

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES AND
STRATEGIES IN THE LIGHT OF
ROMANIAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

**STRATEGII ȘI POLITICI
PRIVIND RESURSELE
UMANE DIN
PERSPECTIVA
CONSOLIDĂRII
ADMINISTRAȚIEI
PUBLICE ROMÂNEȘTI**

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Abstract

It is known that the administration of a country cannot be effective and modern if its human resources are not of somewhat performance. Improving the performance of human capital from the administration sector, is a major objective of the current Romanian government. However, in the absence of clear strategies and policies and transparent in the light of the human resources from the administration sector, there may be a crisis in this area. The reform of the public administration, either central or local, entails certain aspects of human resources to change, of which are at its disposal: the recruitment, selection and appointment of public performance appraisal, evaluation of professional performance, staff motivation and increases of salaries, professional training and career development for the personnel which is part of this industry. All of the aspects mentioned above have been addressed in this paper, from the point of view of both the specific literature and from a strategic perspective..

Keywords: strategies; policies; human resources development; reform of the public administration.

JEL CODES: L38, M53, O15.

Rezumat

Este cunoscut faptul că, administrația unei țări nu poate fi eficientă, modernă, dacă resursele umane ale acesteia nu sunt unele performante. Îmbunătățirea performanțelor capitalului uman, din administrație, constituie un obiectiv major al actualei guvernări, din România. Însă, în lipsa unor strategii și politici clare, transparente privind resursele umane din administrație, poate apărea o situație de criză în acest domeniu. Reforma unei administrații publice, fie ea centrală sau locală, presupune modificarea unor aspecte legate de resursele umane, de care aceasta dispune: condițiile de recrutare, selecție și numire în funcția publică, evaluarea performanțelor profesionale, motivarea și salarizarea personalului, formarea profesională și dezvoltarea carierei personalului din acest sector al economiei. Toate aspectele menționate anterior au fost abordate în prezenta lucrare, atât din perspectiva literaturii de specialitate, cât și din perspectivă strategică.

Cuvinte cheie: strategii, politici, dezvoltarea resurselor umane, reforma în administrația publică.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Currently, the Romanian economy is a system in constant change, and being the subject of multiple challenges of various sizes. Regarding organizations, they are constantly changing, their main objective is to adapt to new trends, by applying different strategies and trying to use more efficiently the resources they have, whatever their nature. It is a difficult goal to achieve, because the external environment is in constant transformation, the consumers' demands undergoes metamorphosis, while the internal environment of the organizations must adapt to new economic trends and general management (Demen and Lala-Popa, 2013, p.232).

In all of this complex environment, the organization's human resources are the foundation on which the entire management is based. However, these resources are not homogeneous, they differ in time and space depending on a variety of criteria. Thus, each person is unique in its own way, there are no two identical individuals. "People" – extrapolated to the concept of "work" and "human resources", varies by age, gender, physical or mental abilities, values, intellectual qualities inherited or acquired over time. They are "social-cultural constructions, consisting of assessment (assessment, selection, and prioritization) and use (effective use) of real and virtual capacities of employees by managers, without social relations (through coercion or negotiation) between managers and employees (current or potential)" (Nica, 2012, p.11).

Human capital represents the resource of the organization able to adapt over time, to add value and to generate results proportional with their level of education. We showed in a previous study that if decades ago young graduates acquired a profession based on the knowledge obtained in schools, today the baggage of knowledge, aptitudes and professional skills accumulated over time becomes outdated very quickly. Existence of employee who are no longer able to professionally keep up with the mutations that occur in the conduct of activities at the organizational level, is a major problem for managers (Manole et al., 2011, p.208). The main objective of the staff development department, is to provide skill and experience, in order to obtain optimum and reliable performance, using the most appropriate methods. In achieving this objective, an important role plays the strategies and policies of the personnel, because the modernization of work processes do not ensure economic efficiency, if personnel development is not taken into consideration (Manole et al., 2011, p.208).

2. THE CONCEPT OF STRATEGIES AND POLICES IN HUMAN RESOURCES

Among experts, it is well known that "an important component of the human resources management is the forecast of human resources needs" (Lefter et al., 2008, p.39). Therefore, the makers of this field must

have the capability to predict the grade of employment of the workforce and to establish the necessary human resource for a period of several years. Also, they must be able to ensure the most effective use of human resources, adapting the staff needs required by the evolution of the organization's activities, and also by the economy in general (Lefter and all, 2008, p.39). Researching specific to this industry literature, we can say that over time, to the term strategy there have been awarded different meanings in relation to the area in which this term has been used. Thus, the human resources strategies represents overall long term goals in terms of human resources, the main ways of achieving them and the necessary or allocated resources to ensure structure, values and culture of the organization, and as well as the utilization of its personnel to contribute to the overall objective of the organization (Manolescu, 2001, p.122).

According to the views of multiple authors, such as Michael Armstrong, personnel strategies define the intentions of the organization in terms of ways of developing human resources, as well as the needs or requirements to be met in this area, to facilitate the achievement of organizational goals (Armstrong, 1996, p.170). According to other authors, human resources strategies of an organization, refers to its fundamental concept about its employees, reflect the type of human resources decisions, decisions which are directly related to organizational and environmental conditions (Milkovich and Boudreau, 1988, p.108). The definition represents in fact three very important aspects (Manolescu, 2001, p.122): managers' decisions regarding employment relations; the connection between organizational conditions and managers' decisions regarding human resources, liaison studied with priority by many specialists, for example Miles and Snow; the effects of environmental pressures on the organization and on human resources. Similar strategies for personnel and policy making, in light of human resources there is no official widely accepted point of view that meet the consensus of experts of the field. Researching the relevant literature, we found that there are numerous formulations assigned to personnel policies, such as:

- a) They define how the organization fulfills its social responsibility towards employees;
- b) Are an expression of the organization's values and beliefs about the function of human resources;
- c) Aims to establish goals and guidelines in the field of personnel;
- d) Means all rules and attitudes of human resources, on which management decisions are adopted, specific to human capital etc.

In conclusion, we can say that if strategies in human resources are the overall objectives in the long run (over 5 years) related to human capital, personnel policies represent all attitudes and major directions of

the management practices relating to insuring, maintaining and developing human resources at organizational level. Thus we can say that if human resources strategies provide the basis for personnel policies, the latter ones support the implementation of strategies. At the same time, covering and analyzing the different definitions presented, it can be concluded that they do not contain contradictory elements, but complement each other, and their authors have paid special attention to existing value systems, both at an organizational and individual level.

3. THE NEED OF A STRATEGY FOR HUMAN RESOURCES IN ROMANIAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

In the period 2014-2020, the strategic approach to strengthening public administration is a major concern of the executive of Bucharest, which the European Union supports permanently. A modern and consolidated administration must be able, at any time, to facilitate economic and social development of the country through an effective public service, to adapt and promptly respond to the complex needs of the contemporary society. Only thus it will be able to implement public policies in the interest of citizens. As part of such administration, human resources, respectively its strategic approach to development will become a mandatory requirement (Manole et al., 2011, p.207). In this respect, the Romanian administration needs, at present, competent human resources and extremely well managed, in order to take responsibility for modernizing the entire Romanian public sector, and in this way to contribute to achieving the objectives of the Europe's Strategy 2020.

From this perspective it was developed the Integrated Strategy for Human Resources Development (SIDRU) 1 from the point of view of lifelong learning, which aims to be an embodiment of Romania's efforts to align with the Revised Strategy from Lisbon, to contribute to its implementation and to make compatible the community's objectives of the European Employment Strategy (SEO), with the national strategy. Thus, by combining policies in education, employment and social inclusion, SIDRU is trying to support a connection between economic sectors for a better and economic social cohesion and for sustainable development by ensuring the development of competent human resources, highly qualified.

Now, more than ever, the Romanian administration required highly qualified human resources, which is to fundamentally change its current configuration in order to improve public services provided to citizens. In the geopolitical regional crisis, in which Romania finds itself (in turn this may cause a highly dangerous geo-economics regional crisis), efficiency of the actions of human capital is the foundation of change in

¹ view Project SIDRU 2009-2020, document produced within the Project PHDRE RO 2006/018-147.04.05.01.07.02

Romanian public sector, of development and efficiency of social services provided to citizens (Manole, 2015, p.31).

In conclusion, we can say that formulation of a strategy aimed at strengthening the Romanian public administration, especially the development of its human resources is fundamental for the next period. "The proposed reforms will only succeed if supported by a clear strategy and can contribute to a significant improvement in the quality of public administration in Romania" (Profiroiu, 2003, p.36).

4. ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT OF ROMANIA

Over time, numerous studies have been conducted on human resources based on the public administration, they provide a global and questionable image on human capital. In all these studies, the major problem reported by specialists concerned how the general principles of performance management were reflected in the processes of staffing (through recruitment-selection-appraisal), evaluation, promotion, motivation and development of administrative human resources, as follows:

a) From the perspective of the assuring process with personnel in the public service

According to the theory of management, it is known that the main objective in the process of recruitment-selection-appraisal relates to maximize compatibility between the requirements of the vacancy and the real competence of the potential candidate (knowledge, skills, abilities, potential for development, etc).

Regarding the public function, one of the criticisms of the recruitment and selection process, over time, was that it is a rigid process, focused more on checking theoretical knowledge acquired on the basis of a bibliography predetermined than evaluating skills and practical abilities required by the job for which the recruitment and selection is carried out. Since 2008² this system was changed in order to allow testing of practical abilities necessary for obtaining the public job, skills and motivation of candidates. Although the new legislation allowed testing other aspects of the candidates, not only the capacity to memory, and the legislative measures were supported by different initiatives (manuals, development of guidelines, training, etc.) aimed to facilitate their application; over time practice demonstrated that preferred were approaches targeted towards testing of candidates' theoretical knowledge and not approaches orientated towards testing the candidates' aptitudes and practical abilities.

b) From the perspective evaluation of professional performances in administrative personnel

² H.G. no. 611/2008 for approving rules regarding professional organization and development of public employees.

In terms of management theory, professional performance appraisal system is an intrinsic and extremely important part of the human resources management (M.R.U.) in particular. According to J.T. Austin and P. Villanova (see fig. no.1), evaluation of performance is a central activity of M.R.U. because it affects numerous decisions of the M.R.U. system (Manolescu, 2001, p. 382; Ferris and Buckley, 1996, p. 272).

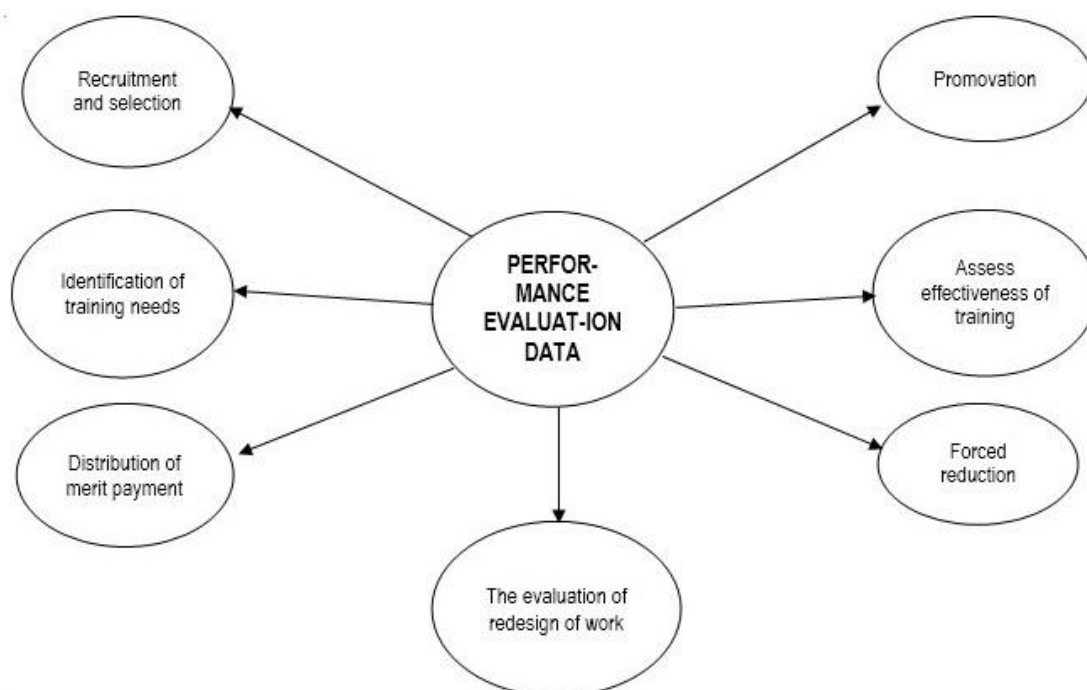


FIGURE 1 - CONNECTIONS OF THE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PROCESS WITH OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Source: after J.T. Austin, P. Villanova and H. D. Hindman

According to the opinion of other specialists through more strategic approach to individual and organizational performance, its evaluation should be regarded as a central element of the concept of "performance management" (Anderson and Herriot, 1994, p.42). In fact, the essence of the professional performance evaluation process is that it must concern every employee's contribution to achieving organizational goals. In regards to the Romanian public sector, although the legislature's intention was that the performance of civil servants to be evaluated in conjunction with and in relation to institutional objectives, this situation was not reflected in institutional practice, mainly as a consequence of training individuals directly involved in the human resources process (both decision-making levels and operational levels), and the lack of tools that provide standardized correlations based on the requirements of the position with skills, abilities aptitudes of potential employees³.

c) From the perspective of motivation and remuneration of managerial personnel

³ The Strategy to Strengthen Public Administration, 2014-2020 (project)

The specialty literature shows that rewarding employees is a very important field of the M.R.U., which affects both employee behavior and organizational effectiveness (Manolescu, 2001, p.456). Regarding public administration, the salary cuts introduced by the Law no.118/2010, and the budgetary constraints have made the Law on the unitary pay of personnel paid from the public funds no.284/2010 to be applied only partially. The main aspects for which are not applicable the law of unitary pay of personnel are those concerning to the method of determine wages (using hierarchal coefficients and the reference value), and granting of bonuses and allowances, which just represents principal factors such as to ensure the unitary pay. At the same time, through art. 23 of the law there is the possibility of monthly prizes up to 2% of the salary's expenses for relevant staff in positions to obtain outstanding results⁴, the provision could not be applied due to budgetary cuts. Currently the ministry is considering the introduction of a new provision that would foster professional performance by awarding an excellence prize up to 2 basic wages / year, which will not generate additional costs to those agreed with the sphere of international banks, as it will provide savings to the salary fund⁵.

d) From the perspective of training of civil servants

According to the theory of management, professional training and development represents fundamental activities aimed at developing human resources in general and the development of individual's career in particular. From this point of view, the main problem facing the government at present is that few institutions and public authorities communicate annually to the National Agency of Civil Servants, the plan for professional training of civil servants and the forecast of required funds (those being substantially reduced because of recent budgetary cuts). Other issues concerning the training system of civil servants is the fact that⁶: there is not a national database containing tutorials and training courses on specific fields practiced by the civil servants; there isn't a uniform quality management mechanism on training programs; there isn't a validating system of correlating training needs with the attributions needs for the job for each public official, practiced in various forms of professional development, etc.

To all the problems mentioned above are added some objective aspects generated by the current socio-economic and political environment, which is reflected in our country and will influence the labor market,

⁴ Article 23 of Law no. 284/2010 regarding the unitary remuneration of personnel paid from public funds, as amended and supplemented

⁵ The Strategy for Strengthening Public Administration, 2014-2020 (Project)

⁶ Idem

with long term risk of imbalances between supply and demand of the workforce. For example, regarding public administration, there are the following⁷:

- a) The structure by age of the civil servants shows a high degree of aging, the age group over 50 years representing 35.5% of all civil servants. Simultaneously, another concern related to this issue is the distribution of the other age group in the public sector: 35.2% of civil servants are aged between 40-50 years old, the age group 30-40 years old 25.55% fall within this category, while only 3.75% of civil servants are under 30 years old. The result is noticeable, especially having a significant impact on adaptability and transformation of the administrative system.
- b) Concentration of executive staff in public administration in higher professional ranks, mainly that: 50% represent higher grade public positions, 25.2% primary level public functions and only 24.8% level and junior assistant public positions. This situation is aggravated by the fact that 53.24% of executive civil servants have reached the maximum professional level, higher education, with implications for professional performances to decrease when compared to their motivation, while only 87.25% of the public functions at the level of professional debutant are vacant;
- c) Today, salaries are not established according to the framework of Law no. 284/2010 using the coefficients of hierarchy and the reference value, the determination of basic salaries is the same as the one set prior the enforcement of the above law, namely that since December 2009, which led to some discrepancies in wages.

Concluding this part of the study, it can be said that implementing a performance management in the Romanian public administration is needed a simultaneously strategic approach of all mentioned deficiencies.

5. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, PRIORITY ACTIONS AND POLICIES' RESULTS OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN THE ROMANIAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

From the perspective of achieving a performant management in the Romanian administration (in 2014-2020), the current program of government targets the adaptation of policies and the entire human resources system to the goals of a modern administration. Thus, some of the strategic objectives,

⁷ The data and information presented were taken from the Socio-economic Analysis conducted at the level the Thematic Advisory Board and Good Governance in 2013, which represents the situation actually recorded in the year of 2012 (See Strategy to Strengthen Public Administration 2014-2020)

specifically envisaged by the present government to resolve the deficiencies in human resource administration system, follow⁸:

- I. Increasing professionalism and stability in the public function, as a result of adapting recruitment, selection and evaluation of performance management requirements;
- II. Reviewing motivational human resources policies in the public administration, inclusive from the point of view of career opportunities and remuneration performance oriented;
- III. Integrated approach to developing skills for the public administration.

Some of the priority actions to be undertaken in 2014-2020, to achieve the objective mentioned above, that into consideration⁹:

- Creation of competency frameworks on common strategic areas of activities in the administration domain (public policies, rulemaking, human resources, finance and internal audit management, project management, institutional representation in the work of international relations, etc.);
- Assessment of current recruitment systems for the introduction of amendments to facilitate the existence of a greater degree of correlation between staffing needs of the system and the institutions and skills, knowledge and competencies of people interest in a career in administration;
- Implementation of an evaluation system for staff, based on criteria aiming abilities, performance and conduct (change of current evaluation system);
- Increasing transparency on recruitment, promotion and performance of functions. Thus, actions on increasing transparency will consider:
 - clear definition of management functions, along with how to delegate decisional competencies;
 - establish of new mechanisms for mobility and penalties, based on criteria including performance targets and the possibility to administratively appeal and in the courts / specialized bodies.
- Facilitate the implementation of the Framework Law no. 284/2010 regarding the unitary remuneration of personnel paid from public funds. For this it is considering revising the entire regulatory framework and reintroducing salary elements that reward performance at individual

⁸ The strategy to strengthen public administration 2014-2020 (Project)

⁹ The strategy to strengthen public administration 2014-2020 (Project)

level (possible solution for financing new measures creating savings at the salary fund level, by authorized officers, so that these can use the relevant amounts for the above mentioned target);

- Redefining the system of vocational training and development of skills for public administration (strategic, normative, methodological and institutional framework). Underlying this strategic priority will form the three parts followed in the evaluation process – competence, efficiency and conduct;
- Establishing and implementing principals for quality assurance regarding professional training for the public administration. In order to achieve this strategic priority, an important role will be played by the National Agency of Civil Servants, which should¹⁰:
- establish priorities and to develop or, where appropriate, to endorse national policies and strategies regarding professional training for the public administration, in conjunction with national / European policies regarding professional training, but based on the needs of the administration;
- establish the necessary and relevant skills for performing different categories of functions, or, where appropriate, the different categories of public power activities in conjunction with the national inventory systems and description of those competences, but based on the needs directly resulting from the architecture of recruitment and selection systems in the public sector, in particular of those based on career development;
- define the modalities for recognition of skills resulted from learning activities, made by each person while exercising public functions, corresponding the exact method of how this was achieved (formal or informal system);
- redefine the institutional goals and priorities so that activities / tasks specific to the training provider status are subject to promote self-reliant activities like branding, re-branding and marketing of the product;
- redefine an appropriate institutional structure of the new objectives, based on including additional allocated human resources.

The expected results to be achieved in terms of adaptation of policies and human resources of the whole system to the objectives of a modern administration can be summarized, as follows:

¹⁰Idem

TABLE - 1

NAME OF SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES; PRIORITY ACTIONS	RESULTS
Specific objective I: Increasing professionalism and stability in the public domain, as a result of adapting recruitment, selection and evaluation procedures to the requirements of performance management	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish and implement a system of standardization of skills in strategic domains of activities in administration (e.g. public policies, human resources, financial management and internal audit, project management, etc.), for various types of functions and specific domains, where appropriate (e.g. specific functions which are part of some ministries etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defining and identification of strategic and specific domains; - Defining and implementing of frameworks on strategic and specific domains; - Updating relevant occupational standards.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment of current recruitment systems for the introductions of amendments to facilitate the existence of a greater degree of correlation between the needs of the institutions and the abilities, knowledge and competences of persons interested in a career in administration, along with the implementation of a evaluation system for the staff based on criteria aimed to competence, performance and conduct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of the current situation (from the point of view of enforcing current rules); - Updating legislation through the integration of positive aspects and example of good practice (amending and completing Law no. 188/1999 regarding the status of civil servants) identified as a result of implementing YPS¹¹ and BSGR¹² programs, and also of the analytical pilot system of career development in the public industry (rules, manuals, guides, etc.).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased transparency on recruitment, promotion and performance of functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased degree of transparency about the activities of staffing, promotion and performance of functions
Specific objective II: Review of motivational human resource policies in public administration (AP), inclusive of career opportunities and salaries driven by performance	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate the implementation of Framework Law no. 284/2010 on the unitary pay process paid from public funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on salaries of staff paid from public funds, developed in 2015; - By December 2020, the implementation of stages of a unitary pay system and considerable decrease (by December 2020) of wage gaps generated by demotivation of civil servants.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish of a coherent system of recruitment and development of personnel performance evaluation methodology of structural funds and investments, based on performance criteria stipulated by national law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specific requirements for recruitment by competitions of the personnel who manages community funds, and also an unified pay system, unique and stimulating for the same category of staff (established in December 2014); - Develop a mechanism for periodic assessment of performance at the individual level, based on performance indicators established for each position (beginning with January 2015); - Provide financial incentives based on individual performance;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation of the YPS and BSGR programs and integrating the "+" aspects through a new approach of career development in AP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legislation updated with the "+" aspects and examples of good practice (from June 2015 to December 2020)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of an occupational pension scheme for staff in AP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developed occupational pension scheme for staff from the administration industry (date of completion is December 2018)
Specific Objective III: The integrated approach to development of competences in the public administration (AP)	

¹¹ Young Professional Scheme¹² Romanian Government Special Scholarship

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Redefining the vocational training system (strategic, normative, methodological and institutional framework) and skills development for AP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and implement public policies on training and skills development for AP; - Creation of a functional and sustainable regulatory and institutional framework; - Implement a system of quality assurance for the training processes; - Analysis of establishing an entity responsible in terms of training of the AP.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment and implementation of quality assurance principles, regarding the vocational training for AP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement a system of quality assurance of the training processes (deadline June 2017); - Creating permanent mechanism for collaboration between institutions in terms of providing quality vocational training (as part of the new regulatory and institutional framework)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training of AP personnel in correlation with developed competence frameworks and institutional needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal strategies for developing staff skills (throughout 2014-2020); - Implementation of staff training programs (developed on strategic and specific domains, with poor expertise throughout the period 2014-2020)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professionalism of counseling activities within the cabinets of dignitaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing decisional and high quality advice on policy maker factors; - Conducting activities on specific training, related to the functions and the role of concerned persons; - Development of a framework for specific competences, for functions aimed at advisers working in political areas.

Source: The action plan on strategy implementation to strengthen public administration, 2014-2020

CONCLUSIONS

Currently, both the Romanian Government and at the level of European Union, there is a major concern relating to the modernization of the Romanian public administration, so that this is able to fulfill its role as a facilitator of socio-economic development for the country. In fact, this concern is also apparent in the negotiations that the Executive of Bucharest has with the European Commission relating to the Partnership, which will be the basis for grants from the structural funds for the entire period 2014-2020.

All the strategic objectives and also the priority actions mentioned above, related to human resources in Romanian public administration aim the need to prepare the country to meets its obligations assumed at the European level concerning a series of goals set by the European Strategy 2020. The objectives and lines of action set out above will be complemented by those contained in the Integrated Strategy for Human Resources Development (SIDRU) of the lifelong learning perspective, which considers the current problems in Romania in the field of education, employment and social inclusion and which could be financed by the European Social Fund throughout 2014-2020¹³.

¹³ The Project for Integrated Strategy of Human Resources Development, from the point of view of lifelong learning perspective, 2009-2020

Given the fact that, the strategic approach to human resources development is a mandatory requirement in the era of globalization, we can say that continuous training of employees is essential (Manole, 2012, p.53). Only in this way, human resources, both in public administration industry and other sectors of the national economy, will cope with increased competitive pressures on the European and global market (Manole, 2012, pp.60-61).

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