

NATIONAL MODEL FOR TRAINING CIVIL SERVANTS IN TURKMENISTAN

Ogultach Soyunova¹

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ABSTRACT

The transition to a market economy in Turkmenistan necessitated the formation of a state structure, as well as institutional forms and methods aligned with the new level of economic relations characteristic of the modern era. Accordingly, the development of the civil service in the country began alongside the establishment of a new system of state governance. Given that the civil service constitutes an integral part of the economic sector and that its development largely depends on processes occurring within this sphere, the system for training, retraining, and professional development of civil servants plays a decisive role in determining the overall state of the national economy. As a result, the creation of a highly qualified civil service has become a top priority. Various mechanisms are being developed to establish a modern, professional civil service capable of ensuring the country's long-term development and the effective implementation of state policy across multiple sectors. Leaders, civil servants, lawyers, and economists must possess a high level of moral and ethical development. In response to ongoing changes in economic theory and regulatory legislation, the Academy continually improves and updates its curriculum. The training of managerial personnel in Turkmenistan is guided by national priorities.

Keywords: *Civil service, executives, government agencies, management, practical skills, digital economy, education system, career advancement*

BACKGROUND

The civil service in Turkmenistan began to take shape following the establishment of a new system of state governance. Today, Turkmenistan is a sovereign and independent state that possesses all the political and international legal attributes inherent to members of the global community. The country is currently undergoing a complex transformation that includes the transition of the national economy to market-based mechanisms, the development of new economic infrastructure, and the introduction of modern forms and methods of state regulation.

Prior to independence, Turkmenistan's economy was largely oriented toward the extraction and supply of raw materials. Agriculture played a dominant role, accounting for approximately 40 percent of the national economy, with a pronounced specialisation in cotton production. Industry contributed about 17 percent to the gross domestic product, more than 80 percent of which was generated by the extractive sectors.

The transition to a market economy required the development of a state structure, as well as forms and methods, consistent with the new level of economic relations characteristic of the modern era. The establishment of new organisational structures and the improvement of

¹ Senior Lecturer, Department of Economics and Finance, PhD in Economics, Academy of Public Administration under the President of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. Email: ogultachsoyunova@gmail.com

forms and methods of public administration are aimed at increasing the efficiency of the state apparatus, strengthening a culture of legality among public sector employees, fostering commitment and responsibility in the activities of all institutions of the state and society, and enhancing citizen creativity and public participation in governance.

At present, the country's economic sectors demonstrate positive production performance. Sustainable growth is observed across all areas of the economy. According to the results of the past year, gross domestic product growth remained stable at 6.3 percent. Growth rates amounted to 1.8 percent in the industrial sector, 7.9 percent in construction, 9.8 percent in transportation and communications, 9.6 percent in trade, 7 percent in agriculture, and 7.5 percent in services. Compared with 2024, overall output increased by 10.2 percent in 2025. Execution of the revenue side of the country's main financial plan for 2025 reached 101.5 percent, while the expenditure side was implemented at 99.7 percent.

As a result, industry accounts for 30.8 percent of the country's gross domestic product. The share of extractive industries in industrial value added has declined significantly, amounting to 34.7 percent in 2024, while manufacturing industries account for 62.9 percent. The combined share of the light and food industries has increased to nearly 50 percent. In 2024, agriculture represented 12.4 percent of GDP, trade and public catering services 18.8 percent, transportation and communications 10.3 percent, and construction 5.9 percent.

Against the backdrop of improved industrial development, the country's foreign trade turnover has shown steady growth. In 2024, exports accounted for more than 61.2 percent of total foreign trade turnover. The main trading partners were China, with a share of 62.1 percent, and Italy, accounting for 12.6 percent. Overall, foreign trade turnover in 2024 exceeded the 2020 level by nearly 45.0 percent.

As is well known, "the civil service constitutes an integral part of the economic sector, and its development largely depends on processes taking place within this sphere. Accordingly, the level of development of the system for training, retraining, and professional development of civil servants determines the overall state of the country's economy" (Annamuradov and Soyunova, 2016). At the same time, the condition and performance of the economy directly depend on the effectiveness of civil servants in performing their duties.

In this context, Turkmenistan's new economic policy places emphasis on the introduction of modern governance methods at all levels, broad democratisation, and the full activation of the human factor. Under these conditions, effective public administration is driven by the need to ensure the implementation of state policies aimed at the efficient use of natural, labour, material, and information resources, the fair distribution of income, and the safeguarding of fundamental social and economic rights. One of the primary objectives at the current stage is the modernisation of public administration, the rationalisation of its organisational structure, and the improvement of its overall efficiency.

NATIONAL MODEL FOR TRAINING

The modernisation of public administration, in turn, presupposes the systematic training and professional development of civil servants at all levels, considering the new state ideology, as well as modern legislative and legal approaches, within the framework of an integrated system of public administration. In the context of growing external challenges, the achievement of the objectives of market reforms largely depends on the effectiveness and consistency of public administration reforms.

Personnel training in Turkmenistan, as in many foreign countries, is conducted through specialised state universities and specialised educational institutions in which the future managerial elite is formed. Each higher education institution independently determines the ranges of disciplines necessary for training specialists. It is widely recognised that a classical university education provides a solid theoretical foundation; however, due to its disciplinary orientation, it often lags behind the dynamic needs of a developing economy. A modern civil servant therefore requires not only specialised professional knowledge, but also a broad outlook, flexible thinking, and the ability to initiate and manage change in response to evolving external conditions.

Insufficient professionalism remains one of the primary causes of inefficiency in the activities of public authorities. As the experience of many countries demonstrates, a state that fails to ensure the proper development of its civil service apparatus inevitably faces serious challenges in governance. Consequently, the training of highly qualified and competent civil servants has become an urgent requirement of the present stage of development. The transformation of the role of the state in the context of the transition to market-based forms of governance objectively necessitates raising the professional and educational level of civil servants and attracting specialists capable of thinking in innovative and non-standard ways.

“In the context of the transition to a digital economy, particular importance is attached to identifying and developing the information and communication technology competencies required of civil servants, in accordance with their functional responsibilities and role within the public administration system”.²

Taking the foregoing into account, the creation of a highly qualified civil service system occupies a central place on today’s policy agenda. Various mechanisms are being developed to establish a modern civil service based on professionalism, capable of ensuring the country’s long-term development and the effective implementation of state policy across a wide range of areas.

With the establishment of the Academy of Civil Service under the President of Turkmenistan, civil service and public administration were institutionalised as an academic discipline. The Academy of Civil Service under the President of Turkmenistan maintains close cooperation with the National Academy of Sciences of Turkmenistan and with international organisations. Through the implementation of joint projects, the “Academy consistently conducts research in key areas of public administration reform and the training of managerial personnel, while also developing interactive teaching methods and updated educational programmes”.³ The powers of the Academic Council of the Academy have been significantly expanded, both in developing the main directions of scientific research activities and in making conclusions on dissertation research and recommendations for the publication of textbooks and teaching aids.

Opportunities are also being created for training and professional development abroad for both faculty and students, as well as for leading international experts invited to teach at the Academy. All of this has contributed to the development of a new, concrete scientific and

² Concept for the Development of the Digital Economy in Turkmenistan for 2026–2028. Collection of Regulatory Acts of the President of Turkmenistan and Decisions of the Government of Turkmenistan, 2025, No 10.

³ Resolution of the President of Turkmenistan “On Certain Issues of the Academy of Civil Service under the President of Turkmenistan”. Collection of Regulatory Acts of the President of Turkmenistan and Decisions of the Government of Turkmenistan, 2020, No 1 of the President of Turkmenistan “On Certain Issues of the Academy of Civil Service under the President of Turkmenistan”. Collection of regulatory acts of the President of Turkmenistan and decisions of the Government of Turkmenistan. 2020, No 1.

theoretical framework based on innovative decision-making methods for civil servants, drawing on the experience of domestic public administration.

Proceeding from the premise that every national leader, civil servant, lawyer, and economist must possess a high level of moral and ethical development and taking into account ongoing changes in economic science as well as in the regulatory and legal framework that underpins the national economy, the Academy continuously improves and updates its curricula.

The continuously renewed curricula include disciplines aimed at developing a modern understanding of market relations and enhancing competencies in economic management and regulation for civil servants in the fields of law, political science, economics, sociology, psychology, and management. This comprehensive and fundamental training enables graduates to acquire professional competencies necessary for teaching, research, and applied public administration activities. At the same time, the training of managerial personnel in Turkmenistan is guided by national priorities. The primary objective of leadership training is the formation of professionals capable of effectively implementing public policy within the framework of a sovereign state.

To achieve the stated objectives, the country is systematically improving its regulatory and legal framework, while examining specific organisational and legal aspects of this issue that make it possible to identify practical ways to enhance the system for training managerial personnel.

On the basis of newly approved regulations, the Academy is expanding its training programmes for management specialists, including those developed with the participation of the business sector. While the Academy of Civil Service under the President of Turkmenistan continues to fulfil its core mission of advanced training and retraining of civil servants, the launch of Master's degree programmes in 2020 has opened new opportunities for career advancement in public administration, governance, and business. The Academy consistently seeks to increase the number of Master programmes offered across various fields on an annual basis.

Particular emphasis in the training of management personnel is placed on the development of practical skills and competencies necessary for effective management at all levels of the government apparatus. Thus, in accordance with the requirements, Turkmenistan has created its own model for addressing issues related to the development and accelerated development of the civil service. All training programmes for civil servants are developed accordingly, considering active responses to emerging issues, which are reflected in the President's strategic programmes and plans, as well as the country's socioeconomic development policy initiatives.

Here, in our opinion, it is important to note that today, the country's government agencies are not adequately implementing planned and systematic training and professional development for their employees. Some government agencies do not pay sufficient attention to the training of their employees.

Even though "the Academy of Public Administration is developing and implementing specialised training courses for management personnel at all levels, including programs covering the fundamentals of the digital economy and other relevant areas,"⁴ it currently lacks sufficient capacity to actively engage in the training of civil servants in the regions. To improve

⁴ Concept for the Development of the Digital Economy in Turkmenistan for 2026–2028. Collection of Regulatory Acts of the President of Turkmenistan and Decisions of the Government of Turkmenistan, 2025, No 10.

this situation, it is necessary to establish institutions for advanced training and professional development of civil servants in all regional centres of the country, thereby ensuring broader territorial coverage.

In this regard, the experience of the Russian Federation is of particular interest. In Russia, each federal subject has a branch of the civil service training system that plays a key role in the retraining and professional development of civil servants. According to available data, in Western European countries, approximately 10 percent of local government personnel undergo retraining on an annual basis.

It is also necessary to develop mechanisms for assessing the effectiveness of training programs. In addition, it would be advisable to establish a system of incentives that encourages civil servants to continuously improve their professional qualifications and to engage in ongoing self-development.

CONCLUSION

This article examines the historical development of the civil service in Turkmenistan and the main stages of its reform, aimed at strengthening professional and managerial competencies and ensuring the timely adoption of effective management decisions. Particular attention is paid to issues related to the training of civil servants and the legislative framework governing this process. The Academy of Civil Service under the President of Turkmenistan plays a leading role in the professionalisation of the civil service. The analysis demonstrates that the Academy's system of training and professional development for civil servants is guided by advanced international practices and national priorities.

The primary objective of personnel training is the formation of professionals capable of effectively implementing public policy within the framework of a sovereign state.

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