

## **THE HUMAN FACTOR – RESOURCE AND VULNERABILITY WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION SECTOR**

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***Abstract:*** *The public administration represents the subsector of one of the 12 sectors with critical infrastructures in Romania, namely the Administration sector. Its role is to ensure the organization and concrete execution of the law, in order to protect the rights and freedoms of citizens. The efficiency and performance of the public administration is mainly determined by the effectiveness of the civil servant. That is why the human factor is the main resource in the administration sector, being also the most vulnerable element of this sector. The unpredictability of human resources makes measures to reduce the vulnerabilities caused by it (human resources) the most difficult to manage.*

***Keywords:*** *public administration; human factor; vulnerability; critical infrastructures.*

### **Introduction**

The instrument by which the rights and freedoms of citizens can be protected, by which the vital functions of society are ensured and by which a more secure society can be created is the Law. In Romania, the organization and concrete execution of the law is done through the public administration.

The essential element of the public administration is satisfying the national or local public interest through activities of organizing the enforcement and the concrete application of the law, by providing public services. At the structural level, the administration consists of a complex set of entities and officials with public responsibilities.

In our opinion, the most important critical elements within the Public Administration sector are human resources and classified information.

### **Protection of classified information in the public administration**

The importance of public administration through critical infrastructures is recognized by its designation as a critical infrastructure subsector, within the administration sector according to the Government Decision no. 98 of 2010 on the identification, designation and protection of critical infrastructures. The responsible public authority designated for the administration sector is the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration<sup>1</sup>. In countries such as Australia, Brazil, Estonia, Finland, and Spain, public administration is not a designated critical infrastructure sector. In other countries, public administration is designated as a critical infrastructure under various names such as institutions of the legislative and executive powers in Austria, Government Agencies Administration and justice in Germany, Government Institutions in Hungary, Domestic and Foreign Policy in Russia, Public Administration in Spain and Italy<sup>2</sup>.

Public administration is the main lever through which the values and objectives set at the political level are achieved. The public administration acts as an intermediary between two main plans: the one referring to political leadership and the one in which decisions and political values take shape.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ordonanță de Urgență nr. 98 din 3 noiembrie 2010 privind identificarea, desemnarea și protecția infrastructurilor critice*, Publicat în Monitorul Oficial, nr. 757 din 12 noiembrie 2010.

<sup>2</sup> International CIIP Handbook 2008/2009 An Inventory of 25 National and 7 International Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Policies, Author Elgin M. Brunner, Suter Manuel, <https://doi.org/10.3929/ethz-b-000009792>

The public administration represents the range of activities of the President of Romania, of the Government, of the central and local administrative authorities and of all the structures coordinated by them, through which the laws are carried out or public services are provided in the regime of public power.

We can define public administration as an activity of organization and concrete execution of the law, with a dispositive and provider character, carried out mainly by the public administration bodies, and in the subsidiary and by the other state bodies, as well as by private organizations of public interest. From the definition given to the public administration it results that it consists in legal acts and material operations through which the laws are fulfilled, either by issuing normative acts subordinated to the law, or by the effective and direct organization and provision of public services.

One of the main attributes of public administration is national security. National security is defined as the state of legality, balance and social, economic and political stability necessary for the existence and development of the Romanian national state as a sovereign, unitary, independent and indivisible state, maintaining the rule of law and the climate of unrestricted exercise of rights fundamental freedoms and duties of citizens, according to the democratic principles and norms established by the Constitution<sup>3</sup>.

Information for critical infrastructure protection is "a component part of national security information - defined as a product of intelligence activity, including new knowledge in relation to pre-existing ones, regarding situations, phenomena, facts, facts that constitute or may become threats or sources of risk to national security or to their connected vectors"<sup>4</sup>.

A critical element of public administration is classified information. Currently, the world's states face a wide range of threats to the security of sensitive information, which amid the exploitation of internal vulnerabilities and other environmental factors can favor or determine the materialization of threats and the emergence of significant risks, with regional or international impact.

All public administration institutions must counter security threats or those that favor or predispose to committing activities against state security, as well as possible vectors responsible for such actions (individuals, groups of persons, organizations, state entities). State institutions, especially those in public administration, must be interested in knowing the threats, risks and vulnerabilities to classified information concerning public administration and, at the same time, continuously adapt to their constant evolution. One of the biggest challenges in protecting classified information in the public administration sector is the constant evolution of technology, coupled with the rich expertise of those who launch attacks on information security. The evolution of technology is the object of an application according to the purpose for which it was created, of a reuse, as well as of some abuses or accidents. The more powerful a technology is when used correctly, according to the purpose for which it was created, the more harmful it is when used abusively. Information security has a very important role to play in ensuring the enforcement and enforcement of laws, so protecting it is the main goal in this sector.

### **The human factor – resource and vulnerability**

Human resources are the first strategic resources in public administration; they are unique in terms of their potential for growth and development, performance.

Although for a long time human resources management in the public sector has been treated with a higher dose of skepticism, in the last two decades this science is recognized as a key to ensuring the success and good functioning of organizations including public, in particular to increase their efficiency and effectiveness<sup>5</sup>. The human factor is the key factor in public sector

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<sup>3</sup> *Legea nr. 51/1991*, republicată, cu modificările și completările ulterioare.

<sup>4</sup> Sursa: <http://www.sri.ro/upload/BrosuraProtectiaInfrastructurilorCritice.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> *Specificul gestiunii resurselor umane în administrația publică*, Culegere de articole selectiv ale Conferinței Științifice Internaționale „Competitivitatea și Inovarea în Economia Cunoașterii”, Vol. 2, 28-29 septembrie 2018, E-ISBN 978-9975-75-933-5, [https://ibn.idsi.md/sites/default/files/imag\\_file/287-292\\_0.pdf](https://ibn.idsi.md/sites/default/files/imag_file/287-292_0.pdf)

activities and performance. Moreover, it is the essential coordination of the size and, above all, of the quality of activity in the public sector. Thus, it is not possible to mention the efficiency of a public institution, in general, without taking into account the directly quantifiable aspects, and a series of non-directly quantifiable aspects, but which have multiple consequences on the performance in the public sector. Among these, an important place is occupied by the efficiency of the work of civil servants. The very quality and efficiency of the activity in the public administration depend on the efficient use of the staff, on the efficiency of its work.

P. Drucker, a professional manager, argues in the paper "Efficiency of the decision factor" the idea that we cannot talk about efficiency without effectiveness, because it is much more important to achieve well what you set out to do - efficiency - than to achieve it well otherwise - efficiency<sup>6</sup>.

Civil servants as agents of the public authority have such obligations of conduct:

1. the exercise of competencies in the public interest, which means that civil servants perform a public function of social importance in the interest of citizens, excluding any other interests;

2. legality, the principle according to which civil servants must act in accordance with the laws and instructions in order to achieve the objectives provided by the legislator;

3. the responsibility under which civil servants are obliged to respect and enhance the prestige of the institution in which they work and to be reserved and discreet so as not to compromise the actions of that authority;

4. the professionalism that requires civil servants to perform their duties and duties in an exemplary manner;

5. integrity, a principle that prohibits civil servants to request or accept gifts or other benefits from citizens for the fulfillment of certain attributions incumbent on them by the state of functions or by the nature of the public function that occupies it.

In order to achieve the interests of citizens, the civil servant needs the following tools: speed of administrative procedures, confidentiality, legality, right judgement and access to public information<sup>7</sup>. The organization is not efficient without the existence of labor resources; it is practically a lot of useless equipment that can wear out physically and morally over time if human effort does not leave its mark on it. At the same time, the human resource represents vulnerabilities. The vulnerability of the human factor is determined by its inadequate preparation. One way to improve this is to organize training activities, including topics designed so that: the objectives to be established correctly in relation to the training needs of the moment and to the directions the evolution of the issue in the field of activity; the scientific content to be dimensioned so as to cover fully and balanced the objectives designed and also allow for easy updating; the training strategy is designed in an interactive and flexible way, correctly adapted to the objectives, curricular content and human resources involved. Training, employee training is one of the most successful solutions for raising the level of training, each course or training leading to the reduction of vulnerabilities caused by inadequate training and increases the security area of the entity or person. Another vulnerability in public administration is the lack of cyber security specialists. A challenge is to create a competitive legal framework and attract the best specialists in the field in order to effectively combat actions aimed at obtaining sensitive data. Cyber security has become a top priority for companies trying to protect themselves from the huge costs of security breaches. Therefore, many private companies offer more attractive conditions for specialists in this field than can do state institutions in the field of public administration.

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<sup>6</sup> *Eficiența administrației publice: criterii de apreciere și factori de influență*, Șaptefrați, Tatiana. Publicat în: Revista „Administrația Publică”. Chișinău. 2010, nr. 1, p. 23-30. ISSN 1813-8489. CZU: 351/354(478) <http://dspace.aap.gov.md/handle/123456789/745>

<sup>7</sup> *Managementul resurselor umane în administrația publică*, Manual pregătit de: Renaldo Niță și Nic Enache, Administrație și apărare – parteneriat pentru performanță.

The human factor has a fundamental role in any national and international organization regardless of its object of activity. If someone interested fails to obtain certain information through technology, he can turn to the human factor, manipulating his mind.

From the point of view of social engineering, the human factor is the weak link in the chain of information protection and security measures. People are not only likely to make mistakes, but also vulnerable to pressure from individuals who hunt for confidential information.

The activity of achieving information security is increasingly complex, requiring as many specialists and inter-institutional cooperation, in the effort to prevent and counter threats and risks in the field. On the other hand, for this activity to be effective, it must be doubled by a modern legislative framework, constantly updated and adapted to the current challenges specific to the field of information security.

Information security has a very important role to play in ensuring the purpose of national security, so protecting it is the main objective in this sector.

### Conclusions

One of the most important attributes of public administration is national security. National security ensures the legality, balance and social, economic and political stability necessary for the existence and development of the Romanian national state as a sovereign, unitary, independent and indivisible state, maintaining the rule of law and the climate of unrestricted exercise of fundamental rights, freedoms and duties of citizens, according to the democratic principles and norms established by the Constitution. The efficiency and performance of the public administration is mainly determined by the effectiveness of the civil servant. That is why the human factor is the main resource in the administration sector, being also the most vulnerable element of this sector. The unpredictability of human resources makes the measures to reduce vulnerabilities caused by it even the most difficult to manage. State institutions, especially those in public administration, must be interested in knowing the threats, risks and vulnerabilities to classified information concerning public administration and, at the same time, continuously adapt to their constant evolution.

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