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SOME TOPICS OF THE COPERNICUS REFORM:

THE REMUNERATION SYSTEM FOR FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVANTS AND SALARY REFORM IN THE BELGIAN PUBLIC SECTOR

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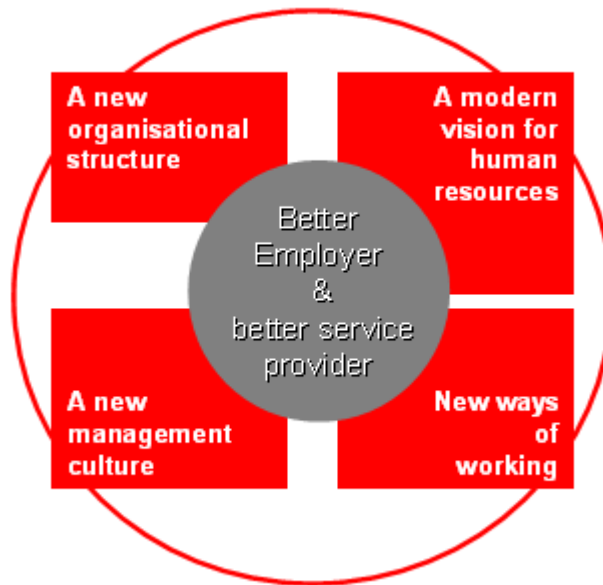
Seminar on

**“Remuneration Systems for Civil Servants and Salary Reform”
Vilnius, 14 December 2006**

**Civil Service Dept. under the Lithuanian Interior Ministry
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Context

“Twin objectives: better services, a better employer”



The Copernicus plan was a “route map” for the reform of the Belgian Federal Administration. It aimed to improve the services which the Administration offers to the citizens, and the conditions and prospects it provides to its employees.

The Copernicus reform was and is still based on the recognition that the citizen has a central position within the state, and that the Administration is there to provide the service level which the citizens deserve. To do this, the Administration has to move with the times, and adapt to the needs of contemporary society.

In order to meet these twin objectives, the Federal Administration is being reformed in four main areas, providing:

- a new organisational structure;
- a new way of working;
- a new management culture;
- a new vision for human resources.

The first two areas are not the subject of this seminar. This paper focuses only on a few themes of the last two areas.

I. A New Management Culture

The mandate system is based on four elements:

- a six-year mandate for top officials;
- mandates are weighted according to the function they cover;
- a new selection procedure;
- a business plan and operational plans.

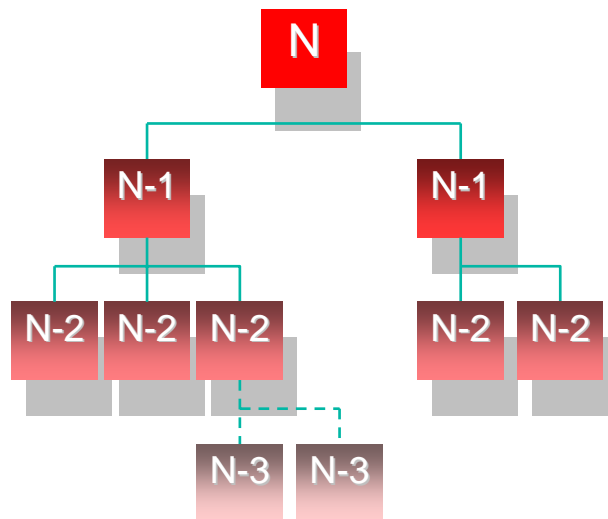
Under the Copernicus Reform, top management positions such as the President of a Federal Public Service (FPS) are subject to a six-year mandate. The objective of the mandate is to assign clearly defined responsibilities to the top levels of management, whilst allowing them sufficient freedom in the way they run their service or division.

The new mandate system implies that new demands are being made of managers. A new kind of recruitment procedure was therefore necessary in order to find the right people with the right skills and experience, relating both to technical issues and to management.

For the first time, an assessment centre was used as a selection tool. Within three months of the appointment, a President must present a management plan with strategic and operational objectives and budgets for the service.

The levels below the President must make operational plans for their own divisions and units in line with the overall strategic plan. Mandate-holders are evaluated every two years by external experts on the basis of their management plan. This can lead to the plan being revised or the position being re-assessed. At the end of each six-year mandate, a global evaluation is made. Mandates are not renewable: a manager may re-apply for the post, but will have to go through a new competitive recruitment procedure.

Mandates will apply to the top three levels of management (N, N-1, N-2). Within the FPS Finance, by far the largest public service, there will also be an N-3 level, governed by a mandate.



II. Some Topics of a Modern Vision for Human Resource Management

In the years 1999-2002, the accent was laid on the revision of the careers at levels B, C and D. Those are characterised by a pecuniary revalorisation based on a system of measurement of competences.

In August 2004, the career at level A was also finalised. The job channels and the certified trainings lie in the heart of the development of this career. In the long term, certified trainings will also be introduced for the levels B, C and D.

The new human resource policy places a new value on the skills of its personnel and on increasing personnel satisfaction

3 main aspects of human resource management:

- recruitment and selection;
- salaries and careers;
- and personal development.

Professional selection and recruitment of personnel.

In recruitment and selection there is an important shift away from generic, theoretical knowledge testing towards function-specific criteria. This focus on an individual's skill and expertise is at the heart of all recruitment, whether for new hires or for promotions. (See: "Make your talent public! Belgian Civil Service Recruitment Procedures" by Corinne Benharrosh Vilnius 21-22 March 2006)

Remuneration and career possibilities in line with the private sector.

If the Administration wants to attract good, motivated staff, retain its employees, and keep them satisfied, it must ensure that salaries are in line with those for comparable jobs in the private sector. It also means that staff need to be provided with genuine opportunities for career progression.

In the past, tests on theoretical knowledge and number of years in service were the only routes a civil servant could take to move their career on. The "salaries & careers" programme introduces a

new approach which is focused on a person's skills, rewarding those who are willing to develop and sustain the right skills. Career progression depends on passing a series of consecutive competency tests. These ensure that skills are set at the level required for the job.

A reward system has also been introduced: everyone passing a competency test will receive a related bonus for a set period thereafter.

Skills-building and personal development.

Training contributes to participants' personal development, and should be relevant for their current (or future) work. There is now specialised training in public administration management, as a means of improving management skills among promising staff.

(Public Management Programme).

During the evaluation process an individual civil servant's developmental needs are identified. Based on the outcome of this evaluation, the direct supervisor assumes the responsibility for stimulating personal development.

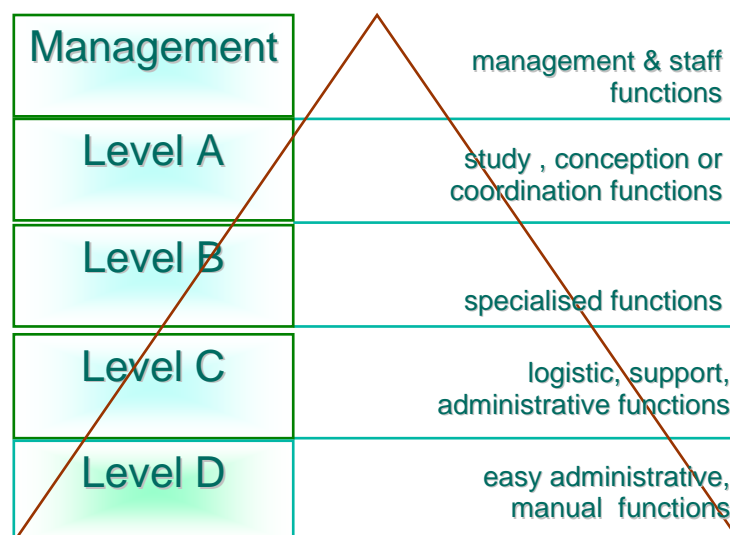
Continuous learning is further stimulated by the new career and remuneration policy. This favours those who are willing to develop specific expertise which helps them carry out their function more efficiently. Succeeding in competency tests is an accelerator for career development.

III. Career Structure

The functions within the federal administration have been subdivided in 4 levels. The diploma plays still an important role at the recruitment, but the job description and the required competences become more important: the civil servant must be good in what he does and must prove that he has all the correct competences. In return the civil servant becomes more possibilities to progress to a higher level and to be rewarded suitable.

All careers have been reconsidered in a thorough manner and the last years salaries have been revalued:

- in 2002, for the levels B, C and D;
- in 2004, for level A;
- in 2005, for level D.



Employees of level D perform mainly executive work. They have one of the following degrees:

- administrative employee;
- kitchen/cleaning employee;
- technical employee.

Staff members of level C are administrative or technical assistants. They perform for example secretariat work, treat files or work as technical draughtsman, graphic illustrator or printer.

The staff members of level B are called expert. They have one of the following degrees:

- administrative expert, for example an executive board secretary;
- financial expert, for example an accountant;
- technical expert, for example a land-surveyor, a paramedic, a social assistant;
- ICT-expert, for example a programmer or programmer analyst.

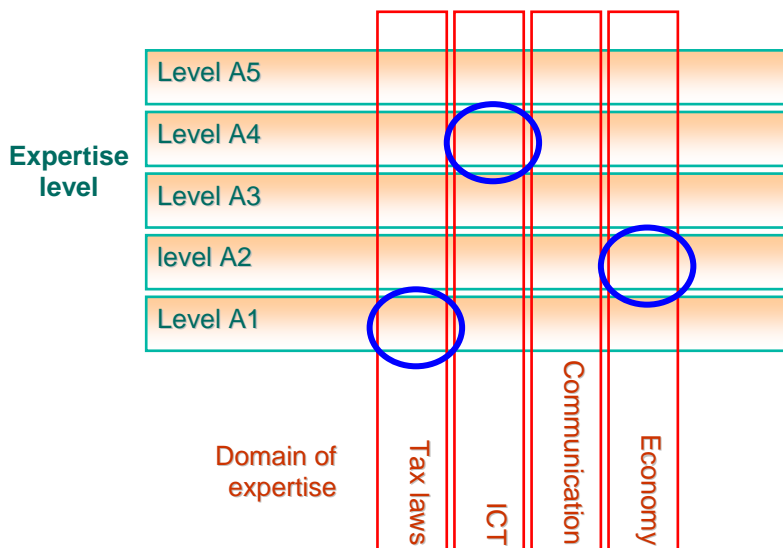
In the career of level A, functions have been entirely subdivided in domains of expertise, expertise levels and function classes.

A domain of expertise groups functions with homogeneous activities and knowledge.

Examples of this are the domains of expertise 'data processing', 'taxation', 'staff and organisation', etc.

Within these domains of expertise, the expertise level groups functions which are similar in the field of complexity, level of technical expertise and responsibility. Functions are ranked in classes on the basis of their relative weight in the organisation. The class A1 represents the 'easiest' functions of the level A and the class A5 the most 'difficult'.

The combination of a domain of expertise and a expertise level is a function class.



In this career structure, promotion possibilities and possibilities to develop competences are provided: a civil servant has the opportunity to build himself his own career by developing his skills thanks to permanent training. To be successful in the so-called certified training in a domain of expertise, plays a central role. This training is concluded with an evaluation of the achieved knowledge and skills.

When the civil servant succeeds the test, he is entitled to receive:

- a competence allowance,
- a salary scale progression or
- a change of function class (only of A12 to A21).

Managements and staff functions are subject to a specific regulation.

IV. Salary, allowances and compensations

Salary

The monthly amount depends on

- the level (A, B, C, D) and function class (for level A) or degree (for the levels B, C and D);
- the salary scale in the function class or the degree of the staff member;
- the seniority.

As a lot of factors can influence the salary amount, in the next tables only a few simple examples stand of what a civil servant can earn per level. The amounts are always the gross monthly salary amounts of a single appointed civil servant without persons to burden.

The net monthly salary amount is the gross monthly salary amount minus the social contributions, taxes and a particular social security contribution. The net monthly amount that is mentioned here, counts for an appointed civil servant (on 1st October 2006).

Level A	Seniority	Gross monthly amount	Net monthly amount
Attaché (A11)	Minimum	2 503.07 €	1 538.37 €
Advisor (A32)	11 years	4 759.04 €	2 514.00 €
Advisor-general (A43)	Maximum	6 748.46 €	3 318.40 €
Level B	Seniority	Gross monthly amount	Net monthly amount
Administrative expert	Minimum	1 729.96 €	1 212.66 €
	Maximum	3 508.19 €	1 982.18 €
Technical or financial expert	Minimum	1 922.38 €	1 293.18 €
	Maximum	3 789.99 €	2 107.75 €
ICT-expert	Minimum	1 976.15 €	1 319.98 €
	Maximum	4 026.42 €	2 209.61 €
Level C	Seniority	Gross monthly amount	Net monthly amount
Administrative and technical assistant	Minimum	1 632.91 €	1 168.38 €
	Maximum	3 107.84 €	1 816.30 €
Level D	Seniority	Gross monthly amount	Net monthly amount
Administrative employee	Minimum	1 472.82 €	1 089.02 €
	Maximum	2 265.13 €	1 426.76 €
Technical employee	Minimum	1 509.03 €	1 107.23 €
	Maximum	2 714.04 €	1 643.89 €

The salaries of managers and staff functions depends on the weighting of their function and are spread out over seven classes:

Management and staff functions

Class	Gross monthly amount	Net monthly amount
7	13 453.52 €	6 095.50 €
6	11 687.38 €	5 359.12 €
5	9 996.88 €	4 665.94 €
4	8 372.45 €	3 991.41 €
3	7 494.20 €	3 627.51 €
2	6 532.79 €	3 229.77 €
1	5 945.77 €	2 988.48 €

Housing or residence allowance

When his gross year salary is inferior to 25 162.42 €, the civil servant is entitled to an additional compensation. According to his personal civil state he receives either a 'housing' or a 'residence' allowance that is added to his salary.

The 'housing' allowance is awarded to:

- the staff members that are married or live together, except when their spouse or the person with who they live together, gets already allowance;
- the single staff members who have one or more children that entitled him to a child allowance;
- the civil servants who are entitled to an child allowance.

The 'residence' allowance is awarded at the staff members that don't receive a 'housing' allowance.

Allowance: gross monthly amount	When gross annual salary is lower than 22101.86 €:	When gross annual salary is between 22101.86 € and 25162.42 €
Housing allowance	82.36 €	41.18 €
Residence allowance	41.18 €	20.59 €

Competence allowance

Who succeeds the competence test or the certified training, gets a competence allowance. The competence allowance is paid each year in one time in September on the basis of the services which are performed during the 12 past months: who for instance works 4/5, gets 4/5 of the allowance.

The competence allowance is counted for the calculation of the holiday money and the end of year allowance. It is also taken in account for the calculation of the old-age pension and the survivor's pension. (See: "Social security benefits in the Belgian Public Sector: A brief overview" by Johan Janssens -Vilnius 9 November 2006)

	Gross annual allowance 2006	Validity period
Level A		
Expertise level 1	2 745.60 €	6 years
Expertise level 2 & 3	4 118.40 €	6 years

Level B		
Administrative, financial and technical expert	2 745.60 €	5 years
ICT-expert	3 432.00 €	3 years
Level C		
Administrative and technical assistant	2 333.76 €	8 years
Level D		
Administrative employee (from 1/9/2007)	1 372.80 €	8 years
Technical employee (from 1/9/2006)	1 372.80 €	8 years
Kitchen / cleaning employee (from 1/9/2007)	1 098.24 €	8 years

A management bonus

An annual management bonus is awarded at particular staff members of the level C and D that either directly lead a team of at least 10 persons, either were indicated through the hierarchy. The bonus is paid monthly under the same conditions as the salary: the bonus is not taken into account for the calculation of the holiday money, the end of year allowance and for the calculation of the pension.

Level	Annual amount of the bonus (on 1st October 2006)
Level D – appointed & contract civil servant Administrative or Technical employee	686.40 €
Level D – contract civil servant Kitchen or cleaning employee	686.40 €
Level C – appointed & contract civil servant Administrative or Technical assistant	1 372.80 €

Language premium

At the civil servants who can proof a minimal knowledge level of the other national language, a premium for bilingualism can be awarded (French for Dutch speakers and vice versa).

Holiday money

For all civil servants of level A, B, C and D, the holiday money amounts to 92% of the gross monthly salary amount. The holiday money is paid in May.

End of year allowance

The end of year allowance consists of a fixed and a variable sum. The allowance is paid in the month December. In 2005, the fixed part amounted to 306 1433 €. The variable part amounted to 2.5% of the gross salary amount for the month October of that year.

Sources:

- www.belgium.be (French & Dutch with a limited amount of content available in English and German).
- www.pdos-sdpsp.fgov.be (only French & Dutch).
- www.selor.be (only French & Dutch).