



“Attractiveness of Public Service Jobs among the Students of Yerevan’s Leading Universities”

SUMMARY REPORT

Increasing the attractiveness of the public service is one of the main targets of the public administration reforms which is stated in the 2021-2026 Government Program of the Republic of Armenia and in the relevant sectoral strategies. The Government of the Republic of Armenia submitted for public discussion the draft decision “On Approving the Package of Public Administration Reform Strategy by 2030”. In the draft “Public Administration Reform Strategy by 2030: Government 4.0”, low management efficiency, inadequate institutional capacity, inefficiency of the policy development and implementation system, the insufficient quality and efficiency of service provision by the state for the public, and the imperfection of the public service system are identified as key problems. People are perhaps the most important among the four pillars of the strategy: policy, services, people and institutions. It is not accidental that regarding people, the establishment of a professional public service with high awareness of the public interest, decent remuneration and independent of the change in the balance of political forces, was considered a strategic goal.

Increasing the attractiveness of the public service is considered in the context of attracting professional and highly trained personnel, which, as a key factor, will make the development and implementation of effective, evidence-based and applied policies possible. Current statistical data prove that the demand for “non-worker” professional labour force in the public sector is rather high (59% of the total demand for the labour force, with professionals with high and medium qualifications being the most in demand. Nevertheless, there is a significant demand for such specialists also in the private sector which uses more proactive, flexible and modern mechanisms for labour force engagement, creating an environment where significant risks arise in terms of “brain drain” from the public sector to the private sector, moreover, including not only the existing workforce, but also making the sector attractive for young personnel with great potential (according to 2021 data, 34.3% of first-time job seekers are 16-29 years old). Engagement of the latter is a matter of strategic importance from the perspective of development and improvement of public service capacities, considering the huge potential of young professionals to bring in positive changes and innovative approaches, as well as the appropriateness and importance of training competitive personnel in the public service sector, including for future leadership positions.

Statistical data show that over the recent years, especially starting from the 2018-2019 academic year, the number of specialists trained by RA higher education institutions has significantly decreased (by about 2,000 graduates against the previous academic year). This, in turn, implies that there will be a bigger competition between the public and private sectors in terms of attracting the “best” personnel with appropriate education. Therefore, there is a need to better understand the factors and circumstances that are decisive and considered attractive for the selection of future

employment sectors by young professionals receiving higher education as potential professional workforce who are going to enter the labour market in the next couple of years, and how the public service sector can become more attractive for young professionals.

The research is also interesting considering the fact that so far targeted research in this direction was carried out only by individual universities in this country, in order to study the career course of their graduates. Whereas, the implementation of such a research would enable to form a complete understanding of the combination of stimulating and repelling factors that ultimately determine the choice of a job by a young professional in favour of the public or private sector.