragmatic, and well anchored in the realities of institutional context.** The participants appreciated that the section was anchored in the realities of the current challenges of the public administration, especially in terms of managing change, adapting organizational structures, and balancing efficiency requirements with regulatory and procedural constraints.

104. **The feedback on Section 2 highlights a predominantly positive perception of the clarity and relevance of the content, which was appreciated as being "well structured, easy to follow" and adapted to the real constraints of the public administration.** A distinctive element that emerges from the comments is the value attributed to the examples used, which are explicitly mentioned as a factor that "created interaction between participants" and facilitated discussions about real contexts. The course materials are evaluated favorably for their ability to "concentrate on the essence of each module," with specific suggestions regarding the exclusive use of the digital format to allow for further dissemination inside institutions. In terms of learning methods, participants describe the course as "very interactive," while also emphasizing the desire for each participant to have more space for intervention, a sign of a high level of engagement. Comments on the daily schedule suggest the need to consider having lengthier sessions and moving the sessions during weekends or after working hours to allow for a more in-depth exploration of the topics. Representative examples of these perceptions are summarized in the table below.

105. **The comments should be interpreted in correlation to the specific nature of reorganization as a process of structural and managerial change**, which involves sensitive decisions, impact on human resources, and adjustments to institutional functioning. The high level of interest, requests for more time for applied discussions, and emphasis on real examples reflect participants' need to understand not only the formal framework of the concept, but also the need to understand more realistic methods to implement it in different institutional contexts.

106. **The quantitative assessments confirm these perceptions, indicating that the participants were highly satisfied with the contents of this Module, the practical relevance of the sessions, and the quality of the facilitation**. The scores reflect a high level of satisfaction regarding the clarity of the content, the practical relevance of the sessions, and the quality of the facilitation, thus confirming the relevance of the topics to the professional needs of the participants. Section 2 was evaluated favorably, with an NPS score of 9.56, indicating a high level of satisfaction among the participants and their willingness to recommend the training.

Table 16 . Quantitative feedback: participants' experience with Section 2 of Module 2

Dimension evaluated	Average score	Comments
Overall usefulness of the training	4.85	Perceived as very useful and relevant to institutional reorganization processes
Facilitator – Explained clearly	4.5	Clear, well-structured explanations
Facilitator – I felt involved	4.7	High level of involvement and interaction
Facilitator – Provided relevant examples	4.7	Appreciated examples, considered relevant to the administrative context
Content – Easy to understand	4.	Clear, logical, and accessible content
Content – Useful in my professional activity	4.7	Highly useful for application in institutional contexts
Content – Valuable for my professional development	4.	Significant contribution to the development of professional skills

3.1.3 Module 3. Shaping institutional strategies to achieve results for citizens and the business environment (elective)

107. **Participants consistently appreciated the conceptual clarity of the content and the professionalism of the delivery, stating that the materials and working methods were "easy to follow" and well-structured, in line with the strategic topics covered**. The participants believed that the module provided a relevant framework for understanding and using strategic planning and coordination tools, particularly in the context of orienting public institutions towards results for citizens and the business environment.

108. **In terms of relevance, the feedback suggests that the participants perceived the module as a space for strategic reflection**, in which the concepts discussed could be correlated to concrete institutional realities. One participant summed up this experience by saying that "everything was prepared and presented with a high degree of professionalism," while others emphasized the coherent and applicable nature of the content, stating that "everything is easy to follow" and appropriate for the purpose of the module.

109. **The only explicit suggestion was to expand the practical component** by developing an integrated, end-to-end case study in groups, which would allow participants to practice the entire strategic modeling process. This suggestion does not reflect a limitation of the content, but rather an increased interest for a more in-depth study and for strengthening the practical dimension of the strategic skills addressed.

110. **In terms of schedule, the feedback received indicates a high degree of satisfaction with regard to the flexibility shown in adapting the timetable.** Participants appreciated the training team's willingness to adjust the program to accommodate professional constraints, saying that "following discussions, the schedule was adjusted accordingly" and that the chosen format "responds to the professional agenda of the trainees." This flexibility was perceived as a factor that facilitated active participation and involvement throughout the module. The opinions expressed in the open feedback are supported by the results of the quantitative assessments, which indicate a very high level of satisfaction with the overall usefulness of the module, the clarity of its content, and its relevance to the participants' professional activity. The scores reflect a consistent level of satisfaction regarding the importance of the strategic tools presented and the module's contribution to the development of the skills needed to inform strategic decisions at the institutional level.

111. **Module 3 was very well received, with participants particularly appreciating the conceptual clarity and practical relevance of the content for HLCS roles.** The high level of satisfaction is confirmed both by quantitative assessments and by the NPS score of 9.8, indicating a high level of satisfaction among the participants and their willingness to recommend the training and its relevance for the development of strategic competencies in public administration.

Table 17. Quantitative feedback: participants' experience with Module 3. Shaping institutional strategies

Dimension evaluated	Average score	Comments
Overall usefulness of the training	4.9	Perceived as very useful for strategic decision-making
Facilitator – Explained clearly	4.5	Clear, well-structured explanations
Facilitator – I felt involved	4.4	High level of involvement, specific to an elective module
Facilitator – Provided relevant examples	4.7	Examples appreciated for their strategic relevance
Content – Easy to understand	4.9	Clear and coherent content
Content – Useful in my professional activity	4.8	Highly useful for strategic planning and coordination
Content – Valuable for my professional development	4.9	Significant contribution to skills development

3.1.4 Module 4. Solving crises and complex situations in public institutions through anticipation and negotiation (elective)

112. **In terms of structure, clarity and practicality of the sessions in Module 4, the feedback from the participants was very positive.** The feedback is convergent and consistent, with the module being described as "very well calibrated," "clear and comprehensive," and by some participants as "one of the most interesting and comprehensive modules" in the program. The use of practical exercises and case studies allowed the targeted skills to be transposed into a framework of analysis and action specific to crisis situations, facilitating the understanding of the decision-making processes and the negotiation dynamics in complex institutional contexts. Participants appreciated the fact that the sessions recreated realistic contexts for analysis and intervention, allowing them to test leadership behaviors under pressure, uncertainty, and conflicts of interest.

113. **In terms of relevance, the module was perceived as having immediate utility for the HLCS positions,** particularly for managing complex situations in current institutional activity. Comments highlight the fact that the topics covered and the examples used were closely related to the administrative contexts, which increased the participants' confidence in their own ability to manage crises and negotiation processes in real contexts.

114. **The format of the trainings, that included a hybrid component (online and face-to-face), was very well received, being perceived as a factor that supported active participation without affecting the quality of the learning process.** Participants appreciated the flexibility and the training team's ability to adapt the program to unpredictable professional constraints, saying that "they were in constat dialogue with the team, and everything was adjusted to the participants' schedule, without compromising the rigor of the course."

115. **In terms of the learning experience, the level of engagement was very high, which is due to the experiential nature of the methodology used.** Participants responded favorably not only to the content covered, but also to the way in which they were actively involved in simulating crisis and negotiation situations, having the opportunity to test their reactions, compare strategies, and reflect on their own decisions in a safe learning environment.

116. **The opinions expressed in the open feedback are supported by the results of the quantitative assessments, which indicate very high scores on all dimensions analyzed, especially in terms of the overall usefulness of the training, the clarity of the explanations, and the relevance of the examples used.** The quantitative assessments confirm the opinions expressed in the open feedback for Module 4, indicating that the participants were extremely pleased with the content and the practical nature of the sessions. The scores obtained highlight the fact that they appreciated the clarity of the explanations, the examples used, and the direct usefulness of the concepts for managing complex situations in professional activity. The module was rated as excellent, with participants particularly appreciating the practical relevance, clarity, and immediate applicability of the content. The very high quantitative scores and NPS of 9.8 confirm a high level of satisfaction among the participants and their willingness to recommend the module.

Table 18. Quantitative feedback: participants' experience with Module 4

Dimension evaluated	Average score	Comments
Overall usefulness of the training	5	Perceived as extremely useful for crisis management
Facilitator – Explained clearly	4.7	Clear explanations, adapted to complex contexts
Facilitator – I felt involved	4.	High level of involvement and active participation
Facilitator – Provided relevant examples	4.9	Highly appreciated examples, relevant for real life situations
Content – Easy to understand	5	Clear, well-structured, accessible content
Content – Useful in my professional activity	4.9	Immediate applicability for leadership roles
Content – Valuable for my professional development	4.8	Important contribution to the development of crisis management skills

3.1.5 Module 5. Monitoring the performance of institutional strategic plans and investment projects

117. **In terms of content and delivery, the feedback from the participant on Module 5 was consistently positive, with comments suggesting that the structure and materials were appropriate for the established objectives.** Beyond the positive assessment of content and delivery, participant feedback indicates a clear preference for earlier integration of the practical component, particularly with regard to the use of performance monitoring tools. The suggestion to begin the learning process by directly exploring the applications reflects the participants' need to quickly anchor theoretical concepts in practice and speed up the induction phase, so to quicky get acquainted with the tools used in their day-to-day work.

118. **Several comments highlighted the need to allocate additional time for in-depth study, an aspect related to the complexity of the topic and the volume of information covered**. In terms of organization, the participants appreciated the flexibility demonstrated by the training team, saying that they appreciated the "constant attention paid to accommodate the emerging requirements and emergencies, striking a balance between the rigor of the course and the work schedule."

119. **Participants perceived the module as providing a clear framework for understanding the relationship between strategic objectives, performance indicators, and decision-making process for investment projects.** The participants appreciated the module for the way it fosters managerial responsibility, transparency in decision-making, and the efficient use of resources in public institutions.

120. **Quantitative data for Module 5 indicate outstanding performance in terms of content clarity and professional value,** with maximum scores for overall usefulness and explanation of concepts**.** Variability in reported engagement levels is explained by the technical complexity of the subject matter and differing degrees of participant familiarity with performance monitoring tools, indicating varying stages of adaptation to analytically focused, application-oriented content. Despite this variation, the module was evaluated very positively, with participants expressing strong appreciation for the clarity of facilitation, the quality of illustrative examples, and the professional value of the material. The very high quantitative scores and NPS of 9.8 confirm a high level of satisfaction among the participants and their willingness to recommend the module

Table 19. Quantitative feedback: participants' experience with Module 5

Dimension evaluated	Average score	Comments
Overall usefulness of the training	5	Perceived as extremely useful for monitoring strategic performance
Facilitator – Explained clearly	5	Very clear explanations
Facilitator – I felt involved	4.3	Good level of involvement, with variations depending on familiarity with the tools
Facilitator – Provided relevant examples	4.9	Highly appreciated examples, relevant to institutional processes
Content – Easy to understand	4.	Clear, well-structured content
Content – Useful in professional work	4.4	Highly useful, depending on the role and responsibilities of participants
Content – Valuable for my professional development	4.9	Significant contribution to the development of strategic performance management skills

3.1.6 Module 6. Application of performance-based budget management in the public sector

121. **In terms of content, structure and delivery of the sessions, the feedback received from the participants on Module 6 indicates a high degree of satisfaction.** The comments repeatedly highlight the appreciation for the clarity of the explanations and the hand-on nature of the approach, with participants saying that the program was "complex, tailored to our needs" and that there was "a balance between the technical and practical aspects." Some participants pointed out the need for more real-life examples from trainers with hands-on experience who can tailor the content to the specific needs of different types of public institutions.

122. **Although most participants did not make any suggestions for improvement, there were specific suggestions regarding the need to allocate more time to further analyze and better understand budgeting stage. Other suggestions involved having more online sessions.** In terms of organization, feedback highlights a high level of appreciation for the flexibility of the program, which participants described as sufficiently adapted to their schedules, including the scheduling of sessions on weekends.

123. **Quantitative assessments for Module 6 indicate a high and consistent level of satisfaction with the relevance of the content and its applicability to participants' professional work.** The overall scores reflect a good understanding of the concepts, the participants having appreciated the examples use. Also, the level of engagement was very high, which confirms the hands-on and user-oriented nature of the module. The module was evaluated favorably, with participants appreciating the practical nature of the content, the clarity of the explanations, and the relevance of the examples presented. The quantitative scores and NPS of 9.4 indicate a high level of satisfaction among the participants and their willingness to recommend the module.

Table 20. Quantitative feedback: participants' experience with Module 6

Dimension evaluated	Average score	Comments
Overall usefulness of the training	4.7	Perceived as useful and applicable in professional activity
Facilitator – Explained clearly	4.5	Clear, well-structured explanations
Facilitator – I felt involved	4.7	High level of involvement and interaction
Facilitator – Provided relevant examples	4.8	Appreciated examples, relevant to budgetary practice
Content – Easy to understand	4.7	Clear and accessible content
Content – Useful in my professional activity	4.7	Highly useful for my current work
Content – Valuable for my professional development	4.7	Consistent contribution to the development of budgetary skills

3.1.7 Evaluation of the factors that influenced the achieved results

124. **A cross-cutting factor that consistently influenced the scores under the Level 1 of the Kirkpatrick model is the program's methodological approach, centered on experiential learning,**

reflection on practice, and the principle of co-creating content, i.e., the exchange of experience between participants. This approach was used consistently in all modules, ensuring consistency in the learning experience and a comparable level of engagement and satisfaction, regardless of the topic covered.

125. **The content of the program was extremely relevant for the HLCS positions. This was one of the key factors in determining the success of the pilot.** This relevance was supported by the systematic alignment of content and exercises with the competency framework for HLCS, which was used as a common benchmark for program design and learning objective definition. Throughout all modules, participants found the topics covered to be directly relevant to their strategic, operational, and decision-making responsibilities, whether it was leadership, reorganization, digitization, budget management, or crisis management. Convergent feedback indicates that the emphasis on real-life contexts in public administration, concrete examples, and authentic institutional situations reinforced the program's usefulness and practical value in the eye of the participants.

126. **The quality of the facilitation and the expertise of the trainers had a decisive impact on the learning experience.** Consistently high scores for clarity of explanations, ability to maintain engagement, and relevance of examples used confirm the central role of trainers in the program's success. Both participant feedback and trainer logs highlight an interactive, open, and adapted facilitation style, that stimulated dialogue, reflection, and supported an active engagement, even in the case of more technical or analytical modules.

127. **The practical nature of the exercises and case studies contributed significantly to the high level of satisfaction.** Participants consistently appreciated the hands-on exercises, simulations, role-plays, and real-life applications, which were perceived as elements that "anchor" the content and that facilitated its transfer to the day-to-day activity. In particular, the modules on leadership, reorganization, and crisis management stood out in terms of level of interaction and relevance of the applications. These methodological elements facilitated the transfer from conceptual understanding to reflection on one's own practice, reinforcing the perception of the program's immediate usefulness and relevance.

128. **The flexibility and the numerous adjustments made to fit the professional constraints of the participants reinforced the positive experience, without affecting the rigor of the training.** Feedback indicates that the participants appreciated the fact that the schedule was adjusted to meet the unpredictable agenda of the HLCS, either by adapting the daily agenda, using hybrid formats, or reorganizing some of the activities. This flexibility is explicitly mentioned as a factor that allowed for continued participation and involvement, even in demanding institutional contexts.

129. **Beyond the very favorable evaluations, the feedback received emphasizes a recurring issue related to the time dedicated to activities and the desire to expand the practical component.** In the case of several modules, participants expressed the need to have longer sessions, additional case studies, and more time for exercises and discussions. These suggestions do not signal limitations in the content or design of the program, but reflect an interest in further study, especially in the case of more technical or analytical modules. This type of feedback is specific to groups of learners with consolidated professional experience and reflects high expectations regarding the depth and applicability of the training process.

130. **Another aspect that could be improved is a refined tailoring of the content according to the participants' level of experience and institutional specificities.** Especially in modules such as corporate governance or budget management, the feedback reflects the need for additional

contextualization and a better alignment with the diversity of the participants' roles and responsibilities Such requirements are specific to groups of learners with consolidated experience and indicate a need for even greater personalization at the level of applications and case studies, while maintaining the curricular architecture. These findings provide concrete benchmarks for adjusting future stages of curriculum design, highlighting the need to maintain this applied methodological architecture.

3.2 Level 2 of the Kirkpatrick model: Learning

131. **The Level 2 assessment was carried out within a unified methodological framework for all modules, using a combination of tools adapted to the specific nature of each topic. This allowed us to measure the learning outcomes and the ability to apply concepts.** At the end of each day, participants were asked to fill in knowledge questionnaires that tested their understanding of the key concepts covered in the sessions, and the hands-on activities provided an opportunity to demonstrate the use of these concepts in analyses, decision making, and drafting of action plans. During the sessions, trainers used journals to document the level of involvement, the accuracy of the reasoning formulated, and the quality of the results generated by participants in relation to the competencies targeted by each module. This combination of tests, exercises, and observations allowed for an integrated assessment of the learning process, in accordance with the requirements of Level 2 of the Kirkpatrick model.

132. **In addition to the standard learning assessment tools, the Level 2 analysis also included a qualitative analysis of the answers provided by the participants to open-ended questions focused on cognitive transfer and perceived ability to use concepts**. This information was used as indirect indicators of understanding and internalization of concepts and was derived from the following set of open-ended questions:

- *What topics would you like to see explored in more depth or addressed in this course?*
- *What specific skills from this course will you apply in your work?*
- *What tools did you find useful that could be implemented in your professional activity?*

These answers provide additional insights into the degree of internalization of concepts and the perceived ability of the participants to transfer the acquired skills into practice, without replacing the actual assessment of behavioral transfer.

3.2.1 Module 1. Generating impact in public administration through transformational leadership and corporate governance

133. **For Module 1, the Level 2 evaluation was conducted based on the learning objectives defined by the curriculum.** These consisted of understanding the concepts of transformational leadership and corporate governance, clarifying the link between leadership, organizational culture, and performance, and developing the capacity for strategic analysis and decision-making in contexts specific to public administration.

Section 1. Leadership in the public sector

134. **The results of the exercises, case studies and knowledge assessment questionnaires show that the participants demonstrated significant progress in acquiring and applying the skills (and sub-skills) targeted for HLCS: strategic thinking, accountability, and strategic agility.** They

formulated and analyzed visions, missions, and strategic directions, identified values and behaviors relevant to institutional culture, and structured levers of cultural transformation with an impact on performance. They also diagnosed the level of commitment and psychological safety, generated adaptive solutions in exercises, and identified practical ways to strengthen a constructive institutional culture. This assessment does not focus on visible changes in behavior in the workplace, but rather on participants' ability to understand, explain, and use concepts in context-based simulations and analytical exercises.

135. **The progress was also reflected in the way participants formulated issues and solutions, moving from general descriptions of institutional situations to structured reasoning based on explicit criteria, correlations between objectives and behaviors, and in the way the formulated arguments to support the decisions.** The results of the knowledge evaluation questionnaires and the hands-on exercises carried out during the sessions confirm the transfer of knowledge and of the competencies. The table below summarizes the main learning domains in Section 1, the key concepts covered, the types of applications used and the evidence on which the level of learning achieved was assessed, according to Level 2 of the Kirkpatrick model.

Table 21. Summary of learning domains, applied concepts, and learning evidence for Section 1 of Module 1

Topic	Training objectives: concepts learned and practiced skills	Evidence (questionnaire/hands-n exercise)
Strategic leadership – Clarity of intent	Understanding the link between vision, mission, strategic directions, and decisions; formulating a clear and easy to understand intention.	Questionnaire Day 2 *(≈ 85% correct answers);* Exercise: *Clarity of intent*
Organizational culture and values	Differentiating between the current and the ideal organizational culture; translating values into behaviors and habits; identifying desirable behaviors.	Questionnaire Day 3 *(≈ 80% correct answers);* Exercise: *Cultural diagnosis*
Cultural transformation	Identifying levers for cultural transformation; structuring a change plan; the role of the leader in reinforcing desired behaviors.	Questionnaire Day 3 *(high scores on items about levers);* Exercise: *Transformation plan*
Commitment and psychological safety	Understanding the factors that influence commitment; assessing the four dimensions of psychological safety; defining actions for improvement.	Questionnaire Day 5/6 *(≈ 80–100% correct answers)* Exercise: *Psychological safety assessment*;
Innovation in the public sector	Assimilating the stages of innovation (inspiration, idea, implementation); identifying barriers; developing a mini plan for institutional innovation.	Questionnaire Day 6 *(≈ 90% correct answers);* Exercise: *Plan for a culture of innovation*

136. **Beyond the evaluation questionnaire responses, the Level 2 analysis highlights the participants' ability to use concepts such as reasoning, analysis, and decision-making relevant to their leadership roles.** The quality of the answers provided during the exercises, the coherence of the solutions formulated, and the way in which participants correlated the concepts with concrete situations

in their institutions indicate a functional understanding of the topics covered, not just a theoretical assimilation. In the proposed exercises and case studies, participants demonstrated the ability to operate with abstract concepts in a contextualized manner, for example by formulating strategic directions explicitly correlated with expected organizational behaviors, by identifying differences between declarative values and current practices, or by structuring levers of cultural transformation adapted to real institutional constraints. These reasoning skills indicate not only an understanding of the concepts, but also the ability to use them as tools for analysis and decision-making. Thus, the learning process is consistent with the program's experiential approach, which emphasizes the application of concepts in simulated contexts or those drawn from institutional reality, and the reflection on leadership practice.

137. **The learning process was also supported by the use of a psychometric tool used after the start of the leadership module, which was followed by individual executive coaching sessions for feedback.** This component did not assess the knowledge acquired in the module but facilitated self-awareness and guided the participants to reflect on their personal leadership styles, on how they react under pressure, and on the decision-making and relationship patterns. Individualized feedback enabled participants to relate the theoretical concepts explored in the module, including constructive and defensive leadership styles, results-oriented organizational culture, psychological safety in teams, and the inspired communication of strategic direction, to their personal leadership practice in public administration. As a result, participants gained a clearer understanding of how these concepts translate into practical approaches to exercising authority, engaging teams, and navigating complex situations.

138. **The goals for improvement expressed by participants following the feedback received after the psychometric testing indicate a differentiated understanding of their own leadership patterns and a direct link to the HLCS competencies targeted by the program.** In the open feedback, this understanding is expressed through concrete examples of adjustments to leadership behaviors. Some participants mentioned the need to "be more empathic and to encourage the team to come up with ideas and solutions," others indicated their intention *to* "*improve their leadership style in a constructive way and to reduce defensive reactions*," while others explicitly emphasized "*how to communicate with the team in crisis situations*" or the need for "*better communication*." Formulated in specific terms and anchored in professional experience, these intentions go beyond general statements of development and reflect an authentic reflection on how to exercise the role of leader in the public administration.

139. **Overall, the results confirm that the module's learning objectives have been achieved, with participants demonstrating both an understanding of the fundamental concepts and the ability to use them in exercises, analyses, and scenarios relevant to the role of HLCS.** The consistency between the correct answers in the questionnaires and the quality of the practical applications indicates a real consolidation of knowledge and a visible development of the competencies associated with strategic thinking, accountability, and strategic agility. This level of knowledge creates favorable conditions for the transfer of competencies into practice, providing a solid foundation for the evolution of professional behaviors that are the subject of Level 3 in the Kirkpatrick model.

Section 2. Corporate Governance

140. **Section 2 supported a targeted learning process, with empathize on clarifying the fundamental concepts and tools, but with a degree of immediate applicability that varied depending on the participants' current professional roles.** In the context of an intensive one-day session, the data collected indicates a high level of interest in the specific tools discussed (in particular key performance indicators, the letter of expectations, and monitoring mechanisms), as well as a better

clarification of the roles and responsibilities associated with the General Meeting of Shareholders' (GMS) and the Board of Directors (BoD).

141. **Given the length of Section 2, the assessment focused primarily on understanding the fundamental concepts of corporate governance and the participants' ability to apply them in simulated contexts**. The learning process focused on clarifying the accountability relationships between the supervisory public authority, the GMS, and the BoD, as well as on better defining roles, limits of intervention, and control and accountability mechanisms. Participants were able to explain and argue the differences between exercising strategic coordination and unjustified operational intervention, demonstrating an approach in line with the principles of good governance.

142. **In the learning process there was a distinct emphasis on understanding and using key corporate governance tools, particularly the letter of expectations, key performance indicators (KPIs), and monitoring mechanisms.** Participants were given the opportunity to practice how to identify the key elements that need to be monitored in the relationship between the supervisory authority and public institutions, as well as how to correlate strategic objectives with measurable indicators and evaluation criteria. The exercises and case studies facilitated an understanding of the role played by these tools as levers for accountability and performance guidance, not just as formal reporting requirements. This area of learning is also supported by the feedback received from participants, who explicitly indicated the tools they perceived as being the most relevant for their activity. In their open responses, most of the participants mentioned KPIs and the letter of expectations as "essential" elements for the responsible exercise of the role of supervisory authority, as well as for clarifying the relationship with boards of directors. The GMS/BoD scenario exercises were also reported as useful, appreciated for allowing "a concrete understanding of responsibilities and limits of intervention," contributing to strengthening the decision-making reasoning specific to corporate governance in the public sector.

143. **In terms of the intention to use the acquired skills in their professional activity, the differences observed do not reflect the levels of learning but can be explained by the diversity of institutional roles and direct exposure to the governance of public institutions.** For participants who currently exercise supervisory authority, learning has immediate operational transfer potential, while for others it contributes to building a strategic reference framework and developing analytical and decision-making skills for future situations. This differentiation is specific to programs targeting the HLCS and confirms the relevance of the training objectives for an introductory-applied session. The table below summarizes the main areas of learning, the concepts addressed, and the types of evidence used to assess the level of learning achieved. In Section 2, participants demonstrated a thorough understanding of the logic of corporate governance applicable to public institutions, beyond mere familiarity with terms or formal structures. Overall, the results indicate that Section 2 contributed to strengthening a common understanding of the basic principles and tools of corporate governance. Differences in implementation intentions reflect the diversity of participants' occupational roles rather than a low level of learning, confirming the achievement of the training objectives set for an introductory-applicative session.

Table 22. Summary of learning areas, applied concepts, and associated evidence in Section 2 of Module 1

Topic	Training objectives: concepts learned and skills practiced	Evidence (questionnaire/hands-on exercise)
The role of the supervisory public authority in the governance of state-owned enterprises	Clarification of the role and responsibilities of the representative of the supervisory authority in relation to the Board of Directors/General Meeting of Shareholders; understanding the limits of intervention and the applicable governance principles.	Questionnaire Day 7 (≈ 90% correct answers); Guided discussions in plenary
Corporate governance tools and levers	Understanding the key tools used by the supervisory authority (letter of expectations, monitoring, reporting); identifying the key elements to be monitored in the relationship with a state-owned company.	Exercise: guided analysis
Integrated application of governance concepts	Consistent application of corporate governance concepts in simulated situations; practicing decision-making reasoning specific to the role of supervisory public authority.	Applied case study: BoD/GMS scenario; Trainers' observations

3.2.2 Module 2. Implementing digitization and reorganization in public institutions

Section 1. Implementing digitization and reorganization in public institutions

144. **Section 1 focused on developing participants' ability to understand and apply the basic concepts and tools needed to initiate digital transformation processes.** The assessment examined both participants' comprehension of key concepts and their capacity to apply them in institution-specific exercises. Beyond standard learning assessment instruments, the analysis included qualitative interpretation of responses to open-ended feedback questions, used to assess the level of internalization of the concepts and tools addressed.

145. **In addition to the learning evidence, we also analyzed participants' responses to open-ended questions about their intentions to use the concepts and tools discussed. These responses were used only as indicators of the level of understanding and internalization.** The results indicate a high level of understanding of the fundamental concepts of digitization, confirmed both by the results of the knowledge questionnaire and by the analysis of participants' qualitative responses, which highlight the consistency of intentions to use the acquired competencies in the professional activity and the recurrence of tools identified as useful. These acquisitions support the development of the core competencies targeted for HLCS in this module in particular strategic thinking, strategic planning and organization, process management and strategic agility. The differences in terms of degree of applicability reflect the institutional specificity and roles of the participants, in line with the objectives of an introductory-applicative section.

Table 23. Summary of learning areas, applied concepts, and associated evidence in Section 1 of Module 2

Topic	Learning objectives: concepts learned and skills practiced	Evidence (questionnaire/application exercise)
Process analysis and optimization for digitization	Understanding the difference between As-Is and To-Be processes; identifying bottlenecks and opportunities for simplifying and digitizing administrative processes.	Knowledge assessment questionnaire (100% correct answers to items related to process analysis and optimization concepts);
Roles and responsibilities in digitization projects	Clarifying the roles and responsibilities in digitized processes; using the RACI matrix to coordinate the involved actors.	Exercise: *Value Stream Map*
Prioritizing digitization initiatives	Understanding the criteria for prioritizing digitization initiatives; using the effort-impact matrix to support decisions.	Knowledge assessment questionnaire (100% correct answers to items related to roles and responsibilities);

Section 2. Reorganization process in public institutions

146. **The goal of Section 2 of the Module was to develop the ability of the participants to initiate, structure, and support institutional reorganization processes, based on organizational diagnosis and established change management models.** The training sessions focused on understanding the issues that trigger institutional reorganization, the key stages of the process, and the planning and implementation of change. Particular attention was also given to the role of leadership, communication, and team involvement in stabilizing and consolidating new organizational structures. The assessment focused on how these concepts were understood and used in hands-on exercises relevant to the context of public administration. In addition to standard learning assessment tools, the analysis also included the interpretation of participants' responses to open-ended questions, used as qualitative indicators of the level of understanding and internalization of the concepts addressed.

147. **The analysis of participants' qualitative responses highlights a clear understanding of the logic of institutional reorganization, as well as the recurrence of tools and approaches perceived as useful in clarifying the roles, simplifying the decision-making flows, and increasing the organizational coherence**. This understanding is also reflected in the participants' statements, who emphasized, for example, the importance of conduction a diagnosis process prior to initiating the reorganization process: "*the reorganization process must begin with an analysis of the issues, rather than just focusing on formal changes* "; and the role of communication in supporting change: "*without clear communication, reorganization remains only a concept*." This type of logic demonstrates the internalization of the stages and concepts of change, that go beyond the theoretical assimilation of concepts. These acquisitions contribute to the development of the targeted competencies of HLCS roles, especially those related to vulnerability management, accountability, and organizational agility, as components of strategic coordination in change processes.

Table 24. Summary of learning areas, applied concepts, and associated evidence in Section 2 of Module 2

Topic	Training objectives: concepts learned and skills practiced	Evidence (questionnaire/application exercise)
Organizational diagnosis and basis for reorganization	Understanding the role of organizational diagnosis in initiating the reorganization process; identifying structural problems, dysfunctions, and the need for change in public institutions.	Questionnaire (items related to the concepts of organizational diagnosis and the need for change – 100% correct answers); Exercise: case study/diagnosis
Models and stages of organizational change	Understanding the main models of organizational change (including the Kotter model); structuring the stages of a reorganization process and the role of leadership in supporting change.	Questionnaire (items focused on models and stages of the change process – correct answers); Exercise: analysis based on change models
Planning, communicating, and stabilizing change	Understanding the elements of a change plan; the role of communication, team involvement, and mechanisms for stabilization and organizational learning after reorganization.	Questionnaire (items focused on planning and supporting change – correct answers); Exercise: change plan/communication scenarios

3.2.3 Module 3. Shaping institutional strategies to achieve results for citizens and the business environment (elective)

148. **The goal of Module 3 was to develop participants' competencies to substantiate and structure coherent institutional strategies, focused on public results.** The training activities focused on the use of strategic analysis tools, the elaboration of objectives, and the correlation of strategic planning with budget planning and the public policy-making process. The assessment focused on whether the participants were able to understand these concepts and apply the newly acquainted skills in hands-on exercises relevant to the context of public administration.

149. **The results indicate a good understanding of the key concepts of strategic planning and results orientation, confirmed both by the results of the knowledge questionnaire and the results of the analysis of the participants' qualitative responses.** The participant's feedback consistently highlights that the training sessions help them better understand the use of strategic tools and the relationship between strategy, budget, and public policy. The respondents emphasized, for example, that "now I better understand the tools we were already working with and they now seem easier to use" or that they will apply the knowledge acquired "to substantiate and draft normative acts." The importance of linking strategic planning with budget planning was also highlighted, as it is perceived as a key element in transforming strategies into concrete results. These arguments indicate not only the theoretical assimilation of concepts, but also the participants' ability to use them as tools for analyzing and substantiating public decisions. Thus, the learning outcomes support the development of the target competencies addressed in this module, such as strategic thinking, strategic planning and organization, citizen orientation and civic responsibility, as well as the ability to substantiate public policies and decisions with relevant analyses.

Table 25 . Summary of learning areas, applied concepts, and associated evidence in Module 3

Topic	Learning objectives: concepts learned and skills practiced	Evidence (questionnaire/application exercise)
Strategic analysis of the institutional context	Understanding the framework for analyzing the internal and external context, and applying SWOT and PESTLE / CCEIAN tools to inform the development of institutional strategies.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on strategic analysis – 100% correct answers); Exercises: SWOT/PESTLE
Orienting strategies towards results for citizens and the business environment	Understanding the principles of orienting strategies towards public results; integrating the perspective of citizens and the business environment in defining strategic directions.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on results orientation – 100% correct answers); Exercises and guided discussions
Formulating strategic objectives and indicators	Developing the ability to formulate clear and coherent strategic objectives; linking objectives to performance indicators.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on goal setting – 100% correct answers); Exercises
Linking strategic planning with budget planning	Understanding the relationship between strategic planning and budget documents (ISP, PALG); using the budget as a tool for implementing strategy.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on linking strategy and budget – 100% correct answers); Case study
Substantiating decisions and normative acts	Using strategic analyses and best practices to substantiate decisions and normative acts with impact.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on the use of analysis in decision-making – 100% correct answers);

3.2.4 Module 4. Solving crises and complex situations in public institutions through anticipation and negotiation (elective)

150. **Module 4 aimed to strengthen participants' ability to navigate contexts marked by high pressure, uncertainty, and complex institutional constraints**. The goal of the training sessions was to support the participants in developing the ability to anticipate complex situations, to analyze institutional vulnerabilities, and make informed decisions in sensitive contexts where communication and negotiation play an essential role. The focus was on understanding the mechanisms that govern organizational crises and practicing approaches adapted to the realities of public administration.

151. **The analysis of the results and the qualitative responses of the participants indicate an enhanced ability to understand the dynamics of complex situations. Also, the participants highlighted the importance of negotiation as a mechanism for managing and easing institutional tensions**. The feedback provided highlights the practical relevance of the tools discussed, with participants making explicit reference to the use of negotiation techniques, the stages of the negotiation

process, and the concepts of BATNA[31] and ZOPA [32] in real crisis contexts "*negotiation in the situations encountered, both from the ZOPA and BATNA perspectives*," as well as the importance of strategic communication and institutional vulnerability analysis "*the importance of communication in negotiation and the analysis of institutional vulnerabilities*." Participants also referred to concrete situations of application, such as recurrent negotiations with trade unions and the management of overlapping crises, indicating a direct connection between learning outcomes and their current professional experience. These arguments confirm the internalization of the concepts addressed and the participants' ability to use them as tools for conducting analysis and substantiate the decision-making process in contexts characterized by uncertainty and high pressure. Overall, the module contributed to the development of the target competencies for HLCS, with a key focus on vulnerability management, conflict mediation, strategic communication, and rapid adaptation of decisions in complex situations.

Table 26. Summary of learning areas, applied concepts, and associated evidence in Module 4

Topic	Training objectives: concepts learned and skills practiced	Evidence (questionnaire/application exercise)
Anticipating crisis and vulnerability analysis	Understanding the crisis anticipation mechanisms; identifying institutional risks and vulnerabilities; recognizing complex situations and overlapping crises.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on crisis anticipation and vulnerability analysis); Discussions and case studies
Decision management and communication in contexts of crisis	Developing the ability to make decisions under pressure and uncertainty; using strategic communication to manage tense situations; addressing moral dilemmas in contexts of crisis.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on decision-making and communication in crises); Exercises and guided reflections
Negotiation in difficult contexts	Understanding the stages of the negotiation process; using negotiation styles and techniques; applying BATNA and ZOPA in real- life contexts.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on the negotiation process and techniques); Role-playing and negotiation exercises
Integrating negotiation into crisis management	Using negotiation as a mechanism to manage and stabilize crisis situations, with a focus on re-engaging in negotiations following failure and sustaining long-term institutional relationships.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on integrating negotiation into crisis situations); Case studies and simulations

[31] BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement) – a concept used in negotiation to describe the best alternative course of action if no agreement is reached, providing an essential benchmark for decision-making in contexts of pressure and uncertainty, which are common in public administration.

[32] ZOPA (Zone of Possible Agreement) – the area of overlap between the interests of the negotiating parties, within which it is possible to build a sustainable agreement, given institutional constraints and public objectives.

3.2.5 Module 5. Monitoring the performance of institutional strategic plans and investment projects

152. **The training sessions in Module 5 were focused on strengthening the participants' ability to track, interpret, and use performance data in the decision-making processes.** The goal of the training was to clarify the role of the Institutional Strategic Plan as a management tool, as well as to develop the required competencies to define indicators, correlate strategy with program budgeting, and use reporting as a support for informed decisions and performance auditing. The emphasis was on understanding the logic behind the monitoring process and applying it in real institutional contexts.

153. **The results achieved by the participants indicate a good understanding of the strategic performance monitoring mechanisms, especially when it comes to the structure of the Institutional Strategic Plan, the relationship between objectives, indicators, and budget, as well as the use of data in decision-making processes.** The analysis of the qualitative responses highlights the fact that the tools discussed were relevant to specific institutional practices, with participants emphasizing, for example, the importance of using data from the ISP to correlate the performance audit activity with the planning and reporting processes, or the need to monitor the measures at the level of organizational structures and the managers involved. The participants also mentioned the differences between institutions in terms of the maturity of program-based planning and budgeting systems. Those differences could explain the participants' different responses regarding the probability of applying the concepts to their respective professional activity. The above reasoning indicates that the participants have internalized the logic of the ISPs, which are no longer seen just as a formal document, but as a basic management tool for decision-making. It also supports the development of the competencies targeted in this module, such as performance management, resource and process management, and in particular the ability to use performance data to support managerial decisions and the continuous improvement of institutional activity.

Table 27. Summary of learning areas, applied concepts, and associated evidence in Module 5

Topic	Training objectives: concepts learned and skills practiced	Evidence (questionnaire/ exercise)
Architecture and role of the Institutional Strategic Plan (ISP)	Understanding the structure of the ISPs and its role as a tool for planning, monitoring, and reporting institutional performance; clarifying the relationship between strategic objectives, measures, and institutional structures.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on ISP architecture and data use – 100% correct answers); Applied discussions
Performance indicators and results monitoring	Developing the ability to define and use performance indicators (output, outcome, impact, efficiency); monitoring progress and interpreting results.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on indicators and performance monitoring ≈ 85% correct answers); Exercises
Linking strategic planning with program budgeting	Understanding the relationship between strategic objectives, indicators, and budget allocations; using program budgeting and MTBST to implement and monitor the strategy.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on strategy-budget correlation ≈ 90% correct answers); Case studies

Performance reporting and use of data in decision-making	Understanding the role of integrated reporting and the use of ISP data in managerial decisions and performance auditing.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on reporting and data use - 100% correct answers); Applied discussions

3.2.6 Module 6. Applying performance-based budget management in the public sector

154. **The aim of Module 6 was to strengthen the participants' capacity to use the budget as a management and decision-making tool, not just as an administrative exercise**. The training focused on developing the required competencies to allocate resources according to priorities and results, to monitor budget execution, and manage the risks associated with financial decisions. The focus was on understanding the logic of performance-based budgeting, prioritizing investment programs and projects, and the role of coordination and budgetary restraint in the context of public administration.

155. **Completing the module helped the participants to have a clear understanding of how the budget can be used as a tool for prioritization and managerial decision-making**, rather than just a routine procedure. Analysis of the results achieved and of participants' qualitative feedback indicates a solid understanding of the principles of performance-based budgeting, the relationship between budget allocations, strategic objectives, and investment projects, as well as the role of execution monitoring in managing financial risks. The feedback expressed reflects this change in perspective, with participants mentioning, for example, their intention to apply "budget management based on performance targets and monitoring the performance of the Institutional Strategic Plan," to "prioritize budget allocations and analyze alternatives to the same program," and the importance of "coordinating the budget process and budgetary restraints." These arguments indicate the internalization of the budget as a management and decision-making tool and support the development of the competencies targeted in this module, such as performance management, resource and process management, civic responsibility, and the ability to use budget data and indicators in decision-making and continuous improvement of institutional activity. The participants expressed different opinions with regard to the implementation of the newly acquired competencies in their professional activity. This is a reflection of the particularities of the current budgetary processes and different levels of organizational complexity, and not a sign of different proficiency levels.

Table 28. Summary of learning domains, key concepts, and associated learning outcomes in Module 5

Topic	Training objectives: concepts learned and skills practiced	Evidence (questionnaire/application exercise)
Performance-based budget management	Understanding the principles of results-oriented budget management; linking budget allocations to strategic objectives and performance targets.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on performance-based budgeting and the correlation with the ISP - 100% correct answers);
Prioritization of investment programs and projects	Developing the ability to prioritize investments based on impact, risk, and feasibility criteria; analyzing financing alternatives for the same program.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on investment projects and cost-benefit analysis ≈ 90% correct answers) Practical exercises

Monitoring budget execution and commitments	Understanding the mechanisms for monitoring budget execution and commitments; using data for adjustments and managerial decisions.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on monitoring budget execution - ≈ 85% correct answers); Case studies and applied discussions
Budget process coordination, prudence, and integrity	Clarifying the role of interinstitutional coordination in the budget process; understanding the principles of budgetary prudence, integrity, and risk management.	Knowledge questionnaire (items on budgetary prudence, legal commitments, and ethics ≈ 85% correct answers)

3.2.7 Analysis of the factors that influenced the results achieved at Level 2 of the Kirkpatrick model

156. **The results achieved at Level 2 of the Kirkpatrick model directly reflect the quality of the design and delivery of the training program, i.e. the curriculum that was focused on how to apply the concepts in real life, on the use of experiential learning methodologies, and constant reference to real contexts in public administration**. The evaluation was designed to highlight and document these learning outcomes, without being a determining factor in their occurrence. In this sense, the results at Level 2 cannot be interpreted exclusively in terms of the scores obtained in the questionnaires or exercises, but must be analyzed in relation to how the program was designed and implemented. The analysis below highlights the main factors that facilitated the acquisition of knowledge and the practice of skills, as well as the educational design and delivery elements that can be considered good practices for development programs for the HLCS positions.

157. **The curriculum of the program is highly relevant to the role of HLCS.** The content was built around real-life situations that involved leadership, decision-making, coordination, and resource management specific to public administration, avoiding general or overly theoretical approaches. This anchoring in institutional reality allowed the participants to recognize the concepts and tools presented as being directly applicable to their current work, not just as conceptual landmarks. From this perspective, a good practice in designing programs for senior public officials consists of systematically relating the content to the concrete responsibilities of the respective position, and to the real institutional contexts in which it is exercised.

158. **The interviews indicate a positive evaluation of the program's utility, particularly in clarifying the strategic role of HLCS and the structuring of the decision-making process.** Participants appreciated the practical nature of the sessions, the relevance of the examples, and the usefulness of the distinction between leadership and management.

- *"It significantly clarified the difference between strategic and operational decisions for me."*
- *"It was very practical, not theoretical."*
- *"It provided me with a clearer framework for prioritization."*

The dominant perception was that the program offered a coherent conceptual framework for exercising leadership roles, rather than merely providing new information. The program contributed to the consolidation of strategic thinking competencies by offering a consistent framework for analysis and prioritization, facilitating a more structured approach to leadership.

159. **The program systematically combines an appropriate conceptual approach with practical exercises and the specific tools necessary for exercising the HLCS function.** During each module the theoretical concepts presented were complemented with hands-on exercises and concrete, ready-to-use tools. Concepts were clearly introduced and then immediately tested through case studies, simulations, or analysis exercises. Tools such as the RACI matrix, SWOT analysis, ISPs, and performance indicators were practiced in relevant simulated contexts and were frequently mentioned in feedback as being very "useful" or "providing clarity”. This constant alternation between explanation and application is a good educational design practice, conducive to Level 2 learning.

160. **The self-assessment component was considered one of the most valuable sequences.** The self-assessment tool was unanimously mentioned as an element with immediate personal impact. Participants described an increase in awareness regarding their own reactions and behavioral patterns.

- *“I realized how I react under pressure.”*
- *“It helped me understand what I am conveying to the team without realizing it.”*
- *“I have started to be more attentive to the way I communicate.”*

This component was perceived as a catalyst for reflection, having a direct effect on how participants relate to others and exercise authority. It was considered a strong differentiator of the program, suggesting incipient manifestations of competencies such as accountability (recognizing and correcting one's own behavioral patterns), driving engagement (team involvement and increased empathy), and strategic communication (message awareness and adapting style in critical contexts).

161. **The program focuses on in-depth activities with a limited set of key concepts, revisited in different contexts.** The program opted to work in depth with essential concepts, revisited and progressively recontextualized in several modules. Topics such as leadership, strategic planning, performance monitoring, and budgetary decision-making were approached from complementary perspectives:

- Clarity of strategic intent and direction (leadership)
- Roles and responsibilities in the decision-making process (governance)
- Strategic objectives and context analysis (strategy)
- Change and process management (reorganization)
- Operationalization through indicators, ISPs, and budget allocations (budget monitoring and management).

This approach supported the development of an integrated and coherent understanding, avoiding fragmentation of knowledge, and can be considered a good practice for executive development programs.

162. **The program content was anchored in the realities of the public administration in Romania.** Case studies, examples, and discussions reflected real situations with real decision-making dilemmas and concrete legislative, institutional, and organizational constraints. This contextualization contributed to the credibility of the content and reduced the distance between learning and practice. As a good practice, similar programs should avoid the mechanical transfer of models and prioritize their adaptation to the particular institutional context in which they will be applied.

163. **The training modules were supported by the exchange of experience and perspectives between participants from different institutions.** The diversity of the participants' professional experiences was an important resource for the learning process. The exchange of examples,

comparisons between different types of institutions, and plenary discussions helped to clarify different concepts and understand how they can be applied in different contexts. Peer learning supported the consolidation of knowledge and provided participants with additional food for thought. This participatory dimension is a good practice that should be maintained and encouraged in future programs targeting groups with high professional experience.

164. **During the program, the trainers used formative assessments as a tool to reinforce learning.** Knowledge questionnaires and hands-on exercises had a dual purpose: assessing the level of understanding and reinforcing knowledge. These tools allowed the participants to test their understanding of key concepts and adjust their reasoning throughout the program. The results indicate that formative assessments supported the process of internalizing knowledge and clarifying the relationships between concepts. As a best practice, the use of formative assessments should be viewed not only as an assessment tool, but as an integral part of the learning process.

165. **Behavioral transfer is perceived by the interviewed participants, but it is in an incipient stage.** One month after completion, participants described concrete but limited applications. Transfer was particularly noted in the structuring of meetings and decisions; the filtering of initiatives and project prioritization; and the adjustment of communication styles with their teams.

- *"I have started to approach the issue of priorities more clearly."*
- *"I no longer push all initiatives forward."*
- *"I am trying to involve the team more in finding solutions."*

These examples indicate early manifestations of competencies in the areas of strategic thinking and interpersonal effectiveness. The program generates early signs of behavioral transfer, especially regarding decision-making structures and team relations. Given the timing of the evaluation (one month after completion), it is premature to assess consolidated operational results at the institutional level.

166. **The institutional context is perceived as a powerful influence on the pace and scope of applying the acquired competencies.** Interviewed participants emphasized that decision-making autonomy, mandate clarity, and managerial stability directly condition the possibility of applying what they have learned.

- *"It depends a lot on how much decision-making space you have."*
- *"Some things depend on the context, not just on me."*

In institutions with clear mandates and continuity at the leadership level, application is described as being faster and more visible. In contexts characterized by instability or high political and procedural constraints, application is more cautious and gradual. This aspect indicates that the program's effects are mediated by structural conditions external to the training itself, and the analysis of its contribution must consider the interaction between the developed competencies and the actual opportunities to exercise the HLCS role.

167. **The identified areas for improvement are related to fine-tuning the conditions for learning at Level 2 of the Kirkpatrick model, namely a deeper understanding of concepts, structuring the practical reasoning, and strengthening the ability to use the tools discussed.** These proposals are based on the premises of an already effective formative design and aim at specific adjustments intended to support a deeper and more coherent learning process, not just an improved training experience:

- For exercises involving integrated analysis, correlation of multiple concepts, or decision-making under constraints, allocating additional time could support the development of stronger applied reasoning. Participant feedback suggests that a more selective, in-depth exploration of key cases (even if this entails covering fewer examples within a session) would facilitate a clearer understanding of the relationships between concepts and the decision criteria, without compromising overall content coverage.

- Given the different levels of professional experience, a more explicit differentiation of exercises could contribute to strengthening the learning process. Adjusting the level of the applications would allow participants with less experience in a particular field to better understand the basic concepts and the logic behind the tools used, while for those with advanced expertise it would support in-depth analysis and critical thinking on how to use the knowledge and tools in complex contexts.
- Providing short briefing materials or food-for-thought questions prior to key exercises could support learning by facilitating a quicker understanding of the concepts covered. This practice would allow the time allocated to practical work to be used primarily for analysis, clarifications and integration of concepts, thus contributing to consolidating the understanding and a more coherent use of the tools discussed.

4. Sustainability and the replication potential of the CDPARPA pilot

168. **This chapter explores the possibilities, requirements, and limitations of taking over and replicating the CDPARPA pilot through a partnership between the NACS and NIA, respectively by the academic institutions and private training providers.** The analysis covers issues related to the specific legislation for each category of providers, the applicable procedural framework, the quality standards used, and the selection of trainers and participants. The analysis also examines the approval, accreditation, authorization, and integration requirements for each type of program in the training providers' portfolio, as well as the conditions for successfully graduating from the program and receiving a certificate for the acquired competencies. The analysis also covers aspects related to the costs of organizing and running this program based on available references, in line with the rates charged by providers. For each of the three options discussed, the analysis identifies strengths and weaknesses regarding the relevance of the program to the type of activity currently carried out by the types of providers, the feasibility of integrating the specific requirements for implementation with the work agenda of the target groups, the cost and time required to obtain the required approvals, accreditations, or authorizations, previous experience, and estimated rates.

Table 29. Comparative presentation of the key characteristics of vocational training programs organized by NIA, universities, and authorized private providers

Characteristic	Organizer		
	National Institute of Administration	Higher Education Institution (University)	Private Vocational Training Provider (Authorized)
Form of delivery	Specialized training program	Post-graduate Adult Vocational Training (AVT) program for continuous professional development (Specialization type)	Adult Vocational Training (AVT) program (Specialization type)
Definition of specialization	Vocational training for civil servants aimed at developing competencies and skills necessary for high-complexity roles requiring specific abilities. Conducted in an organized framework over a relatively extended period, with strictly defined target groups and multiple themes.	Post-graduate AVT programs ensuring the acquisition of new professional competencies related to a different specialization within the same field of the graduate's Bachelor's/Master's/Doctorate degree (minimum 3 ECTS).	Specialization programs aimed at developing competencies within the same qualification, acquiring new competencies in the same or a new occupational area, or acquiring new fundamental/key or technical competencies.
Legislative Framework	- GD no. 1,066/2008 (Training of civil servants)	- Higher Education Law no. 199/2023, Art. 26 (2) d)	- GO no. 129/2000 (Adult Vocational Training)

	- GEO no. 67/2024 (Reorganization and functioning of NIA)	- OMEC no. 4,148/2025 (Methodology for post-graduate AVT) - GD no. 962/2024 (External quality evaluation in higher education)	- GD no. 522/2003 (Methodological norms for GO 129/2000) - OMMSSF no. 353/2003 (Authorization methodology) - OMMSSF no. 5,253/2003 (Certification methodology)
Endorsement, Accreditation, or Authorization	Themes, quality standards, delivery methods, and regulations are endorsed by the Coordination Council attached to the Institute and approved by the NIA President. Duration: ~1 month.	Post-graduate programs can only be organized by accredited universities. After internal quality review, they are endorsed by the Administration Board and approved by the Senate. Validated/registered in the National Register of Post-graduate Programs (RNPP) via the National Qualifications Authority. Duration: ~3 months.	Providers submit an authorization request to the Technical Secretariats of county authorization commissions. The file must prove eligibility, human/material resources, financial status, and prior experience. Duration: ~2 months.
Costs for endorsement/ authorization	No fees are charged by the NIA Coordination Council for endorsement.	The fee for registering the program in the RNPP is equivalent to 25% of the net minimum wage (approx. 643 RON in 2025).	An authorization fee is charged for each program, equal to 2 gross minimum wages. In 2025, the fee was 8,100 RON.
Inclusion in National Registers	Specialized Training Program Record Register (automatically generated via INA platform).	National Register of Post-graduate Programs (RNPP) managed by the National Qualifications Authority.	National Register of Authorized Vocational Training Providers (RNFFPA); Register of Authorizations.
Format	Organized framework or distance learning.	Full-time, part-time, or distance learning.	Full-time and online.

Duration (Hours/Days)	Varies between 54 hours (9 days) and 162 hours (27 days).	Varies between 120 hours and 192 hours.	Varies between 180–300 hours, per occupational standards.
Module Structure	Varies between 3 modules (9 days) and 9 modules (27 days).	Between 5 and 9 modules.	The curriculum may be structured in modules.
ECTS Credits	Not applicable.	Varies between 15 and 26 ECTS.	May be granted under certain conditions.
Registration/ Admission Fee	500 RON for PÎFP. None for other specialized programs.	100 RON – 250 RON.	Established by the provider via training contracts.
Tuition Fee	Varies between 1,350 RON (3 modules) and 5,500 RON (9 modules).	Varies between 1,500 RON (120 hours) and 4,000 RON (216 hours).	Established by the provider via training contracts.
Trainer Fees	Hourly rates for trainers are not specified.	Below the maximum hourly rate for Master's programs with special fees. Example: maximum conventional gross hourly rate of 140 RON.	Based on program budget and agreements with contracted trainers.
Frequency	Annual for programs in the NIA offer.	Annual for programs in the university offer.	Based on commercial objectives and market demand.
Participant Capacity	Approx. 22–25 participants per group (based on PÎFP/PRF analysis).	E.g., ASE (2021) cohorts of 50 students ±20%, groups of 25 ±20%.	Max 28 people for theory; max 14 for practical training.
Selection Requirements	- Enrollment within deadline - Target group alignment - Institutional approval - "First come, first served" (INA platform timestamp) - Numerical limits per program.	Graduates with at least a Bachelor's degree or equivalent. Enrollment per internal university regulations. Specific conditions may apply per university.	Authorized providers can organize programs for university graduates, leading to nationally recognized certificates, based on the approved list of specializations.
Enrollment	After selection, participants are enrolled via NIA Presidential Order.	Admitted candidates are enrolled via Rector's Decision after fee payment and contract signing.	Providers sign a vocational training contract with each participant before registration with technical secretariats.
Trainer Selection	Based on NIA Recruitment and Selection Methodology	Hiring of invited associate teaching staff.	Authorized programs can only be delivered by

	for specialized personnel and specific criteria.		certified trainers or teaching staff with profiles matching the curriculum.
Quality Standards	Standards for each program cover: material/electronic/human resources, content, duration, and quality monitoring measures.	Only accredited universities can organize these programs following external ARACIS evaluation. Internal Quality Committees ensure compliance.	Evaluation for authorization covers: the curriculum, necessary resources, experience, and past results. Standards include access conditions, objectives, and evaluation procedures.
Quality Monitoring	Includes evaluation of participants and the program by specialized staff and a commission via questionnaires after each module.	Maintenance of accreditation requires periodic external evaluation per current regulations.	Monitoring follows authorization criteria through at least 3 visits every 18 months and analysis of final evaluation results.
Results Reporting	Evaluation reports on the program and staff are prepared based on participant results, questionnaires, and NIA monitoring.	Program directors prepare results reports per university regulations; faculty secretariats manage student/graduate documentation.	Technical secretariats update the County Register of Graduates monthly. Examination reports include statistical data on graduation results.
Completion & Assessment	PÎFP: Intermediate evaluation (per module, via trainer or platform) and final evaluation (competency interview).	Mandatory forms specified in the course syllabus, including periodic evaluations and a professional competency certification exam.	Graduation exams (theory/practice) organized under the coordination of the authorization commission and selected specialists.
Certification Issued	Digital Graduation Certificate, electronically signed by the NIA President.	Partial Qualification Certificate.	Nationally recognized Graduation Certificate.

Certificate Annex	Digital "Descriptive Supplement" specifying acquired professional competencies.	"Descriptive Supplement" specifying learning outcomes and competencies.	"Descriptive Supplement" specifying acquired professional competencies.
Record Registers	Nominal Record Register for Graduation Certificates.	Nominal Record Register for Post-graduate AVT Certificates (University).	Provider maintains a Nominal Record Register; a copy is kept by the authorization commission.
Quality Management Certification	NIA holds SR EN ISO 9001:2015 certification for vocational training in public administration.	Universities are accredited by ARACIS (independent body), with official recognition conferred by Government Decision.	Providers may optionally choose to certify their quality management system.

Source: Authors' elaboration based on the legislative framework (see Annexes 4, 5, and 6).

4.1 Replication of the CDPARAP through the NACS-NIA partnership

169. **The program can be taken over by NIA in the form of a specialized training program, with a total of 162 training hours, or 27 training days**. In this regard, the program will have to comply with existing legislation on the organization and delivery of training activities, registration and tuition fees, as well as on the selection procedures and criteria, and the provision for the awarding of certificates of completion. In the same time, the program will have to be in line with the existing organizational and operational regulations and procedures that establish the stages and requirements for introducing a new training program.

170. **The analysis highlights the fact that introduction of the program into the NIA's STP offer is a fairly quick process, involving simplified procedures and no additional costs. It would be based on an already functional institutional and operational framework and on the NIA's solid experience in training public administration leaders. The program is in line with NIA's strategic priorities.** The analysis of the characteristics of the specialized training programs run by the NIA and the experience gained in organizing and conducting them between 2018 and 2025 highlighted a number of strengths and opportunities regarding the relevance of adopting the program. These conclusions are based on the analysis in Annex 4 and consist of the following:

- The procedure for introducing a new ST program into the institute's training offer is the shortest and involves only two levels of approval (the approval of the Coordination Council and the approval of the NIA president), compared to the procedure for accrediting and registering a specialization-type Adult Professional Training postgraduate program (five levels: Faculty Council, Quality Assessment and Assurance Commission, Board of Directors, University Senate, and National Qualifications Authority) or the procedure for authorizing an adult professional training program (3 levels: Authorization Commission, Evaluators selected from the Register of Evaluators of County Training Providers and Programs, Authorization Commission). In practice, the approval of a new program depends on the schedule of the Coordination Council meetings and the opportunity to include this item on its agenda, so that the decision to approve the program can be taken in a single meeting.

- The set of documents (file) required for the approval and review of an ST program consists of only 4 documents: the syllabus, the program-specific quality standards, the organization and implementation regulations (which already include the syllabus and standards, along with the other sections) and the training offer, compared to a specialization-type PTA postgraduate program (curriculum, course descriptions, senate approval decision, etc.) or an authorized adult professional training program. The quality standards and regulations for the organization and implementation of programs exist and can be quickly tailored to fit the requirements of another program, provided that the topics and the complete set of related training materials already exist.

- The introduction of a new ST program in the NIA training offer does not involve the payment of any fee, compared to the regulations for professional training of adults' postgraduate programs (643 lei in 2025) or authorized adult professional training programs (8100 lei in 2025).

- NIA has extensive, valuable experience in providing professional training for strategic groups such as HLCS, prefects and sub-prefects, public management positions, and local secretaries-general, which can be a key factor to the successful organization and delivery of the program. This experience could also be relevant for the participant's selection process and for the interactions throughout the program. The teams implementing the ST programs have the required experience, validated by the number of ST programs organized, both from their own offer and those part of European-funded programs, and by the high number of graduates.

- The procedural framework in force at the NIA level for an ST program covers all stages: approval, promotion, selection of participants and specialized staff, organization, implementation, evaluation, quality assessments, and certification of skills, and includes: the required methodologies, regulations, and procedures, approved by ministerial order or endorsed by the Coordination Council, which can contribute to a quick take over and its successful integration into the training offer.

- The set of strategic priorities and actions established in the NIA Strategic Plan for 2020-2025 highlights a focus on key areas for developing administrative skills, updating the program portfolio, and developing and delivering professional training programs for current and future leaders in public administration. The implementation of the pilot can contribute to the achievement of these objectives.

171. **The analysis also highlights a number of limitations related to tariff caps, the absence of an accredited assessment tools and coaching/mentoring components, but also calendar constraints, the lack of external evaluations and impact analysis, and the need to expand the portfolio of trainers.** A number of issues related to the NIA's ST framework can be analyzed and considered for possible future optimizations with regard to the decision to take over the program. These consist of

- Tuition fees for ST programs are set by ORDER of the Minister of Development, Public Works, and Administration No. 1.114/2022 and cannot exceed 200 lei/day for programs organized in a classical setting; only in the case of Training programs for HLCS and Training Programs for prefects and subprefects the fee 220 lei/day/participant. This cap may limit the institute's ability to mobilize trainers with international experience who are certified in the use of recognized methodologies, coaches, or mentors.

- In the description of ST programs, there is no reference to the use of accredited or certified tools for assessing the leadership skills. Their use involves costs that must be analyzed and budgeted when drawing up the ST program budget.

- In the description of the ST programs, skills development activities complementary to training, such as coaching or mentoring are not mentioned. The option to recruit and engage experienced professionals (who have held SG and DG positions and achieved relevant results in their work) to provide mentoring services at rates similar to those charged for training activities could be explored.

- The ST programs are only scheduled during normal working hours, which can be a hindrance in certain circumstances for the target group represented by SG and DG in office. In the case of the program, participation during the weekend was high and was appreciated by most participants, providing them with a suitable framework for continuous and uninterrupted learning.

- The quality standards for training programs are covered by the quality control system, and the quality management system ensures compliance with SR EN ISO 9001:2025, as proven by its recertification. However, it does not include external monitoring, verification, and quality assessments for ST programs, unlike postgraduate PTA programs and adult professional training programs.

- The expansion of the portfolio of services offered by NIA with the development of the analyses of the training needs of public organizations in 2025 contributes to increasing the relevance of training programs and supporting the work of human resources structures, but no references have yet been identified regarding the use of the methodology for assessing the impact of ST programs organized by the institute.

- Expanding the existing portfolio of trainers with experts in the use of the tools outlined in the program modules can contribute to the successful implementation of the program.

172. **The transition of the program to the NIA's portfolio requires going through the entire institutional process of designing, endorsing, approving, promoting, and implementing a ST program (Figure 5).** Based on the legislation, methodologies, and regulations consulted, the following steps must be taken to endorse and approve the integration of the program into the NIA's portfolio:

- The responsible NIA structure, the Directorate for Specialized Training Programs (DSTP), substantiates the ST program based on an analysis of the training policies and strategies, the current legal regulations, and the institute's strategic objectives regarding professional training, and submits it to the president for approval. The team also estimates the required resources and the expenditure budget for the proposed tuition fee is substantiated.

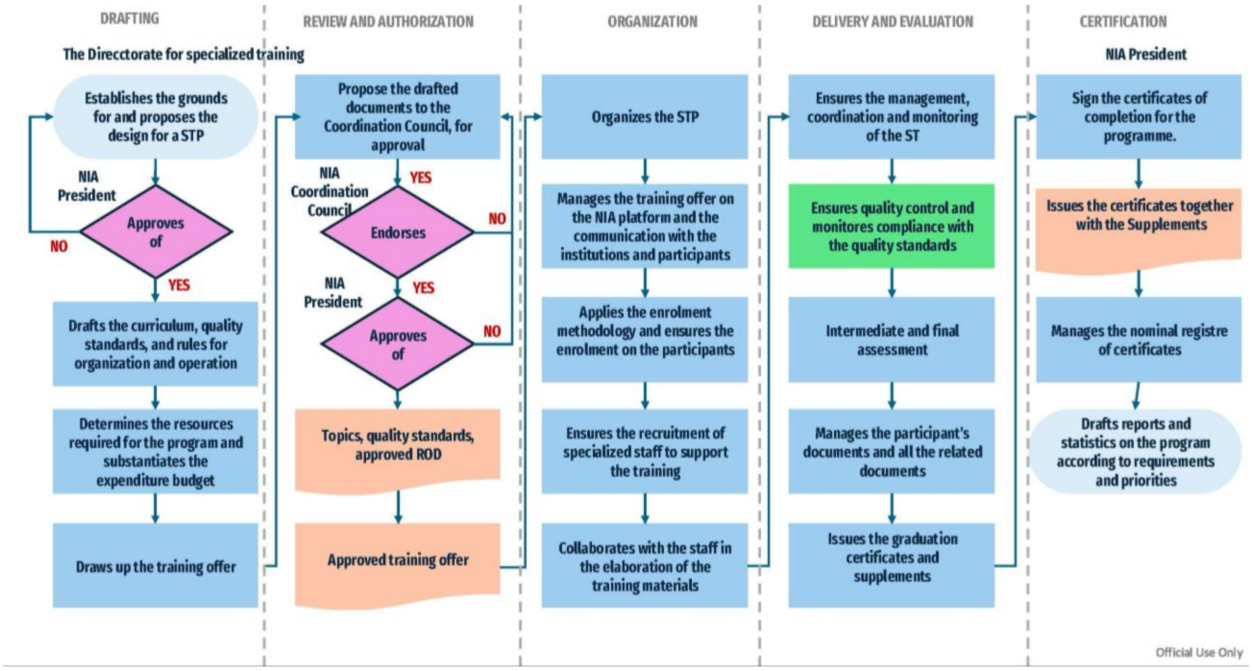
- After approval, the DSTP team drafts the topics, quality standards, implementation methods, and organizational and implementation regulations, which, together with the training offer, are submitted for approval by the Coordination Council operating within the Institute.

- After approval, the documents are approved by the president of the NIA.

- The new NIA offer that includes the ST program is being promoted, and the ST program is being run according to the rules and methods approved by ministerial order.

- The team of trainers selected to support the program collaborates with the NIA's implementation team in drafting the materials (in this case the materials only need to be adjusted, as needed, as they are already designed as a complete package for each module: course support, PowerPoint presentation, practical applications accompanied by user guides, multiple-choice tests, and a final active learning project).

Figure 5 . The process of drafting, authorizing, and organizing an ST program within the NIA



Source: Developed by the authors based on the legislation in force GEO No. 67/2024, OPNIA No. 357/2024, ROF INA, OMDPWA No. 604/2021, OMLPDA No. 3.836/2020.

4.2 Replication of the CDPARPA through a partnership between NACS – universities

173. **Under the current legislation, the appropriate legal form in which the program could be carried out in partnership with the universities is that of a postgraduate professional training programs for adults – PTA.** This option is in line with the program's objectives and simultaneously ensures formal recognition, operational flexibility, and integration into higher education quality assessment mechanisms. The program can be organized on the basis of existing and functional regulatory instruments: Higher Education Law No. 199/2023; Framework methodology for the organization and delivery of postgraduate professional training programs for adults (Order of the Minister of Education No. 4148/2025); as well as internal university regulations and methodologies on continuing education and postgraduate programs (documents already adopted and applied in most universities in Romania). This framework could be adequate for launching the program, without the need to introduce specific legislative amendments or regulations.

174. **Universities have regulated, flexible, and internationally recognized systems for postgraduate adult education programs, which creates a good opportunity for integrating the program into the academic offer**. Based on the analysis conducted between 2018-2025 on the characteristics of postgraduate continuous professional development (CPD) programs and the experience of the universities included in this research, a number of strengths and opportunities stand out regarding the

relevance of adopting the program. These conclusions are based on the analysis in Annex 5 and consist of the following

- Universities have their own regulations on the organization and delivery of postgraduate CPD programs, approved by the university senates, based on the requirements set out in OMEC Ministerial Order No. 4148/2025. These regulations cover aspects relating to admission requirements, enrollment, learning activities, knowledge assessment and skills certification exams, but they also regulate the activities of the admissions and assessment committees, the rights and duties of students, as well as study interruptions, equivalencies, re-enrollment, and certain special situations.

- All 22 postgraduate programs designed for civil servants, as consulted in the National Register of Postgraduate Programs (NRPP), are registered prior to the publication of OMEC No. 4148/2025, which stipulates that established programs may maintain their accreditation until the periodic evaluation process is completed, but no later than July 1, 2026. The reaccreditation of these programs represents an opportunity for program to be included in the offer of some of the stipulated universities in the 2026-2027 academic year.

- Through CPD programs, a minimum of 3 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credits can be obtained, which provides transparency in understanding the study programs, the workload, and the acquired skills, but also have a reference with other internationally recognized programs and flexibility.

- Universities have shown constant interest and have accumulated significant recent experience in organizing and running PTA postgraduate study programs. The total results for only two universities between 2018 and 2025 amounted to 10,141,072 lei and 2,549 graduates.

- Universities have flexibility in establishing the tuition fees and can quickly adapt to the market and the needs of potential beneficiaries, with fees being approved by their boards of directors and senates.

- Universities can initiate and establish partnerships with interested organizations in developing PTA postgraduate programs that meet the market requirements. Four of the twenty-two programs included in the analysis are organized in partnership with the following entities: the Romanian Smart City Association, the General Inspectorate of the Romanian Police, EON Romania, and the Romanian Digitalization Authority.

- The accreditation of PTA postgraduate programs is renewed through periodic evaluation, in line with the regulations in place. The host institution must go through a regular external audit to keep the accreditation for postgraduate programs, which helps create a culture of high quality and continuous improvement.

- The national methodology for the approval and registration of postgraduate programs offers flexibility to structure the program into modules and to combine intensive modules with online activities, mentoring, and applied projects. In most cases where universities organized programs in an executive format (based on intensive 2-3 day modules organized monthly), the participation rate was higher, and the perceived quality of the training process increased significantly.

- The multi-annual strategic plans of ASE, UNIBUC, and SNSPA include specific programs and actions aimed at: consolidating and developing postgraduate programs adapted to the market needs, expanding partnerships with the economic and social environment, developing the offer of "premium" programs consisting of advanced courses in key areas, and strengthening the team. Including the program in their offer can contribute to achieving these goals.

175. **PTA postgraduate programs have procedural and implementation schedule rigidities, as well as gaps in the assessment and development of leadership skills, which may limit the attractiveness and effectiveness of the program for the HLCS and DG.** The analysis reveals a number of issues that may limit the successful implementation of the program in this system and that should be considered for possible future optimizations:

- Although the process of reviewing, approving, and registering a postgraduate program does not involve the classic accreditation process applicable to bachelor's or master's programs, but rather a series of institutional approvals and external validation, carried out within a predictable timetable, this process can last for approximately 3-4 months.

- Universities operate within a well-defined institutional framework, organized into semesters, with pre-established teaching loads and fixed periods allocated to teaching activities, examinations, and vacations. In this context, a program structured in a traditional academic format, with regular weekly sessions, would make it difficult for the HLCS to attend the sessions, as they cannot be away from their institutions on a weekly basis without affecting the current decision-making processes. The only exception would be the time slot between 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m..

- The description of the postgraduate PTA programs does not mention the use of accredited or validated leadership skills assessment tools. Their use involves costs that must be analyzed and budgeted for when drawing up the ST program budget.

- The description of ST programs does not include skills development activities complementary to training, such as coaching or mentoring. The option to recruit and engage experienced professionals (who have held SG and DG positions and achieved relevant results in their work) to provide mentoring services at rates similar to those charged by associate teaching staff for training activities could be explored.

176. **For the design, approval, and registration of the program in a university's training offer, based on the legislation, methodologies, and regulations consulted, the following steps are followed, as illustrated in the figure below:**

- A faculty or training center operating within the university drafts the program file, in accordance with the framework methodology described in OMEC No. 4148/2025. A curriculum and course descriptions shall also be drafted. Each course description shall include information about the course, the dedicated time, the acquired skills, the content, a description of the teaching and assessment methods and means. This process is facilitated by the documentation developed within the pilot, which includes analyses and the complete training package for each module (course support, PowerPoint presentation, practical applications accompanied by user guides, multiple-choice tests, final active learning project) from which the necessary elements can be extracted.

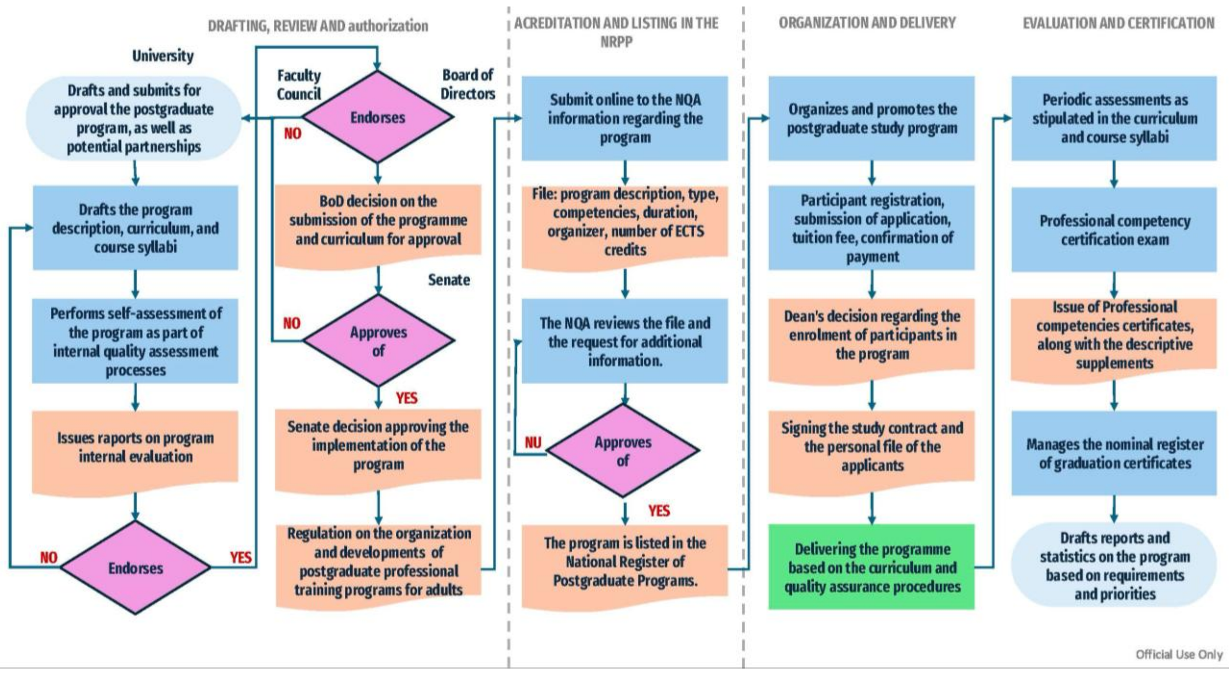
- After being reviewed and approved by the relevant authorities (Faculty Council), the file is sent to the Commission for Quality Evaluation and Assurance (CQEA) for resolutions on compliance with the internal standards. The file is then endorsed by the Board of Directors and authorized by the Senate through a resolution.

- After internal approval, the file is sent to the National Qualifications Authority (NQA) for validation and registration in the National Qualifications Register (NQR) and the National Register of Postgraduate Programs (NRPP). The file includes the application for registration/update, the program registration/update form, the Senate decision approving the program and requesting registration in the NRPP, and proof of payment of the fee for registering the program in the NRPP, equivalent to 25% of the minimum net salary for that year. Providing that no additional information is requested, the NQA has 15 working days to review the file.

- After registration is complete, the university can launch the program and begin operational preparations for promoting the program, planning the delivery of modules, selecting participants, and contracting university and associated teaching staff.

- The program coordination team and contracted teaching staff collaborate in drafting training materials for each discipline (in this case the materials only need to be adjusted, as needed, as they are already designed as a complete package for each module: course support, PowerPoint presentation, practical applications accompanied by user guides, multiple-choice tests, and a final active learning project).

Figure 6 . The process of drafting, authorizing, and organizing a postgraduate PTA program



Source: Developed by the authors based on the analysis of OMEC No. 4148/2025 and the Regulations on the organization and conduct of postgraduate adult professional training programs at universities: ASE, UNIBUC, SNSPA, UBB, UVT, and UGAL.

4.3 Replication of the CDPARPA as a specialized professional training program by a private authorized training provider

177. **The program can be taken over by a private authorized training provider and implemented as a specialized training program, with a minimum duration of 180 hours of training.** Based on the existing legislative framework that establishes the procedural requirements, eligibility criteria, documentation, quality standards, and the monitoring requirements, the program must be authorized,

organized and following the completion of the program, nationally recognized certificates must be awarded to the participants.

178. **Authorized professional training programs providers operate within a well-regulated regulatory framework, but the level of adaptability and flexibility is very high. They have extensive experience, the flexibility to adapt to the market needs, the ability to ensure quality through regular monitoring, and the possibility to integrate modern tools for assessment, coaching, and program modularization.** The analysis of the characteristics of specialized training program for the period 2018-2025, included in Annex 6, highlights the following key points regarding the relevance of replicating the program through a partnership between the NACS and authorized training providers:

- The activities of authorized training providers are governed by a series of normative acts covering aspects related to the design, authorization, organization, and delivery of programs, participant enrollment, quality assurance and monitoring, graduation exams, and the issuance of graduation certificates.

- The authorized training providers have operational agility, reflected by fast-paced internal approval procedures in terms of decision-making and resource mobilization.

- The authorized training providers have extensive experience in authorizing, organizing, and running specialized professional training programs for adults, with 38,001 graduates trained by providers based in Bucharest in 2024 alone, out of a total of 74,602 graduates from 5,166 programs.

- Some of the programs included in this analysis organized by providers with over 20 years of experience in adult training, particularly in the corporate sector, use accredited leadership skills assessment tools and provide access to coaching or mentoring opportunities for the elaboration of the final graduation projects.

- The authorized training providers have greater flexibility in establishing tuition fees and can quickly adapt to market conditions and the needs of potential beneficiaries.

- In order to retain the authorization, the program must meet all the criteria upon which the authorization was granted. This process consists of a minimum of three monitoring visits, at intervals of no more than 18 months, and systematic analysis of the results achieved by the participants following the final assessment. At least one of the visits will take place during the training course, and additional visits may be made in the event of complaints or special circumstances. These provisions contribute to the implementation of a culture of quality and continuous improvement.

- Private providers have a high degree of flexibility in setting the schedule and agenda of the sessions, can manage rescheduling requests relatively easily, and can adapt to participants' schedules. In addition, the methodology for authorizing professional training programs for adults offers the possibility to design and structure the programs in modules, with the possibility to award certificates for the completion of each module.

179. A number of aspects can be analyzed and taken into account when deciding to take on the program:

- The process of authorizing training programs usually takes at least two months and involves obtaining and submitting tax certificates attesting that the provider has no outstanding debts to the state or local budget, entering into contracts for the delivery of practical training activities, and compiling the authorization file.

- For the authorization of each training program, an authorization fee is charged in the amount of two minimum gross salaries per country, guaranteed in payment, on the date of submission of the file; in 2005, the fee was 8,100 lei.

- Tuition fees are high, ranging from 150 to 250/300 euros per training day/participant, which may limit access for participants from the public system to these training opportunities, whose effectiveness has already been proven in the private sector.

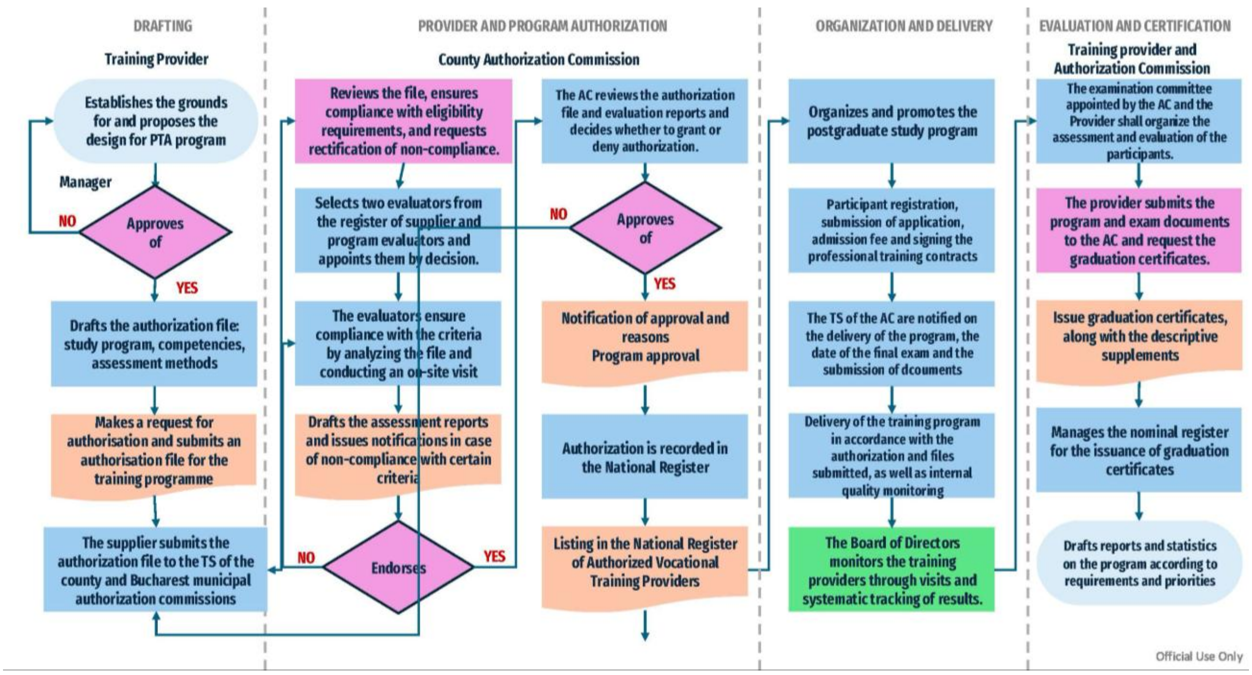
180. As illustrated in the figure below, under the current legislation and methodology, for the design and authorization of the program as a form of professional training programs for adults organized by a private authorized training providers, the following steps must be followed:

- The structure responsible for designing the training programs drafts the authorization file, which shall include documents that show compliance with the eligibility conditions and authorization criteria regarding the existence of the required authorizations and approvals, human resources to support the program, the financial resources, the provider's financial statements, and previous experience, including the program self-assessment form and related technical annexes: the training program, participant assessment methods, and the teaching plan. The training materials can also be drafted. All documents developed within the program framework (course materials, PowerPoint presentation, practical applications accompanied by user guides, multiple-choice tests, final active learning project) can be used in the preparation of the authorization file, which facilitates the process, as they only need to be tailored accordingly.

- The provider submits an authorization application to the Authorization Commission of the Technical Secretariats of the county and Bucharest municipal authorization commissions, accompanied by the authorization file for the training program, which is resolved within 45 days of registration. Based on the analysis of the file and the evaluation reports prepared by the evaluators, the commission decides whether to grant or refuse the authorization, which is then registered in the Authorization Register and is valid for 4 years, with the possibility of renewal at the request of the provider.

- The provider shall then promote and run the professional training programs for adults and put together a team of trainers to deliver the theoretical and practical training.

Figure 7 . The process of drafting, authorizing, and organizing a professional training program



Source: Developed by the authors based on the analysis of GO No. 129/2000, GD No. 522/2003, OMMSSF No. 353/2003, OMMSSF No. 5.253/2003.

4.4 Operational and methodological considerations regarding the replication of the program

4.4.1 Financial implications for replicating the program

181. **The financial implications for replicating the program must be estimated for each category of training provider, but the main cost categories are relevant in all three scenarios presented**. With a view to replicating and integrating the program into the training offer of any provider from the three categories analyzed in this chapter, the main cost categories have been identified, based on the pilot experience and the characteristics of the types of vocational training programs analyzed above. The total budget can be calculated by multiplying the specified costs by the unit rates used by each category of providers. The cost estimates considered cohorts of 21 participants.

Table 30. Cost categories related to human resources required for the organization, implementation, and evaluation of the program

Activity	Activity trainers per hour				Trainer coordinator(s) activity per hour				Program managers' activity per hour				
	D	P	E	Total	D	P	E	Total	S	O	C	R	Total
Module 1.	42	20	10	**72**	42	10	6	58	320	40	20	20	400
Module 2.	18	10	5	**33**	18	5	2	25		10	5	20	35
Module 3.	18	10	5	**33**	18	5	2	25		10	5	20	35
Module 4.	18	10	5	**33**	18	5	2	25		10	5	20	35
Module 5.	18	10	5	**33**	18	5	2	25		10	5	20	35

Module 6.	18	10	5	**33**	18	5	2	25		10	5	20	35
Total A Training	**132**	**70**	**35**	**237**	**132**	**35**	**16**	**183**	**320**	**90**	**45**	**120**	**575**
Networking sessions	0	0	0	0	9	9	0	18	0	9	30	0	**39**
Mentoring sessions	126	63	21	**210**	5	5	3	13					
Project preparation	0	0	0	**0**	0	0	0	**0**					
Project presentation	42	0	0	**42**	6	0	0	**6**					
Leadership style assessment	0	0	0	**0**	0	0	0	**0**					
Results counseling	21	21	0	**42**	1	1	1	**3**					
Total B Networking mentoring and counseling	**189**	**84**	**21**	**294**	**21**	**15**	**4**	**40**	0	0	0	0	**39**
Total Hours	321	154	56	**531**	153	50	20	**223**	320	90	45	120	**614**

Source: Authors' assessment based on piloting experience.

Note: D: Delivery, P: Preparation, E: Evaluation, S: Selection of participants, O: Organization, C: Contracting, R: Reporting.

Table 31. Centralization of costs for organizing, conducting, and evaluating the program

Human resources	Trainers	Coordinator(s) for trainers	Program managers		Logistics	
			Selection hours	32		
Delivery hours	321	153	**Organization hours**	90	Leadership style assessment tools	21 packages
Preparation hours	15	50	**Contracting hours**	45	Classroom management	26 days
Assessment hours	56	20	**Management hours**	120	Coffee breaks	26 days x 21 people
Total hours	**531**	**223**	**Total hours**	**614**		

Source: Authors' assessment based on piloting experience

4.4.2 Methodological and operational recommendations for replicating the program

182. **The experience of running the pilot program and the analysis of the feedback questionnaires completed by participants and the logs completed by the trainers who delivered the training modules led to the formulation of proposals for revising the program**. For certain modules, the content developed can be delivered over a longer period of time than was available during the pilot, without requiring significant design changes. For example, in Module 1. Generating impact in public administration through leadership and corporate governance, only one training day was allocated to

support the topic of corporate governance; however, the materials prepared and the complexity of the practical application requirements and their scalability offer the possibility of delivery over a period of three days. The additional time can be allocated to consolidating learning acquisitions, promoting the exchange of good practices in the respective thematic areas, and exploring in detail the possibility of applying the results at the level of the institutions represented by the participants. Similarly, in the case of Module 2. Achieving digitization and reorganization in public institutions, the topics allocated to digital transformation projects can be addressed in an independent module with a duration of 3 days of training, compared to the 1 day of training allocated during the pilot. Furthermore, the topics and practical applications related to the reorganization of public institutions can be covered in three days of training, compared to the two days of training allocated in the pilot. The same situation is encountered in module 5 Monitoring the performance of ISP and investment projects, where the topic dedicated to ISPs can easily cover 3 days of training, compared to the 2 allocated, and topics related to the monitoring of investment projects can be delivered in 3 days of training.

183. **Revising the materials to cover three days of training, compared to the one or two days allocated in the pilot, does not require significant interventions or the creation of new content or the development of new applications.** Thus, the recommendation is only to allocate more time to practical activities and the presentation of the results obtained by the participants, followed by interactive sessions with colleagues and trainers, with an emphasis on adaptation for use in the represented institution or customization of the results for application in colleagues' institutions. In addition, all the applications presented are scalable, based on robust management processes, and can be transformed and adapted relatively easily, depending on requests and requirements, by modifying the context data. Updates on legislative changes, if any, and the presentation of comparative analyses of the experience of using the tools in the modules and applications can enrich the content in a useful way.

184. **Other proposed revisions include increasing the number of networking sessions from 3 to 6 and the number of coaching sessions from 1 to 3**. The time allocated for participation in the presentation of final projects should be increased from 3 hours to 6 hours, due to participants' questions and the analysis of the possibility of replicating the results at the level of the participating institutions.

Table 32. Comparison between the current pilot program and the proposed program after piloting

Current pilot program			Proposed program after piloting, which can be delivered in two variants: (i) covering all modules or (ii) with the possibility of selecting two modules from four electives			
Module	**Topics covered**	**Duration (days/training hours)**	**Module**	**Topics covered**	**Duration (days/training hours)**	**Total**
Module 1. Generating impact in public administration through leadership and corporate governance	Z1. Leadership	6 hours / 1 day	Module 1. Generating impact in public administration through leadership	Z 1. Leadership	6 hours / 1 day	Duration: 36 hours Training
	Z2. Leadership	6 hours / 1 day		Z 2. Leadership	6 hours / 1 day	
	Z3. Leadership	6 hours / 1 day		Z 3. Leadership	6 hours / 1 day	
	Z4. Leadership	6 hours / 1 day		Z4. Leadership	6 hours / 1 day	
	Z 5. Leadership	6 hours / 1 day		Z 5. Leadership	6 hours / 1 day	
	Z6. Leadership	6 hours / 1 day		Z6. Leadership	6 hours / 1 day	

	Z7. Corporate Governance	6 hours / 1 day	Module 2. Corporate Governance *(elective)*	Z1. Corporate governance	6 hours / 1 day	Duration: 18 hours training
				Z2. Corporate governance	6 hours / 1 day	
				Z3. Corporate governance	6 hours / 1 day	
Module 2. Achieving digitalization and reorganizations in public institutions	Z1. Digitalization	6 hours / 1 day	Module 3. Digital transformation and in public administration	Z1. Digitalization	6 hours / 1 day	Duration 18 hours Training
	Z2. Reorganization	6 hours / 1 day		Z2. Digitalization	6 hours / 1 day	
	Z3. Reorganization	6 hours / 1 day		Z3. Digitalization	6 hours / 1 day	
			Module 4. Reorganization in public institutions	Z3. Reorganization	6 hours / 1 day	Duration: 18 hours Training
				Z3. Reorganization	6 hours / 1 day	
				Z3. Reorganization	6 hours / 1 day	
Module 3. Strategy modeling (elective)	Z1. Strategies	6 hours / 1 day	Module 5. Strategy modeling *(elective)*	Z1. Strategies	6 hours / 1 day	Duration 18 hours Training
	Z2. Strategies	6 hours / 1 day		Z2. Strategies	6 hours / 1 day	
	Z3. Strategies	6 hours / 1 day		Z3. Strategies	6 hours / 1 day	
Module 4. Crisis and complex situation management (elective)	Z1. Crises	6 hours / 1 day	Module 6. Crisis and complex situation management *(elective)*	Z1. Crises	6 hours / 1 day	Duration: 18 hours Training
	Z2. Crises	6 hours / 1 day		Z2. Crises	6 hours / 1 day	
	Z3. Negotiation	6 hours / 1 day		Z3. Negotiation	6 hours / 1 day	
Module 5. Monitoring the performance of ISP and investment projects	Z1. PIM	6 hours / 1 day	Module 7. Monitoring the performance of institutional strategic plans	Z1. PSI	6 hours / 1 day	Duration: 18 hours Training
	Z2. PSI	6 hours / 1 day		Z2. PSI	6 hours / 1 day	
	Z3. PSI	6 hours / 1 day		Z3. PSI	6 hours / 1 day	
			Module 8. Monitoring and investment projects (elective)	Z1. Projects	6 hours / 1 day	Duration: 18 hours training
				Z2. Projects	6 hours / 1 day	
				Z3. Projects	6 hours / 1 day	

Module 6. Performance-based budget management in the public sector	Z1. Financial	6 hours / 1 day	Module 9. Performance-based budget management in the public sector	Z1. Financial	6 hours / 1 day	Duration: 18 hours Training
	Z2. Financial	6 hours / 1 day		Z2. Financial	6 hours / 1 day	
	Z3. Financial	6 hours / 1 day		Z3. Financial	6 hours / 1 day	
Leadership style assessment and coaching	Leadership style assessment tool	2 hours	Leadership style assessment and counseling for interpreting the results	Leadership style assessment tool	2 hours	Duration: 6 hours Training/ developme nt
	Counseling session	1 hour		Counseling session 1	1 hour	
				Counseling session 2	1.5 hours	
				Counseling session 3	1.5 hours	
Networking sessions and presentations	Session 1	3 hours / 0.5 day	Networking sessions and presentations	Session 1	3 hours / 0.5 day	Duration 18 hours of training / developme nt
	Session 2	3 hours / 0.5 days		Session 2	3 hours / 0.5 day	
	Session 3	3 hours / 0.5 day		Session 3	3 hours / 0.5 day	
				Session 4	3 hours / 0.5 day	
				Session 5	3 hours / 0.5 day	
				Session 6	3 hours / 0.5 day	
Technical mentoring	Session 1	1.5 hours	Mentoring sessions technical	Session 1	1.5 hours	Duration: 6 hours training / developme nt
	Session 2	1.5 hours		Session 2	1.5 hours	
	Session 3	1.5 hours		Session 3	1.5 hours	
	Session 4	1.5 hours		Session 4	1.5 hours	
Self-study	Self-study for reviewing training materials	18	Self-study	Self-study for reviewing training materials	24	Duration: 24 training

185. **After the pilot implementation, a series of good practices emerged from the analysis of feedback questionnaires, trainers' journals, and semi-structured interviews with program graduates.** These are presented in the table below, structured according to the main elements of the program.

Table 33. Centralization of lessons learned from piloting the program

Program element	Lessons learned
Program structure	The experience of running the pilot program, together with the analysis of the feedback questionnaires completed by participants and the journals completed by the trainers who delivered the training modules, led to the formulation of proposals for revising the program, which include: • Capitalizing on the content already developed and introducing separate modules, each lasting three days: Corporate Governance, Digitization, Reorganization of Public Institutions, Monitoring the Performance of Institutional Strategic Plans, and Monitoring the Performance of Investment Projects. The proposal to revise the program in the subsequent includes two options: option 1, which involves completing all modules, and option 2, which offers the possibility of selecting two modules from four elective modules. • Increasing the number of experience exchange sessions from 3 to 6 and the number of counseling sessions for interpreting leadership style assessment results from 1 to 3. • Increasing the time allocated for participation in the presentation of final projects from 3 hours to 6 hours, due to participants' questions and analysis of the possibility of replicating the results at the level of the participants' institutions, and the time dedicated to self-learning from 18 hours to 24 hours.
General competence framework	From a methodological point of view, the general competence framework for HLCS served as a benchmark for the selection of learning objectives, concepts addressed, and types of learning activities. The methods used were designed to coherently link the theoretical knowledge, working tools, and skills practiced during the sessions under the umbrella of the targeted competencies, so that each training sequence contributed to the development of behaviors and capacities relevant to HLCS roles. The competences were addressed not only at a conceptual level, but also through analysis, decision-making and application in situations comparable to those in institutional practice, ensuring consistency between the competence framework, the training path and the activities carried out during the program. The recommendation for the adoption of the program clearly states the maintenance of the focus on the development of HLCS competencies, as formulated in the general competency framework.
Quality standards for the design of training materials	The training materials were based on a set of standards for their preparation and included training plans, course materials, PowerPoint

	presentations, detailed practical applications, including instructions for use and delivery during the course, worksheets, and multiple-choice tests. The course materials addressed and described the most important managerial processes relevant to the topics of the modules, as well as the tools or methods used for this purpose. At the same time, the course materials include clear examples and references regarding their application at the level of central public administration. The materials detail the stages of application of the processes and methods addressed and recommendations for use, challenges, and problems encountered in practice were formulated. To design the practical applications, the WB team defined the associated training objectives and detailed the work, specifying the context, any limitations on actions, working times, and the resources available to them. Each application provides sufficient contextual information to enable the requirements to be met and includes the necessary forms and worksheets for participants. The recommendation for adopting the program is to maintain the standards used and to adapt the training materials in line with legislative updates or changes in the methodology for using the tools and methods covered.
Training methods	The practical applications used included exercises, case studies, demonstrations, simulations, and role-playing games. The WB team designed the practical applications based on the following criteria: • To refer to the usefulness of the tools and methods presented in terms of the administrative processes they support, including applicable legislation; • Present relevant examples where the tools and methods have been successfully applied, but also cases where the desired results have not been achieved; • Define the quality level of the use process, but also of the results; • Mention common errors encountered in practice and the possible implications that this undesirable situation could generate; • Provide participants with a safe and appropriate framework for asking questions and sharing relevant situations from their work; and • Formulate conclusions and recommendations that may have an impact on participants' work. The recommendation for adopting the program emphasizes the high utility of complying with these criteria in the implementation of practical applications. In addition, all the applications presented are scalable, based on robust managerial processes, and can be transformed and adapted relatively easily, depending on requests and requirements, by modifying the context data. Updates on legislative changes, if any, and the presentation of comparative analyses on the experience of using the tools in the modules and applications can enrich the content in a useful way.

Development methods	The development methods used were leadership style assessment followed by a counseling session to interpret the results, exchanges of experience with high-level international guests, and individual and/or group mentoring sessions to prepare the final active learning projects. The use of the self-assessment tool, complemented by individual executive coaching sessions, was perceived by participants as a relevant and valuable approach to the process of self-awareness and professional development. Participants unanimously appreciated the usefulness of the information received through the reports generated, the clarity of the explanations, and the safe environment created in the feedback discussions, aspects that facilitated reflection on their own thinking and behavior styles. Each of the three exchanges of experience had the following clearly defined objectives, which were achieved: • Facilitating the exchange of practices and knowledge with international experts in relevant fields of activity, • Generating opportunities for structured *networking* within the group, based on current topics of broad interest to participants; and • Encouraging reflection on the progress made in significant projects and reforms carried out to date, as well as on the challenges encountered and ways to address them. In addition, in order to develop the active learning project, participants had the opportunity to access up to four mentoring sessions with the team of trainers, each lasting 90 minutes, depending on their needs. These sessions were held online or in person, depending on the participants' preferences. The mentors were the trainers involved in the preparation and implementation of the pilot project. The role of the mentors was to guide the participants throughout the development of the project, to support them in integrating the topic into the institutional context, and to provide advice on the correct application of the tools, in accordance with the methodology presented in the course support material and/or in the relevant legislation. All 22 participants in the program accessed the mentoring sessions. Last but not least, although not included in the initial schedule, after analyzing models of good practice in the training of senior officials in OECD member countries, two study visits were organized to the institutions represented by the participants, and four more visits will be organized in March and April 2026. During the study visits, topics of interest proposed by the participants were addressed and useful aspects of the work of the visited institutions were presented, in line with the responsibilities and priorities of the target group represented by secretaries-general and directors-general.

	The proposals for revising the program aim to increase the number of experience-sharing sessions from 3 to 6 and the number of coaching sessions from 1 to 3. The recommendation for taking over the program aims to maintain these 4 methods of skills development, as presented above.
Final active learning project	To complete the program, participants developed an active learning project in which they applied the skills addressed in the program to a specific situation in their own institution. The preparation and presentation of the project was one of the conditions for completing the program and obtaining the certificate of participation. The objectives of the project were to: • Facilitate the application of the knowledge and skills acquired during the program; • To evaluate their use in a clearly defined institutional context, with a high probability of applying or capitalizing on them in the near future; and • Stimulating the exchange of experience between participants. Although initially 3 hours were planned for the presentation of all projects, due to the high interest of the participants, the questions asked, and the discussions on the impact of the proposals and the possibilities for replication at the institutional level, the actual time significantly exceeded the allocation, reaching a cumulative value of over 10 hours of training/development. The recommendation for the program's adoption includes maintaining this training and evaluation method, as it is particularly useful and appreciated by participants and the training team. For the time allocated to participation in the presentation of final projects, it is proposed to increase from 3 hours to 6 hours, due to participants' questions and the analysis of the possibility of replicating the results at the level of the participants' institutions.
Trainers	All trainers involved in preparing training materials and delivering program modules have practical experience in central public administration, and most have been involved in developing or revising the management tools presented, as well as in preparing reports and analyses at national and international level on various topics covered by the training modules. Each of the trainers involved has used the tools and methods presented in several situations, including recent ones, and has come into contact with the particularities of their application in different organizations and structures. The recommendation for taking over the program is to use trainers or co-trainers with experience in using the tools included in the program. During the completion of the training program and the presentation of the final active learning projects, several participants expressed their willingness to support future series of participants as mentors, guests, or resource persons.
Guests	Inviting resource persons, representatives of national and/or international institutions, serves to connect the learning experience to

	the current challenges in the sectors of activity represented by the guests and to provide participants with news, impact analyses, the possibility of assessing systemic risks, and examining case studies. It also creates a conducive environment for exposing the problems they face, formulating proposals for improving administrative processes, and familiarizing themselves with the strategies and implementation plans of the invited institutions.
Eligibility and selection criteria	The eligibility and selection criteria used in the recruitment and selection process for the target group, confirmed by the receipt of 26 eligible applications, can serve as a consistent benchmark for the program and can be adapted according to the need to define the target group based on the strategic objectives of the program edition and the number of available places.
Training module schedule	The proposed schedule for the 162 hours of training underwent certain changes in order to (i) coordinate the training sessions with the participants' agenda and the government meetings in which most of them were involved, and (ii) respond to the request of several participants to attend both elective modules. Thus, the initial proposed schedule was adapted to the participants' agendas. The changes discussed and agreed upon between the NACS and WB teams concerned the following aspects: • The division of certain course days, which totaled 6 hours of training, into 2 sessions, each lasting 3 hours of training; • The introduction of pilot online sessions lasting between 2 and 3 hours of training; and • Changing the time slot for certain training days and rescheduling some modules to allow participants to attend both elective modules. The changes did not affect the total duration measured in days and hours of training corresponding to each module and each development activity established and facilitated the active participation of the target group. The recommendation for the program's adoption is to incorporate these changes into the program's schedule.

5. Monitoring, evaluation, and iterative improvements of the CDPARPA in the medium – to long – term

186. **The institution that will take over the CDPARPA will need to develop a robust and ongoing medium- long-term evaluation system, to measure both the effectiveness of learning outcomes and the actual impact on beneficiary institutions**. This approach involves periodically collecting data on the application of acquired skills, the evolution of professional performance, and changes generated in organizational processes, as well as analyzing this information using quantitative and qualitative methods. Based on these evaluations, the program must be recalibrated iteratively, adjusting the curriculum, teaching methods, evaluation standards, and support mechanisms for participants so that it better responds to the real needs of the administration and maximizes its impact over time. These evaluations involve analyses at Levels 3 and 4 of the Kirkpatrick model.

5.1 Monitoring the transfer of acquired skills into practice – Kirkpatrick Level 3

187. **Level 3 of the Kirkpatrick model focuses on the transfer of acquired knowledge and skills into practice, i.e., their manifestation in observable professional behaviors.** Assessment at this level measures whether and how participants apply the competencies in real work contexts, what conditions facilitate this application, and what obstacle limit it, without yet assessing the long-term organizational impact (which is the objective of Level 4). It is recommended to conduct this assessment 6 months after the completion of the program, a period that allows for the initial application of skills and which allows the participants to see the first changes in their behavior, without compromising the accuracy of the report due to memory issues. In the case of the program, the transfer assessment requires a multi-method, for the following reasons:

- The complexity of roles – combination of strategic, managerial, and relational responsibilities
- The diversity of institutional contexts – differences between ministries, agencies, local authorities
- The nature of competencies – from the use of concrete instruments to changes in thinking and leadership styles.

188. **A single assessment tool cannot accommodate this variety of information requirements.** Therefore, the proposed integrated system includes four complementary components, each addressing a distinct dimension of transfer:

1. Adapted 360° assessment – captures behavioral changes in leadership and communication styles through multi-source feedback (colleagues, team, superiors)
2. Structured transfer questionnaire – documents the effective application of program-specific concepts and tools (what was applied, in what contexts, how often)
3. Obstacles and Enablers Diagnosis Questionnaire – identifies the contextual conditions that facilitated or inhibited transfer (why the application succeeded or failed)
4. Guide for qualitative interviews with participants – explores in depth the experiences of application, the challenges encountered, and the perceived impact, providing narrative perspectives that complement the quantitative data

189. There are several complementary ways the participants can transfer in practice the set of competencies acquired through the program. In order to enable sound and informed decisions regarding the optimization or restructuring of program modules or methods (including at the policy level for this professional group), the subtle differences between the three transfer methods must be taken into account:

- Instrumental transfer – the effective use of concrete tools (RACI, SWOT, ISP, SMART indicators, stakeholder analysis)
- Conceptual transfer – the ability to apply the frameworks and principles to inform decisions, even without explicitly using predefined tools
- Behavioral transfer – visible changes in coordination, communication, team engagement, and change management

These three types are not exclusive, but complementary and interconnected: a participant can apply a tool (instrumental transfer), using its logic in various decision-making process (conceptual transfer), which generates a different way of communicating and coordinating inside the team (behavioral transfer). The integrated system allows for the identification of both balanced transfer patterns (manifestation of all three transfers) and unbalanced profiles (e.g., predominantly instrumental transfer, but without conceptual internalization or behavioral changes), thus providing precise indications for program adjustment.

Component 1: Adapted 360° assessment

190. The adapted 360° assessment captures changes in leadership styles and communication behaviors through feedback provided by people with whom the participant interacts directly in their professional activity: colleagues, members of the team or teams they coordinate, and hierarchical superiors. This method is suitable for transfer assessment because certain aspects, such as effective communication, how he/she is able to engage the team, how he/she manages tension, or how he/she explains decisions, cannot be reliably assessed through self-assessment alone, but became noticeable during the interaction, are strongly influenced by the context.

191. The items in the 360° assessment are formulated concisely, in terms of observable and recurring actions, avoiding general judgments. They are formulated symmetrically for self-assessment and external assessment. For example, for the competencies related to the module on Fostering Engagement and Strategic Agility, addressed in the Leadership (M1) and Digitalization and Reorganization (M2) modules, an item may be formulated as follows:

- Self-assessment: " *When initiating changes or making decisions that involve changing something, I clearly explain what is expected and why."*

- External assessment: "*When initiating change or making decisions that involve changing something, [participant's name] clearly explains what he/she expects and why.*"

192. The results of the 360° assessment are used exclusively to inform decisions about further adjustments and improvements, not for individual evaluations or decisions related to participants' careers. In the absence of a pre-program measurement, the results are interpreted at the level of target group, based on the behavior observed and the link between self-assessment and external assessments. A behavioral dimension is considered to have achieved consistent transfer when the post-program average score is of at least 4.0 on a scale of 1–5 and at least 60% of participants score 4 or 5 individually, with minimal differences between self-assessment and external assessments.

193. **Target group analysis allows for the identification of post-program behavioral dimensions with high and consistent levels of transfer, as well as those with limited or uneven transfer between participants.** Dimensions with low average scores or large variations between respondents indicate the need to review content or delivery methodologies, through methods such as increasing the number of hands-on exercises, introducing more relevant case studies, adjusting the length of the sessions, or integrating reflective practice. For example, if the behavior related to "Managing resistance to change" scores moderately, but qualitative feedback indicates high relevance to the participants' roles, this result suggests a problem with methodology and practical applications, not with the relevance of the content. In contrast, behaviors with high and convergent scores between self-assessment and external assessments are considered models of good practice and can serve as a reference for adjusting other modules in the program.

194. **Analyses of the 360° assessment results by participant subgroups (e.g., based on professional experience, type of institution, or job status) allow for the identification of contextual conditions in which the manifestation of the targeted behaviors is more likely or more consistent, without pursuing relative performance comparisons between participants.** For example, if participants with recent experience in leadership positions score higher on average on the "Team Development" dimension than those with long-term experience, this result may suggest either greater openness to participatory leadership practices or a more acute need to structure the managerial role in the early stages of the position. In this case, the program could benefit from a differentiated curriculum, with introductory modules dedicated to newly appointed participants and advanced modules for participants with consolidated experience.

195. **Similarly, if participants from smaller institutions report more behavioral enforcement compared to those from large institutions, this pattern may reflect structural barriers specific to complex organizations (rigid hierarchies, extensive formal processes, greater resistance to change**). These results may justify the introduction of modules or sequences dedicated to persuasion strategies, institutional navigation strategies, and strategies for leading change in complex organizational contexts. The table below summarizes the competencies assessed through the adapted 360° assessment, the behaviors associated with them, examples of items used, and the program modules that contributed to their development.

Table 34. Competencies, observed behaviors, and items used in the tailored 360° assessment

Targeted competency (HLCS)	Observed behaviors assessed	Example of 360° item (for colleagues)	Relevant modules	Use of results
Generating commitment	Clearly explains what change means; explains the decisions; fosters understanding and acceptance	*"When initiating change or making decisions that involve changing something, clearly explain what is expected of us and why."*	M1 – Leadership M2 – Reorganization / Digitization	Identifying the degree of behavioral transfer; tailoring applied leadership exercises
Team development	Involves the team; ask for perspectives;	*"Before making important decisions, he/she involves the*	M1 – Leadership	Decision to consolidate group work methods and simulations

	supports accountability	*team and takes into account the views expressed."*		
Taking responsibility	Gives explanations about difficult decisions; takes responsibility for the consequences; maintains consistency	*"Takes responsibility for decisions made and explains their consequences to the team."*	M1 – Leadership M4 – Crises and negotiation	Continuing to use the modules as best practice or adjusting the methodological approach
Strategic agility	Adapts direction; explains the change in priorities; manages uncertainty	*"Adjusts course of action when context changes and clearly explains these adjustments."*	M1 – Leadership M2 – Reorganization	Identifying the need for curricular differentiation (introductory/advanced)

Component 2: Structured questionnaire for assessing the transfer

196. **The structured transfer questionnaire aims to document how participants have applied the concepts and tools covered in the program to their current work.** This method is appropriate for assessing transfer at Level 3, as participants are best placed to report whether, how, and in what contexts they have used specific tools – such as the RACI matrix and SWOT analysis – and how these tools have influenced work processes and decisions. The questionnaire can be used at least a few months after the end of the program and allows the participants to reflect on the real level of applicability of the acquired concepts and tools in their recent work. The aim of the questionnaire is to identify specific practices implemented in the last few months, rather than general intentions or retrospective and interpretative assessments.

197. **The items are formulated in the first person and focus on the real level of implementation of the concepts and tools discussed in the program, avoiding general formulations.** They describe specific context for use and are complemented by frequency scales, allowing differentiation between occasional application and constant use in practice. In addition to frequency of use, the questionnaire also captures the context, the perceived impact, and the exact moment, thus providing a nuanced picture. For each item, the questionnaire seeks not only to identify the application itself, but also the context in which it took place and the perceived impact on working methods, decision-making clarity, or professional relationships. This structure allows for differentiation between occasional use and the actual integration of learning into professional practice.

198. **The questionnaire and items are structured on two levels.** On the one hand, by thematic modules (leadership, governance, strategic planning, monitoring) to identify areas with higher or more limited transfer; on the other hand, by type of application – *instrumental* (use of specific tools), *conceptual* (application of thinking models or approaches), and *behavioral* (changes in coordination, communication, or decision-making). Impact assessment is limited to the participant's perception of their own practice and direct interactions, without measuring organizational or institutional results, which are the subject of Level 4 of the Kirkpatrick model. Thus,

- **Instrumental application** refers to the effective use of the specific tools discussed in the program in real work contexts. This dimension captures whether and to what extent participants have used management tools in practice, to help them clarify roles, structure processes, or to coordinate activities. For example, an item formulated in the transfer questionnaire could be: "*I used the RACI matrix to clarify the roles and responsibilities in complex projects or processes*." The answers allow for an assessment of the frequency of use, the context of application, and the perceived impact on the working method.
- **Conceptual application** refers to the use of the thinking frameworks and the principles discussed in the program to inform analysis and decisions, even when formal tools are not explicitly used. This dimension reflects the internalization of analytical logic and the ability to apply it flexibly in various contexts. An example would be: "When I initiate change, I take into account the impact those changes would have on the processes and people involved." This type of item can capture the frequency of application, specific situations, and the added value of the conceptual approach.
- **Behavioral application** refers to observable changes in the way participants act, especially in situations involving leadership, communication, and change management. This category captures transfer as an evolution of behaviors, not just as the use of tools. For example, an item may be formulated as follows: "*When I initiate changes or make important decisions, I explain the objective and the reasoning behind the decision more clearly than before*." The answers allow for a comparative assessment of how this behavior has changed after attending the training sessions in the program.

199. The results of the questionnaire are used to tailor the curriculum design and identify areas where transfer is strong or limited. The analysis is carried out on three dimensions: types of application, thematic modules, and participant profiles. A genuine transfer of learning is considered to have occurred when at least 40% of participants[33] report consistent use of the skills (score ≥ 3) on all three dimensions, indicating a deep and sustainable transfer. If the transfer is predominantly instrumental (>70% consistent instrumental application, and only <30% conceptual and behavioral), learning remains predominantly technical, and it is necessary to strengthen the reflective and contextualization components[34]. On the other hand, a predominantly conceptual transfer (>60% conceptual, <30% instrumental) may signal difficulties in adapting the tools to the professional context, recommending their simplification or the introduction of alternative formats.

200. At the level of thematic modules, a module is considered effective if more than 50% of participants report the use of skills (frequency ≥ 3) and a perceived average impact of at least 3.5 (scale 1–5). Modules that do not meet these thresholds, especially when more than 50% of participants indicate a lack of application opportunities, may require either content and methodology adjustments or repurposing as optional or on-demand modules. Profiling participants based on frequency of use and perceived impact allows for differentiation between strong transfer (consistent application throughout at least two of the three types, high perceived impact), moderate transfer (occasional application or

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[33] The 40% constant application threshold reflects a conservative approach to sustainable transfer, considering that programs with optimal support achieve rates of 60-85%. See Brinkerhoff, R. O. (2006). *Telling Training's Story: Evaluation Made Simple, Credible, and Effective*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

[34] The thresholds reflect the principles of the Kirkpatrick model regarding the need for critical behaviors and supporting conditions, as well as the literature on transfer systems that emphasizes the confluence of skill, motivation, and opportunity factors. Identified imbalances (>70% on one dimension, <30% on others) indicate incomplete transfer. See Holton, E. F., Bates, R. A., & Ruona, W. E. A. (2000). "Development of a Generalized Learning Transfer System Inventory." *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 11(4), 333–360 and Kirkpatrick, D. L., & Kirkpatrick, J. D. (2006). Evaluating training programs: The four levels (3rd ed.). Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

limited to a single type), and absent transfer (rare or non-existent application across all dimensions). This classification allows us to identify participants who may benefit from additional post-program interventions, such as peer learning networks or consolidation sessions, as well as those for whom the program has generated solid and integrated change in practice.

201. **The questionnaire is designed as a standardized tool with 30–40 items, organized according to the three types of application described above (instrumental, conceptual, behavioral), with 8–12 items for each dimension**. The items cover the key concepts and tools used across all program modules. The table below presents a summary of the assessed dimensions, examples of items and how the results can be used.

Table 35. Dimensions for assessing the transfer of competencies into practice using the structured transfer questionnaire

Dimension assessed	What it captures	Example of an item	How the results can be used
Instrumental	Effective use of the specific tools discussed in the program	*"We used the RACI matrix to clarify roles and responsibilities in complex projects or processes."*	To identify tools with high/low applicability; adjusting the level of complexity and hands-on exercises
Conceptual	The use of frameworks and principles, even without formal tools	*"When I initiate change, I take into account the potential impact on the processes and people involved."*	To assess the degree of internalization of program logic; to decide whether to strengthen the reflective component
Behavioral	Noticeable changes in coordination, communication, and decision-making	*"When I initiate changes or make important decisions, I explain the objective and the reasons behind the decision more clearly than before."*	To identify self-assessed behavioral changes; correlation with 360° assessment
Module analysis	Transfer differences between program modules	*Items grouped by Leadership, Governance, Strategy, Monitoring*	To review the modules with low transfer; to repurpose them as electives or on demand
Transfer profiles	Application patterns at participant level	*Combining frequency and impact scores*	To identify the need for post-program interventions (coaching, communities of practice)

Component 3: Questionnaire for identifying obstacles and enablers to transfer

202. **Even in those situations when participants have acquired the relevant competencies and report applying them in practice (through 360° assessment and the structured transfer**

questionnaire), the level of transfer, and the consistency of use can vary significantly depending on a series of personal and institutional factors. While the structured questionnaire takes note of what has been applied, in what contexts and with what frequency, the analysis on obstacles and enablers highlights the reasons why transfer has been facilitated or inhibited by identifying the conditions that have supported or limited transfer. This distinction is essential for formulating appropriate operational recommendations, allowing differentiation between limitations related to program design, individual factors, or organizational barriers, and avoiding interventions that do not address the real causes of the transfer.

203. **The questionnaire is based on the model used in the pilot project, tailored to the specific roles of HLCS in Romanian public administration.** The items do not measure the actual application (which is captured by Component 2), but rather the participants' opinions of the conditions that facilitated or inhibited the transfer of acquired competencies. The diagnosis targets three categories of factors formulated in a manner appropriate to the high level of the participants:

- **Transfer premises (design and applicability) -** assesses whether there were any objective conditions that allowed for the application of the targeted competencies: the relevance of the content for the specific responsibilities of the role, the clarity and applicability of the program design, and the existence of concrete decision-making or coordination contexts in which the competencies could be used. In this part the participant is not asked whether he implemented the skills (this is assessed in Component 2), but whether they had favorable premises, i.e., a relevant and well-designed program in a context with opportunities for application. For example, an item assessed on a Likert scale might be: "*In recent months, my professional responsibilities have created contexts in which the concepts and tools discussed in the program were directly applicable*." This item does not measure actual implementation of the competencies, but rather opportunities. A low score on this dimension indicates that limited transfer is not due to a lack of competence or motivation, but to a mismatch between the program content and the real work context.

- **Motivation for transfer** refers to the participant's belief that applying the competency brings real value and is worth the effort of changing the way they work. This dimension distinguishes between situations where transfer is limited by skepticism or lack of perceived benefits from those where participants are motivated but encounter external constraints. An example item is: "*I believe that applying the tools discussed in the program significantly improves the quality of the decisions I make*." Another item of the questioner may explore confidence in one's own ability: "*I feel confident in my ability to correctly use the tools covered during the session in real work situations*." High scores on motivation but low scores on effective application (from Component 2) suggest the existence of external obstacles, not internal resistance to change.

- **The component of institutional environment for transfer** tailored to the specificities of the HLCS refers to the systemic conditions, formal and informal, that facilitate or discourage implementation: Institutional room for action, the legal authority to try out new approaches instead of the traditional ones, a cultural climate that's open to innovation or new best practices, and not too many rules. This dimension does not assess direct support from political superiors (which would be inappropriate for this level of responsibility), but rather the extent to which the institutional context actually allows for the introduction, testing, and support of new practices, including in contexts where they differ from the "traditional way of working." Examples of items: "*In my institution, the regulatory and procedural framework provides for good flexibility that allow us to introduce new tools or approaches into current work*"; "*Colleagues in similar leadership positions are generally open to discussions about the use of new tools or analytical frameworks*"; "*In my* *institution, the introduction of new tools or approaches is perceived as legitimate and professional, not as a deviation from established practices*." Low scores on this dimension, even context of a seemingly high transfer (from Component 2), may indicate a conservative cultural or normative obstacle, where implementation is fragile and depends on individual initiatives or temporary favorable circumstances and that is also vulnerable to changes of context, rather than a lack of competence or relevance of the program content.

204. **The results of this questionnaire will be used to accurately diagnose the types of obstacles that limit transfer and to formulate differentiated recommendations.** The analysis is carried out at the level of the entire group of participants, by factors and institutional profiles. At the group level, low average scores (below 3 on the Likert scale) on a particular dimension indicate a systemic obstacle. For example, if the scores on "transfer premises – opportunity for application" are low for the entire group of participants, this could suggest either an inadequacy of the content in relation to the actual roles of the participants or structural obstacles within the institutions, requiring curricular adjustments or talks with the partner institutions to clarify post-program expectations. On the other hand, high scores for the "motivation – confidence in one's own ability" dimension, but low scores for the "organizational environment – normative flexibility" dimension, indicate that participants are ready to take action, but the institutional context does not allow for this, which could indicate the need to make adjustments at the level of public policy or senior management, rather than to adjust the training program itself..

205. **A particular scenario that could arise to the context of the public administration in Romania is one where scores for "motivation" and "transfer premises" are high, but transfer remains limited due to low scores on the "legitimacy and cultural compatibility" sub-dimension.** This configuration indicates a vague cultural resistance to approaches perceived as being "too theoretical," "borrowed," or "inappropriate to the real contexts," characterized by attitudes such as "it doesn't work that way here" or "theory is one thing, practice is another," which is not captured by items referring to normative constraints or lack of explicit acceptance by colleagues. In order to diagnose this obstacle, it is necessary to carefully analyze items related to the perceived legitimacy of introducing new tools and the pressure to comply with current practices. If this obstacle is identified at the level of the entire target group, the recommendations do not focus on traditional curriculum adjustments (the program content may be relevant and well designed), but rather on cultural contextualization strategies: the use of examples and case studies from Romanian public administration, the participation of alumni as ambassadors for implementation, creating communities of practice to normalize the use of new approaches, and mitigating the belief that the discussed tools are "foreign" or "only theoretical."."

206. **The questionnaire includes 24–30 items (8–10 items per dimension, 2–4 items per sub-dimension), formulated in the first person and evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = total disagreement; 5 = total agreement).** The estimated time to complete it is 8–12 minutes. The table below summarizes the dimensions assessed, the specific factors measured, and examples of relevant items.

Table 36. Dimensions for assessing transfer into practice – Questionnaire for diagnosing obstacles and enablers

Main dimension	**Factors** (sub-dimensions)	**What it actually measures**	**Example item**[35]	**Interpreted results**
Prerequisites for transfer (*design and applicability conditions*)	Relevance of content	The extent to which the program content is directly applicable to the current responsibilities of the role	*"The concepts and tools discussed in the program are relevant for the decisions I have to make and for my current responsibilities."*	Low scores indicate a mismatch between content and responsibilities, not a lack of competence
	Program design	Tools that are clear, consistent, and easy to use	*"The tools presented in the program were clear enough to be implemented without major adjustments."*	Low scores suggest the need to simplify or methodological adjust the course
	Opportunity for application	The existence of real contexts in which skills can be used	*"During these months, my responsibilities have created contexts in which the concepts and tools discussed in the program were directly applicable."*	Low scores indicate structural obstacles or roles with limited applicability
Motivation for transfer	Perceived value of application	The strong belief that the transfer of acquired tools could have real benefits in the professional activity	*"I believe that applying the tools discussed in the program significantly improves the quality of the decisions I make."*	Low scores indicate skepticism about practical usefulness
	Confidence in one's own ability	Perceived self-efficacy in using the tools	*"I feel confident in my ability to correctly use the tools discussed in the program in real work situations."*	Low scores suggest a need for reinforcement or post-program support
Organizational environment for transfer	Normative flexibility	Degree of procedural freedom for introducing new practices	*"In my institution, the regulatory and procedural framework provides for enough flexibility to introduce new tools or approaches into the work."*	Low scores indicate normative or bureaucratic barriers
	Support from peers	Openness and support from colleagues at a similar level towards new approaches	*"Colleagues in similar leadership positions are open to using new tools or analytical frameworks and providing feedback."*	Low scores suggest professional isolation or pressure to conform
	Legitimacy and cultural acceptance	Informal and professional acceptance of modern practices proposed by the course	*"The introduction of new approaches is perceived as professionally legitimate, not as a deviation from established practices." / "Modern tools can be effectively adapted to the specifics of our institution."*	Low scores indicate a conservative cultural barrier ("we don't do it that way here"), with fragile transfer

[35] The presented items are generic to illustrate the dimensions evaluated. In implementation, each sub-dimension will be evaluated both through generic items (for longitudinal comparability) and through items specific to each tool or conceptual framework taught (e.g., RACI, stakeholder analysis, PESTLE), in order to enable accurate and actionable diagnosis.

207. **Integrating the results of this component with those of the structured transfer questionnaire (Component 2) allows for the validation of the perceived causality.** For example, if a participant reports limited application (Component 2) but high scores on "motivation" and "transfer premises" and low scores on the sub-dimension "organizational environment – legitimacy and cultural acceptance" (Component 3), it could be a sign of significant cultural constraint, not a lack of competence or motivation. This profile indicates that the participant has the right competencies and is motivated but noticed that the approaches discussed in the program are perceived by colleagues or the institutional culture as inappropriate to the local context. In these cases, the recommendations are not to prioritize the reconceptualization of the program content, but to find strategies that would legitimize the transfer: creating a local success narrative by documenting cases where previous participants have successfully implemented the tools in the context of public administration in Romania; facilitating peer-to-peer exchange by establishing communities of practice where participants can openly discuss implementation challenges and normalize the use of new approaches; but also implementing sessions that would bring together and practice, sessions dedicated to how those tools can be implemented in the specific Romanian context, in order to counteract the perception that they are "*imported*" or "*unsuitable for local realities*."

Component 4: Transfer qualitative assessment interview

208. **The qualitative interview complements the quantitative assessments by exploring in depth how the program's competencies and tools have been applied, adapted, or, on the other hand, blocked in specific institutional contexts.** While the questionnaires document the level and types of transfer, the interview explains the mechanisms behind those results, providing detailed answers to questions such as how, why, and under what conditions the transfer takes place in practice.

209. **The interview guide can be designed in a semi-structured format, lasting approximately 30–45 minutes, and applies to all program participants, given the small size of the group (21 participants) and the limited nature of the target population at the national level.** The interviews should be conducted 6–9 months after the end of the program, preferably after the questionnaires have been filled in, to allow the quantitative results to be used in the qualitative analysis.

210. **The structure of the guide is aligned with the three types of transfer analyzed in the quantitative components** (instrumental, conceptual, and behavioral), as well as with the diagnosis of transfer obstacles and enablers. The questions are not standardized in the form of fixed items, but function as thematic landmarks that allow for a deeper exploration of the participants' concrete experiences. The application of tools and concepts is explored through questions oriented towards real work situations and contextual adaptations. For example, participants are invited to describe a recent situation in which they used a tool or concept discussed in the program (such as the RACI matrix, ISP, or a process analysis framework), explain why they chose that approach, and whether it was necessary to adapt the tool to the specific institutional context. This type of question allows for the identification of instrumental transfer and creative uses, which cannot be captured by closed-ended items.

211. **Behavioral and relational changes are assessed through reflective questions focused on external perceptions and observable examples.** The interview seeks to determine whether participants have noticed changes in the way they communicate, coordinate, or explain decisions and whether these changes have been noticed by colleagues or team members. Questions such as "Can you describe a real situation when your leadership style was different from before the program?" allow for qualitative correlation with the results of the 360° assessment. Obstacles and enablers to transfer are

analyzed through causal questions designed to validate and nuance the quantitative diagnosis. Participants are invited to reflect on the factors that helped them apply what they learned, as well as the obstacles they encountered, including resistance from colleagues, procedural constraints, or lack of time. These answers allow for a clear differentiation between obstacles related to the design, individual obstacles, and organizational obstacles.

212. **The interview explicitly explores the contextualization and perceived legitimacy of the approaches proposed by the program, with specific relevance to public administration in Romania, as well as the recommendations made by participants to increase the practical applicability**. This section examines the extent to which the tools and concepts discussed were perceived as appropriate for the context of local institutional or if, on the other hand, they were seen as "imported," "too theoretical," or difficult to legitimize in relation to current practices. The interview explores how participants navigated these perceptions in their relationships with their colleagues, supervisors, and within the existing regulatory framework, as well as the strategies they employed to build acceptance and professional legitimacy. In addition, participants are invited to make concrete recommendations on adjusting the content, methodologies, or post-program support (e.g., tools that could be implemented locally, communities of practice, follow-up sessions), thus contributing to the co-creation of solutions aimed at facilitating sustainable transfer in future editions of the program.

213. **The interview guide includes 12–15 main questions (2–3 per domain), structured across five thematic areas.** Each main question may be followed by 2-4 *questions* to explore nuances and concrete examples, resulting in a total of 30-50 possible questions depending on the participant's answers. Such interview guides are semi-structured, allowing flexibility in terms of order of questions and the pursuit of emerging themes, with an estimated duration of 30–45 minutes per participant. The main questions are open-ended and descriptive (e.g., "Describe a situation in which..."), followed by follow-up questions for clarification ("What led you to...?"), exemplification ("Can you give a concrete example?"), and causal exploration ("What prevented you from...?"). The table below summarizes the areas explored, the types of questions, and how the collected data will be used.

Table 37 . Structure of the transfer qualitative assessment interview: areas, questions, and use

Area explored	Type of questions	Examples of questions	Use of results
Use of instruments	Descriptive, situational	*"Describe a situation in which you used RACI/ISP."*	Validating the instrumental transfer; identifying creative adjustments
Behavioral changes	Reflective, observable	*"What changes did your colleagues notice in your coordination style compared to before the program?"*	Correlation with 360° assessment; assessment of the relational impact
Obstacles and enablers	Exploratory, causal	*"What prevented you from applying the tools*	Validation and refinement of the diagnosis from Component 3

		discussed in the program?"	
Contextualization	Evaluative, cultural	*"Did you find the tools, concepts, and practices suitable for the Romanian context?"*	Identifying the cultural barrier "we don't do it that way here"
Recommendations	Prospective, co-creative	*"What changes would you make in order to facilitate implementation?"*	Basis for operational recommendations and post-program design

214. Interviews are documented through detailed real-time notetaking or audio recording (with informed consent), followed by verbatim transcription that are then analyzed through iterative thematic coding in three stages:

1. *Initial descriptive coding* – identifying relevant segments and labeling them with preliminary codes (e.g., "tool adjustments," "peer resistance," "lack of resources");
2. *Analytical coding* – grouping codes into thematic categories (structural vs. cultural vs. individual obstacles; formal vs. informal enablers; types of creative adaptation);
3. *Triangulation with quantitative data* – comparing patterns identified in interviews with results from Components 2 and 3 for cross-validation. For example, if the questionnaire related to obstacles in implementation (Component 3) indicates low scores on "cultural climate" at the group level, and interviews reveal that participants have used in creative ways not recognized by standardized items to adapt the tools to the local specifics, this suggests not a cultural obstacle per se, but a need to include in the assessment items related to adjustment methods.

215. The interpretation of participants' statements will support differentiated decisions on several levels:

- **Curriculum and training methodology adjustments:** The assessment of the interviews allows for the identification of situations where limited transfer is caused by the teaching method or the level of tailoring of the tools, not by their lack of relevance. The resulting decisions concern specific methodological adjustments, not altering content. For example:
    - If participants with strong transfer report the use of certain tools (such as the RACI matrix) in other simplified forms compared to the version taught, and more than 50% of participants mention that the tool was too complex for direct application, the recommendation would be to simplify and progressively illustrate the tool within the module.
    - If the "too theoretical" comment appears repeatedly but is accompanied by clear descriptions of situations in which the tools would have been applicable if they had been presented differently, the decision is to improve the contextualization and case studies, not to conceptually redesign the program.
    - However, when interviews indicate bottlenecks caused by external structural constraints (e.g., rigid budget cycles that block the application of strategic planning tools) and at least 40% of

participants report this as the main cause, these are treated as system limitations, not as shortcomings of the training program.

- When interviews reveal that participants have creatively adapted the tools to specific contexts (e.g., combining SWOT analysis with PESTEL analysis in a hybrid format tailored to government briefing reports) and these adaptations have led to effective transfer, they are documented as good practices and integrated into course guides as "validated contextual variants." This approach acknowledges the fact that authentic transfer often involves creative adaptations rather than mechanical replications, and it supports the creativity of participants by reducing the pressure to strictly follow the models presented.

- **Post-program intervention design:** The interviews identify the types of post-program support needed: (1) if participants with moderate transfer mention professional isolation and a lack of interlocutors who understand the new approaches, an option would be to create alumni communities of practice (e.g., process management, change leadership); (2) if participants report difficulties in adapting the tools to the specifics of the institution, the decision would be to offer post-program coaching sessions (1-3 individual meetings at 3, 6, 9 months); (3) If the interviews reveal a need for external validation to legitimize the application in front of skeptical colleagues, the decision would be to create a hands-on certification system that recognizes effective application.
- **Case studies and contextualized materials:** Some of the positive experiences reported in interviews can become anonymized case studies for future editions (with consent from the respective participants), counteracting the perception that the tools are "imported" or "unsuitable for the local context." For example, an interview describing how an HLCS used stakeholder analysis to manage a complex reform can be turned into a 2–3-page case study, integrated into module M3 - Shaping institutional strategies, demonstrating concrete applicability in Romanian public administration. This process creates a positive cycle of contextualization: the experience of each group legitimizes the program for the next group, gradually reducing the cultural barrier identified at the systemic level.

5.2 Results assessment and institutional impact – Kirkpatrick Level 4

216. **The training programs for leaders in public administration should not only be evaluated in terms of the skills acquired by participants, but also in terms of the impact they generate on the institutions.** The OECD emphasizes that the development of leadership skills has systemic effects: better-trained leaders give clearer strategic directions, manage to coordinate internal processes more effectively, and deliver higher-quality public services[36]. Therefore, the evaluation must go beyond the individual level and capture the changes generated at the level of institutional processes, practices, and outcomes.

217. **In the public sector, impact assessment focuses not on direct causality but rather on the extent to which the program has contributed to the overall performance of the institution.** The Kirkpatrick model provides a useful framework for assessing organizational outcomes (Level 4), but its application in the public sector raises specific issues The results of public institutions are influenced by external factors that training programs cannot control: political changes, regulatory constraints, budgetary constraints, or institutional reorganizations. Therefore, the objective of the evaluation is not to demonstrate a direct causal relationship between the program and the results, as this result would be

[36] OECD (2019). Recommendation of the Council on Public Service Leadership and Capability, OECD/LEGAL/0445. https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0445

artificial, but to document how the program contributed to the observed changes, along with other relevant factors.

218. **The assessment of the questioner results allows the team to conduct a rigorous evaluation in complex contexts by constructing a "plausible story" based on converging evidence**[37]. In these contexts, this methodological approach substitutes the pursuit of strict causal attribution with an understanding of the mechanisms through which an intervention produces change. A rigorous evaluation involves three steps: clarifying the logical chain through which acquired skills translate into new professional behaviors (Kirkpatrick Level 3); documenting how these behaviors influence organizational processes; and identifying measurable institutional outcomes that can be plausibly associated with these processes.

219. **The evaluation of the programs dedicated to HLCS uses *leading indicators* measurable at 6–18 months to predict *lagging indicators* measurable at 24–48 months[38].** In the short and medium term, intermediate institutional results are measured, such as improved quality of strategic planning, systematic use of management tools (e.g., RACI, stakeholder matrix, SMART indicators), or strengthened inter-institutional coordination. In the long term, these changes support final results such as high strategy implementation rates, improved citizen satisfaction with public services, or strengthened crisis response capacity.

5.2.1 The CDPARPA impact logic – from content to institutional results

220. **Assessing the program's contribution to the institutional outcomes requires explicitly articulating the mechanisms of change**. These mechanisms should describe how the training content (concepts and tools) translates into new behaviors and, subsequently, into measurable organizational outcomes. These logical chains (from inputs to behavior, operational results, and institutional impact) form the foundation for the contribution analysis used for the assessment of Level 4 described above. Without this structure, the evaluation risks being descriptive or mistaking individual results for systemic changes. Therefore, this section methodically outlines the program's impact logic for each competency in the General Competency Framework for HLCS.

221. **Each competency required for the HLCS should be assessed through four successive components.** These are the theoretical and practical concepts and tools covered in the program (operational input); key behaviors through which these acquisitions are manifested in professional activity (Kirkpatrick Level 3); intermediate operational results, measurable at 12–24 months (Level 4); and institutional impact, observable at 24–48+ months (Level 4). The following tables summarize these logical chains for the 11 competencies in the General Competency Framework for the HLCS, grouped into five competency areas (Personal Effectiveness, Interpersonal Effectiveness, Social Responsibility, Management, and Leadership). Each impact chain integrates concepts and tools from the program modules, reflecting the cross-cutting nature of competency development and showing how the

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[37] Mayne, J. (2012). Contribution analysis: Coming of age? Evaluation, 18(3), 270-280. Mayne defines contribution analysis as an approach that "seeks to reduce uncertainty about the contribution of an intervention to observed outcomes by clarifying the reasons why these outcomes occurred (or did not occur) and the role played by the program, along with other internal and external factors.

[38] Kirkpatrick, J. D., & Kirkpatrick, W. K. (2016). Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Training Evaluation. ATD Press. The distinction between leading indicators (early indicators, measurable at 6-18 months) and lagging indicators (final outcome indicators, measurable at 24-48+ months) is essential in the evaluation of public programs, where final outcomes are influenced by multiple factors and require long observation periods.

behavioral transfer confirmed at Level 3 generates measurable operational results that, over time, support institutional changes that can be assessed through performance indicators.

222. **The "Personal Effectiveness" competency area captures how the individual competencies of the HLCS translate into strategic clarity, decision-making accountability, and rigorous planning.** In this area, the impact of the program is assessed through behaviors associated with formulating the direction, strategic decision-making, and resource alignment, as well as their effects on institutional coherence and delivery capacity. The table below summarizes the impact chains associated with the competencies of Strategic Thinking, Accountability, and Strategic Planning and organization.

Table 38. Impact chains for the competencies in the area of "Personal Effectiveness" (Kirkpatrick Levels 3–4)

Competency	Program concepts and tools	Key behavioral patterns (6–12 months)	Expected operational results *(12–24 months)*	Potential institutional impact *(24–48+ months)*
Strategic thinking	**Communicating the vision and mission (M1)**	Explicitly articulates purpose and priorities in key decisions	Increased consistency between objectives, plans, and resources	Significant increase in the strategy implementation rate; reducing the number of conflicting objectives in strategic documents
	Distinction between leadership and management in the decision-making process (M1)	Separates the strategic decisions from the operational ones	Faster decisions and focus on direction	Reduced average time for strategic decision-making; fewer decisions being revoked or corrected after implementation
	Institutional Strategic Plan – ISP (M3, M5)	Correlates the objectives with the SMART indicators and with the resources	Improved quality of the strategic documents; most objectives meet the SMART criteria	ISP target achievement rate increases substantially; reduced number of ad hoc strategy revisions
Accountability	**Tone from the top – accountability (M1)**	Publicly explain decisions and their consequences	Fewer decision-making bottlenecks; decreased approval time	Employee satisfaction with role clarity increases; fewer complaints about arbitrary decision-making
	Self-awareness and adjustment of managerial behavior (M1-LSI)	Identifies the defensive styles and adopt constructive behaviors in professional interactions	Increased mutual trust and managerial legitimacy; fewer recurring conflicts	Staff turnover rate decreases; increase in organizational engagement score; fewer HR complaints
	Decision Gates - (M5-PIM)	Assume responsibility for decisions to terminate or continue immature projects	Fewer failed projects; most projects pass maturity stages	The success rate of completed projects increases significantly; reduction in budget overruns; fewer projects being abandoned after approval

Strategic planning and organization	**Integration of strategic planning with results-oriented budgeting – ISP (M5, M6)**	Correlates the budget with the strategic priorities in official documents	A more efficient allocation; most of the budget is in line with the ISP priorities	Substantial increase in budget execution; fewer reallocations during the last month of the fiscal year; increased transparency through the publication of quarterly reports
	SWOT + PESTLE analysis (M3)	Anticipates vulnerabilities and opportunities in planning	Fewer ad hoc responses; most of the decisions are planned	Improved crisis response capacity; reduced mobilization time in emergencies; fewer undocumented emergencies
	Project maturity assessment – (M5-PIM)	Applies maturity criteria *(Concept, Readiness, Implementation, Delivery)*	More realistic portfolio; most projects have Green Maturity upon approval	On-time delivery improves significantly; substantial reduction in cost overruns; fewer projects with major delays

223. **The "Interpersonal Efficiency" area reflects the ability of the public leaders to communicate strategically and manage organizational tensions when interacting directly with individual stakeholders, citizens, employees, institutional partners, etc.** The impact of the program is assessed through behaviors related to stakeholder alignment, decision-making transparency, and early conflict resolution, as well as their effects on institutional legitimacy, reputation, and internal climate. The table below summarizes the impact chains for the competencies Strategic Communication and Conflict Mediation.

Table 39. Impact chains for competencies in the area of "Interpersonal Effectiveness" (Kirkpatrick Levels 3–4)

Competency	Concepts and tools in the program	Key behavioral patterns (N3: 6–12 months)	Expected operational results *(N4: 12–24 months)*	Potential institutional impact *(N4: 24–48+ months)*
Strategic communication	Communicating the vision and mission (M1)	Explicitly communicates strategic direction to teams and external stakeholders; explains the "why" behind the decisions	Strategic messages are understood consistently across the institution; decisions are accepted easier	Alignment of internal and external stakeholders with institutional priorities; fewer contradictory messages; increased trust in leadership
	3-step value communication plan (M1)	Translates abstract values into concrete messages tailored to fit different internal audiences	Organizational values become visible in daily communication; consistent and repeatable messages	Strengthening of institutional identity; increased consistency in internal and external communication
	Stakeholder matrix + structured consultation (M3)	Identifies stakeholders' interests, influence, and positioning before major decisions; structures consultations	Public consultations are more relevant and better informed	Decision legitimacy increases; reduced resistance to implementation and public challenges;

				improved institutional reputation
	Performance reporting to stakeholders (M5)	Communicates results and deviations from targets in a transparent way	Performance reports published regularly and available to the public	Better institutional transparency; satisfaction rates among citizens regarding access to information
Conflict mediation	Psychological safety (M1)	Encourages employees to express disagreement in a constructive way; addresses conflicts early on.	Conflicts are reported and managed before they escalate	Healthy institutional climate; fewer conflicts and operational bottlenecks
	Rejection of toxic behaviors (M1)	Promptly steps in in cases of harassment, bullying, or unprofessional behavior	Fewer incidents of inappropriate behavior	Safer working environment; increased staff retention; fewer conflict-related absenteeism
	RACI matrix (M2, M5)	Clarifies the roles and responsibilities to prevent conflicts of jurisdiction	Fewer conflicts caused by decision-making ambiguity	Increased operational efficiency; reduced time lost in procedural disputes

224. **The "Social Responsibility" area reflects the ability of public administration leaders to prioritize public interest in their decisions and proactively manage ethical, operational, and contextual risks.** The impact of the program is assessed through behaviors related to citizen orientation, the application of integrity criteria, the anticipation of vulnerabilities, the ability to negotiate in challenging situations and manage crises. In addition, the impact is assessed based on how these behaviors affects the public trust, compliance, and institutional resilience. The table below summarizes the impact chains for the competencies of Civic Responsibility and Vulnerability Management.

Table 40 . Impact chains for competencies in the area of "Social Responsibility" (Kirkpatrick Levels 3–4)

Competency	Concepts and tools in the program	Key behavioral patterns *(N3: 6–12 months)*	Expected operational results *(N4:12–24 months)*	Potential institutional impact *(N4: 24–48+ months)*
Civic responsibility	Citizen-oriented and public value – Once-only, SSO (M1, M2, M3)	Integrate the citizen's perspective into the process of defining goals and services; apply the "once-only" principle in new processes	Simplification of procedures; decisions are more focused on real needs; increased accessibility of digital services	Citizen satisfaction with public services increases significantly; shortened processing time; fewer complaints
	A well-structured public consultation process and the mapping of stakeholders	Identifies and involves relevant stakeholders in key stages of the decision-making process; integrates their feedback into the final	Consultations are more relevant and better documented; the feedback is more often integrated	An increase in the legitimacy of public decisions; fewer challenges and subsequent reviews

		versions of regulatory acts		
	Performance monitoring and results reporting (M5)	Communicates results and deviations from objectives in a transparent way; publishes reports in non-technical language that are available to the public	A better reporting discipline; public information is understood by citizens	Public trust in the institution increases; the perception of transparency improves
Vulnerability management	Ethical leadership and integrity (M1)	Consistently applies integrity criteria in decisions; rejects inappropriate pressure; promotes ethical measures by personal example	Minimizing the risk of corruption and conflicts of interest; decisions based on objective criteria	Institutional integrity score increases; fewer incidents of inappropriate conduct; strengthened ethical reputation
	Risk and vulnerability analysis – PESTLE, SWOT, Risk Matrix (M2, M3, M4, M5)	Identifies operational, reputational, and continuity risks (internal) but also external vulnerabilities (legislation, economy, technology); uses the Probability × Impact matrix	Issues are anticipated and addressed before escalation; plans include risk scenarios and integrated mitigation measures	Increased institutional resilience; fewer major incidents; better ability to adapt to external shocks
	Crisis management and decision-making under pressure – OODA Loop, DECIDE, ICS (M1, M4)	Ability to use the OODA cycle (Observe-Orient-Decide-Act); makes informed decisions under pressure; coordinates response according to the ICS (Incident Command System)	Reduced response time in critical situations; crisis team operates with clear roles; operational checklists reduce errors	Increased crisis response capacity; reduced negative impact on public services; reduced failure rate of risky projects
	Plans for institutional continuity – BCP, Intervention Plans (M4, M5)	Develops continuity plans for critical functions; defines alternative resources and backup procedures	Essential functions are maintained during disruptions; full resumption of operations within an acceptable timeframe	Operational continuity ensured; financial losses associated with disruptions reduced; increased stakeholder confidence in the institution's resilience
	Managing negotiations in tense situations – BATNA, ZOPA, Harvard Method (M4)	Identify your own BATNA style and estimate the other party's BATNA; negotiate based on interests (not positions); seek the zone of possible agreement (ZOPA)	Conflicts are managed constructively; fair agreements maintain relationships; de-escalation (according to the Glasl Ladder)	Fewer operational bottlenecks and public disputes; stable organizational climate; strengthened the legitimacy of decision-making

	Ensures psychological safety and encourages early reporting of problems (M1)	Encourages reporting of risks and errors without punishment; creates an early warning environment	Problems are reported earlier and managed systematically; more early warnings	Prevention of recurring crises; prevention-oriented organizational culture; reduced losses associated with unmanaged risks

225. **The "Management" area reflects the ability of public leaders to effectively manage institutional resources and to support the development of capacity and performance** The impact of the program is assessed based on behaviors linked to process optimization, evidence-based resource allocation, team competency development, and the creation of a constructive work environment, as well as their effects on operational efficiency, delivery quality, and talent retention. The table below summarizes the impact chains for competencies related to the Resource and Process Management and Team Development.

Table 41. Impact chains for competencies in the "Management" competency area (Kirkpatrick Levels 3–4)

Competency	Program concepts and tools	Key behavioral patterns *(N3: 6–12 months)*	Expected operational results *(N4:12–24 months)*	Potential institutional impact *(N4: 24–48+ months)*
Resource and process management	Value Stream Mapping and process analysis (M2)	Identifies activities without added value in operational flows; suggests streamlining based on end-to-end mapping	Reduced processing times; no more operational bottlenecks; simpler, better-documented processes	Significantly increased operational efficiency; reduced administrative process costs; improved delivery capacity
	Business Process Reengineering – BPR (M2)	Redesigns citizen-oriented processes; applies the principles of once-only and interoperability	Digitized, user-centered processes; fewer redundant steps	Average service delivery time decreased substantially; increased internal and external user satisfaction
	RACI matrix – clarification of roles (M2, M5)	Explicitly defines roles and responsibilities for key processes; eliminates decision-making ambiguity	Reduced conflicts of jurisdiction; increased clarity on responsibilities	Less time wasted on procedural disputes; inter-institutional coordination improves
	Integrating the planning with the budgeting process – ISP + MTEF (M5, M6)	Correlates budget allocation with strategic priorities and performance indicators	Budget is executed according to plan; fewer last-minute reallocations	Budget execution increases significantly; improved transparency of spending; financial predictability
	Public expenditure analysis – Spending Review (M6)	Uses systematic recommendations to streamline the allocation of resource	Inefficient spendings are identified; substantiated savings proposals	Fewer administrative costs; reallocation of resources to strategic priorities
	Program-based budgeting – PBB (M6)	Links financial resources to measurable	More transparency on the correlation of resources allocation	Increased efficiency of public spending;

		results through performance indicators	and results; better-informed budget decisions; informed budgetary decisions	strengthened financial accountability
Team development	Psychological safety – constructive leadership (M1)	Encourages the employees to express their opinions and report issues without sanctions; creates an environment of trust	More internal initiatives and upward feedback; employees feel less scared to report errors	Improved organizational learning capacity; faster adaptation; collaborative climate
	Self-awareness and adjustment Interaction styles – LSI/Circumplex (M1)	Identifies his/her own defensive styles (according to LSI feedback) and adopts constructive styles in interactions	Reduction of interpersonal tensions and latent conflicts; increased level of mutual trust	Decreased staff turnover rate; better organizational engagement; a more stable organizational climate
	Communicating the reason for change – 3-step plan (M1)	Explains the "why" behind initiatives for change before implementation; tailors messages to different internal audiences	Changes are more likely to be accepted; initial resistance decreases; consistent messages at the institutional level	Increased implementation speed; consolidated trust in leadership
	Constructive feedback and recognition of contributions (M1)	Provides specific, development-oriented feedback; publicly recognizes team achievements	More motivated teams; improved individual performance	Increased talent retention; improved employee satisfaction with direct management

226. **The "Leadership" area reflects the ability of public leaders to generate organizational commitment and swiftly reform institutions in changing contexts.** The program's impact is assessed through behaviors related to how the leader is able to communicate strategic direction, to involve teams in decisions, quick adaptability to change, and promoting innovation. The assessment also considers the effects of those behaviors on the organizational commitment, speed of implementation, and capacity for institutional transformation. The table below summarizes the impact chains for the competencies of Fostering Engagement and Strategic Agility.

Table 42 . Impact chains for competencies in the "Leadership" competency area (Kirkpatrick Levels 3–4)

Competency	Program concepts and tools	Key behavioral patterns *(N3: 6–12 months)*	Expected operational results *(N4:12–24 months)*	Potential institutional impact *(N4: 24–48+ months)*
Generating commitment	Communicating the vision and mission (M1 – Leadership)	Explicitly articulates the purpose and strategic priorities; communicates the "why" behind decisions to teams and stakeholders	Strategic messages are consistently understood within the institution; a better acceptance rate	Alignment of internal and external stakeholders with priorities; consolidated trust in leadership; fewer contradictory messages
	3-step communication plan for values – Clarification,	Translates abstract values into concrete behaviors and visible examples; tailor	Organizational values become visible in daily communication;	Strengthening institutional identity; organizational culture aligned with values

	Activation, Consolidation (M1 – Leadership)	messages to different audiences	consistency between discourse and practice	
	Taking accountability – Tone from the top (M1 – Leadership)	Publicly explains decisions and consequences; acknowledges mistakes and takes responsibility	Fewer bottlenecks related to the decision-making process; increased managerial legitimacy	Employee satisfaction with role clarity increases; more trust in the integrity of the leadership
	Early involvement of the team in the decision-making process (M1 – Leadership)	Seeks employees' input early in the decision-making process; involves teams in defining solutions	Decisions are better informed; a better acceptance rate	Increased organizational engagement; more frequent bottom-up
	Recognizing and celebrating successes (M1 – Leadership)	Publicly recognizes team contributions and achievements; celebrates important milestones	More motivated teams; strengthened sense of belonging	Decreased turnover rate; the institution's reputation as an employer ameliorates
Strategic agility	Learning from mistakes – Growth mindset (M1 – Leadership)	Approaches mistakes as learning opportunities; encourages employees to experiment and take calculated risks	More innovative initiatives; fear of failure decreases	A better institutional innovation capacity; rapid adaptation to external changes
	Incremental innovation and prototyping (M1 – Leadership; M2 – Digitalization)	Tests new solutions through pilot projects before scaling up; applies the "test-learn-adapt" logic	Implementation of changes is faster and less risky; integration of lessons from the pilots programs	Increased speed of institutional transformation; the cost of mistakes is reduced through early testing
	Anticipating change – PESTLE and SWOT analysis (M3 – Strategies)	Monitors external trends (legislation, economy, technology); integrates vulnerabilities into planning	The plans include adaptation scenarios; reduced ad hoc responses	A better strategic resilience; improved capacity to respond to external shocks
	Incremental change and consolidation – Micro-habits (M1 – Leadership)	Promotes small, repeatable changes instead of radical transformations; monitors incremental progress	The implementation of new behaviors is faster and more sustainable	Lasting cultural transformation; a decreased resistance to change
	Flexibility in planning – Review and update ISPs (M5 – Monitoring)	Reviews strategic plans annually; adjusts priorities based on performance and context	Plans are relevant and adapted to reality; strategic flexibility	A better achievement rate for the strategic objectives; ability to pivot quickly
	Stakeholder coordination and negotiation in complex contexts (M3 – Strategies; M4 – Crisis)	Maps relevant stakeholders (interests, influence); negotiates functional agreements in tense situations using BATNA and ZOPA	Improved inter-institutional coordination; conflicts are managed in a better way	Common objectives achieved more efficiently; fewer implementation bottlenecks; consolidated reputation as a reliable partner

227. The long-term impact of the program is reflected by an increased institutional capacity to develop strategies, to deliver results efficiently, and to adapt to changes. An assessment of the logical chains of impact highlights four main directions, which can be observed 24–48+ months after the training:

- Increased strategic coherence and implementation capacity by reducing conflicting objectives, aligning resources with priorities, and improving the achievement rate of targets in institutional strategic plans;

- Strengthening the legitimacy and public trust by a more transparent communication with stakeholders, reducing conflicts inside the institution, and increasing the citizens' satisfaction with public services;

- Improving operational efficiency and the quality of public service delivery by optimizing processes, reducing delays in project implementation, and increasing budget execution in line with strategic objectives;

- Developing institutional resilience and transformation capacity by anticipating and proactively managing risks, reducing mobilization time during crisis, and successfully implementing organizational reforms and digitization initiatives.

228. These institutional changes are a result of a combination between the leadership skills developed through the program and contextual and systemic factors in which they are implemented. The transfer of skills into practice (Kirkpatrick Level 3) is a necessary condition for achieving intermediate operational results, which in turn support long-term institutional impact. Organizational factors such as clarity of the strategic mandate, availability of resources, senior management support, and team stability significantly influence the ability of public leaders to translate acquired competencies into measurable institutional results.

229. The indicator framework detailed above provides a comprehensive conceptual basis for assessing the impact of program, covering all the competencies relevant for HLCSs and the four identified impact directions. However, the successful implementation of a rigorous assessment requires a transition from this conceptual architecture to an operational strategy: the selection of a limited number of measurable indicators, defining the stages of the data collection process, defining the methodology for inter-institutional analysis, and articulating how the results can be used to improve the program and to inform public policy decisions.

Annex 1. Calendar of the CDPARPA pilot implementation, August-December 2025

Module 1. Generating impact in public administration through transformational leadership and corporate governance

Table 43 . Module 1 - schedule

Activity	Date	Duration	Training hours	Total hours	Location	No. of participants
Module 1. Generating impact in public administration through transformational leadership and corporate governance	Day 1, 22.08.2025	09:00 – 16:00	6 hours	**42 hours**	WB, 9.1	**13**
	Day 2, 23.08. 2025	9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	6 hours		WB, 9.1	**11**
	Day 3, 29.08.2025	09:00 – 16:00	6 hours		WB, 9.1	**16**
	Day 4, 4.09.2025	09:00 – 16:00	6 hours		WB, 9.1	**9**
	Day 5, 5.09.2025	09:00 – 16:00	6 hours		WB, 9.1	**14**
	Day 6, 12.09.2025	09:00 – 16:00	6 hours		WB, 9.1	**16**
	Day 7, 13.09.2025	09:00 – 16:00	6 hours		WB, 9.1	**16**

Day 1. Leadership in the public sector and Day 2. Clarity of intent

The module covered the following topics:

- What leadership is and why is it different from management – differences in terms of objectives, core activities, required competencies, time horizon, and attitude towards change
- Organizational culture and structure - elements of culture and structure, different responsibilities for leaders and managers;
- The leadership component. The benefits of leadership in the public sector;
- Conceptual model for managing organizational culture;
- Factors influencing the habits of people in an organization;
- Climate vs. Culture – differences and interferences between culture and climate;
- Thinking and behavior styles;
- The impact of the leaders' personal styles on the institution – how passive/defensive and aggressive/defensive personal styles can affect the institution and how constructive styles can help.
- Clarity of intention
- Vision, mission, and strategic directions in a public sector organization.
- Citizen-oriented approach in defining vision and mission;
- The role of the leader in providing direction and inspiring the team;
- Communicating the vision and mission while maintaining a citizen-oriented approach. Messages and communication strategy.

The training objectives of the module were to enable participants to:

- Conduct a critical analysis of their thought processes and behaviors that affect their leadership style and make decisions regarding their personal development that would enable them to have a more positive impact at the interpersonal, team, and institutional levels.
- Clarify the institution's vision and mission and formulate them in a way that is easy to understand and generates trust and commitment for both the institution's employees and citizens/direct beneficiaries;
- Communicate the vision and mission effectively, both at the level of institution and society.

The performance criteria for the module focused on:

Day 1 Leadership in the public sector:

- Understanding the role of the leader in the public sector
- Understanding the responsibilities of a leader in the organizational culture
- Understanding the importance of developing leadership skills
- Building a personal development plan

Day 2 Clarity of intent

- Ability to better articulate the vision and mission of the institution to better reflect a citizen oriented approach
- Developing a plan for communicating the vision and mission of the institution

The training materials used included: a Course support, a PowerPoint presentation, Practical applications, Worksheets.

Table 44. Hands-on exercises carried out on Day 1 and Day 2 of Module 1

Exercise	Status
Exercise no. 1 Fill in the Leadership vs. Management questionnaire – discovering the differences between leadership and management from the OECD perspective	Completed
Exercise no. 2 Personal development plan that includes: identifying thinking and behavior styles, fostering positive behaviors and limiting counterproductive behaviors, in order to generate a positive impact in the organizational culture.	Completed
Exercise no. 3 Exercise: Clarity of intent – discovering the components of clarity of intent and their impact on the organization and citizens	Completed
Exercise no. 4 Exercise: The ability to clearly communicate the vision, mission, and strategic directions in the public institution	Completed

Source: Assessed by the trainer who delivered the module and monitored by the World Bank team

Table 45. Assessment of the Day 1 and Day 2 of Module 1 exercises, conducted by the trainers who delivered the program

Application	The complexity level of the exercise requirements	The level of engagement	The quality of the achieved results	Participants' perception of relevance
Exercise no. 1	4	5	10	5
Exercise no. 2	4	5	10	5
Exercise no. 3	5	5	8	5
Exercise no. 4	5	5	8	5

Source: Assessed by the trainer who delivered the module

Day 3. Organizational culture, Day 4. Cultural transformation, and Day 5. Commitment and psychological safety

The module covered the following topics:

- Defining/clarifying citizen-oriented values;
- From values to reality – Habits that allow the team to express their value;
- Defining undesirable and desirable habits;
- How do values come to life in the organization?
- Leadership levers for cultural transformation;
- Defining values and habits;
- A culture of accountability and integrity: Defining the need for transformation and the action plan;
- Commitment to the organization. Actions that impact commitment;
- Psychological needs - Components of psychological safety;
- Identifying the level of psychological safety;
- The leader's impact on the psychological safety.

The training objectives of the module were to enable participants to:

- Identify the habits that affect the institutional results, and classify them as desirable (constructive) and less desirable;
- Identify the needs for cultural transformation and the use of leadership levers to implement the desired cultural transformation;
- Provide a model and support the personal development of the employees, in order to help build a culture of integrity and accountability; consistently expressing the expectation that people exhibit behaviors associated with a culture of integrity and accountability
- Recognize the psychological needs of the employees and uses leadership in order to create an environment of psychological safety and increase organizational commitment.

The performance criteria for the module focused on:

Day 3. Organizational culture

- Understanding the difference between real culture and an ideal one;
- Understanding the relationship between culture, values, and customs;
- The ability to define values at the level of institution;
- The ability to translate values into desirable habits;

- Ability to identify undesirable habits;
- Defining desirable and undesirable habits;

Day 4. Cultural transformation

- Building a plan for communicating values and expectations related to the behavioral of the employees;
- The ability to identify the need for cultural transformation;
- Conducting an assessment;
- Understanding leadership levers for achieving cultural transformation;
- Developing a plan to implement a culture of accountability and integrity;

Day 5. Commitment and psychological safety

- Recognizing factors that impact engagement inside the institution;
- Understanding the psychological needs;
- Assessing the level of psychological safety;
- Developing a plan to increase the psychological safety

The training materials used included: a Course support, a PowerPoint presentation, hands-on exercises, Worksheets.

Table 46 . Hands-on exercises carried out in Module 1. Days 3, 4, and 5

Exercise	Status
Exercise no. 1 Case study: Decisions and organizational culture	Completed
Exercise no. 2 Exercise: Understanding the difference between a real culture and an ideal one; a deeper understanding of the relationship between values and behaviors	Completed
Exercise no. 3 Exercise: Plan for communicating what the desirable values and behaviors are and how to support foster them	Completed
Exercise no. 4 Case study: Identifying the need for change	Completed
Exercise no. 5 Exercise: A culture of accountability and integrity to encourage the practical application of cultural transformation tools	Completed
Exercise no. 6 Case study: Organizational commitment aimed at building build the capacity to recognize commitment-related behavioral, predict performance, formulate appropriate interventions, and evaluate the impact of leadership policies	Not delivered[39]
Exercise no. 7 Exercise: Assessing the level of psychological safety in the participants' team based on the four essential areas of psychological safety	Completed
Exercise no. 8 Exercise: Plan for increasing the psychological safety in your own team	Not delivered[40]

Source: Assessed by the trainer who delivered the module and monitored by the World Bank team

[39] The module requires additional delivery time.
[40] Ibid.

Table 47. Assessment of the Day 3, 4 and 5 of Module 1 exercises, conducted by the trainers who delivered the program

Exercise	The complexity level of the exercise requirements	The level of engagement	The quality of the achieved results	Participants' perception of relevance
Exercise no. 1	3	4	9	5
Exercise no. 2	3	5	9	5
Exercise no. 3	4	4	8	5
Exercise no. 4	3	5	8	3
Exercise no. 5	4	5	8	4
Exercise no. 6	-	-	-	-
Exercise no. 7	2	5	10	5
Exercise no. 8	-	-	-	-

Source: Assessed by the trainer who delivered the module

Day 6. Encouraging innovation. A culture of innovation

The module covered the following topics:

- Innovation;
- Inspiration and an approach citizen oriented;
- Ensuring diversity of ideas;
- Managing implementation;
- A culture of innovation;
- Reflection on personal development.

The training objectives of the module were to enable participants to:

- Encourage employees to identify opportunities for innovation based on citizens' best interests, generate new ideas, and implement innovation plans.

The performance criteria for the module focused on:

- Understanding the stages of innovation
- Building a plan to support the development of a culture of innovation

The training materials used included: a Course support, a PowerPoint presentation, hands-on exercises, Worksheets.

Table 48. Hands-on exercises in Module 1. Day 6

Exercise	Status Delivery
Exercise no. 1 Exercise: Innovation - An introduction to the three steps of the innovation process: Inspiration, Ideas, Implementation, and exploring obstacles	Completed
Exercise no. 2 Exercise: Planning for a culture of innovation tailored to the institutional context	Completed
Exercise no. 3 Individual reflection on personal transformation during the program	Completed

Source: Assessed by the trainer who delivered the module and monitored by the World Bank team

Table 49. Assessment of the Day 6 of Module 1 exercises, conducted by the trainers who delivered the program

Application	The complexity level of the exercise requirements	The level of engagement	The quality of the achieved results	Participants' perception of relevance
Exercise no. 1	5	5	8	5
Exercise no. 2	5	5	8	5
Exercise no. 3	5	5	10	5

Source: Assessed by the trainer who delivered the module

Day 7. Corporate governance

The module covered the following topics:

- The position in regard to state-owned enterprises: Implications of the position of representative of the supervisory authority vs. the position of member of the board of directors
- Step 1. Formulating and communicating expectations. Strategic alignment of the letter of expectations, Sources of information and follow-up issues, Theories of corporate governance applicable to state-owned companies;
- Step 2. Contribution to the establishment of the board of directors. Job profile, ideal candidate profile, aspects to monitor in the selection process. From expectations and objectives to KPIs and activities;
- Step 3. Analysis and approval of company plans. Management plan (submitted by the board of directors): alignment of the objective with the letter of expectations, working assumptions, context, and planned budget;
- Step 4. Analysis and approval of company plans. Management plan (submitted by the Board of Directors), KPIs taken into account, performance reflected by KPIs, planned activity, alignment with the planned budget;
- Step 5. Ongoing monitoring activity. Aspects to be evaluated in the activity report;
- Step 6. Assessing the Board of Directors' mandate. Assumed objectives vs. Achieved. assessment of the individual mandates and objectives;
- Exceptional events: Resignation of a BoD member, Renegotiations. KPIs at the request of the BoD, Readjustment of indicators, Decisions to extend the mandate;

- Ensuring institutional transparency: Documents ensuring transparency, Monitoring compliance with the transparency regulations.

The training objectives of the module were to enable participants to:

- Analyze key performance indicators at each stage of working with state-owned enterprises and track performance against established strategy, objectives, and KPIs

The performance criteria for the module focused on:

- Understanding the role of representative of the supervisory authority and the differences between this role and that of a member of the board of directors;
- Understanding the key elements that must be monitored at each stage of working with a state-owned company;
- Understanding the levers/measures that can be used at each stage;
- Understanding their own role in ensuring institutional transparency.

The training materials used included: a Course support, a PowerPoint presentation, Hands-on exercises, Worksheets.

Table 50. Hands-on exercises carried out in Module 1. Day 7

Exercise	Status
Exercise no. 1 Case study: Case study: the use of analytical and decision-making tools designed to help fulfill the role of public authority representative in working with state-owned companies	Completed

Source: Assessed by the trainer who delivered the module and monitored by the World Bank team

Table 51 . Assessment of the Day 7 of Module 1 exercises, conducted by the trainers who delivered the program

Exercise	The complexity level of the exercise requirements	The level of engagement	The quality of the achieved results	Participants' perception of relevance
Exercise no. 1	5	5	7.5	4

Source: Monitored by the WB team

Module 2. Implementing digitization and reorganization in public institutions

Table 52. Module 2 implementation schedule

Activity	Date	Duration	Training hours	Total hours	Location	Attendance Participants
Module 2. Implementing	Day 1, 30.09.2025	3:00 p.m. – 7:00	3 hours		WB, 9.1	**1**

digitization and reorganization in public institutions	Day 2, 1.10. 2025	3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	3 hours	**18 hours**	WB, 9.1	**1**
	Day 3, 3.10. 2025	9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	6 hours		WB, 9.1	**16**
	Day 4, 4.10. 2025	10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	6 hours		WB, 9.1	**12**

The module covered the following topics:

- Digitization, digital transformation – strategic alignment and levels of implementation;
- Digital Maturity Assessment;
- Digital governance of data and technology
- The digitization of public administration processes – strategies and best practices;
- Digital transformation process management. The digitization of public administration processes – strategies and best practices;
- Managing the digital transformation process;
- Basic and key concepts of organizational change;
- Theories and explanatory models of change;
- Types of change and how to manage them;
- Organizational assessment and identifying areas for improvement;
- Collecting and analyzing data relevant to decision-making;
- Types of interventions for organizational change;
- Essential steps and enabling factors;
- Intra-institutional collaboration and involvement of relevant actors (roadmap);
- Setting clear objectives for a successful plan;
- Choosing the most appropriate change strategy;
- Implementing change: strategies and methods;
- Creating and applying a concrete plan for change;
- Implementing change: action plan, communication, and monitoring.

The training objectives of the module were to enable participants to:

- Develop their capacity to lead digital transformation at the level of public institutions and to differentiate between projects that merely "digitize documents" and digital transformation solutions with real impact;
- Analyze and assess the organizational capacity of the institution, identifying strengths, weaknesses, and resources needed to respond to strategic or reform requirements;
- Develop and coordinate reform plans/institutional development or consolidation plans that align organizational structures and processes with new strategies, policies, or external requirements;
- Lead the implementation of institutional reforms, by monitoring the progress, assessing the impact, and adjusting the processes to ensure that the objectives are met.

The performance criteria for the module focused on:

- Ensuring the fact that the identified digital transformation solutions are tailored to the institutional context, and the improvement needs and are in line with new technologies;

- Ensuring the fact that the designed digital transformation plan responds to the requirements and institutional needs as presented;
- Ensuring that the organizational diagnosis is based on a correct interpretation of the contextual information provided and includes an assessment of the structure and bottlenecks in the operational flow;
- Ensuring that the institutional development plan makes effective use of the information provided and the diagnosis, and that it fits the purpose for which it was designed: modernization of administrative processes/digitization/organizational restructuring/implementation of new policies;
- Ensuring that the proposed institutional reforms are tailored to the development objectives set and can generate a measurable impact, allowing for the monitorization of the progress and the required assistance.

The training materials used included: a Course support, a PowerPoint presentation, Hands-on applications, Miro App for collaborative work within working teams, Worksheets.

Table 53. Hands-on exercises carried out in Module 2

Exercise	Status Delivery
Exercise no. 1 Case study: Digital transformation vs. pseudo-digitization. Differentiating between document digitization projects and digital transformation projects, to be able to design process re-engineering solutions that generate results for citizens	Completed
Exercise no. 2 Exercise: Designing a digital transformation plan for an institution that should include a vision and objectives for 2026–2030, As-Is vs. To-Be analysis, 3 pilot initiatives, roadmap, KPIs, and responsible parties	Completed
Exercise no. 3 Exercise: Organizational diagnosis and data analysis to assess the structure and efficiency of organizational processes, identify problems, bottlenecks in the operational flow, and external factors that influence the institution's performance.	Completed
Exercise no. 4 Exercise: Development of an institutional development plan based on contextual information and the diagnosis of a public institution aimed at modernizing administrative processes, organizational restructuring, or implementing new public policies.	Completed

Source: Evaluation by trainers who taught the module and monitoring by the World Bank

Table 54. Assessment of the Module 2 exercises, conducted by the trainers who delivered the program

Exercise	The complexity level of the exercise requirements	The level of engagement	The quality of the achieved results	Participants' perception of relevance
Exercise no. 1	3	4	8	5
Exercise no. 2	4	4	8	5
Exercise no. 3	4	4	7	4
Exercise no. 4	5	4	8	5

Source: Assessed by the trainer who delivered the module and monitored by the World Bank team

Module 3. Shaping institutional strategies to achieve results for citizens and the business environment (elective)

Table 55 . Module 3 schedule

Activity	Date	Duration	Training hours	Total hours	Location	Attendance
Module 3. Shaping institutional strategies to achieve results for citizens and the business environment *(elective)*	Day 1, 21.10. 2025	4:00 p.m.	3 hours	**18 hours**	WB, 9.1	**12**
	Day 2, 22.10.2025	4:00 p.m. – 7:15	3 hours		WB, 9.1	**7**
	Day 3, 24.10.2025	9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	6 hours		WB, 9.1	**10**
	Day 4, 25.10. 2025	10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	6 hours		WB, 9.1	**13**

The module covered the following topics:

- Tools for developing institutional strategies, policies, and strategic plans;
- Correlating the strategic planning process and tools with the process of drafting normative acts;
- Methods for analyzing the internal and external context;
- Methods for defining general and specific objectives, and outcome and impact indicators;
- Methods for identifying, consulting, and mobilizing stakeholders;
- Stages of the public policy cycle;
- The Government's annual work plan (GAWP), from a bureaucratic model to a priority-setting model;
- Stages of the decision-making process at the strategy and policy level, correlating the objectives in the programmatic documents with the EU and OECD;
- Consultative Council for the Impact Assessment of Normative Acts (CCEIAN (CCEIAN).

The training objectives of the module were to enable participants to:

- Implement a decision-making process based on the coordinated alignment of strategies and policies at the institutional level.;
- Coordinate and monitor the implementation of strategies and policies meant to align institutional objectives and ensure their achievement;
- Identify trends outside the organization, assess risks and opportunities;
- Initiate specific measures for aligning and orienting the institution towards achieving its strategic objectives;
- Map key actors involved and facilitate collaboration between various stakeholders to implement strategies and policies.

The performance criteria for the module were as follows:

- The context analysis uses relevant and substantiated information, covers all dimensions of the PESTLE model, and provides useful contributions for setting the objectives of the public policy document;
- The institutional monitoring mechanism allows for tracking the progress of the strategy, includes relevant indicators, and is appropriate to the structure and size of the institution analyzed;
- Thee stakeholder matrix identifies the representatives that are relevant to the issue analyzed and includes appropriate ways to consult and involve them during the implementation process;
- The selected option is duly substantiated, and the sections of the instrument for presenting and substantiating normative acts are filled in with the necessary information;
- Valid alternatives for the development and drafting of new corporate governance legislation are identified, along with relevant proposals for approaching negotiations with the EU and the OECD.
- The main observations made by the CCEIAN on the proposed legislative acts are well interpreted, and the consent regarding whether they should be included or not in the final version is based on solid arguments and an impact assessment

The training materials used included: a Course support, a PowerPoint presentation, Hands-on exercises.

Table 56. Hands-on exercises carried out in Module 3

Exercise	Status Delivery
Exercise no. 1 Exercise: Context analysis, goal setting, and design/tailoring of an interinstitutional monitoring mechanism for a public policy document	Completed
Exercise no. 2 Exercise: Identifying stakeholders and drafting the stakeholder matrix	Completed
Exercise no. 3 Exercise: Generating options and going through the main steps in the instrument for presenting and substantiating normative acts	Completed
Exercise no. 4 Case study: Drafting new legislation on corporate governance of public enterprises in the context of Romania's obligations under the NRRP, communication and negotiation with EC and OECD partners	Completed
Exercise no. 5 Case study: Use and integration of the comments expressed by the Consultative Council for the Impact Assessment of Normative Acts (CCEIAN) (CCEIAN) on proposals for normative acts	Completed

Source: Assessed by the trainer who delivered the module and monitored by the World Bank team

Table 57. Assessment of the Module 3 exercises, conducted by the trainers who delivered the program

Application	The complexity level of the exercise requirements	The level of engagement	The quality of the achieved results	Participants' perception of relevance
Exercise no. 1	5	4	4	4
Exercise no. 2	4	5	5	5
Exercise no. 3	5	4	4	4
Exercise no. 4	4	5	5	5
Exercise no. 5	5	5	5	5

Source: Assessed by the trainer who delivered the module

Module 4. Solving crises and complex situations in public institutions through anticipation and negotiation (elective)

Table 58 . Module 4 schedule

Activity	Date	Duration	Training hours	Total hours	Location	Attendance Participants
Module 4. Solving crises and complex situations in public institutions through anticipation and negotiation *(elective)*	Day 1, 31.10.2025	12:00 p.m.	5 hours	**18 hours**	WB, 9.1	**12**
	Day 2, 1.11. 2025	10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	6 hours		WB, 9.1	**11**
	Day 3, 5.11. 2025	4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	2 hours		Webex	**17**
	Day 4, 7.11 2025	12:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	5 hours		WB, 9.1	**15**

The module covered the following topics:

- Defining of the concepts of crisis, emergency, complex situations; characteristics, differences, impact;
- Decision-making under pressure;
- Types of emergencies, crises, and complex situations;
- Triggering factors and their impact on the institution;
- Conflict dynamics and underlying causes in public administration;
- Conflict resolution models and approaches;
- Identifying institutional vulnerabilities;
- Drafting intervention plans and crisis scenarios;
- Risk analysis and plans for preventive measures;
- Methodologies for ongoing assessment and tailored interventions;
- Institutional continuity plan;
- Basic negotiation principle;
- Identifying optimal negotiation objectives and strategies;
- Negotiation styles;
- Negotiation methods and techniques.

The training objectives of the module were to enable participants to:

- Identify the main characteristics of critical situations: crises, emergencies, or complex situations, as well as their triggers;
- Implement appropriate strategies and procedures for the effective management of crisis, emergencies, and/or complex situations;
- Apply practical models for crisis intervention and resolution, tailored to the specific nature of the institution.

The performance criteria for the module were as follows:

- The vulnerabilities of public institutions are realistically identified and correctly classified;
- The institutional continuity plan is relevant for the identified vulnerabilities and allows the achievement of the set objectives, in relation to the institution's capacity, resources, and challenges;
- Participants collaborate effectively to resolve the crisis, respecting the responsibilities assigned to their roles;
- Participants correctly analyze the interests of the parties involved, develop negotiation strategies, and identify solutions that suit both parties involved.
- Participants apply negotiation methods and techniques in a manner that is adapted and appropriate to the simulated situations.

The training materials used included: a Course support, a PowerPoint presentation, hands-on exercises, and worksheets.

Table 59. Hands-on exercises carried out in Module 4

Exercise	Status Delivery
Exercise no. 1 Exercise: Assessing the vulnerabilities of a public institution and drafting a quick action plan in the event that a certain scenario occurs	Completed
Exercise no. 2 Exercise: Developing an institutional continuity plan based on the above assessed vulnerabilities	Completed
Exercise no. 3 Role play: Implementing the previously developed Continuity Plan to address a crisis, with different roles assigned according to key positions in a public institution.	Completed
Exercise no. 4 Role-playing: Simulating a negotiation process in a public administration crisis situation - analyze the interests of the parties involved, negotiation strategies, apply persuasive tactics, and reach a mutually acceptable solution that minimizes the impact of the crisis.	Partially completed [41]

Source: Assessed by the trainer who delivered the module and monitored by the World Bank team

Table 60. Assessment of the Module 4 exercises, conducted by the trainers who delivered the program

Exercise	The complexity level of the exercise requirements	The level of engagement	The quality of achieved results	Participants' perception of relevance
Exercise no. 1	4	4	8	5
Exercise no. 2	4	5	8	5
Exercise no. 3	5	5	8	5
Exercise no. 4	5	5	9	5

Source: Assessed by the trainer who delivered the module

Module 5. Monitoring the performance of institutional strategic plans and investment projects

[41] The module requires additional delivery time.

Table 61. Module 5 schedule

Activity	Date	Duration	Training hours	Total hours	Location	Attendance
Module 5. Monitoring the performance of institutional strategic plans and investment project	Day 1, 18.11.2025	4:00 p.m. – 7:15	3 hours	**18 hours**	Webex	**1**
	Day 2, 19.11. 2025	4:00 p.m. – 7:15	3 hours		WB, 9.1	**9**
	Day 3, 21.11 2025	12:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	5.5 hours		WB, 9.1	**11**
	Day 4, 22.11 2025	10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	6.5 hours		WB, 9.1	**11**

The module covered the following topics:

- Strategic performance management. Implementation mechanisms
- The strategic planning system in Romania;
- Drafting, monitoring, reporting, and review of the ISPs at the level of ministries and the GSG: Implementation tools and roles. Setting the work schedule. The role of the SG/DSG in the process;
- Mapping the national and sectoral strategies and other strategic documents that are being implemented through the ISP;
- Bi-annual and annual reporting on the implementation of budget programs;;
- Drafting the performance report;
- Public investment management (PIM)? Project cycle. The stages of a large investment
- Assessment. Evaluation of the project concept. Assessing the maturity of an investment project implementation. Monitoring the project portfolio.

The training objectives of the module were to enable participants to:

- Organize and supervise the process of updating the ISP and assessing institutional performance in accordance with the stages and timelines established in the normative acts;
- Harmonize performance management with the organization's mission and the institution's strategic priorities;
- Use tools and best practices for planning, monitoring, and reporting institutional performance;
- Address and interpret performance variations and take measures to optimize performance and prevent poor performance;
- Strategically monitor a portfolio of projects, with a focus on assessing maturity and implementation risks.

The training materials used included: a Course support, a PowerPoint presentation, Hands-on exercises, Map of strategies implemented in Romania, Institutional strategic plans of Romanian ministries, Performance reports of the ministries that manage projects under Target 403 of the NRRP: Ministry of Health, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Water and Forests, and Ministry of Education, Online platform psi.gov.ro for monitoring the ISP implementation and generating semi-annual and annual performance reports, Accounts created for all program participants in the psi.gov.ro application.

The participants also had the opportunity to engage in a discussion with a senior advisor from the Directorate for Policy and Program Coordination, within the General Secretariat of the Government, who is responsible for monitoring the design and implementation of the Institutional Strategic Plans for the Romanian ministries.

Table 62 . Hands-on exercises carried out in Module 5

Exercises	Status Delivery
Exercise no. 1 Exercise: Strategy mapping - Identifying national and sectoral strategies, but also other strategic documents that are operationalized through the ISPs	Complete d
Exercise no. 2 Practical demonstration and testing: Using the online platform psi.gov.ro to monitor the implementation of the ISPs and to generate biannual and annual performance reports	Complete d
Exercise no. 3 Case study: Assessment and review of the conclusions of an annual performance report	Complete d
Exercise no. 4 Role play: Taking part in a government meeting to present the results achieved following the implementation of the ISP and three public policy priorities for attaining an adequate budget..	Partially complete d [42]
Exercise no. 5 Case study: Analysis and review of the indicators used in strategic planning and the performance measurement system at the level of the ministries	Partially complete d[43]
Exercise no. 6 Case study: Project portfolio monitoring. Evaluating the project concept based on the PIM evaluation grid applied to a list of anonymized projects	Complete d
Exercise nr.. 7 Case study: Project portfolio monitoring. Assessing the maturity of an investment project implementation based on the PIM assessment grid applied to a list of anonymized projects	Complete d

Source: Assessed by the trainer who delivered the module

Table 63. Assessment of the Module 5 exercises, conducted by the trainers who delivered the program

Exercise	The complexity level of the exercise requirements	Level of engagement	The quality of the aquieved results	Participants' perception of relevance
Exercise no. 1	3	5	8	5
Exercise no. 2	4	5	9	5
Exercise no. 3	5	4	8	5
Exercise no. 4	5	4	8	4
Exercise no. 5	4	5	8	5
Exercise no. 6	3	5	9	5
Exercise no. 7	3	5	9	5

Source: Assessed by the trainer who delivered the module

[42] The module requires additional delivery time.
[43] The module requires additional delivery time.

Module 6. Application of performance-based budget management in the public sector

Table 64. Module 6 schedule

Activity	Date	Duration	Training hours	Total hours	Location	Attendance
Module 6. Application of budget management	Day 1, 02.12.2025	4:00 p.m. – 7:15	3 hours	**18**	Webex	**17**
	Day 1, 3.12. 2025	4:00 p.m. – 7:15	3		Webex	**18**
	Day 3, 5.12. 2025	12:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.	6 hours		WB, 9.1	**11**
	Day 4, 12.12.2025	12:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.	6 hours		WB, 9.1	**13**

The module covered the following topics:

- National budgetary framework;
- European and national programmatic documents;
- Romania's budgetary context;
- Summary of fiscal and budgetary objectives and implications for the main authorizing officers for the fiscal year and the next three years;
- General rules for planning and executing public budgets;
- Public finance legislation, framework letter;
- Budgetary instruments: Budget classifications and budget indicators;
- Main budgeting methods used internationally for public institutions;
- Temporary provisions applicable to the planning and execution of the public budgets;
- How current budget constraints affect budget planning and execution: Current year (examples from approved budgets of public institutions) and next year;
- Green labeling of budgetary and fiscal expenditures;
- Program-based budgeting. Program budgeting and the relationship between them, the standard budgetary process, and the budgetary classification. The classification of budgetary expenditures from the perspective of budget programs;
- Public investment programs: description, rules, examples, monitoring.
- The public investment cycle: presentation, legislative framework;
- Regulatory framework, role, rules, structure, process related to the public investment programs;
- Correlation with strategic objectives and national profile plans;
- Prioritizing budget allocations through cost-benefit analysis of budget allocation proposals.
- Introducing the cost-benefit analysis.
- Simplified cost-benefit analysis methods for management: description, international experiences, examples, and applicability in Romania.
- Instruments for the assessment of budget execution.
- Budget classification at COFOG 3 level.
- Budget and budgetary execution reporting tools in the Forex bug portal.
- Tools for analyzing the budgetary execution. Assessment of the budgetary execution. Credit transfers, adjustments.
- Lessons learned for future budgeting cycles.

The training objectives of the module were to enable participants to:

- To take a holistic approach to the institution's budgetary management throughout the entire budget cycle, harmonizing strategic objectives, performance targets, and investments with budget allocations
- Organize and manage an efficient budgeting planning process, involving relevant departments and subordinate institutions;
- Apply a fit for context cost-benefit analytical framework, when making decisions on the allocation of budgetary resources;
- Organize public investment programs and budgetary programs in line with the strategic objectives of the areas of activity managed by the public institution;
- Monitor the budget execution, interpret the achieved results, and use the conclusions in planning for subsequent fiscal years;
- Identify solutions to improve the budget management in the institution and that could be implemented during the next budget cycle.

The training materials used included: a Course support, a PowerPoint presentation, hands-on applications, specific legislation, and statistical data.

Table 65. Hands-on exercises carried out in Module 6

Exercise	Status Delivery
Exercise no. 1 Case study: Current budgetary constraints on budget planning and execution. The approved budget of a public institution	Completed
Exercise no. 2 Exercise: Analysis of the budget programs of public institutions based on their allocations for the current year, the previous two years, and the following two years	Completed
Exercise no. 3 Simulation: Drafting a public investment program	Completed
Exercise no. 4 Exercise: Evaluating alternatives for allocating the budgetary resources through a cost-benefit analysis	Completed
Exercise no. 5 Exercise: Reviewing and understanding the budget execution of some public institutions	Partially completed[44]

Table 66. Assessment of the Module 6 exercises, conducted by the trainers who delivered the program

Exercise	The complexity level of the exercise requirements	The level of engagement	The quality of the achieved results	Participants' perception of relevance
Exercise no. 1	3	4	8	4
Exercise no. 2	4	4	9	4
Exercise no. 3	4	4	8	4
Exercise no. 4	5	5	9	5
Exercise no. 5	4	5	9	5

Source: Assessed by the trainer who delivered the module

[44] The module requires additional delivery time.

Annex 2. Detailed comments on participants' experience – feedback form

Module 1. Section 1 – Leadership in the public sector

Table 67 . Feedback: the participants' experience – Section 1. Leadership in the public sector

What do you think we should improve in terms of ...	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
...the content?	- *The training was interactive and met my expectations.* - *Nothing, it is very well understood.* - *I don't have any suggestions, from my point of view, the module was excellent.* - *Everything was perfect.* - *Video representation.* - *All the presented case studies can be replicated in our public institutions, in the context of the administrative code.* - *Everything was easy to follow and interactive.* - *Each participant should come up with concrete examples from their respective public institutions.* - *The sessions were very hands-on, but perhaps it should be more focused of the participants who do not understand certain concepts.* - *The possibility to take part in online sessions.* - *Dedicating more time for discussions with all the partcipants. .*
...the course materials?	- *The materials are very good and comprehensive.* - *They met my expectations. Easy to follow and understand.* - *I wouldn't change a thing.* - *The course materials are well drafted.* - *Everything was perfect.* - *Working formats.* - *Materials as hands-o as possible.* - *Problems and solutions.* - *"Everything is OK, dynamic. I like it!"* - *I think they are ok, but it would be useful to have more examples from public administration.* - *Nothing.*
...the learning methods/level of interactivity?	- *Exercises.* - *Everything is perfect.* - *OK.* - *I don't have any advice, the sessions were extremely interactive.* - *The course was interactive, structured around organizational issues.* - *More complex topics for the work in group sections.* - *Each participant should be listened to and asked questions.* - *Let's learn and retain as much as possible during the course, given the time constraints.*

	- *Honestly, it's the most dynamic training I have ever attended. I really like it!* - *It would be good to have more interactive sections for those participants how are not that used to hands-on exercise.* - *Nothing.* - *Have as many exercises and applications as possible during the course.*
... the daily schedule (start and end times, breaks)?	- *It would be ideal to move the sessions after working hours.* - *No sessions on Saturdays.* - *The modules should be structured over several days, according to the work schedule.* - *The sessions should be start after the working hours.* - *Have sessions only at the end of the day, after working hours.* - *Have sessions on Fridays and Saturdays.* - *The sessions should start at 10 a.m.* - *Not applicable.* - *More towards the end.* - *More variety from one day to another..*

Table 68. Feedback: the participants' experience - Application of psychometric questionnaire for leadership style analysis

What do you think we should improve in terms of ...	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
...the feedback sessions: organization (duration, scheduling, etc.)?	- *The schedule was adjusted accordingly. Everything is OK this way.* - *Dedicate more hours.* - *The module met my expectations.* - *I don't have any suggestions. It was an excellent module.* - *Nothing* - *Everything is fine* - *It fit perfectly into my schedule and met my expectations.* - *No improvements needed* - *More complex information* - *I was pleased. I don't have any comments* - *Online sessions* - *I don't have any comments.* - *Everything was fine as it was* - *The schedule was adjusted accordingly. Everything is OK this way.* - *It would be good to have at least two sessions, a introductory and a more in-depth one.* - *I was pleased. I don't have any comments.*

Module 1. Section 2 – Corporate Governance

Table 69 . Feedback: the participants' experience – Section 2. Corporate Governance

What do you think we should improve in terms of...	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
...the content?	- *The quantity, so we have more time to dedicate for exercises.* - *Clearer examples* - *Not applicable.* - *More time for disseminating information.* - *Dedicate two days for the module.* - *Find ways to focus on all team members* - *Analyze the list of participants and develop relevant content* - *Nothing* - *Bring lecturers/trainers/in various fields of administration.*
...the course materials?	- *Have several copies* - *Not applicable.* - *Well prepared, I don't have any suggestions.* - *More elaborate materials.* - *Make sure they understand for whom the materials are targeted.* - *Include tablets or ask the participants to bring their laptops or tablets. This would facilitate the text analysis and the answers.*
...the learning methods/level of interactivity?	- *Everything was OK here.* - *Dedicate more time.* - *Select charismatic trainers who won't be bothered by participants' requests/recommendations/advice. We are a group of well-trained people from the administration. Most of them are trainers/instructors in various fields within the administration..* - *Not applicable.* - *Everything was perfect.* - *Dedicate more time for exercises.* - *Interact more with all the students.* - *Learn pedagogy. In order to keep engaged and motivated a group of people who technically run the central public administration, you really need to have some skills. And the approach of a lady, who was "calling us to the..."* - *Nothing.*
... the daily schedule (start and end times, breaks)?	- *It's not a one-day thing; it takes at least two days.* - *The sessions should be start after the working hours* - *Not applicable.* - *I don't have any suggestions.* - *Everything is OK.* - *The schedule for the day was OK, but it would be better to have 2 days dedicated for this module.* - *Final.* - *We just need to stick to what has been agreed.* - *Have online participation.*

Module 2. Section 1 – Digitization

Table 70 . Feedback: the participants' experience – Module 2, Section 1.

What do you think we should improve in terms of ...	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
...the content?	- *Have more case studies* - *Further develop the module to create master's course or a module for management positions* - *Nothing* - *I don't have any suggestions, the Curriculum is good. Perhaps having more case studies would help, but this would require additional time* - *It should be spread over several days for better understanding* - *Include a summary at the end*
...the course materials?	- *The materials should also be available in digital format* - *Nothing* - *They are very well thought out and easy to follow* - *The colors could be more user-friendly, and it would be helpful to receive the materials by email* - *Case studies sent in electronic format* - *The documents should also include a summary*
...the learning methods/level of interactivity?	- *The materials should also be available in digital format* - *Nothing* - *They are very well thought out and easy to follow* - *The colors could be more user-friendly, and it would be helpful to receive the materials by email* - *Case studies in sent electronic format* - *The documents should also include a summary*
... the daily schedule (start and end times, breaks)?	- *It's fine as you proposed. Those who seek personal development will show up!* - *I don't have any recommendations.* - *The end times.* - *Not applicable.* - *The schedule is OK, adjusted to the existing working schedule.* - *The courses should be held during working hours.* - *My suggestion would be to schedule the sessions after 4 p.m. on working days.* - *It should be aligned with our schedule, in the afternoon: Tuesday/Monday/Wednesday. It was ok.* - *The sessions should take place after working hours, and Saturday should be free.* - *The schedule is good.*

Module 2. Section 2 – Reorganization in public institutions

Tabel 71 . Feedback: participants' experience – Section 2. Reorganization in public institutions

What do you think we should improve in terms of ...	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
...the content?	- *It's fine as it is* - *Not applicable* - *The content is well structured for the time available. The examples helped create interaction among participants.* - *It is well structured and easy to follow* - *I don't have any suggestions. The content is comprehensive and adapted to reality* - *The dedicated time* - *OK* - *More practical discussions*
...the course materials?	- *All material should be in digital format* - *Not applicable* - *The materials captured the essence of each module* - *Well-structured and easy to understand. I recommend this format* - *The materials are excellent. Having them in electronic format would make it easier to share them with other colleague.* - *Nothing* - *It's OK* - *More practice*
...the learning methods/level of interactivity?	- *Online* - *Not applicable* - *I don't have any other suggestions* - *The course materials and the way they were presented were useful and easy to understand.* - *The course was very interactive* - *Let each participant speak* - *It's OK* - *All right*
... the daily schedule (start and end times, breaks)?	- *More sessions on Saturday* - *Not applicable* - *I suggest Friday and Saturday* - *It's OK, considering the previous schedule* - *We should have more days dedicated to the sessions, especially after working hours* - *Saturday is OK, but also the schedule was ok* - *It is well adjusted* - *On weekends after 10 a.m.* - *I'm OK with having sessions during the weekends*

Module 3 - Shaping institutional strategies to achieve results for citizens and businesses (elective)

Table 72 . Feedback: the participants' experience – Module 3 - Shaping the institutional strategies (elective)

What do you think we should improve in terms of ...	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
the content, course materials, training methods, and degree of interactivity?	- *Everything was well prepared and presented in a professional manner.* - *Everything is OK* - *I don't have any suggestions* - *Everything was perfect* - *Everything is easy to follow, I don't have any suggestions* - *I would take a specific completed case and try, as a group, to develop a comprehensive scenario that could lead to improvements*
... the daily schedule (start and end times, breaks)?	- *The schedule was adjusted to meet our requirements* - *Following discussions, the schedule was adjusted* - *The schedule was good* - *The current schedule seems to meet the professional agenda of the participants* - *Everything is OK* - *Evening classes after 6:30 p.m.* - *I don't have any suggestions, it's fine*

Module 4 - Solving crises and complex situations in public institutions through anticipation and negotiation (elective)

Table 73 . Feedback: the participants' experience Module 4 - Solving crises and complex situations in public institutions through anticipation and negotiation (elective)

What do you think we should improve in terms of ...	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
the content, course materials, training methods, and level of interactivity?	- *I don't have any suggestions* - *The structure is fine. I liked that it was adapted to both online and physical learning.* - *The integration of case studies and practical examples.* - *The option to attend the course online* - *It is well calibrated. I don't think it needs improvement* - *Good level of interactivity* - *It is clear and comprehensive.* - *It was one of the most interesting and comprehensive modules. Congratulations!* - *Role-playing exercises* - *The materials were very good.* - *Class hours*

	- *It's okay*
...the daily schedule (start and end times, breaks)?	- *I don't have any examples* - *It's okay for me.* - *The sessions should start at 9 a.m. or after 6 p.m.* - *The schedule was appropriate* - *Avoid overlapping the sessions with the 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. working schedule* - *The 12/1 p.m. start is fine* - *It is very good, diverse.* - *The schedule is OK, the lecturers were more than indulgent and understanding, our schedule is chaotic and unpredictable. Thank you for your understanding!* - *Hybrid* - *To have sessions scheduled in the evening* - *It's ok* - *No observations. There was continuous communication and flexibility in adapting to participants' schedules, without affecting the rigor of the course.*

Module 5 - Monitoring the performance of the institutional strategic plans and investment projects

Tabel 74 . Feedback: the participants' experience - Module 5 - Monitoring the performance of institutional strategic plans and investment projects

What do you think we should improve in terms of ...	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
the content, course materials, training methods, and degree of interactivity?	- *Everything is OK* - *I don't have any suggestions* - *I would have started with an interactive session where participants could "play around" in the application to explore it.* - *I don't have any suggestions* - *Everything is fine* - *Everything was OK, but more time is needed* - *Interactivity*
... the daily schedule (start and end times, breaks)?	- *Everything is OK* - *Repetition* - *The schedule was OK, but perhaps more days should be dedicated to the course* - *The schedule is ideal, with weekends included* - *Constant attention was paid to adjusting the schedule t other emerging professional requirements and emergencies, striking a balance between the need for rigor in the course and the work schedule*

Module 6 - Monitoring the performance of institutional strategic plans and investment projects

Table 75 . Feedback: the participants' experience – Module 6 – Applying performance-based budget management in the public sector

What do you think we should improve in terms of ...	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
the content, course materials, learning methods/degree of interactivity?	- *Nothing* - *Everything is excellent, very easy to understand and remember* - *No comments* - *What is presented is OK* - *I don't have no suggestions* - *Trainers with real practical experience in what they teach.* - *The program was complex, tailored to our needs; there was a balance between the more technical and the hands-on aspects* - *From my point of view, everything is perfect; the content is very comprehensive, but it might be useful to focus more on budget formulation and understanding it.* - *The dedicated time* - *Online meetings* - *It's OK* - *I'm very happy with it*
The daily schedule (start and end times, breaks)?	- *Nothing, everything is OK* - *Not applicable* - *I don't have any comments* - *It was well organized as it was.* - *NA* - *The program was good* - *I don't have any comments* - *The program is perfect* - *It depends on the participant's schedule, but you here are very flexible.* - *To have the sessions in the afternoon* - *Convenient start times for the sessions, including on days off.It's OK* - *More online sessions; Saturdays are OK, and so is the schedule* - *It is well adjusted* - *To have the sessions on weekends after 10 a.m.* - *I am OK with weekends*

Annex 3. Detailed comments on learning areas and the intention of the participants to apply the competencies - feedback form

Module 1. Section 1 – Leadership in the public sector

Table 76. Learning areas and participants' intentions to apply the skills– Section 1 – Leadership in the public sector

Question	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
What elements from this module would you like to apply in practice?	- *Clear decision-making* - *The motivational factors* - *To communicate values and behavioral expectations* - *To set clearer criteria and make informed, accountable decisions, taking into account all the relevant factors.* - *Change and innovation* - *To apply ideas about creativity and innovation. Listen to others and take their suggestions into account. The creative techniques learned added value to my future management work.* - *To clearly establish decision-making criteria* - *The methods for optimizing work* - *To address the problem directly and understand it better. Brainstorming* - *The STELL*R method* - *I want to deepen my understanding of the concept of innovation in management, in order to improve my competencies.* - *The STELL*R – Leadership model, the Practical guide to managing organizational culture and the principles governing the professional conduct of civil servants and contract staff* - *To be more open to innovation, to better encourage colleagues to contribute ideas* - *Training leaders and managers* - *The Creativity techniques* - *Changes to contract terms* - *The Innovative methods from the STELL*R area*
What topics would you like to see explored or addressed in this module?	- *Special situations* - *Positive communication styles and approaches.* - *Innovation* - *Problem solving within a rigid legislative framework* - *Communicating values* - *Structural and bureaucratic imbalances* - *The psychological needs* - *Leadership training* - *Leadership and time management* - *Specific issues* - *The pros and cons presented are promising; the debate sessions are extremely useful to us because they broaden our horizons and allow us to see more perspectives*

	- *How to adjust my communication style to different personality types* - *How to use the AI tools in the institutional activity* - *The values in public administration*
Which tools from this module did you find useful and could implement in your institutions?	- *Team building* - *Communication, motivation, and practical decisions* - *Transforming culture requires leading by example.* - *Defining the criteria* - *Innovation* - *Rules* - *Interview* - *Still thinking*

Table 77. Learning areas and participants' intentions to apply the skills – Application and feedback Psychometric questionnaire for assessing the leadership styles

Question	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
Following the feedback you received, what elements would you like to apply in practice?	- *Everything* - *Be more empathetic.* - *Everything. The presentation was very clear.* - *To further develop my "green zone" leadership style and reduce the "red zone" behaviors..* - *Practical applicability during work activities* - *Specific elements of thinking and behavior styles* - *For me, the result showed that I need to be more empathic and involve the team more in coming up with proposals and solutions to achieve results.* - *Speech/attitude* - *Improving work-time efficiency, enhancing the organizational environment, achieving better results, and developing a "lessons learned" catalogue.* - *The communication* - *Major changes.* - *Better communication* - *The way I see myself* - *To further develop my constructive and collaborative approach,, etc.* - *How to communicate with the team in crisis situations* - *Sincere internal introspection for adjustments/balancing* - *Planning for disaster* - *Stress management and results management.*

Module 1. Section 2 – Corporate Governance

Table 78. Learning areas and participants' intentions to apply the skills – Section 2. Corporate Governance

Question	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
What elements from this module would you like to apply in practice?	- *The KPI indicators and, very importantly, the letter of expectations.* - *More practice.* - *"I want to be able to change, where appropriate, the way I coordinate the team, as a leader at the institutional level.* - *I also want to learn from the experience of other colleagues and trainers."* - *"Pay attention to my responsibilities and the transparency.* - *Analyze the activities and responsibilities of the members of GMS and BoD."* - *Everything.* - *Establish performance indicators and monitor them closely.* - *"Team management and leadership.* - *Improve my adaptability to changes in my professional career."* - *Major changes.* - *Some basic concepts. Any course must be tailored to the level of preparation of the students. Every course must be tailored according to the experience of the participants. Only a small number of them were familiar with the area of expertise and the role, since they work in different public institutions..* - *I am considering applying for a position on a board of directors.* - *I will apply some of the general principles.* - *Course materials and exercises for participants with experience in the field.* - *Given that I am currently a secretary general who does not have any state-owned companies, the course will only help me in terms of personal development..*
What topics would you like to see explored or addressed in this module?	- *The KPIs and their connection to the draft budget, as well as to the external context.* - *The legislative changes – proposals for improving the activity.* - *The relevant examples.* - *How those in managing positions adapt to career changes.* - *To be spread out over a longer period of time.* - *OK.* - *The independence of the Board of Directors.* - *Discussions regarding the role negotiations.* - *The correlation between the national strategies and the letters of expectation, the current performance of public enterprises, and the evolution and cycle of mandates.* - *The course must be tailored for the participants who are enrolled: beginners/intermediate/advanced.* - *NA.* - *The structure is very OK, but there is too much information in a very short time; more time dedicated to the course is needed.* - *Discussions on how the GMS supports the activity of the BoD.*

	- *Exercises should be sent in advance so that there is enough time to go through them.* - *Lecturers should also have experience in public administration; you cannot explain to HLCSs/DGs how to do something when you have never been in their position.* - *Topics tailored to the participants' level of expertise.*
Which tools in this module did you find useful and could implement in your institutions?	- *The KPIs.* - *The letter of expectations.* - *All of them.* - *All stages were achieved.* - *Everything.* - *Those related to the coordination and engagement of the Board of Directors in responsibilities and duties.* - *Only the general aspects, because I am the secretary general of a ministry that does not have any companies.* - *NA.*

Module 2. Section 1 – The Digitization

Table 79. Learning areas and participants' intentions to apply the skills – Section 1 Implementing digitization in public institutions

Question	**Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms**
What elements from this module would you like to apply in practice?	- *The RACI Matrix* - *The Value Stream Map* - *The Digitization of activities* - *The digitization of processes and activities* - *Changes in processing* - *Digital transformation of the process for issuing approvals and authorizations* - *The practical aspects* - *Digitalize as many activities as possible*
What topics would you like to see explored in more depth or addressed in this module?	- *The Impact – Effort Matrix* - *Cybersecurity* - *Case study tailored to the specific of my institution* - *Methods for the process optimization the NHPP* - *Financing planning* - *Process analysis and streamlining of bureaucracy in the procedure for issuing approvals and authorizations for the public investments* - *All topics were covered* - *Useful tools for digital transformation at the institutional level* - *To-Be flow*
Which tools in this module did you find useful and could	- *The RACI, very useful* - *The RACI Matrix* - *The digital transformation* - *The case studies*

implement in your institutions?	- *The Impact–Effort matrix* - *Process analysis* - *Process Digitization*

Module 2. Section 2 – Reorganization in public institutions

Table 80 . Learning areas and participants' intentions to apply the skills – Section 2 Implementing reorganization in public institutions

Question	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
What elements from this module would you like to apply in practice?	- *Experience through examples* - *The public policies* - *The models of change* - *The ability to adapt to changes* - *Improving communication between management and teams* - *Better involve the team in decision-making* - *Methods of organizational change* - *Diagnosis and models of change* - *The Kotter method, very useful for my professional development* - *Institutional stability and further development at the institutional* - *All of the above* - *The digitization of the response procedures in communicating with the beneficiaries or those who wish to apply under our projects*
What topics would you like to see explored or addressed in this module?	- *Specific cases* - *Plans for change* - *So far, the module has met my expectations* - *More examples of best practices* - *Change* - *Institutional reform and principles for reorganizing a public institution* - *Coaching sessions focused on the reorganization and the management of change* - *All topics were covered* - *Useful tools for digital transformation at the institutional level* - *To-Be flow*
Which tools from this module did you find useful and could implement in your institutions?	- *All examples* - *Everything was very useful* - *Change models* - *I answered the first question* - *Change process models* - *The Kotter's method and communication methods*

Module 3. Shaping institutional strategies to achieve results for citizens and the business environment (elective)

Table 81 . Learning areas and the participants' intentions to apply the skills – Module 3. Shaping institutional strategies

Question	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
What elements from this module would you like to apply in practice?	- *The ISPs, the GAWP, etc.* - *The course material was useful and helped me have a better understanding of the tools I work with; now everything is clearer* - *The entire course material was well structured, documented, and clearly presented* - *I will implement all the topics covered in the course* - *Specific elements that have immediate applicability* - *First and foremost, the good practices* - *As many exercises as possible* - *The SWOT* - *The analyses presented* - *I am going to implement the acquired knowledge for drafting normative acts*
What topics would you like to see explored in greater depth or addressed in this module?	- *The PESTLE/CCEINA model* - *I am satisfied with the module* - *The topics were presented and documented in a well- balanced manner* - *We should introduce mandatory impact assessments for public policies and establish a reasonable period of time for analyzing major legislative initiatives* - *Corporate governance* - *Case studies* - *Lessons to be learned* - *Setting objectives* - *The correlation between strategic planning and budget planning*

Module 4. Solving crises and complex situations in public institutions through anticipation and negotiation (elective)

Table 82 . Learning areas and the participants' intentions to apply the skills – Module 4 – Solving crises and complex situations

Question	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
What elements from this module would you like to apply in practice?	- *All the examples discussed* - *The negotiation techniques* - *I will take into account all stages of the negotiation process* - *How to manage any critical situations that may arise in the course of my work* - *Negotiation* - *How to negotiate with education unions, as such situations are already frequent*

	- *The formulas presented* - *The importance of communication in negotiation and the analysis of vulnerabilities within the institution* - *The strategic communication during a crisis* - *How to negotiate in certain in situations encountered, both from the ZOPA and the BATNA perspective* - *Negotiation styles, methods, and techniques* - *All*
What topics would you like to see explored in more depth or addressed in this module?	- *More complicated cases* - *Interactive discussions* - *The module and presentation were easy to understand. I wish I had attended something similar at the beginning of my career as a senior civil servant* - *Effective time management in various situations* - *Risk management* - *-Developing scenarios that involve failure. How to resume a negotiation process once you have failed to reach ZOPA or the minimum acceptable* - *More role-playing* - *As many case studies as possible* - *The course module a wide range of topics, but given what negotiation entails in a crisis, I would also be interested in ethics, i.e., addressing moral dilemmas in decision-making* - *Budget adjustment* - *Moral dilemmas in the decision-making process* - *How to manage overlapping crisis situations* - *Techniques for overcoming difficult situations* - *Anything*

Module 5. Monitoring the performance of institutional strategic plans and investment projects

Table 83 . Learning areas and the participants' intentions to apply the skills – Module 5 – Monitoring the performance of strategic plans

Question	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
What elements from this module would you like to apply in practice?	- *I want to encourage the use of the ISP so as to correlate the external public audit activity (probably, first and foremost, the performance audit) with the data collected* - *Excellent* - *Soon* - *To monitor the measures at the level of each structure and employee* - *Everything* - *The Ministry of Education and Research is one of the few central authorities that uses the ISPs and the program-based budgeting; therefore, today's concepts are very helpful in annual reporting* - *Repetition* - *More time* - *Elements of the ISPs architecture*

	- *Everything we have encountered* - *Strengthening the ISPs* - *Everything we received* - *The ISP* - *Recommendations* - *Engaging the subordinate structures in the implementation process and in the achievement of the objectives*
What topics would you like to see explored in greater depth or addressed in this module?	- *Institutional organization and instruments* - *Updating the ISPs and integrated reporting* - *The ISP platform* - *It was OK* - *I don't* - *Defining the indicators for each ministry*

Module 6 - Monitoring the performance of institutional strategic plans and investment projects

Table 84. Learning areas and the participants' intentions to apply the skills – Module 6 - Applying budget management

Question	Relevant quotes from participants' feedback forms
What elements from this module would you like to apply in practice?	- *The things I will find useful to me* - *Specific use of target-based budgeting on performance targets and measures related to monitoring the performance of the institutional strategic plans and investment projects* - *Monitoring the budget execution* - *How to communicate with the team, how to prioritize investments, how to avoid risks, leadership* - *Prioritizing budget allocations and analyzing alternatives for the same program* - *Specific use of the target-based budgeting and measures related to monitoring the performance of the ISP and investment projects* - *Everything that would be necessary to me* - *Rereading the relevant legislation* - *Prioritizing investments* - *How to coordinate the budget process* - *Elements of budgetary prudence* - *It is very useful* - *The structure of investment programs*
What topics would you like to see explored in greater depth or addressed in this module?	- *Elements of investment project prioritization* - *Bring experienced trainers who have expertise in the public administration* - *Criteria for establishing priorities* - *Budgeting by objectives* - *Integrity, conflict of interest* - *In-depth topics regarding the Government meeting* - *It was a very in- depth module. I gained a better understanding of what the management of target-based budgeting really means*

	- *It was a complex module that clarified many unknowns* - *Examples of how to improve your management and leadership styles* - *How to develop the skills and competencies under the Administrative Code* - *Integrated monitoring of the budget appropriations* - *Legislative changes*

Annex 4. Analysis of the incorporation of the CDPARPA as a specialized training program run by NIA

The National Institute of Administration is a public institution operating under the MDPWA[45], with a strategic mandate to implement the Government's priorities for improving public administration efficiency through the professional development of staff at both central and local levels. The Institute provides methodological support for the integration and coordination of joint initiatives of strategic relevance aimed at the professionalization and modernization of public administration. The NIA has responsibilities in the following areas: (i) training and professional development of public administration staff; (ii) quality assurance in public administration training; (iii) research and innovation in public administration; (iv) providing technical assistance to support public administration development; and (v) dissemination of information and the results of research and innovation initiatives related to public administration–citizen relations.

The Institute organizes specialized training and professional development programs for central and local public administration, with a duration established by law, targeting civil servants, contract staff, staff working under management contracts, public managers, locally elected officials, individuals elected or appointed to public office or similar positions, as well as other relevant categories. In terms of the quality assurance for public administration staff training, the Institute sets quality standards for professional training programs that that are organized directly or run in partnership or association with other providers, and ensures the control and monitors of compliance with these standards. Completion of specialized training programs is certified through a Certificate of Completion issued by the NIA, together with a descriptive supplement outlining the acquired competencies, in accordance with the current legislation.

Specialized training is defined in the normative act[46] regulating the training of civil servants, as "training activity aimed at developing the skills and abilities necessary to perform a highly complex job that requires specific skills and abilities, carried out in an organized framework, over a relatively long period of time, with target groups defined and constituted in a restrictive manner, usually on a selection basis, and covering multiple topics, correlated in a logical sequence and focused on achieving the main objective." Within the NIA, there is a Directorate for Specialized Training Programs (DSTP)[47] which is responsible for initiating, organizing, conducting, and evaluating specialized training programs (STP).

In the training offer[48] for 2025, the Institute included eight ST programs that took place over a relatively long period of time, compared to the continuing professional development programs, that had a duration of between 54 and 162 training hours. Those training programs were targeting strategic groups and contributed to the development of specific skills required to perform highly complex functions. The programs can be organized in a traditional format (in an organized setting, face-to-face), online, or in a hybrid format.

1. Specialized training program for the public positions corresponding to the HLCSs (STPHLCS)

[45] https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/284204

[46] Government Decision No. 1,066/2008 approving the rules on the professional training of civil servants https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/97567

[47] Regulations on the organization and functioning of the NIA, available at https://ina.gov.ro/images/2024/regulamentul-de-organizare-si-functionare-al-ina-.pdf

[48] NIA 2025 training offer available at: https://ina.gov.ro/images/2025/brosura_oferta_ina_2025.pdf

2. Specialized training program for the appointment of prefects and sub-prefects to public office (STPPRF)
3. Specialized training program for management positions in the public sector (STPMP)
4. Specialized training program for local elected officers (STPLE)
5. Specialized training program for general secretaries of administrative-territorial units (STPGSATU)
6. Leadership Academy (LAP)
7. Specialized training program for chief architects at the municipal and city level on regional planning, urban planning, and building permits (STPARH)
8. Specialized training program for chief architects at the level of communes on regional planning, urban planning, and building permits (STPARH)

The fees for participating in the specialized training programs range from 1,350 lei for three modules and 9 days of training to 5,500 lei for 9 modules and 27 days of training and are set based on the provisions of Ordinance of the Ministry of Labor, Family, and Social Protection[49] . 1.114/2022, approving the fees per day/participant, ranging from 150 lei/day for online programs to 200 lei/day for programs organized in a face to face (classical) setting. For STPHLCS and PPRF, a fee of 220 lei/day/participant has been set. The table below presents the characteristics of the STP programs offered by NIA. The budget for a ST program includes: fees for trainers, logistical expenses for the classroom and training materials, coffee breaks, expenses for the staff involved, and the institute's overhead costs. For STPHLCS, the budget also includes the fee for the admission and appeal committees.

Table 85 . Number of training hours / days and fees for the NIA specialized training programs in 2025

Year	STPHLCS	STPMP	STPPRF	PGSATU	STPLE	LAP	STPARH
When was it introduced into the NIA STP offer	2018	2019	2022	2019	2019	2018	2023
Number of modules	9	4	9	3	3	3	4
Number of training hours	162	72	150	54	54	54	90
Number of training days	27	12	25	9	9	9	
Registration fee - lei	50	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fee - lei for physical participation	5,500	2,400	5,500	1,800	1,800	1,800	0
Fee - online participation		1,800		1,350	1,350	1,350	5,200

Source: NIA annual activity reports 2018–2024 and estimates based on the results of the 2025 STPHLCS national admission competition

Two specialized training programs (STP[50]) were launched in 2018 (STPHLCS and the Leadership Academy), three in 2019 (those for management positions, secretaries-general, and locally elected officials), and in 2022, the program for the appointment of prefect and sub-prefect was introduced. In 2023 two new programs were added to the training offer to help professionalize the position of chief architect at the level of municipalities and cities and, separately, at the level of communes, organized in collaboration with the Romanian Urban Planners Registry.

[49] OMDLPA Order of the Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration No. 1.114 of 31/2022 approving the fees per day/participant for specialized training programs (advanced and specialized training) organized by the National Institute of Administration

[50] NIA annual activity reports 2018-2024 available at: https://ina.gov.ro/despre-ina/rapoarte-de-activitate

An analysis of the length of the national admission competition and training activities for the STPHLCSs that took place between 2018 and 2025 indicates a total period of approximately: 8 months, divided into 2 months for the competition (registration, exams, and file submission) and 6 months for training and evaluation activities. For each ST program, the duration is established by regulation and communicated in the training offer.

Table 86. Calendar for the national admission and training schedule - PHLCS for 2018–2025

Year	National exam for admission to STPHLCS			STPHLCS delivery method		
	Candidate registration	Exam	File submission + fee	Training modules	Reassessment / Reevaluation	Final assessment
2018	18.06 - 22.06	25.06 – 10.07	11.07 – 31.07	12.09 – 16.11	12.12	4.12- 6.12
2019	11.03– 15.03	18.03 –1.04	2.04 – 22.04	8.05 – 12.07	17.07 – 19.07	10.09 – 12.09
2022	11.07- 15.07	18.07 –5.08	8.08 – 26.08	13.09 – 16.02	–	6.02 – 10.03
2023	30.03 –5.04	6.04–27.04	28.04 – 19.05	12.06 – 6.12	–	11.12 – 14.12
2024	28.02 –8.03	11.03 – 25.03	26.03 – 15.04	22.04 – 13.11	–	18.11 -20.11
2025	13.01– 31.01	3.02- 17.02	18.02- 10.03	–	–	–

Source: Order of the Minister of Development, Public Works and Administration (Ministerial Order) no.4857/2018 Ministerial Order no.1073/2019, Ministerial Order no.3008/2019, Ministerila Order no.1190/2022, Ministerial Order no.344/2023, Ministerial Order no.770/2024, Ministerial Order no.3771/2024, OPINA 245/2018, OPINA 138/2019, OPINA 190/2022, OPINA 114/2023

An analysis of the revenues generated by the NIA's STP programs between 2018 and 2025 shows that the program for filling public positions corresponding to the category of HLCS accounts for 62.57% of the total amount, with a total of 2,249,080 lei in 6 years (only taking into account the amounts from the state budget and individual contributions from participants amount forr 3,594,230 lei), followed by the program for prefects and sub-prefects with 15.91% of revenues, and the program for management positions in the public sector with 11.81%. Out of the total turnover of 4,706,010 lei generated by the STP activities, including the contracting of services following participation in public procurement procedures, the STPHLCS accounts for 47.79%.

Despite the fact that they were only introduced in 2023, the programs for chief architects at the level of municipalities, cities, and communes generated revenues of 306,800 lei, accounting for 8.53% of the total revenues generated from STP activities. No information is provided on the results of the Leadership Academy and Local Elected Officials programs. The decrease in STPHLCS revenues can be interpreted in line with the introduction of STPPRF in 2022, following the amendment of the status of the prefect and sub-prefect in the Administrative Code [51], which established that the functions of prefect and sub-prefect

[51] Government Emergency Ordinance No. 4/2021 amending and supplementing Government Emergency Ordinance No. 57/2019 on the Administrative Code available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/237031

are public office positions, and prefects and sub-prefects represented a significant percentage of the target group for the previous STPHLCSs.

Table 87 . Revenues generated from the delivery of the INA's specialized training programmes during the period 2018–2025

Year	STPHLCS	STPMP	STPPRF	STPGS ATU	STP LE	LAP	STPAR H	PAP[52]	Total year
2018	410,800								410,800
2019	249,780	100,800		0	0	0			350,580
2022	555,000	237,300	451,000	22,950	0	0			1,266,25 0
2023	490,500	57,600	121,000		0	0	306,800		975,900
2024	277,000	28,800	0	18,900	0	0	0	1,111,780	1,436,48 0
2025	266,000								266
Total STP	**2,249,080**	**424,500**	**572,000**	**41,850**	0	0	**306,800**		**4,706,01 0**
%	***47.79***	***9.02***	***12.15***	***0.88***	**0**	**0**	***6.51***	***23.62***	***100***

Source: NIA Annual Activity Reports 2018–2024, SEAP, and estimations based on the results of the 2025 STPHLCS National Admission Competition

The total number of participants who took part in the ST programs carried out between 2018 and 2025 is 1,222. Out of this, 34% of them took part in the STPHLCSs. Then, 33,8% took part in the STPP program, contracted from NAPP and financed through NRRP, 15.63% participated in the STPMP and 8.51% in the STPRF. If we add up the number of participants who hold or aspire to hold leadership or public office positions from the STHLCS, STMP, STPRF, and STGSATU programs, the total number of participants would be of around 742 people, representing 60.72% of the total number of participants in ST programs, which shows the high interest of these categories in professionalizing their careers. Analyzing only the number of 814 participants in ST activities, without taking into account the NRRP-funded NAPP contract, the STHLCS account for 51% of the total number, and the combined percentage of participants from STHLCS, STMP, STPRF, and STGSATU (91.15%), This reflects both the level of interest and the strategic prioritization of the NIA's activities and resources toward developing competencies for individuals holding leadership and public office positions. This supports the idea of integrating the program in the NIA's training offer, as a natural extension of the range of programs required to meet the training needs of the target group represented by secretaries and directors-general.

In addition to the total number of 1,222 participants, there are another 3,676 participants who in 2022 (901) and in2023 (2775), took part an European-funded project[53], implemented in partnership with NAPP, which indicates a high level of institutional capacity to accommodate large volumes of trainees and provide training services targeted to the needs of a representative and extensive group. In addition, the high number of participants trained through specialized training programs (4,084), delivered under EU-funded projects (POCA and NRRP) within a relatively short timeframe (2022–2024), creates the conditions for the

[52] Service contract no. 5384/03.07.2023 concluded with the National Agency for Public Procurement, under Target 436: Provision of specialized training courses in the field of public procurement, financed through the NRRP https://ina.gov.ro/despre-ina/proiecte/proiecte-incheiate/formare-specializata-in-domeniul-achiztiilor-publice

[53] https://ina.gov.ro/despre-ina/proiecte/proiecte-incheiate/cod-sipoca-625-cod-smis-126949
https://ina.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Raport-de-activitate-INA-anul-2022.pdf
https://ina.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Raport-de-activitate-INA-anul-2023-2.pdf

Institute's involvement in large-scale professionalization initiatives capable of addressing complex training needs and challenges.

Table 88 . Number of participants in NIA specialized training programs between 2018 and 2025

Year	STPHLCS	STPMP	STPPRF	STGSATU	STPLE	LAP	STP ARH	PPA	Total year
2018	10				0	14			114
2019	57	35		0	0	0			92
2022	92	111	82	17	0	0			302
2023	77	29	22	0	0	0	59		187
2024	45	16		14	0	0	0	408	483
2025	44	-	-	-	-	-	-		44
Total	**416**	**191**	**104**	**31**	**0**	**14**	**59**		**1222**
%	***34.04***	***15.63***	***8.51***	***2.53***	***0***	***1.14***	***4.82***	**33.38**	**100**

Source: NIA annual activity reports 2018–2024, SEAP, and estimations based on the results of the 2025 STHLCS national admission competition

In order to include a new ST program in the NIA[54] offer, there are several steps that should be followed, that involve carrying out analysis, designing the program, and developing a set of specific documents: content, quality standards, delivery method and planning, as well as regulations on the management and delivery of the program, which, together with the training offer, will be submitted for approval[55] to the Coordination Council operating within the Institute and then to the president of the NIA. At this stage, the resources needed to organize the program in good conditions are also estimated, and the expenditure budget for the proposed tuition fee is substantiated. The staff within the Directorate for Specialised Training substantiate the ST activities based on the training policies and strategies, the legal regulations in force and the training methodologies and standards. These activities must be in line with the Institute's strategic objectives for specialized training. The NIA's strategic plan for the 2020-2025[56] includes, under objective 1. Providing relevant, hands-on, innovative professional training programs and high-quality services for the public administration, along with a set of priorities, along with a set of priorities and actions to achieve this objective, including:

- Focusing on areas that are essential and relevant for the development of the public administration competencies

[54] Regulations governing the organization and functioning of the NIA available at https://ina.gov.ro/images/2024/regulamentul-de-organizare-si-functionare-al-ina-.pdf

[55] Government Emergency Ordinance No. 67/2024 of June 21, 2024, on the reorganization and functioning of the National Institute of Administration, available at https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/284204

[56] NIA Strategic Plan for 2020–2025 available at https://ina.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/INA-Strategie-2022.pdf

- Analyzing, identifying, and defining the strategic target groups for the NIA programs and updating the portfolio of professional training programs based on the analyses conducted and
- Developing and delivering professional training programs for leaders and future leaders in the public administration

These priorities are highly relevant for the potential implementation of the Competency Development Program for Accelerating Results in Public Administration as part of the NIA's training offer, as the program can contribute to their achievement, both in terms of targeting strategic groups and in terms of the limited resources that would need to be mobilized, as the content has already been developed and piloted..

It is also worth noting that the Institute may organize such ST programs in partnership with relevant organisations, and that said agreements shall be approved by the Coordination Council. The Coordination Council is established by Decision of the Prime Minister[57], operates under an organizational and operating regulation approved by Order of the Minister of Development, Public Works and Administration[58] , and its secretariat is ensured by the Institute. The Council meets quarterly in ordinary sessions and in extraordinary sessions whenever necessary. The decisions are adopted by a majority vote of the members present; in the event of a tie, the chair of the Council has the casting vote. Regarding the training activities, the Council approves: the training program schedule and the topics, the regulations governing the organization and delivery of specialized training programs; the quality standards applicable to the programs delivered; proposals regarding participation fees; and the cooperation, partnership, or association agreements concluded by the Institute.

For each specialized training program, a Regulation on the Organization and Delivery of the Program (ROD) is also drafted. This regulation applies to both program participants and the NIA staff involved, and establishes the general framework for the organization, delivery, evaluation, and certification of competencies within the program. The ROD also establishes the quality standards applicable to the program, the responsibilities of the NIA implementation team, and the rights and obligations of the participants. The quality standards for the ST programs include a description of the aspects related to material resources, electronic, IT, and communication resources (online organization), human resources, program content and length (topics, training plan, length of the module, logistics), and measures to ensure and monitor the quality of the program.

The procedural framework for organizing a specialized training program is established by a series of normative acts that regulate the schedule and unfolding of the selection and training activities, the enrollment and tuition fees, and the selection and evaluation criteria. The Order of the Minister of Development, Public Works and Administration No. 1.114/2022[59] , issued at the proposal of the Institute and with the approval of the Coordination Council operating under the NIA, establishes the maximum fees per training day per participant applicable to ST programs, and Order of the Minister of Development,

[57] Decision of the Prime Minister No. 262/2022 establishing the Coordination Council operating under the National Institute of Administration, available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/264103

[58] Order of the Minister of Development, Public Works and Administration MDPWA No. 572/2022 on the approval of the Regulations on the organization and functioning of the Coordination Council operating within the National Institute of Administration, available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/254242

[59] Order of the Minister of Development, Public Works and Administration MDPWA No. 1.114 of 31/2022 approving the participation fees/day/participant for professional training programs (advanced training and specialized training) organized by the National Institute of Administration available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/255873

Public Works and Administration No. 604/2021[60] establishes the requirements and stages for the selection of participants, the applicable selection criteria, and the responsibilities of NIA staff involved in the selection process. For STHLCS programs, the provisions of the GD 832/2007[61] also apply, in conjunction with the provisions of the Administrative Code. The rules for organizing and conducting the national admission competition for the STHLCS programs, including the calendar, topics, registration and tuition fees are established by Order of the Minister of Development, Public Works and Administration [62] , arrangements for the delivery of the program are mentioned in an OPINA[63] . The recruitment and selection of specialized staff is based on an NIA methodology[64] which establishes the selection criteria, the stages of the process, and the documents required, as well as the responsibilities of the selected staff and those subsequently involved in the training programs: pre-training preparation, delivery, and evaluation of participants and programs. The procedure for issuing and managing graduation certificates issued by the Institute is described in the Order of the Minister of Development, Public Works and Administration [65] no. 3.836/2020.

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[60] Order of the Minister of Development, Public Works and Administration MDPWA No. 604/2021 approving the Methodology for selecting participants in professional training programs organized by the National Institute of Administration, available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/public/DetaliiDocument/242108

[61] GD no. 832/2007 approving the Regulation on the organization and delivery of the specialized training program for holding a public office corresponding to the HLCS available at https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/84186

[62] Order of the Minister of Development, Public Works and Administration No. 3.771/2024 approving the Regulation on the organization and delivery of the national admission competition for the specialized training program for public office corresponding to the HLCS - year 2025, Constantin C. Angelescu class, available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/289411

[63] OPNIA No. 16/2025 approving the procedure for delivering the Specialized Training Program for occupying a public position corresponding to the HLCS - 2025, Constantin C. Angelescu class available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/public/DetaliiDocument/294911

[64] Methodology for the recruitment and selection of specialized personnel for professional training programs organized by INA, 2024 available at: https://ina.gov.ro/images/2024/MetodologieRSF2024.pdf

[65] Order of the Minister of Development, Public Works and Administration MDPWA No. 3.836/2020 approving the Methodology for managing certificates of completion for professional training programs organized by the National Institute of Administration, available at https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/230384

Box 2 . The legislative and procedural framework governing the organization and delivery of NIA specialized training programs, including STHLCS

Delivery of specialized training programs					
Number of modules, training hours, groups, and registration and tuition fees	Selection topics and program	Selection calendar, criteria, and stages	Schedule and method of delivery	Selection of specialized personnel	Assessment Issuance of certificates
• Government Emergency Ordinance No. 67/2024 on the reorganization and functioning of the National Institute of Administration • Regulation on the Organization and Delivery of the Specialized Training Program for high level civil servants, approved by Government Decision No. 832/2007, as subsequently amended and supplemented • Regulation on the Organization and Delivery of the Specialized Training Program for high level civil servants • Operational procedure on the organization and delivery of specialized (general) training programs • Operational Procedure: Organization of the Specialized Training Program for High-Level Civil Servants (HLCS) • Order of the President of the National Institute of Administration on the approval of the arrangements for the delivery of the Specialized Training Program for High-Level Civil Servants (HLCS).					
• Order of the President of the National Institute of Administration (OPNIA) No. 357/2024 amending OPNIA No. 202/2024 on the approval of the Rules of Organization and Functioning of the NIA • Ministerial Order No. 604/2021 approving the Methodology for the selection of participants in specialized training programs organized by the NIA • Ministerial Order No. 3.836/2020 approving the Methodology for the management of certificates of completion of professional training programs organized by the National Institute of Administration • Methodology for the recruitment and selection of specialized staff for professional training programs organized by the NIA					

The selection of participants in ST programs is carried out in line with the principles of equal treatment, objectivity, equal opportunities, confidentiality, transparency. The selection process consists of various steps: informing potential participants, registration, selection process carried out by designated staff, taking into account the selection criteria. A statement of the results is then drafted, which is to be approved by the management and posted on the NIA's training platform. The selection criteria approved by Ministerial Order are: timely registration, being part of the target group, getting the consent of the institution for the participation in the program, the date and time of registration on the NIA training platform (the principle of "first come, first served" applies), and compliance with the numerical criterion of the maximum number of participants set for each program. The selection criteria are applied in the order in which they are listed. For STHLCS programs, the selection process is regulated by the Government Decision No. 832/2007[66] and implies the organization of a national admission competition for the program, hereinafter referred to as the competition, which consists of two tests: application review and interview. During the review of applications stage, the board examines whether all documents listed in the Ministerial Order for the approval of the ROD for STPHLCS have been submitted. During the interview stage, in which only eligible candidates are allowed to participate, candidates are evaluated based on their general knowledge of public administration, as well as the skills and competencies required to hold a HLCS public office. They are evaluated based on the following criteria: understanding of the principles, rules, organization, and functioning of public administration, communication skills, managerial skills, ability to make decisions and assess their impact, ability to analyze and synthesize, ability to set and formulate individual goals, and how of motivated they are to hold a high-level public office. Participants are enrolled in the program by Order of the NIA president.

[66] https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/84186

Based on NIA's methodology, specialized staff for the preparation and delivery of training and assessment activities within the ST programs are recruited and selected. The methodology is updated periodically. The recruitment test involves creating an account on the NIA training platform https://training.ina.gov.ro/ and uploading a set of documents, certifying professional and training experience, university studies completed, proposed training session on the specific topic of the program(s) for which they are applying. Candidates who have submitted all the documents as required in the recruitment notice will move on to the first selection stage, during which the recruitment and selection committee will review and award points, based on the documents submitted by the candidates, for the first two selection criteria: experience in the field of professional training (maximum 3 points) and experience in the training program for which they are applying (maximum 3 points). Candidates who obtain at least 4 points will move on to the second selection stage, which consists of an interview that takes place at the NIA headquarters or online, during which skills such as communication, planning and organizing a training session, and interactivity and applicability will be assessed. Hourly rates for trainers are not stipulated on the NIA website.

The quality standards for each ST program are detailed in the Organization and Delivery Regulations developed for each program and establish specifications for aspects ranging from material resources, training materials used, human resources involved in organizing and supporting training sessions, to program content and quality assurance measures. Participants will have access to the training materials in electronic format, and for each module will receive: the agenda, a course support, exercises, case studies, PowerPoint presentations, analyses, worksheets, bibliographic references, and other materials of interest to the topic covered. A program implementation team from the NIA, approved by the president at the proposal of the DSTP director, organizes the program, collaborates with the specialized staff selected to support the modules, coordinates the training activities, and monitors compliance with the quality standards approved in the ROD. The guidelines allow for the participation of experts or other qualified specialists as guest lecturers (trainers from other similar Romanian, European, and international training institutes; scholars, university professors, and practitioners from Romania and abroad) to conduct sessions within the training modules, disseminate best practices, share current tools, and discuss lessons learned. The training methods employed are specific to adult learning and are tailored to the particularities of the modules and the target group for which the program is organized: presentations, case studies, role-playing, hands-on tasks and exercises, examples of good practices, demonstrations, watching video materials, structured discussions, group discussions, etc. Specific learning objectives are established for each module, targeting concrete results. These objectives are determined based on the range of knowledge, competencies, and behaviors that participants will acquire upon completing the respective training module.

The quality monitoring includes an assessment, carried out by specialized staff and the evaluation committee, of both the participants and the program. There are two assessments for the participants: intermediate, consisting of a multiple-choice test or an exercise at the end of each module, graded by the trainer or automatically by the training platform; final assessment, consisting of an interview that evaluates the acquired competencies, graded by a final evaluation committee. The evaluation forms are suggested by the DSTP, tailored to the objectives of each program, and approved by the President of the NIA. The program evaluation and the assessment of the performance of the specialized staff are carried out at the end of each training module through questionnaires filled out by the participants; the specialized staff also submits an activity report. Finally, the NIA program implementation team prepares the programme assessment and the performance assessment of the specialized staff, drawing on participants' results, questionnaire responses, activity reports, and its own observations collected through ongoing monitoring.

Also, as part of the SIPOCA 716 project[67] implemented in partnership with the GSG and NACS, NIA developed and proposed a set of minimum quality standards for training applicable within the National

[67] https://ina.gov.ro/despre-ina/proiecte/proiecte-incheiate/cod-sipoca-617-cod-smis-127558

Network of Training Providers for Public Administration "ReForm"[68] , covering 10 activities arranged in the training cycle called "principles", detailed by criteria and methods for their fulfilment. The following activities have been analyzed: (P1) The Training needs analysis, (P2) The Target group analysis, (P3) Defining the training objectives, (P4) Design, (P5) Development of the training plan, course and training materials, (P6) The selection of trainers, (P7) The organization of the training program, (P8) The delivery of the training program, (P9) The evaluation of the training program, (P10) The review of the training program.

Also within the same project, a methodology was designed to evaluate the impact[69] of specialized training programs organized by the National Institute of Administration. This methodology aims to measure the overall impact of the ST programs at the level of the beneficiaries and at the level of the institution. This assessment should be conducted within a year after the end of the program and should identify areas for improvement in the organization and delivery of the programs The methodology includes four components and aims to assess: the training context, the participants' reaction to the training, the acquired competencies, and the results. It uses the following assessment methods for the listed components: document analysis, feedback questionnaire, initial and final tests, a questionnaire to identify benefits, focus groups, and interviews, and provides benchmarks and operational guidance for planning the evaluation and applying and integrating these methods.

In 2021, as part of the SIPOCA 47 project[70] implemented by MDPWA, NIA, in partnership with MDPWA and five other institutions under the subordination and authority of MDPWA, implemented an integrated management system that includes a quality management component (ISO 9001:2015), in line with the internal management control system, and obtained certification of compliance with the requirements of the ISO 9001:2015 standard for professional training in public administration. The scope and certification of ISO 9001:2015 at the National Institute of Administration is professional training in the public administration, encompassing two processes: professional development and specialized training. In 2024[71] following the recertification audit, the certification for professional training in public administration was renewed.

The Competencies Development Program for Accelerating Results in Public Administration meets the above analyzed standards: within the NIA and ReForm ST programs, these are incorporated into its content from the stages of training needs analysis, design, and development and can be transposed and integrated into the NIA offer. The materials developed during the program implementation and pilot evaluation process also include useful information for the impact analysis process, as well as recommendations and ways to improve and update it, in line with the provisions of SR EN ISO 9001:2015.

The management structure of a ST program is formed by the program implementation team and the director of the DSTP and includes a set of defined, tested, and functional processes, based on specific documents, which comply with the requirements of the integrated management system, from submissions for review, approval, collaboration, coordination, and monitoring by the president of the NIA, the Coordination Council, the specialized staff supporting the training sessions, invited experts, the End-of-Course Assessment Committee, participants, and their institutions.

[68] https://ina.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Decalogul-calitatii-in-formare-Ghid-la-purtator.pdf
[69] https://ina.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Metodologie-pentru-evaluarea-impactului-programelor-de-formare-specializata-organizate-de-Institutul-National-de-Administratie.pdf
[70] https://www.mdlpa.ro/pages/sipoca47
[71] https://ina.gov.ro/images/2025/raport-de-activitate-institutul-national-de-administratie-anul-2024.pdf

The assessment of the revenue generated by the STP activities, which accounted for 45.52% of the NIA's total income between 2018 and 2025[72] highlights the fact that such activities contribute significantly to the institution's budget and that there is a demand for this type of training during this period. Furthermore, the STHLC programs amounted for 47.79% of the total STP activity and 21.75% of the total NIA revenues for 2018-2025. This highlights the high interest in participating in and completing this program.

Table 89 . Share of revenues generated from specialized training programs out of total NIA revenues between 2018 and 2025

Year	Revenue (lei) generated by STPHLCS			Total NIA revenue	% STPHLCS of the total NIA revenue	Total specialized training revenue	% STPHLCS of total ST revenue	% ST of total NIA revenue
	From registration fees	From tuition fees	Total					
2018	40,800	370,000	410,800	1,216,750	33.76	410,800	100	33.76
2019	30,900	218,880	249,780	2,172,140	11.49	350,580	71.2	16.13
2022	49,000	506,000	555,000	2,005,682	27.67	1,266,250	43.83	63.13
2023	67,000	423,500	490,500	1,833,905	26.74	975,900	50.26	53.21
2024	29,500	247,500	277,000	2,843,050	9.74	1,436,480	19.28	50.52
2025	24,000	242,000	266,000	-	-	266,000		
Total	**241,200**	**2,007,780**	**2,249,080**	**10,071,527**	**21.75**	**4,706,010**	**47.79**	**45.52**

Source: NIA Annual Activity Reports 2018-2024, Ministerial Order for STPHLCS (2018-2024) and estimations based on the results of the 2025 National Admission Competition for HLCS

The trend in the number of secretaries-general, deputy secretaries-general, directors, and deputy directors shown in the table below indicates that these positions could represent a significant target group for the CDPARPA, with the possible recruitment of 100 to 150 people per year.

Table 90. Evolution of the number of public positions eligible to take part in the Competencies Development Program for Accelerating Results in the Public Administration, by category and level of occupancy

Year	Secretary General			Deputy Secretary General			Director			Deputy Director General			Total public positions
	Total	1	2	Total	1	2	Total	1	2	Total	1	2	
2022	47	43	4	46	36	10	325	275	50	318	233	85	**736**
2023	54	43	11	47	34	13	342	311	31	333	284	49	**776**
2024	55	45	10	45	36	9	329	291	38	328	258	70	**757**
2025													

Key: 1=Permanent and temporary positions, 2=Vacant positions

Source: NACS, Report on the management of public positions and civil servants for 2022, 2023, and 2024

[72] The total NIA income from professional training activities incurred in 2025 will be completed after the publication of the Annual Activity Report for 2025, which will include income from professional development programs and other income from STP activities.

Table 91 . The characteristics of a specialized training program organized by the National Institute of Administration

Characteristic	Description
Form of delivery	Specialized training program
Determining the type of training	Professional training for civil servants aimed at developing the competencies and aptitudes required to perform a highly complex job that requires specific competencies and aptitudes, carried out in an organized setting, over a relatively long period of time, with well-defined and limited target groups, usually selected on a competitive basis, and covering a variety of topics, correlated in a coherent sequence and focused on achieving the main objective (Art. 3 (1) lit. c of GD 1066/2008)
Determining the target group	The ST programs are designed for specific target groups, and the selection process requires the applicants to demonstrate they are part for the target group. (Art. 3 (1) lit. c of GD 1066/2008) (Order of the Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration No. 604/2021 Art. 8 (1))
The legislative framework	- GD No. 1,066/2008 approving the rules on the professional training of civil servants - GEO No. 67/2024 on the reorganization and functioning of the National Institute of Administration
The procedural framework	- Order of the President of the National Institute of Administration (OPNIA) No. 357/2024 amending OPNIA No. 202/2024 on the approval of the Rules of Organization and Functioning of the NIA - Operational procedure for the organization and delivery of specialized training programs - Regulations on the organization and delivery of the specialized training program endorsed by the Coordination Council and approved by the president of the NIA - Ministerial Order No. 604/2021 approving the Methodology for the selection of participants in specialized training programs organized by the NIA
The possibility to organize the program in partnership	- Develops methodologies for the selection of partners in the training process, which are approved by Ministerial Order (GEO No. 67/2024, Art.11, (1) lit. h) - Training programs that are organized directly or carried out in partnership or association with other providers. (GEO No. 67/2024, Art.12, letter E) - Agreements/protocols/interinstitutional collaboration contracts for the organization of specialized training programs (ROF NIA, Art. 29, (3) lit. dd)
Review, accreditation, or authorization	The topics, quality standards, the delivery methods, the organization and delivery regulations, as well as the training offer are endorsed by the Coordination Council operating within the Institute and approved by the president of the NIA.
Costs for review, accreditation, or authorization	The Coordination Council operating within the NIA does not charge any fees for review

Listing in the national registers	The register of specialized training programs is automatically generated from the NIA training platform
The structure responsible for the implementation	The NIA program implementation team, appointed by the president at the proposal of the DSTP director, organizes the program, collaborates with the team of experts selected to deliver the modules, coordinates the training activities, and monitors compliance with the standards approved by the ROD.
Form	In an environment that facilitates direct interaction between participants and trainers in specially designed spaces throughout the entire duration of the training program, or remotely, using specific electronic, IT, and communication resources, through self-learning and self-assessment activities.
Number of hours and days of training	Between 54 hours (9 days of training) and 162 hours (27 days of training)
Module structure	Between 3 modules (9 days of training) and 9 modules (27 days of training)
Number of ECTS credits	-
Registration/admission fee	500 lei for STHLCS programs. No fee is charged for other ST programs
Tuition fee	Fees are established by Order of the Minister of Development, Public Works and Administration No.1.114/2022, approving the fees per day/participant, ranging from 150 lei/day for online programs to 200 lei/day for programs organized in a traditional setting. For the STHLCS programs and for STPRF programs, a fee of 220 lei/day/participant has been established Between 1,350 lei (for 3 modules and 9 days of training) and 5,500 lei (for 9 modules and 27 days of training).
Rates for trainers	Hourly rates for trainers are not mentioned
Frequency	- Once a year in the case of the ST programs included in the NIA training offer - Occasionally in the case of the ST programs carried out as part of European-funded projects
Number of participants accepted	- No specific information is available, but based on an analysis of the number of participants in the STHLCS and STPRF programs, there are approximately 22–25 participants in a group. - 25 participants in the case of the ST programs carried out as part of European-funded projects
Participant selection requirements	- Registration within the established deadline; - Being part to the target group addressed by the program; - Consent from the institution regarding the person's participation in the program; - Date and time of registration on the NIA training platform (the "first come, first served" principle applies) and - Compliance with the numerical criterion by falling within the maximum number of participants established for each program. (Ministerial Order No. 604/2021 Art. 8 (1))
Registration	Upon completion of the selection process, participants are enrolled in the program by order of the president of NIA.

The selection of trainers	Trainers are selected based on the Methodology for the recruitment and selection of specialized personnel for professional training programs organized by NIA using three selection criteria: experience in training, experience in domain for which they are applying, and an interview.
Training materials used	The Agenda, a course pack, exercises, case studies, PowerPoint presentations, analyses, worksheets, bibliographic references, and other relevant materials for the topic covered
Training methods used	Presentations, case studies, role-playing, hands-on tasks and exercises, examples of good practice, demonstrations, video materials, structured discussions, group discussions, etc.
Accredited tools for assessing the leadership skills	No such tools are mentioned in the description of the ST programs.
Coaching or mentoring sessions	No such tools are mentioned in the description of the ST programs.
Applicable quality standards	Quality standards are established for each ST program, and include specifications for aspects ranging from material resources, training materials used, human resources, content and duration (topics, learning plan, module duration, logistics); and quality assurance and monitoring measures.
Quality monitoring	The quality monitoring includes an assessment, carried out by specialized staff and the evaluation committee, of both the participants and the program. The assessments are carried out by the specialized staff and the evaluation committee. The evaluation forms are established at the proposal pf the DSTP, tailored to the training objectives of each ST program, and approved by the President of the NIA. The program assessment and the evaluation of the specialized staff is carried out by means of questionnaires filled out by participants at the end of each training module; the staff must also fill in an activity report.
Achieved results reports	The report on the assessment of the program and staff is prepared based on the results achieved by participants, the questionnaires, the activity reports, and the observations of the NIA team following an ongoing monitoring process.
Method of completion and assessment of skills	The evaluation methods for STHLCS programs are: intermediate, consisting of a multiple-choice test or a hands-on exercise at the end of each module, graded by the trainer or automatically by the training platform; final, consisting of an interview aimed at assessing the acquired competencies, graded by a final assessment committee. For other ST programs, the evaluation methods are established by the ROD, based on a proposal from the DSTP, subject to review by the Coordination Council, and approved by the President of the NIA.
Study certificate issued	Completion of a professional training program organized by the Institute is certified by a digital certificate of completion signed electronically by the president of the NIA. Certificates of completion are issued to participants who achieve a minimum final grade of 7 in the professional skills assessment. (Ministerial Order No. 3.836/2020, Art. 2 (1) and (3))

Annex to the graduation certificate	The certificate of completion is issued together with a digital annex, referred to as the Diploma Supplement, which states the professional acquired competencies. The supplement is electronically signed by the Director of the DPST and subsequently electronically signed by the President of the Institute.
Nominal register of certificates	The nominal register of certificates issued by NIA for specialized training programs
Results evaluation	Published in the NIA's annual activity report.
Results and impact analysis	In 2023, a Methodology for assessing the impact of the specialized training programs organized by NIA was drafted, but no information regarding its implementation is available.
Quality Assurance System Certification	Certificate attesting that the NIA has implemented and maintains a quality management system in accordance with the requirements of SR EN ISO 9001:2015 for professional training in public administration (issued in 2021 and in 2024 following the recertification audit)
Relevance to the institutional development plan	The NIA strategic plan for the period 2020–2025 includes certain priorities and actions: - Focus on areas that are essential and relevant for the development of certain competencies relevant for the public administration - Analyzing, identifying, and defining strategic target groups and updating the portfolio of training programs - Developing and delivering professional training programs for leaders and future leaders in public administration.
Relevance to the national strategic context	Draft Strategy for Professional Training in Public Administration 2024–2029, currently undergoing approval.[73] General Objective 2: Providing unified training programs dedicated to priority groups. Specific Objective 2: Planning and delivering unified training programs for individuals in management positions and for new entrants into public administration. Measure 2.1: Planning and delivering unified training programs for HLCS and senior management civil servants.
Experience in training projects for public administration	2024, Target 436 of the NRRP: 408 participants and certified 2023, SIPOCA 625: 2775 participants in the STP, 2566 certified 2022, SIPOCA 625: 901 participants in the STP, 828 certified

Source: Prepared by authors based on: GD no. 1,066/2008, GEO no. 67/2024, OPNIA No. 357/202, Ministerial Order No. 604/2021, ROF INA, OMDPWA No. 3,836/2020, GD No. 832/2007, NIA Annual Activity Reports 2018-2024

[73] https://ina.gov.ro/images//strategia-formare/SFPAP_112023_240906_140308.pdf

Annex 5. Analysis of the integration of the CDPARPA as a postgraduate program for continuous professional development within the higher education system

Traditional training (focused not on the development of skills, but rather on updating and consolidating knowledge) is no longer enough to face current challenges. Public administrations need to develop *adaptive capacities*, *digital skills*, *systemic thinking skills*, and *the ability to work with uncertainty*—skills that can only be acquired through training programs designed in real partnership with higher education institutions. This idea is reinforced by studies on administrative reforms, which highlight the fact that sustainable change is more likely to occur in contexts where public actors actively participate in generating solutions rather than simply receiving them "from outside"[74] . Moreover, the development of innovative solutions requires collaborative ecosystems, not just bilateral relationships. The OECD highlights the fact that public institutions need to connect with "influential actors, who are able to generate impact " and have access relevant external knowledge, to be able to navigate technological and social transitions. Higher education institutions represent the central nodes of these ecosystems[75] .

The public sector innovation cycle requires collaboration with academic experts at every stage, as contemporary problems are, by their nature, *cross-cutting*, *interdependent*, and *unsolvable through unilateral action*. Therefore, the importance of partnerships is not only one of efficiency, but also a strategic one: to jointly develop the essential competencies in a modern state, that would enable the civil servant to manage challenges such as digitization, demographic and climate change, and institutional transformations. Higher education institutions and public administrations must become co-architects of solutions and co-builders of competencies, working in a "*learning partnership*" that is indispensable to modern governance.

In this context, a partnership between the public administration and the higher education institutions can have two complementary functions. It can ensure a coherent offer of initial and continuing training, integrated with the strategic objectives of the state (in general), but also with the competence frameworks in public administration (including those aimed at developing leadership or digital skills); and it can contribute to the development of a culture of lifelong learning, in which universities and other training institutes jointly design professional development pathways (executive master's degrees, micro-certificates, modular programs for rapid skills updating, etc.).

European examples (such as the programs offered in France through its network of universities and training centers for public service careers[76] or the executive master's program coordinated by the London School of Economics and Civil Service UK[77]) and transatlantic examples (such as the Sir Rolan Wilson doctoral scholarships open, among others, to civil servants in Australia[78]) demonstrate that structural partnerships between public administration and higher education institutions can support both the initial training and development of future leaders capable of addressing complex national issues.

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[74] Heyse, Liesbet; Resodihardjo, Sandra; Lantink, Tineke; Lettinga, Berber (eds.). (2006). Reform in Europe. Breaking the Barriers in Government, Routledge

[75] OECD. (2020). The public sector innovation lifecycle: A device to assist teams and organizations in developing a more sophisticated approach to public sector innovation, OECD Working Paper on Public Governance no.37, https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/0d1bf7e7-en

[76] http://www.ipag-cpag.fr/spip.php?page=site

[77] https://www.lse.ac.uk/school-of-public-policy/empp

[78] https://srwfoundation.anu.edu.au/scholarships/sir-roland-wilson-scholarship

The partnerships between the public administration (in the broad sense) and the higher education institutions should be explicitly designed as co-participation and co-design arrangements, which arise from the national competencies frameworks and the human resource strategies, include systematic feedback mechanisms from civil servants (to avoid "layering barriers" to access to learning) and corelate the formal training program with long-term learning practices (mentoring, coaching, professional networks, mobility between the public institution and the university).

Universities, due to their ability to integrate research into teaching and generate advanced programs, are becoming central actors in the training of current and future civil servants. Moreover, they represent the ideal platforms for developing the competencies that are required to solve complex problems. Studies on global trends in governance and public service administration point to a shift from "procedural execution" to networking, risk anticipation, data use, innovation, and co-creation with citizens[79] . These areas require advanced, multidisciplinary training, which higher education institutions can deliver more effectively than any other type of training provider. Thus, a genuine partnership—built on co-participation, co-curriculum design, and shared responsibility for the development of competencies—becomes an essential condition for strengthening the administrative capacity in an environment dominated by complex, ever-changing problems.

Romania has strong higher education institutions in the field of public administration (the programs in Cluj Napoca and Bucharest being among the few in Central and Eastern Europe that have international accreditation[80]), but the priority of the latter has long been initial training (through bachelor's and master's degree programs). As a result, a significant number of qualifications in areas relevant for the public administration are not aligned with the general competency framework for public service and do not include institutionalized co-design mechanisms with public institutions (whether central or local).

In addition, although there is a growing offer of postgraduate courses in universities, Romania has not developed robust executive programs comparable to those presented above (e.g., the LSE Executive Master's or Leadership programs available in prestigious universities in continental Europe or the United States[81]). In fact, the training market for civil servants in Romania is dominated by private providers, which leads to the fragmentation of the offer and the development of often superficial or redundant skills, lacking the strategic coherence required for a professional management body.

In this context, postgraduate professional training for adults (PTA) programs are the main instrument through which higher education contributes to lifelong learning. The framework methodology adopted by Order of the Minister of Education and Research No. 4148/2025[82] specifies that these programs form part of continuing education within higher education and are regulated pursuant to Article 26(2)(a) of Law No. 199/2023.[83] Thus, postgraduate programs fall within the scope of continuing education and not within the scope of the study cycles leading to academic qualification (bachelor's, master's, doctorate); however, they use the same quality assurance tools, the same learning outcomes logic, and the same transferable credit

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[79] See Heyse, Liesbet; Resodihardjo, Sandra; Lantink, Tineke; Lettinga, Berber (eds.). (2006). Reform in Europe. Breaking the Barriers in Government, Routledge; Brandsen, Taco; Verschuere, Bram; Steen, Trui (eds). (2018). Co-Production and Co-Creation. Engaging Citizens in Public Services. Routledge; and Norton, Penny; Hughes, Marin. (2018). Public Consultation and Community Involvement in Planning. A twenty-first century guide. Routledge,

[80] https://eapaa.eu/accredited-programmes/

[81] For more information, refer to the offers of the European University Alliances, but also the leadership programs developed by Stanford, Harvard, or MIT.

[82] OMEC No. 4.148/2025 approving the Framework Methodology for the organization and delivery of postgraduate adult vocational training programs available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/298987

[83] Law no. 199/2023 on higher education, available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/271898

system as the latter. OMEC No. 4148/2021 repeals OMCEC No. 4.750/2019[84] and includes transitional provisions whereby postgraduate programs organized under the previous framework retain their accreditation until the periodic evaluation process is completed, but no later than July 1, 2026.

Only those who have achieved scores of 6 or 7 in the National Qualifications Framework may be enrolled in a PTA postgraduate study program organized by higher education institutions for graduates. A set of specific parameters are to be taken into consideration: the program type, the field of specialization according to the ISCED classification, mode of study (full-time, part-time, distance learning), the level of qualification, the number of ECTS credits, location, delivery mode, language, and occupation/qualification targeted.

As established by the Order of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 4.148/2025, there are three types of postgraduate PTA study programs: programs for continuing professional training and development, programs for professional conversion and reconversion, and personal development programs.

The Continuing Professional Training and Development Programs provide training aimed at acquiring one or more professional competencies specific to a qualification, in accordance with the relevant occupational or qualification standard. These programs may carry a minimum of 2 ECTS credits and include: professional initiation programs, professional development programs, and specialization programs. Professional initiation programs focus on the acquisition of one or more professional competencies specific to a qualification, in line with the applicable occupational or qualification standards and have a minimum of 2 ECTS credits. Professional development programs support the updating or further development of professional knowledge or competencies within the same qualification as that obtained through initial training; they may have a minimum of 1 ECTS. Specialization programs ensure the acquisition of new professional skills related to another specialization in the same field of bachelor's/master's/doctoral degree as the one completed and may have a minimum of 3 ECTS.

Postgraduate PTA programs for professional conversion lead to the acquisition of new professional competencies related to a different specialization within the same field of undergraduate studies as the one completed and may have a minimum of 12 ECTS, and lead to a level 6 qualification in the National Qualifications Framework, while professional retraining programs are geared towards new professional skills related to another specialization in the same branch of science as the specialization completed, and may have a minimum of 60 ECTS. Personal development programs may have a minimum of 1 ECTS and are aimed at supplementing or acquiring new transversal skills.

The workload allocated to one credit, in accordance with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), amounts to 25–30 hours and is structured into two components: (a) 12–15 contact hours, which may include lectures, seminars, laboratories, project work, research activities, and assessment; and (b) the remaining hours, up to a total of 25–30 hours, consisting of individual study time. Individual study may include reviewing course materials, textbooks and reference books, preparing for projects and laboratory work, completing assignments, and conducting research in libraries or through online resources. A PTA postgraduate program includes all the activities related to planning, organizing, teaching, and mentoring, as well as the actual learning process, the practical application, research, and assessment, which together lead to the awarding of certificates.

[84] OMEC No. 4,750/2019 approving the Framework Methodology for the organization and registration of postgraduate programs by higher education institutions, available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/244770

In terms of delivery , the Methodology allows for full-time, part-time, or distance learning programs) (the latter two being in fact equivalent to the synchronous and asynchronous online training already patented in international spaces); with continuous assessment and final exams that can take place both face-to-face and online, provided that the legal rules on academic integrity and personal data protection are complied with. This flexibility is essential to make the programs accessible to adults who are active in the labor market.

Following completion of e PTA postgraduate programs, as appropriate, the participants will undergo a competency-based assessment, a professional skills certification exam or a cross-cutting skills certification exam. Based on the results of the exams, they shall be awarded certificates of: professional skills, partial qualification, qualification, or transversal skills. The certificates are issued together with an annex, referred to as the Diploma Supplement [85] , which states the acquired the professional competencies.

Table 92. Types of PTA postgraduate study programs, number of credits, completion method, and study certificate issued upon completion

Program	Type	ECTS credits	Ensures the acquisition of skills	Method of completion	Study certificate issued
Continuing Professional Training and Development Programs (CPTD)	**Initiation**	≥ 2 ECTS	Specific to a particular qualification according to the occupational/qualification standard	Competency based assessment	Certificate of Competency
	Development	≥ 1 ECTS	Updating within the same qualification as that obtained through initial training		Certificate of Partial qualification
	Specialization	≥ 3 ECTS	New competencies related to another specialization in the same field of study as the one completed		
Professional conversion and retraining programs (PC)	**Conversion (PC)**	≥ 2 ECTS	New competencies related to another specialization in the same field of study as the one graduated	Competency based assessment	Certificate of Qualification
	Reconversion (PR)	≥60 ECTS	New competencies related to another specialization in the same field of science as the completed specialization		
Personal development programs (D)		≥ 1 ECTS	Completing the cross-cutting competencies already acquired	Assessment of transversal skills	Certificate of transversal skills

Source: Elaborated using data from the Order of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 4.148/2025

85 The template for the supplement and the rules for filling it in are set out in Annex 12 to Government Decision No. 1,225/2024 approving the types of content and format of academic documents, as well as the diploma supplement, available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/public/DetaliiDocument/289216

PTA postgraduate study programs can only be organized by higher education institutions that have accredited university study programs within the first cycle of university studies, following an external evaluation of the quality of education. Under current legislation, a postgraduate PTA study program may be delivered only if it has been granted prior accreditation. In order to organize and deliver a postgraduate PTA study program, higher education institutions must develop their own regulations, that are to be then approved by the Senate. Those Regulations shall include procedures for internal quality assurance in education. The educational institutions analyzed for the drafting of this report have approved and published this Regulations on their websites: the Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE), the University of Bucharest (UNIBUC), the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration (SNSPA), the Babeș-Bolyai University (UBB),[86] and the West University of Timișoara (UVT). Higher education institutions may initiate and establish partnerships with interested organizations in the development of postgraduate PTA study programs that meet the market requirements.

The process of approving and registering a postgraduate program does not involve the traditional accreditation process applicable to bachelor's or master's programs, but consists of a series of institutional approvals and external validation, carried out according to a fixed schedule. The process begins at the level of a faculty or continuing education center, which takes the academic initiative and develops the program concept. It can act independently or in partnership with other faculties, universities, or institutions, based on university autonomy. At this stage, the targeted competencies, learning outcomes, modular structure, and target audience are defined. Based on the concept, the program dossier is developed in accordance with the framework methodology in OMEC No. 4148/2025. The curriculum for a postgraduate program contains subjects whose completion is achieved through the assessment of the skills acquired, in accordance with the methods set out in the curriculum documents. The description of the subjects, content, teaching and assessment methods and means are contained in the subject files. The file then follows a standard internal academic approval and endorsement process. After analysis and approval at the level of the initiating structures (Faculty Council), the file is sent to the Commission for Quality Evaluation and Assurance

[86] Regulations of the organization and delivery of professional training for adults are available at:
- https://senat.ase.ro/wp-content/uploads/2025/20250924/Hot.Senat%20nr.%20176%20din%2024.09.2025_Reg.org.desf.fin.prog.form.prof.adultilor.pdf
- https://unibuc.ro/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Regulament-postuniversitare-finalizat_aprobat-Senat_17_04_2024.pdf
- https://senat.ase.ro/wp-content/uploads/2025/20250924/Hot.Senat%20nr.%20176%20din%2024.09.2025_Reg.org.desf.fin.prog.form.prof.adultilor.pdf,
- https://unibuc.ro/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Regulament-postuniversitare-finalizat_aprobat-Senat_17_04_2024.pdf,
- https://snspa.ro/academic/programe-de-studii/postuniversitar/.https://www.ubbcluj.ro/ro/programe_academice/files/netraditional/Regulament_postuniversitare_2025.pdf
- https://www.uvt.ro/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Anexa-6.-Metodologie-de-organizare-a-programelor-postuniversitare-la-UVT.pdf

(CQEA)[87] for resolutions regarding compliance with internal standards. The file is approved by the Board of Directors and approved by the Senate by decision[88] [89].

Following internal approval, the file is sent to the National Qualifications Authority (NQA) to be validated and then registered in the National Qualifications Register (NQR) or the National Register of Postgraduate Programs (NRPP). The file includes[90]: the application for registration/update, the program registration/update form, the Senate decision approving the program and requesting registration in the NRPP, and proof of payment of the fee for registering the program in the NRPP, equivalent to 25% of the minimum net wage[91] for the respective year. The program registration form contains at least the following information: the name of the program and the National Qualifications Framework level, the type of program and the field of specialization, a description of the postgraduate programs through the learning outcomes/skills acquired and occupations in the labor market, the location and organizer, the duration, and the number of ECTS credits. Providing that no additional information is requested, the NQA has 15 working days to review the file.

The NQA verifies the alignment of the program with the National Qualifications Framework and the consistency of the declared competencies. Currently, postgraduate programs are not subject to a separate external evaluation by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in High Education, but specific guidelines and standards are expected to be developed starting in 2026, which could lead to a more formalized involvement. Until then, responsibility for the quality of the program lies with the university, through its internal quality assurance system. Government Decision No. 962/2024[92] on the approval of the Methodology for the External Quality Evaluation of Higher Education which states that postgraduate study programs within continuing education, as well as lifelong learning programs, are subject to external evaluation for accreditation purposes at the level of the field of study, taking into account the corresponding bachelor's or master's degree fields. Methodology for the external evaluation of the quality of education in higher education specifies that postgraduate programs, within continuing education, as well as those of lifelong learning, are subject to external evaluation for accreditation at the domain level, taking into account the fields of undergraduate or master's degree studies. The accreditation of PTA postgraduate study programs is maintained through periodic evaluation, in accordance with the regulations in force. The organizing institution is required to undergo periodic external evaluation procedure[93] in order to maintain accreditation for PTA postgraduate study programs. Once registration is complete, the university can launch the program and begin operational preparations for promotion, module planning, participant selection, and trainer recruitment.

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[87] Example of Regulations for the organization and functioning of the Commission for Quality Assessment and Assurance at the university level, available at: https://senat.ase.ro/wp-content/uploads/2025/20250924/Hot.Senate%20No.%20179%20of%2024.09.2025_Regulations%20of%20the%20Commission%20for%20Quality%20Assessment%20and%20Assurance.pdf

[88] https://senat.ase.ro/wp-content/uploads/2024/20240513/Hot.Senat%20nr.%2084%20din%2013.05.2024_Infiintare%20prog.%20postuniv.si%20aprob.planuri.pdf

[89] https://senat.ase.ro/wp-content/uploads/2025/20251217/Hot.Senat%20nr.%20236%20din%2017.12.2025_Infiintare%20prog.%20postuniv.si%20aprob.planuri_Fac.EAM.pdf

[90] https://www.anc.edu.ro/rnc/rnpp-reglementari

[91] In the amount of 643 lei according to ANC Instruction no. 6384/2025 available at: https://www.anc.edu.ro/rnc/registre_tarife

[92] https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/286994

[93] Government Decision No. 962/2024

An analysis of the postgraduate programs listed in the National Register of Postgraduate Programs revealed 22 programs addressing public administration, primarily at the central level, including high level public officials and public sector managers., with a duration of over 150 hours. Out of those, 10 are organized by ASE, 3 by UNIBUC, 5 by SNSPA, 2 by UBB, and one each by UVT and UGAL. Registration fees range from 100 to 250 lei, and tuition fees start at 1,500 lei and go up to 4,000 lei. The number of study modules is between 5 and 9, and the number of associated ECTS credits varies between 15 and 26.

Table 93. Status of postgraduate programs for public administration listed in the National Register of Postgraduate Programs with a duration of more than 150 hours of training

University	PTA Postgraduate program and training partner	No. of hours	ECTS	Fees		Modules	Duration	No. NRPP Senate Decision
				Enrolment	Tuition			
ASE	Public procurement	180	15+5	250 RON	3,500 RON	7		108 127/2020
ASE	Local public administration management	180	15+5	250 RON	3,500 RON	6		111 127/2020
ASE	Public institutions management	180	15+5	250 RON		6		112 127/2020
ASE	Public Policy Management	180	15+5	250 RON		6		113 127/2020
ASE	Organizational management	180	18+5	-		6		146 127/2020
ASE	Smart City Management, in delivered in partnership with: The Romanian Smart City Association	180	15	250 RON		7		186 172/2020
ASE	Public Administration for Sustainable Development	180	15+5	250 RON		4		338 107/2021
ASE	Financial audit	180	22			6		364 209/2021
ASE	Specialization in Economic Crime Investigations, in partnership with: General Inspectorate of the Romanian Police	216	23	250 RON	4,000 RON	5		456 235/2022
ASE	Corporate Compliance, in partnership with: EON Romania and the European Ethics & Compliance Association	160	15			7		554 85/2024
UNIBUC	Equal opportunities expert, COR code 242230	180	15	150 RON	3,000 RON	5	4 months	587 21310 / 2024
UNIBUC	Sustainable development expert, COR code 242232	192	17					561 12001/ 2024

UNIBUC	E-Governance and Public Communication Principles, in partnership with the Romanian Digitalization Agency	120	13	100	1,500 RON	6	2 months	418 12602/ 2022
SNSPA	European Administration		24					41 70/2023
SNSPA	Public administration		26					42 70/2023
SNSPA	Public Procurement Management	188	15+5		2,900 RON	8	4 months	*23* 70/2019
SNSPA	Internal Audit and Governance	180	16+5		2,900 RON	9	4 months	522 70/2023
SNSPA	Sustainable development expert		20					550 14
UBB	GIS in administration and public institutions	500	22		3,000 RON	8		163/948
UBB	Sustainable Development Expert		20				4 months	512 155/2023
UVT	Sustainable Development Expert	192	16					526 113/2024
UGAL	Management of public institutions		15					308 104/2021

Source: National Register of Postgraduate Programs available at https://www.anc.edu.ro/rnc/rnpp and the curricula of the universities included in the analysis, available at: https://mefc.ase.ro/programe-postuniversitare-de-formare-si-dezvoltare-profesionala-continua/; https://unibuc.ro/studii/lifelong-learning/programe-postuniversitare/;https://snspa.ro/academic/programe-de-studii/postuniversitar/; https://www.ubbcluj.ro/ro/programe_academice/netraditional/formare_continua; https://admitere.uvt.ro/program/programe-de-studii-postuniversitare/;https://www.ugal.ro/studii/alte-programe-de-studii/programe-postuniversitare-de-formare-continua

The coordination of a postgraduate program is ensured by a program manager (director) and a scientific secretary, while the management of the participants' academic records is carried out by the secretary of the faculty organizing the **PTA** program. As a rule, the educational offer for these programs includes only fee-paying places or places financed from other sources, such as European funding or public procurement contracts. The minimum level of tuition fees is established by the Senate, upon the proposal of the Administrative Council, and is set out in the University Methodology on Tuition Fees [94].

To support postgraduate training activities, universities may invite specialists with scientific and professional standing in the relevant field, who do not hold a doctoral degree, whom they may employ and

[94] H Senate ASE 201/2025 regarding the approval of the Methodology on fees applied at the Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies for the 2025-2026 academic year, available at: https://senat.ase.ro/wp-content/uploads/2025/20250924/Hot.Senate%20No.%20201%20of%2024.09.2025_Methodology%20on%20fees%20applied%20at%20ASE.pdf

classify as associate teaching staff[95], based on their own methodology, subject to endorsement by the Department Council and the Administrative Council, and approval by the University Senate.[96]. Of the universities included in the analysis, only the ASE Bucharest[97] published on the website the fees for teaching activities carried out on an hourly basis and on an annual basis.

Table 94 . Evolution of gross Hourly fees for Teaching Activities at ASE Bucharest between 2021 and 2026

Academic Year	Professor	Associate Professor	Lecturer	Teaching Assistant	Guest Lecturer	PHD student supervision	Foreign teaching staff
Hourly Rate for Teaching Activities (Lectures, Seminars, Practical Classes)							
Gross hourly rate (per conventional hour, without Work Insurance Contribution)							Physical hour
2021	65 RON	65 RON	65 RON	60 RON	60 RON	130 RON	75 EUR
2022 - 2023	65 RON	65 RON	65 RON	60 RON	60 RON	130 RON	75 EUR
2023 - 2024	65 RON	65 RON	65 RON	60 RON	60 RON	130 RON	75 EUR
2024 - 2025	100 RON	90 RON	80 RON	70 RON	60 RON	160 RON	75 EUR
2025 - 2026	100 RON	90 RON	80 RON	70 RON	60 RON	160 RON	75 EUR
Maximum hourly rate for teaching activities carried out within master's programs with special tuition fees – Gross value / conventional hour							
2021 - 2022	160 RON	90 RON	70 RON	65 RON			
2022 - 2023	160 RON	90 RON	70 RON	65 RON			
2023 - 2024	160 RON	90 RON	70 RON	65 RON			
2024 - 2025	250 RON	180 RON	140 RON	100 RON			
2025– 2026	250 RON	180 RON	140 RON	100 RON			

Source: ASE Senate Decisions regarding the approval of fees for teaching activities carried out on an hourly basis for the academic years: no. 195/22.09.2021, no. 158/21.09.2022, 154/20.09.2023, no. 207/25.09.2024, no. 188/24.09.2025

[95] Under the terms of Art. 202 para. (8) of Law No. 199/2023 on higher education, available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/271898

[96]H ASE Senate No. 42/2024 on the approval of the equivalence of university teaching degrees for invited specialists who do not have a university teaching degree recognized in the country and who will carry out teaching activities on an hourly basis during the 2023-2024 academic year for the postgraduate program "Criminal Business Law" available at: https://senat.ase.ro/wp-content/uploads/2024/20240228/Hot.Senate%20No.%2042%20of%2028.02.2024_Echiv.grad%20did.univ.pdf

[97] H no. 207/2024 of the ASE Senate regarding the approval of fees for teaching activities carried out on an hourly basis for the 2024-2025 academic year, available at https://senat.ase.ro/wp-content/uploads/2024/20240925/Hot.Senate No. 207 of 25.09.2024_Hourly Rates.pdf

For teaching activities carried out within postgraduate PTA programs, the hourly rate is established by the program director, through the program budget, and is approved by the Board of Directors. It is estimated that this rate remains below the maximum hourly rate applicable to teaching activities delivered within master's programs with special tuition fees. In the case of public procurement contracts concluded within internationally funded projects, the rate is set on a case-by-case basis[98], by decision of the board of directors. For example, to support teaching activities within the "Public Administration for Sustainable Development" program, organized by the Faculty of Administration and Public Management, during the 2021-2022 academic year, under service contract no. 59/01.03.2022, concluded between the General Secretariat of the Government and ASE, the gross hourly rate (RON 140) was set below the maximum ceiling applicable to master's programs with special tuition fees (RON 160). The hourly rates vary depending on the university, the program budget, the value of the public procurement contract, and may be significantly lower.

Table 95. Hourly rates for the Postgraduate Continuing Professional Training and Development Programme "Public Administration for Sustainable Development", Academic Year 2021–2022

Mode of delivery	Professor	Associate professor	Lecturer	Lecturers with international expertise	Training coordinator	Organizational secretary
Conventional	140 RON	140 RON	140 RON			
Course physics	350 RON	350 RON	350 RON	750 RON	250 RON	120 RON
Seminar Physics	210 lei RON	210 RON	210 RON			

Source: H CA ASE no. 145/2022

A conventional teaching hour[99] represents one hour of teaching activities such as seminars, projects, laboratory and practical assignments, practical training, and guidance for final year projects in undergraduate university education.
For master's and PhD, the teaching hour (class) = 2.5 conventional hours, while the seminars, projects, lab work, practical work, and final year project guidance = 1.5 conventional hours.

Enrollment in PTA postgraduate programs is carried out in compliance with the specific Regulations on the organization and delivery of postgraduate continuing professional training programs for adults. Since only applicants who hold university degrees or equivalent qualifications are eligible to participate in these programs, the main requirements for the application file are the submission of a copy of the diploma, along with other documents required by each university, and the payment of the registration fee. Once these requirements have been met, the candidate is placed on a waiting list until the minimum number of students is reached. They will then be notified by the program secretariat regarding the start date of the training. Every university has the right to establish specific requirements for enrollment, based on the target group and the professional or financial objectives. Candidates declared admitted following the evaluation of their application files are enrolled in the postgraduate professional training for adults (PTA) program by decision of the Rector, after confirming their place through payment of the tuition fee, and upon signing the study contract.

[98] H CA ASE no. 145/2022 on the approval of the fee for teaching activities carried out on an hourly basis in the postgraduate program of continuing professional training and development "Public Administration for Sustainable Development" available at https://ca.ase.ro/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/HCA-145_16.03.2022-privind-aprobare-tarife-postuniv-Administratie-publica-pentru-dezvoltare-durabila-la-Fac-AMP.pdf
[99] Art. 211 para. (2)(7)(8)(9) of Law No. 199/2023 on higher education.

The aforementioned regulations on the organization and delivery of postgraduate professional training for adults programs, approved by the university senates, establish the rules governing admission and enrolment, the delivery of learning activities, knowledge assessment and competencies certification, the functioning of admission and assessment committees, the rights and obligations of participants, as well as provisions on study interruptions, credit recognition, re-enrolment, and specific special situations. The size of study groups in postgraduate PTA programs is approved by a decision of the university Senate. Specific information is not available in public documents, except for ASE, 2021-2022, where the data shows study series with 50 students ±20% and groups with 25 students ±20%.

ASE and UNIBUC have achieved relevant results from running postgraduate PTA programs relevant to the public administration. Between 2018–2025, the Bucharest University of Economic Studies recorded total revenues of RON 2,607,934 from training and certification activities delivered to 711 participants, with RON 598,350 attributable to programs included in the current training offer, covering 315 graduates. The amount of 2,009,584 lei was obtained through two public procurement contracts for training services, with European funding, SIPOCA and NRRP, through which 571 graduates were trained. For UNIBUC, no data is available on the results of the other postgraduate CVT programs currently in offer, with revenues of 7,533,138 lei from training activities delivered to 1,838 people, under seven public procurement contracts for training services, with funding through NRRP.

Table 96. Correlation between the number of alumni enrolled in postgraduate programs relevant to public administration offered by ASE and UNIBUC and the revenue generated.

Year	Program	Number of enrolled students	Number of graduate students	Program fee		Revenue collected
				Enrollment	Tuition	
Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE)						
2018	Introduction to public institution management	-	32	125 RON	900 RON	28,925 RON
2018	Introduction to local public administration management	-	36	125 RON	900 RON	32,525 RON
2018	Management of public institutions	-	13	125 RON	3000 RON	40,625 RON
2019	Introduction to public institution management	-	14	125 RON	900 RON	14,350 RON
2019	Introduction to local public administration management	-	24	125 RON	900 RON	24,600 RON
2019	Management of public institutions	-	13	125 RON	3000 RON	40,625 RON
2019	Public procurement		26	125 RON	3,000 RON	112,500 RON
2022	Public administration for sustainable development	159	150	Service agreement GSG SIPOCA 613 No. 52 / 01.03.2022		1,000,000 RON
2022	Introduction to legislative mechanisms	51	48	125 RON	1700 RON	93,075 RON

	and procedures in public administration					
2022	Introduction to interministerial coordination and communication	65	59	125 RON	1700 RON	118,625 RON
2023	Introduction to Strategic Decision-Making in Central Public Administration	50	50	150 RON	1,700 RON	92,500 RON
2025	Sustainable development expert, COR code 242232	246	246	Service agreement No. 265/30.12.2024 GSG NRRP South-East Region		1,009,584 RON
	Total ASE 2018–2025	**571**	**711**			**2,607,934** RON
University of Bucharest (UNIBUC)						
2025	Sustainable development expert, COR code 242232	238	-	Service agreement No. 262/23.12.2024 NRRP Central Region		1,056,146 RON
2025	Sustainable development expert, COR code 242232	266	-	Service agreement No. 261/23.12.2024 NRRP North-West Region		1,182,122 RON
2025	Sustainable development expert, COR code 242232	340	-	Service agreement No. 264/23.12.2024 NRRP North-East Region		1,502,980 RON
2025	Sustainable development expert, COR code 242232	194	-	Service agreement No. 268/30.12.2024 NRRP South-West Region		865,598 RON
2025	Sustainable development expert, COR code 242232	175	-	Service agreement No. 269/30.12.2024 NRRP Western Region		777,474 RON
2025	Sustainable development expert, COR code 242232	296	-	Service agreement No. 269/30.12.2024 NRRP South Muntenia Region		1,148,983 RON
2025	Sustainable development expert, COR code 242232	245		Service agreement No. 267/30.12.2024 NRRP South Muntenia Region		999,835 RON
	Total UNIBUC 2025	**1754**	**1,838**			**7,533,138** RON

Source: Authors' processing based on the Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE) Rector's Annual Reports on the State of the University for: 2019, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024, SEA, UNIBUC'S Rector's Annual Reports on the State of the University for the years: 2023 and 2024, and www.unibuc.ro

The activity of the two universities analyzed, for which data and information regarding accreditation and the implementation of postgraduate programs have been identified, is significant. While ASE a steady commitment, with 2,139 graduates between 2018 and 2024, UNIBUC has allocated considerable resources for those training activities in 2023 and 2024, managing to double the number of accredited programs and to have a total of 1,945 enrolled students. The above data does not reflect the results of the programs provided under the professional training service agreements concluded with the General Secretariat of the Government[100] for the training of experts in sustainable development, with funding from the NRRP.

Table 97. Overview of all PTA postgraduate programs run by ASE and UNIBUC between 2018 and 2024, the number of students and the graduation certificates issued.

ASE Bucharest								
Year	**Programs run**	**Programs in progress**	**Number of enrolled students**	**Number of graduates**			**New accredited programs**	**Number of Issued Certificates**
				Total	**This years**	**Previous year**		
2018	9	5	263	171			3	
2019	8	2	-	340	-	-	9	-
2020	2	3	223	61	-	-	43	195
2021	8	5	610	302	-	-	-	121
2022	8	2	617	514	314	200	6	130
2023	13	4	657	434	131	299	2	363
2024	11	5	592	317	22	295	2	433
Total	**59**	**26**	**2962**	**2139**				**1242**
UNIBUC								
2023			879				14	
2024			1066				15	
Total			**1945**				**29**	

Source: Authors' processing based on the Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE) Rector's Annual Reports on the State of the University for: 2019, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024, SEA, UNIBUC'S Rector's Annual Reports on the State of the University for the years: 2023 and 2024.

The ASE Bucharest Strategy[101] for 2020–2030 strategy includes, among its strategic objectives in the field of education, the diversification of continuing professional training and education programs through postgraduate programs and enhancing the ability of the study programs to proactively respond to the socio-economic needs and trends identified at national and international level and to provide graduates with the knowledge and competencies required for a successful transition into the labor market. The objectives are transposed into the ASE Bucharest's multi-annual Strategic Plan[102] for 2024-2029 through Program 3—Creating a diverse, innovative, and flexible portfolio of undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degree programs and postgraduate programs—and measure A3—Strengthening, developing and promoting postgraduate study programs, in line with the current needs of employees and employers, with a view to create/update certain competencies, anchored in the economic and social reality of our country and to

[100] https://dezvoltaredurabila.gov.ro/proiect-extins-2000-edd

[101] https://ase.ro/universitatea/conducerea/strategia-ase-2020-2030/

[102]https://senat.ase.ro/wp-content/uploads/2024/20240925/Hot.Senat%20nr.%20166%20din%2025.09.2024_Planul%20strategic%20multianual.pdf#page=2

broaden the offer for such programs, by establishing partnerships with relevant economic entities. Also, through Program 11. - Increasing and diversifying the financial resources, particularly by means of securing a substantial share of financial support from the socio-economic environment, the measures A3 Developing the necessary framework to support the creation and expansion of strategic partnerships with the economic and social environment, and A4. Strengthening and developing postgraduate programs aligned with labor market needs, are stable.

The development strategy of the University of Bucharest[103] for 2024-2028, transposed through the Strategic Plan for the period: 2024-2028, includes a section dedicated to strengthening UNIBUC's capacity in the field of development projects, continuous learning, and consulting, with the main objective of developing and managing the continuing education offer, and sets the following strategic directions: increasing the diversity and visibility of the University of Bucharest's lifelong learning offer (especially at the postgraduate level), developing a range of "premium" postgraduate programs in the form of advanced courses in key areas: strategic management, Change Management and Organizational Culture, public policy and governance, etc., and strengthening the team to be able to efficiently manage the increase in activity volume. A target of six new postgraduate programs has been set for the implementation period.

The SNSPA strategic plan[104] for 2021-2025 includes various strategic objectives: Objective 1. Developing relationships with students and Objective 5. Developing relationships with the socio-economic environment, which integrate operational objectives that aim to: 2. Diversify the forms of education, among others, by offering short-term study programs and 5. Involving SNSPA in educational and cultural projects in partnership with public authorities, institutes, and organizations whose visions and values are aligned with those of the University.

Table 98. Characteristics of a specialized training program organized by a higher education institution

Characteristic	Description
Form of delivery	Postgraduate PTA Program for Continuing Professional Training and Development – Specialization
Determining the type of training	Postgraduate PTA Program for Continuing Professional Training and Development – Specialization, which ensure the acquisition of new professional competencies related to another specialization in the same field of bachelor's/master's/doctoral degree as the one completed of bachelor's/master's/doctorate degree as the one graduated and which may have a minimum of 3 ECTS. (Art. 12 (1) lit. c of OMEC no. 4.148/2025)
Determining the target group	Each university may establish specific admission requirements for its programs, depending on the target group addressed and the professional or financial objectives pursued.
The legislative framework	- GD no. 1,066/2008 approving the rules on the professional training of civil servants - Higher Education Law No. 199/2023, Art. 26 (2) lit. d) - Order of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 4.148/2025 approving the framework methodology for the organization and delivery of postgraduate professional training for adults programs

[103] https://unibuc.ro/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Strategia-UB_-2024-2028.pdf
[104] https://snspa.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Planul-strategic-al-SNSPA-2021-2025.pdf

	- Government Decision No. 962/2024 approving the Methodology for the external evaluation of the quality of education in higher education Art. 39 (2) a. and Art. 53.
The procedural framework	- Order of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 4.148/2025 approving the Framework Methodology for the organization and delivery of postgraduate PTA programs - Regulations on the organization and delivery of postgraduate PTA programs approved by university senates (Order of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 4.148/2025 Art. 8)
The possibility to organize the program in partnership	-Higher education institutions may enter into partnerships with interested entities for the development of professional training for adults programs that meet the requirements of the labor market. (Order of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 4148/2025, Art. 4 (2))
Review, accreditation, or authorization	Postgraduate PTA study programs may only be organized by higher education institutions that have accredited undergraduate study programs within the first cycle of university studies, following an external evaluation of the quality of education. After the assessment of the file, which includes the curriculum and course descriptions, by the Faculty Council, the Commission for Quality Evaluation and Assurance (CQEA) issues a resolution on compliance with internal standards. The file is then endorsed by the Administrative Council and approved by the Senate by decision. Following this step, the file is forwarded to the National Qualifications Authority for validation and registration in the National Register of Postgraduate Programs.
Costs for review, accreditation, or authorization	The fee for registering the program in the NRPP is equivalent to 25% of the minimum net wage, which in 2025 was 643 lei (Order of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 4148/2025, Art.16 (4) lit. d)
Listing in national registers	National Register of Postgraduate Programs (NRPP) managed by the National Authority for Qualifications (NWQ)
The structure responsible for implementation	The organization and coordination of a postgraduate program is ensured by a program manager (program director) and a scientific secretary, while the management of the participants' academic records is carried out by the secretariat of the faculty organizing the PTA program.
Form	Higher education institutions may organize PTA postgraduate study programs in the following forms: full-time, part-time, distance learning. (Order of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 4148/2025, Art. 6 (1))L No. 199/2024 Art. 32 (1))
Number of hours and days of training	Between 120 hours and 192 hours
Module structure	Between 5 and 9
Number of ECTS credits	Between 15 ECTS and 26 ECTS
Registration/admission fee	100 RON – 250 RON
Tuition fee	The minimum tuition fees are set by the Senate, at the proposal of the Board of Directors, and are included in the Methodology regarding the fees applied by each university. It varies between 1,500 RON (for 120 hours of training) and 4,000 RON (for 216 hours of training).

Rates for Trainer	For teaching activities carried out within postgraduate professional training for adults programs, the hourly rate is established by the program director, through the budgets of these programs, and is approved by the Board of Directors. It is estimated that this rate remains below the maximum hourly rate applicable to teaching activities delivered within master's programs with special tuition fees. There are examples of maximum gross hourly rates of 140 RON – conventional hour.
Frequency	- Annually in the case of postgraduate programs offered by universities - Occasionally in the case of ST programs carried out within European-funded projects
Number of participants accepted	- The number of PTA postgraduate programs students is approved by a decision of the university Senate. Specific information is not available in public documents, with the exception of ASE, 2021,where the data shows study series with 50 students ±20% and groups with 25 students ±20% - in the case of the STP carried out within European-funded projects the number of students has been established at 25.
Participant selection requirements	Graduates who have at least a bachelor's degree or equivalent are eligible to enroll in PTA postgraduate study programs. (Order of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 4148/2025, Art.7 (1)) Enrollment in PTA postgraduate programs is carried out in accordance with the specific regulations on the organization and delivery of postgraduate programs for professional training for adults. Each university may establish specific admission requirements for its programs, depending on the target group addressed and the professional or financial objectives pursued.
Registration	Candidates declared admitted following the evaluation of their application files are enrolled in the postgraduate professional training for adults (PTA) program by decision of the Rector, after confirming their place through payment of the tuition fee, and upon signing the study contract.
The selection of Trainers	(To support postgraduate training activities, the employment of invited associate teaching staff is envisaged (Order of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 4148/2025, Art. 5 (3)). To support postgraduate training activities, universities may invite specialists with scientific and professional standing in the relevant field, who do not hold a doctoral degree, whom they may employ and classify as associate teaching staff, based on their own methodology, with the approval of the department council and the board of directors and with the approval of the university senate.
Training materials used	Agenda, course materials, exercises, case studies, PowerPoint presentations, analyses, worksheets, bibliographic references, and other materials relevant to the topic covered.
Training methods used	Presentations, case studies, practical topics and exercises, examples of good practices, demonstrations, role-playing, structured discussions, group discussions, etc. The description of the topics, content, teaching methods, and assessment methods are described in the subject files, which are compiled in the curriculum of the PTA postgraduate program.
Accredited tools for assessing leadership skills	No such tools are not mentioned in the description of the ST programs.

Provision of coaching or mentoring	No such tools were identified in the description of the PTA postgraduate study programs or in the course descriptions.
Applicable quality standards	Postgraduate PTA programs can only be organized by higher education institutions that have accredited undergraduate study programs, following an external evaluation of the quality of education, in line with the methodology approved by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. The Commission for Quality Evaluation and Assurance issues a resolution on the compliance with the internal standards.
Quality monitoring	Quality monitoring measures are established by Regulations on the organization and delivery of postgraduate professional training for adults programs approved by the university Senates, which also include procedures for internal quality assurance (Order of Ministry of Education and Culture No. 4.148/2025 Art. 8).The regulations on the organization and functioning of the Commission for Quality Evaluation and Assurance, approved by the university Senates, establish specific monitoring tasks and activities. The accreditation of postgraduate PTA study programs is maintained through periodic evaluation, in accordance with the regulations in force. The organizing institution is required to undergo periodic external evaluation procedures in order to maintain accreditation for its postgraduate PTA programs.
Reports on the achieved results	Each program director prepares a report on the achieved results, in accordance with the requirements established by the internal regulations of the universities, while the Secretariat of the faculty organizing the program manages the records and documents of the students and graduates. The results achieved following the organization and implementation of the programs are centralized in the Rector's Annual Reports on the State of the University
Method of completion and assessment of competences	The forms and methods of assessment shall be clearly stated in the course description and shall include: periodic assessments (by module) to verify the ability to apply the acquired competencies in practice, and the examination and certification of professional skills. The final exams for PTA postgraduate programs can be organized both in person and online, for all forms of study. (Order of Ministry of Education and Culture No. 4148/2025, Art.6 (3)) In accordance with the universities' own regulations, the assessment committees for the certification exam are established at the proposal of the program director, with the approval of the dean, and may include, in a proportion of no more than one third of the number of members, a representative of the labor market. The evaluation committees are responsible for establishing the assessment criteria for the professional competency certification exam.
The Graduation certificate issued	Based on the examinations results, the higher education institutions issue a partial qualification certificate. (Order of Ministry of Education and Culture No. 4148/2025, Art.18 (2) lit.3)
Annex to the graduation certificate	The certificates issued are accompanied by an annex to the certificate, called supplement, which states the learning outcomes associated with the competencies for which the candidate has been declared competent. (GD no. 1.225/2024, Annex 12)

Nominal Register of Certificates	The Nominal Register of Certificates for PTA postgraduate study programs organized by the university
Results Analysis	As a rule, they are published in the Rector's Annual Reports on the State of the University
Results and Impact Analysis	Certain universities conduct annual surveys to assess the level of satisfaction among student with regard to the quality of education provided and on the integration of graduates into the labor market, with robust methodological support and relevant experience in conducting them ( ). These are usually published in the Rector's Annual Report on the state of the university. These research tools can also be adapted for graduates of postgraduate PTA study programs.
Certification of the quality management system	Universities in Romania are accredited by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (RAQAH), an independent body under the Ministry of Education and Research, which evaluates and approves study programs and institutions, and the Ministry makes the final decision on accreditation, granting official recognition by Government Decision.
Relevance to the institutional development plan	The ASE 2024-2029 multi-annual strategic plan includes: -Program 1, Measure A3. Strengthening, developing, and promoting postgraduate study programs in line with the needs of employees and employers and diversifying the offer for such programs by establishing partnerships with relevant economic entities. -Program 11, Measure A3.Developing the necessary framework to support the creation and expansion of strategic partnerships with the economic and social environment and -Program 11, Measure A4. Strengthening and developing postgraduate programs aligned with labor market needs.. The UNIBUC 2024-2028 strategic plan sets out the main objective of developing and managing the continuing education offer with the following strategic directions: 1. Increasing the diversity and visibility of UB's lifelong learning offer (especially at the postgraduate level), 2. Developing a range of "premium" postgraduate courses in the form of advanced courses in key areas; 3. Strengthening the team to be able to efficiently manage the increase in activity volume. The SNSPA Strategic Plan 2021-2025 includes the following operational objectives: 2. Diversify the forms of education, among others, by offering short-term study programs 5. Involving SNSPA in educational and cultural projects in partnership with public authorities, institutes, and organizations whose visions and values are aligned with those of the University
Relevance to the national strategic context	
Experience in training programs for public administration	2022, ASE, SIPOCA, 150 certified graduates 2025, ASE, NRRP, 246 certified graduates 2025, UNIBUC, NRRP, 1,838 certified graduates 2018-2025, ASE, (Tuition fees paid) 571 certified graduates

Annex 6. Analysis of the takeover of CDPARPA as a professional training program by an authorized private training provider

The category of private professional training providers is represented by providers established as entities subject to Law No. 31/1990 or as non-governmental organizations: associations or foundations established in accordance with the Government Ordinance No. 26/2000. They hold the largest share[105] in terms of the total value of contracts awarded for professional training programs for public authorities and institutions. The main legislative acts regulating their activity are Government Ordinance No. 129/2000[106] on adult professional training and Government Decision No. 522/2003[107] Methodological rules for the application of the provisions of No. 129/2000 on adult professional training.

Continuing professional training for adults, completed with nationally recognized certificates, is part of the national education and professional training system[108], complements initial training, and creates the framework for developing existing professional skills or acquiring new ones.

Professional competencies can be acquired formally by enrolling in a program organized by a professional training provider, non-formally through workplace practice or self-study, and informally through non-institutionalized, unstructured, and unintentional means. Adult professional training programs are available for: initiation, qualification, requalification, development, and specialization. Pursuant to the provisions of Government Ordinance No. 129/2000, specialization refers to the development of certain competencies under the same qualification, the acquisition of new competencies in the same occupational field or in a new occupational field, and the acquisition of fundamental/key competencies or new technical competencies. According to the provisions of Government Ordinance No. 129/2000, specialization means the development of skills within the same qualification, the acquisition of new skills in the same occupational area or in a new occupational area, the acquisition of fundamental/key skills or new technical skills. Providers of adult professional training authorized under the Government Ordinance No. 129/2000 may organize advanced training and specialization programs[109] for university graduates. At the conclusion of the training programs, the participants are awarded nationally recognized graduation certificates, based on the list of specializations and advanced training programs[110] approved by joint order of the ministers of labor and education. These programs must meet the quality criteria specific to the level of qualification, in accordance with the law.

Professional training providers that organize training programs completed with nationally recognized qualification or graduation certificates[111] are registered in the National Register of Authorized Vocational Training Providers (NRAVTP). Providers that organize training programs in fields for which there are no

[105] World Bank (2022), Result 3 – Report on the development of the trainer network. Prepared under the Agreement on Reimbursable Technical Assistance Services for Strengthening the Capacity of the National Institute of Administration to Improve the Policy Framework for Training in Public Administration in Romania

[106] Government Ordinance No. 129/2000 on adult vocational training, available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/24105

[107] Government Decision No. 522/2003 Methodological norms for the application of the provisions of No. 129/2000[107] on adult vocational training, available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/262607

[108] Government Ordinance No. 129/2000, Art. 3

[109] Government Ordinance No. 129/2000, Article 21^1 (1)

[111] OG No. 129/2000, Article 21 (1)

approved occupational standards and/or which are not completed with nationally recognized certificates are listed in the National Register of Unauthorized Vocational Professional Training Providers.

In order to be authorized, training providers submit an authorization application to the Authorization Commission of the Technical Secretariats of the county and Bucharest municipal authorization commissions (authorization commissions[112]), together with the authorization file for the selected training program. The main responsibilities of the authorization committees include: authorizing the training providers, monitoring their activities and coordinating the organization of final exams at the end of the courses. The file[113] contains documents[114] certifying compliance with the eligibility conditions and authorization criteria regarding the necessary authorizations and approvals, human resource capacity to support the program, material resources, the provider's financial situation, as well as previous experience, which includes the program's self-assessment form and related technical annexes: the training program, the methods for evaluating the participants, and the teaching plan.

The training program may be structured in modules quantified in transferable credits[115]. For specialization programs, the total duration[116] expressed in hours of theoretical instruction and practical training must be between 180 and 300 hours for a nationally recognized certificate of completion to be issued. The number of training hours must allow the participants to achieve the learning objectives and must be in line with the content and the training methods used; at least 2/3 of the total training hours must be dedicated to practical training.[117]

The program self-assessment form provides information on: identification data, access conditions, objectives - in terms of professional competencies to be acquired in line with occupational standards, length, location, forms of organization, training plan, the number of participants for theoretical and practical training, the assessment procedure, and the trainers. For the authorization of each training program, an authorization fee[118] is charged amounting for 2 minimum gross basic salaries per country, guaranteed in payment, on the date[119] of submission of the file.

Authorization requests are processed within 45 days of their registration. In authorizing the program, certain criteria[120] are to be taken into account: the professional training program, the resources required to carry out the program, and the experience and results of previous activities[121]. The same criteria that serve as the basis for the authorization of providers also serve as the basis for the monitoring stage.[122] If the eligibility conditions are met, the authorization committee evaluators from the registry of evaluators of training providers and programs in the county/municipality of Bucharest, who independently verify whether the authorization criteria are met, by analyzing the documents and visiting the provider's premises and the training venue. The Assessment of the training program is based on the analysis of a set of specific

112 Structures without legal personality established by the Ministry of Labor, Family, Youth, and Social Solidarity to coordinate the authorization and monitoring of the activities of vocational training providers
113 Annex 6 to OMMSSF No. 353/2003 approving the methodology for authorizing adult vocational training providers available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/264258
114 OMMSSF No. 353/2003 Art. 14
115 OG No. 129/2000, Article 17 (2)
116 OMMSSF No. 353/2003, Art.7 (7)
117 OMMSSF No. 353/2003, Art. 7 (6)
118 OG no. 129/2000, Article 39 (2)
119 In 2025, the authorization fee was: 8,100 lei, according to Government Decision No. 1505/2024 establishing the minimum gross base salary guaranteed for payment in the country
120 Art. 5 (1) OMMSSF No. 353/2003
121 Art. 5 (3) OMMSSF nr. 353/2003
122 OG nr. 129/2000, Article 28 (2) și OMMSSF nr. 353/2003, Art.10 (2)

evaluation standards that define this criterion, which refers to: admission requirements, training objectives, duration of theoretical and practical training, training programs, training content and methods, program organization and evaluation procedure. The evaluators must detail each of their findings regarding the compliance of the specifications in the program design and planning documents with these criteria. The criterion for evaluating program resources includes details on the availability and adequacy of course support for training programs and human resources for training participants: the number, certification, training, and experience of the proposed trainers. Authorized training programs may only be delivered by certified trainers or teaching staff with a background or specialization relevant to the training program. Based on the analysis of the file and the evaluation reports prepared by the evaluators, the commission decides whether to grant or refuse authorization, which is recorded in the Authorization Register and is valid for 4 years, with the possibility of renewal at the request of the provider. If, during its activity, the provider no longer meets the authorization criteria, the commission shall withdraw its authorization, even within the period of validity.[123]

Box 3 . Evaluation standards for a professional training program

<table>
<tr><th>Training Objectives</th><th>Duration</th><th>Training program</th><th>Content and methods</th><th>Organization</th><th>Assessment procedure</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">1. The admission requirements are appropriate for the program.
2. The objectives, expressed in terms of the professional skills to be acquired, are: correctly formulated, relevant, and in line with the occupational standards.
3. The duration of theoretical instruction and practical training is adequate for achieving the stated learning objectives.
4. The training program allows for the acquisition of the established competencies, and the modular structure is appropriate.
5. The content is relevant, the training methods and means are appropriate, and the assessment criteria ensure that learning progress is measured.
6. The program's organization and training plan enable the objectives to be achieved.
7. The assessment methods and procedures used for the training program are relevant and appropriate to the quality of the training process.
8. The methods and tools proposed for ongoing assessment are appropriate for the content to be assessed; the final assessment ensures the acquisition of competencies.
9. Each participant has access to course materials that are appropriate for the training program and enable the transfer of knowledge. Where appropriate, these are supplemented by other materials such as practical application workbooks, documentary materials, bibliographies, etc.
10. There are at least two trainers for practical and theoretical training, and they have the experience, training, and certification required for the complexity of the program.</td></tr>
</table>

Source: Processing according to the Order of Ministry of Family, Social Solidarity and Family No. 353/2003 for the approval of the methodology for authorizing adult professional training providers

[123] GO No. 129/2000, Article 5 (4)

Table 99. Results of the authorization of providers and professional training registered with the Bucharest Authorization Commission

Year	Authorization activity			Professional training activity				
	Programs verified	Authorized providers	Authorized Authorized	Training programs organized and completed	Total number of graduates	Specialization	Advanced training	Key skills
2017	367	201	367	6,037				
2018								
2019								
2020								
2021	450	210	424	5925	76731	53125		
2022	461	237	461	6,600	96676	71,503		
2023	449	269	449	7,085	118,022	41,385	13,200	15,130
2024	429	243	429	5,166	74,602	38,001	2,932	8,023

Source: Activity report of the Bucharest Social Payments and Inspections Agency for the years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024

The quality assurance process in professional training programs is integrated into the internal operations of training providers. This process is supported by quantitative standards, implementation guidelines, reporting mechanisms, and improvement procedures, and is monitored through regular audits of the organizations and implemented programs. Providers are required to organize and deliver professional training programs in accordance with the authorization criteria and quality assurance principles, to notify[124] the commission of any changes to the initial authorization conditions at least 10 working days before the estimated start date of the courses and to make available to the monitoring or control teams all the information and documents requested in relation to the training activity. The participants evaluate[125] the following aspects of the training program: content, delivery of the training process, the performance of the trainers, and organizational aspects. The legislation provides that the training provider must ensure the conduct of such an evaluation at least upon completion of the program.

The principles[126] for quality assurance in adult professional training cover the integration of quality management into the provider's internal processes; the regular evaluation of these processes and of the training programs delivered, including through external control bodies; the provision and consolidation of information on activities and achieved results; the coordination of quality checks conducted at county level with those carried out at national level; and the involvement of all relevant stakeholders.

The monitoring activity of the authorized providers is designed to ensure compliance with the authorization criteria and is carried out through a minimum of three monitoring visits, at intervals of no more than 18 months, and a systematic analysis of the results achieved by the participants following the final evaluation. At least one of the visits should take place during the training period, and additional visits may be made in the event of complaints or special circumstances. At the location where the program is held, the monitoring team shall verify how the theoretical and practical training of the participants is carried out, ensuring: compliance with the admission requirements, compliance of the curriculum with the provisions of the occupational standard, compliance with the training plan. They also shall assess the evaluation methods and instruments used for the training program and trainees, attendance, and the adequate allocation of

[124] GO No. 129/2000, Article 30 (1)
[125]OMMSSF No. 353/2003, Art. 9
[126] Government Ordinance No. 129/2000, Article 5 (1) .

human and material resources. The results of the training provider's previous activity and the causes of any complaints or claims are also analyzed.

[127]Before the start of the course, providers must enter into a professional training contract with each participant in the program. This contract which shall be submitted for registration to the technical secretariats of the authorization committees. The training group for theoretical training may consist of a maximum of 28 people, and the group for practical training may consist of a maximum of 14 participants.[128]

Upon completion of the theoretical and practical training, the provider shall organize graduation exams, under the coordination of[129] the authorization commission, which shall select the specialists who will be part of the examination commission. The examination commission shall consist of two specialists independent of the provider, selected by the authorization commission from the lists of specialists, and a representative of the provider. The payment[130] of the independent members shall be ensured by the provider, and the hourly rate shall be equivalent to the amount received by a teacher with a first-level teaching qualification and 20 years' experience in education in the public education system.

The graduation exam[131] consists of a set of theoretical and/or practical tests, aimed to assess the acquisition of the targeted competencies. The provider prepares and makes available to the examination committee at least 5 sets of questions for each of the graduation exam tests, covering the entire content of the program. The examination board checks whether the proposed topics cover the entire content[132] of the training program, selects the topics for the exam tests, grades the participants' practical and theoretical work, and displays the results of the exam. The minimum passing grade for the theoretical and practical tests is 5. Participants who pass the exam are issued nationally recognized graduation certificates, accompanied by an annex called the Descriptive Certificate Supplement, where the professional competencies are stated. The model[133] of graduation certificates and supplements issued for specialization programs is provided in Government Decision No. 522/2003. The technical secretariat of the authorization commission applies the dry stamp on the graduation certificates before they are issued to the participants. The training provider keeps a record of the certificates issued in the Register of Graduation Certificates, and a copy of the register is kept by the authorization committee. The technical secretariats of the authorization committees compile and update monthly the county-[134] register of graduates of authorized adult professional training programs.

The program may be taken over by a private training provider in the form of a specialization-type PTA, completed with nationally recognized graduation certificates, or in the form of a training program completed with a certificate issued by the provider.

In order to identify the characteristics of a training program, i.e., duration expressed in hours or days of training, number of modules, duration of organization and delivery calculated in months, the fee and the form of certification, the analysis covered the publicly available information from the training offers of some recognized providers with over 20 years of experience in delivering complex programs in Romania, which include leadership and management programs with a duration similar to that of the program.

[127] GO No. 129/2000, Art. 19 and GD No. 522/2003 Annex 2
[128] OMMSSF No. 353/2003, Art. 8 (1)
[129] OMMSSF No. 5.253/2003 approving the methodology for certifying adult vocational training, Art. 7, available at: https://legislatie.just.ro/public/DetaliiDocument/47467
[130] OMMSSF No. 5.253/2003, Art. 40
[131] OG No. 129/2000, Art. 42 (1)
[132] OMMSSF No. 5.253/2003, Art. 9 (1) lit.d
[133] HG No. 522/2003, Annex No. 5B and Annex 6.
[134] GD no. 522/2003 Art. 27 (2), lit. D

Table 100. Characteristics of the training programs offered by private providers

Provider	Program	Hours	Days	Modules	Length	Fee	Certification
Exec-Edu	360° Management Course	162 hours	*27*	7	5 months	3090 Euro	(CAVTP) certificate Supplier certificate
Exec-Edu	360° Leadership Course			3	3 months	1,990 Euro	Provider certificate
Exec-Edu	Project Management Course					990 Euro	CAVTP Certificate Provider Certificate
Exec-Edu	HR Management Course			3	4 months	1,290 Euro	CAVTP Certificate Supplier Certificate
Trend Consult	The Leadership Journey	64 hours	*8*	8		2220 Euro	Provider certificate
Trend Consult	The Management Journey	56 hours	*8*	7	3–12 months	1950 Euro	Supplier certificate
Codecs	Professional Certificate in Management				10 months	2,600 Euro	CAVTP Certificate Provider Certificate
Codecs	Professional certificate in Operations Management				4 months	990 Euro	CAVTP Certificate Provider Certificate
Qualians	Leading Successful Transformation Package	60	10			1125 Euro	Supplier certificate
Qualians	Adapt & Perform Package	36	6			980 Euro	Provider certificate

Source: descriptions of training programs mentioned on the websites of the analyzed providers

At European level, the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) in the Netherlands offers training and development programs, technical assistance, and benchmarking services for civil servants involved in European affairs management.

Table 101. Consulting fee per day (in euros/day per consultant) in the Bucharest-Ilfov region for 2021-2024

Year	Junior consultant		Senior consultant		Project manager		Partner/Director	
	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
2021	150	300	280	750	300	850	750	1200
2022	150	300	300	750	350	850	750	1200
2023	170	320	330	780	350	850	550	1200
2024	150	300	200	700	300	800	500	1000

Source: AMCOR, Study on the management consulting market in Romania, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024

Table 102. Characteristics of a specialized training program organized by a private professional training provider

Characteristic	Description
Form of delivery	Specialized adult professional training program
Determining the of the form of specialization	Specialization programs aim to develop skills within the same qualification, acquire new skills in the same occupational area or in a new occupational area, acquire fundamental/key skills or new technical skills. (Government Ordinance No. 129/200, Art. 8 (3), letter c))
Determining the target group	Each provider may establish the eligibility and admission requirements, which must be correlated with the provisions of the occupational standard or program type.
The legislative framework	- GD No. 1,066/2008 approving the rules on the PTA of civil servants - Government Ordinance No. 129/2000 on the PTA - Government Decision No. 522/2003 Methodological rules for the application of the provisions of No. 129/2000 on adult professional training - Ministerial Order No. 353/2003 approving the methodology for authorizing adult professional training providers - Ministerial Order No. 5.253/2003 approving the methodology for certifying adult professional training
The Procedural framework	Before starting training activities, providers must enter into a professional training contract with each participant in the program, which they submit for registration to the technical secretariats of the authorization commissions. (Government Ordinance No. 129/2000, Art. 19 and HG No. 522/2003 Annex 2) - GD No. 522/2003 Methodological rules for the application of the provisions of No. 129/2000 on adult training - Ministerial Order No. 353/2003 approving the methodology for authorizing adult training providers
The possibility to organize the program in partnership	- No details are provided regarding the possibility to organize and run the program in partnership, with this being highlighted in the graduation certificate.
Review, accreditation, or authorization	In order to be authorized, training providers submit an authorization application to the Technical Secretariats of the county authorization commissions, or as applicable, the authorization commission of the municipality of Bucharest (authorization commissions), together with the authorization file for the selected training program. The main tasks of the authorization committees include: authorizing the training providers, monitoring their activities and coordinating the organization of final exams at the end of the courses. The file contains documents certifying compliance with the eligibility conditions and authorization criteria regarding the necessary authorizations and approvals, human resource capacity to support the program, material resources, the provider's financial situation, as well as previous experience, which includes the program's self-assessment form and related technical annexes: the training program, the methods for evaluating participants, and the teaching plan. (Ministerial Order No. 353/2003 Art. 14 (5) and Annex 6)

Costs for review, accreditation, or authorization	For the authorization of each training program, an authorization fee equivalent to two times the national gross minimum wage, in force on the date of submission of the application file, is charged. In 2025, the authorization fee was: 8100 lei. (Government Ordinance No. 129/2000, Article 39 (2))
Listing in national registers	National Register of Authorized Vocational Training Providers (NRAVTP)) Register of Authorizations (Government Ordinance No. 129/2000, Article 21 (1))
Structure responsible for implementation	The organization and coordination of training program is ensured by a program manager. The program manager is also in charge of the management of relevant documents.
Delivery	Full-time and online
Number of hours and days of training	Between 180 and 300 hours, according to the occupational standards and training objectives. The number of training hours must allow the participants to achieve the learning objectives and must be in line with the content and the training methods used; at least 2/3 of the total training hours must be dedicated to practical training. (OMMSSF No. 353/2003, Art.7 (7) and (6))
Module structure	The training program may be structured in modules quantified in transferable credits (OG No. 129/2000, Article 17 (2))
Number of ECTS credits	-
Registration/admission fee	Set by the provider through professional training contracts. A review of the offers of relevant training providers shows that no separate registration fee is applied.
Tuition fee	-
Trainer fee	-
Frequency of organization	In line with the commercial objectives of the training providers and the requests of potential participants.
The number of participants accepted	The training group for theoretical training may consist of a maximum of 28 people, with a maximum of 14 participants per group for practical activities. (OMMSSF No. 353/2003, Art. 8 (1))
Participant selection requirements	Adult training providers authorized under the terms of Government Ordinance No. 129/2000 may organize training and specialization programs for university graduates. At the conclusion of the training programs, the participants are awarded nationally recognized graduation certificates, based on the list of specializations and advanced training programs approved by joint order of the ministers of labor and education. These programs must meet the quality criteria specific to the level of qualification, in accordance with the law. (Government Ordinance No. 129/2000, Article 21^1 (1) and OMMSSF No. 1.151, OMMSSF No. 4.115/2018)
Registration	Before the start of the course, providers must enter into a professional training contract with each participant in the program. This contract which shall be submitted for registration to the technical secretariats of the authorization committees (Government Ordinance no. 129/2000, Art.19 and HG no. 522/2003 Annex 2)

Trainers section	Authorized training programs may only be delivered by certified trainers or teaching staff with a background or specialization relevant to the training program. (Government Ordinance No. 129/2000, Article 28 (2) and OMMSSF No. 353/2003, Art. 10 (2))
Training materials used	Agenda, course materials, exercises, case studies, PowerPoint presentations, analyses, worksheets, bibliographic references, and other materials relevant to the topic covered.
Training methods used	The authorization file contains documents certifying compliance with the eligibility conditions and authorization criteria regarding the necessary authorizations and approvals, human resource capacity to support the program, material resources, the provider's financial situation, as well as previous experience, which includes the program's self-assessment form and related technical annexes: the training program, the methods for evaluating participants, and the teaching plan. (OMMSSF No. 353/2003 Annex 2 and Annex 4)
Accredited leadership skills assessment tools	Some of the programs included in the preparatory documentation for this report include such tools.
Provision of coaching or mentoring	Some of the programs included in the preparatory documentation for this report include such tools.
Applicable quality standards	In authorizing the program, certain criteria are to be taken into account: the professional training program, the resources required to carry out the program, and the experience and results of previous activities. The same criteria that serve as the basis for the authorization of providers also serve as the basis for the monitoring stage (OMMSSF No. 353/2003 Art. 5 (1) and (3)) The Assessment of the training program is based on the analysis of a set of specific evaluation standards that define this criterion, which refers to: admission requirements, training objectives, duration of theoretical and practical training, training programs, training content and methods, program organization and evaluation procedure. The evaluators must detail each of their findings regarding the compliance of the specifications in the program design and planning documents with these criteria. The criterion for evaluating program resources includes details on the availability and adequacy of course support for training programs and human resources for training participants: the number, certification, training, and experience of the proposed trainers..
Quality monitoring	The monitoring activity of the authorized providers is designed to ensure compliance with the authorization criteria and is carried out through a minimum of three monitoring visits, at intervals of no more than 18 months, and a systematic analysis of the results achieved by the participants following the final evaluation. At least one of the visits shall take place during the training period, and additional visits may be made in the event of complaints or special circumstances. At the location where the program is held, the monitoring team shall verify how the theoretical and practical training of the participants is carried out, ensuring: compliance with the admission requirements, compliance of the curriculum with the provisions of the occupational standard, compliance with the training plan. They also shall assess the evaluation methods and instruments used for the training

	program and trainees, attendance, and the adequate allocation of human and material resources. The results of the training provider's previous activity and the causes of any complaints or claims are also analyzed.
Reports with recorded results	The technical secretariats of the authorization committees compile and update monthly the county register of graduates of authorized adult professional training programs. (Government Decision No. 522/2003, Art. 27 (2), letter D) The official report of the examination committee includes statistical data on the results of the graduation exam. (OMMSSF No. 5.253/2003 Annex 1)
Method of completion and assessment of skills	Upon completion of the theoretical and practical training, the provider shall organize graduation exams, under the coordination of the authorization commission, which shall select the specialists who will be part of the examination commission. The graduation exam consists of a set of theoretical and/or practical aimed to assess the acquisition of the targeted competencies. The provider prepares and makes available to the examination committee at least 5 sets of questions for each of the graduation exam tests, covering the entire content of the program. The examination board checks whether the proposed topics cover the entire content of the professional training program, selects the topics for the exam tests, grades the participants' practical and theoretical work, and publish the results of the final exam. (OMMSSF No. 5.253/2003, Art. 7 and OG No. 129/2000, Art.42 (1))
Certificate issued	Participants who pass the final exam are issued nationally recognized graduation certificates. (GD No. 522/2003, Annex No. 5B)
Annex to the study certificate	Certificates are issued together with an annex, referred to as the Diploma Supplement , which states the acquired the professional competencies. (GD No. 522/2003, Annex 6.)
Registers for recording the issuance of certificates	The training provider keeps a record of the certificates issued in the Register of Graduation Certificates, and a copy of the register is kept by the authorizing commission. The technical secretariats of the authorizing commissions compile and update monthly the County Register of Graduates of Authorized Adult Vocational Training Programs. (GD No. 522/2003, Art. 27 (2), letter d)
Analysis of results	Centralized by providers and authorization committees. Training results are consolidated by providers and authorization commissions. At county level, training results may be reported in the annual activity reports of the Agency for Payments and Social Inspection, including those of the Bucharest Municipality
Analysis of results and impact	Not available.
Certification of the quality management system	Training providers may opt for quality management system certification for their activities.

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