

Planning of human resources within the system of substantive planning by the national statistical office – Ukraine’s experience¹

Submitted by the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The implementation of the tasks standing before the statistical authorities depends on a range of factors, one of them being the availability of highly qualified specialists. This determines the priority of the human resource policies regarding the work of national statistical offices. In this document, we present information on our system of substantive planning and the development of human resources, the issues that the Ukrainian statistical authority is faced with regarding this task, and the approaches that we have adopted in order to solve these issues.

2. Pursuant to the Ukrainian law “On State Statistics”, the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine (SSCU) is a specially authorized central authority of the executive branch of the government responsible for the implementation of government policies in the area of statistics and responsible for carrying out SSCU activities in accordance with long-term programs for the development of statistics and the annual plans of state statistical surveys.

II. STRATEGIC PLANNING OF WORK OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL OFFICE

3. The basis of statistical activities is laid out in long-term programmes which determine strategic directions of development of state statistics, taking into account both internal and external factors. The long-term programs (Ukraine has a tradition of 5-year strategic planning) have a complex character and they concern the entire range of statistical activity. In the development and implementation of the programs, not only the statistical bodies, but also other ministries and agencies, as well as scientific and research institutes and academic institutions take part. As a rule, the preparation and implementation of long-term statistical programs is accompanied by the review of the departments of the State Statistics Committee of the Ukraine and the regional branches with an aim to align them with the goals of strategic objectives and the tasks. Therefore, in the course of the development of the programs, we conduct an analysis of existing human resources on the level of individual departments, of regional branches, and of the statistical system as a whole; proposals are prepared concerning the development of human resource base and requirements regarding resources necessary for implementation of the program. The implementation of long-term programs is carried out on the basis of annual plans of activities which, after they are approved in detail first by the national statistical office and then by other government ministries and agencies, i.e. by the producers and users of statistical information, are approved by a special decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

4. Each long-term program contains a special component regarding the development of human resources from the standpoint of increased levels of qualification and the competency of cadres to fulfill the tasks outlined in the programs. At present, a third such program is being

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implemented in Ukraine. In the framework of two previous programs, a whole complex of activities has been implemented concerning the training of employees in modern statistical methodology, which has allowed us to create a rather strong base of qualified specialists in the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine. The current program envisions carrying out further measures directed toward development of a modern system of management and training of personnel based on the previously achieved results, as well as on modern methods used by other national statistical offices. In particular, we aim for the development of a comprehensive strategy of human resource development, which would include:

- (a) creation of a system of continuous training of statistical personnel, as well as data users and respondents;
- (b) development and implementation of more effective procedures for the management of labour resources;
- (c) introduction of motivational strategies for the achievement of among others, higher qualification levels and productivity of work.

III. SHORT-TERM PLANNING OF WORK OF OUR NATIONAL STATISTICAL OFFICE

5. The system of short-term planning includes an annual plan of statistical surveys, in which all current activities of our national statistical office are reflected, as well as duties of other government ministries and agencies with respect to the collection and processing of certain types of data and the transfer of obtained results to statistical bodies. For the internal use of statistical bodies, a technical plan of performing statistical surveys is introduced in order to regulate each concrete task as to periodicity, and stages and deadlines for implementation. The technical plan also defines, for each concrete task a concrete person responsible for its execution. To maintain work regarding automated data collection and processing of the data on the central as well as regional levels, in accordance with the plan of statistical surveys, a plan is annually introduced for the development and use of complexes for electronic processing of statistical data. The annual plan of statistical surveys is further complemented by semi-annual plans of economic and organizational activities. The plan for economic activities regulates the list and deadlines for the release of documents, bulletins, statistical compendia and other statistical releases (publications). The plan for organizational activities stipulates, among others, main measures regarding activities such as organizing meetings and seminars, reviews of activities of the authorities in the regional branches, and review of quality of data. Furthermore, for each year separately, we create a separate annual calendar plan of scientific and research activities in the area of statistics that are funded by the federal budget and implemented by the science and technology complex for the statistical research of the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine.

6. The short-term planning of statistical activities involves comprehensive study and analysis of the efficiency of the use of not only the material and financial resources but also of the human resources, the main results of which serve as the basis for the development of annual plans for the following period. This planning work involves:

- (a) monthly analysis of data produced by the automated accounting system for employees' monthly work periods, for departments of the SSCU, and for the regional branches;
- (b) quarterly review of the results of work of the regional branches;
- (c) review of reports on results of activities of departments of the SSCU and the regional branches at the meetings of the boards, budget committees, and so on;
- (d) regular review, in the framework of special internal committees of the SSCU, of the proposals of employees of statistical bodies, directed at reducing working time and the

- economy of means for the preparation of statistical data;
- (e) annual evaluation of performance of employees with respect to their tasks and duties;
- (f) creation of a human resource pool, and planning of the human resource requirements regarding qualified personnel.

7. The development of an annual plan of statistical surveys is preceded by the work of the Commission for the Improvement of the Government Statistics Reporting and Accounting Documentation of the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine (SSCU). This committee takes into account the proposals of the regional branches and main users and makes decisions on the necessity of introducing changes into the system of reporting for the coming year. Based on the results of the Committee, proposals are made to include the statistical surveys in the annual plan, identifying additional resources, including human resources that will be necessary for implementation of the task. On the basis of this information, we send the Ministry of Finance a detailed budgetary proposal displaying the intended use of funds sought and substantiating the necessary budgetary financing for the coming year. One of the main items is the salaries and wages. However, the volume of budgetary allocation does not always correspond with the demands of statistical bodies and this dictates the necessity of a reduction of set tasks to the level corresponding with current levels of financial and human resources.

8. The SSCU has the right, in the course of implementation of the annual plan of statistical surveys, to apply a mechanism of internal redistribution of human and financial resources, in the framework of existing staff levels and allocated assignments, with an aim to secure fulfillment of priority tasks.

9. To secure the implementation of strategic plans, as well as short-term plans for activities of statistical bodies, such mechanisms as employing external experts on a contractual basis, and collaboration with scientific institutions (affiliated or external) for conducting necessary scientific projects are also used.

10. One of the key tools used today by statistical bodies in the system of planning, is the automated system of recording hours worked, allowing us to obtain detailed information on the work loads of personnel of statistical bodies, as well as to determine the cost of statistical production and to substantiate the budgetary requests for financing statistical surveys. In 2002, Ukraine switched to the program-and-goal oriented method to form the state budget. Therefore, with an aim to study the efficacy of the utilization of budget means and to determine the planned volumes of expenditure necessary for securing activities of statistical bodies, the SSCU, based on its own experience and with consultative support of statistical services of Sweden and Latvia, has developed and implemented, at the beginning of 2004, on all levels of their statistical service, a special automated system of accounting.

11. After two years of using this system, we have obtained information which enables us to analyze in detail the efficiency of utilization of human resource potential in the statistical system as a whole, as well as in individual regional branches, and to conduct necessary redistribution of labour resources between the departments of the SSCU and the regional branches in the framework of set staff levels in order to remove the existing disproportion in the levels of work load, and by doing this increase efficiency of labour as a whole. The work concerning the monitoring and optimization of distribution of labour resources is carried out on a continuous

basis and the results are taken into consideration when developing annual plans of statistical surveys, and thereby determining priority for individual activities as well as improving organizational structure and management of production procedures and organization of labour in the statistical system.

IV. EVALUATION AND PLANNING OF HUMAN RESOURCES

12. As we have already mentioned above, in the course of developing the plans of statistical activities and in order to secure their implementation, we conduct special analyses of existing human resources and plan separate strategies for the utilization of human resource base. In the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, as well as in the public service as a whole, work on planning the utilization of human resources is part of the substantial planning regarding human resources, and is regulated by the Ukrainian legislation entitled "On Public Service," as well as by other lesser legislative acts.

13. In order to obtain detailed data regarding the human resource base of the statistical bodies and to determine the number of vacant positions and expected personnel changes, the personnel service directorate of the SSCU carries out, at the beginning of each year, a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the composition of staff in different job categories (managers and specialists) and in different professional specialization (employees of statistical units or service units).

14. In order to obtain information on the professional potential of employees, and the existing need for upgrading qualifications of personnel, we conduct an annual evaluation of performance of duties and tasks of personnel of statistical bodies, the results of which are used in the planning and organization of labour for an individual employee and for a statistical body as a whole. The evaluation is conducted by managers of the departments of the SSCU in accordance with results of the previous year on the basis of individual work plans of public servants, which are formulated at the beginning of each year in accordance with the work plan for the particular department of the SCSU. In the course of the evaluation, we analyze the public service employee's performance with respect to the job description and his individual work plan. On the basis of this, as well as on the basis of the employee's self-evaluation, an interview with the employee is conducted, in the course of which the work of the employee is evaluated, the tasks are determined and an individual plan for the following year in accordance with priorities of the department is set out. Also determined is whether there is a need to upgrade the employee's qualifications. Results thus obtained are used for determining annual and long-term requirements regarding human resources, formulation of public service requests for the training, re-training and qualification upgrades of public servants in the statistical sector, as well as in their career growth. The results of the evaluation are used by the managers of the departments of the SSCU as well as human resource services for the analysis of issues such as promotion of individual employees, assigning the appropriate job categories, determining salary increases and other monetary rewards, creating human resource pools, and extending period of employment for individual employees in the public service.

V. PLANNING OF UTILIZATION OF HUMAN RESOURCES

15. One of the basic instruments of planning of the utilization of human resources is the creation of human resource pools for the public service. The aim of creating human resource

pools is to effectively fill vacant positions with trained specialists and to forecast personnel promotions in the service. The human resource pools are created by the goal-oriented method to fill in managerial positions (in accordance with current Ukrainian legislation on public service, there must be two candidates for each managerial post) and, also, specialist positions, if necessary. In order to select candidates to be included in the human resource pool, the managers of individual departments of the SSCU take into consideration the results of annual evaluations of activities of employees of the statistical bodies and employees' qualifications, such as professional competence, work experience, organizational skills, and initiative.

16. The employees, included in the human resources pool of the public service, make their personal annual plans, which are confirmed by managers of departments of the SSCU. These plans include, for example, systematic familiarization of an employee with the legislation governing the activities in the statistical sector, the foreign and national scientific research and practical experience, and the participation in various seminars, meetings and conferences. How well the employee fulfils his personal plan is given consideration at the time of the annual performance evaluation.

17. The effectiveness of the human resource pools in the system of statistical bodies for past years is 40 to 50 % of all promotions to higher posts. After the post for which the pool has been created has become vacant, we conduct an analysis of the level of training of the candidates in accordance with their personal plans for training. The candidate who shows the best results will have the opportunity to take up the vacant position and achieve the career growth that was envisaged by the institution of a human resource pool.

18. The recruitment of new employees for vacant positions is carried out in accordance with general laws on labour relations, the legislation "On Public Service" and, through open competition, during the course of which general knowledge in statistics is verified, as well as through knowledge in the area of a particular division for which the potential candidate plans to work, and through the knowledge of specific work conditions in the public service. For this purpose, a special permanent Hiring and Competitions Committee has been founded at the SSCU, which is led by the deputy chairman of the SSCU and comprises directors of the departments of the SSCU.

VI. PLANNING OF REQUIREMENTS WITH RESPECT TO QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

19. The high standards of modern statistics significantly increase the need in highly qualified personnel. Therefore, one of the most important aspects of planning of development of human resources in the SSCU is the training and re-training of specialists. This issue is one of the most problematic in the area of activities regarding personnel because there is a great deficit in the volume of budgetary financing for this purpose. At present, about 60 % of employees serving in the statistical sector are in need of upgrades of qualification. Related to this is the important role of programs of technical cooperation within whose framework the personnel of statistical bodies in Ukraine have opportunities to obtain necessary knowledge in the area of contemporary statistical methods.

20. With respect to the issues of the re-training of personnel, i.e. obtaining additional specialized education by employees, this task is carried out, at the request of the SSCU, by the

State Academy for Statistics, Accounting and Audit, who offer a program titled “Statistics”. However, the volume of re-training does not correspond yet with existing requirements.

21. The process for planning the utilization of human resources in the statistical sector also includes long-term planning for requirements regarding the training of specialists in public service management. Training in this specialty is offered by the “National Academy of Public Administration, the President of Ukraine.” The Academy responds to the needs of the central government and local governments by training specialists in public administration. The graduates of the Academy’s master's program are given priority when there are management vacancies in the statistical sector to fill, because, as well as higher specialized education (in this case in statistics), they are trained as professional managers. In the planning of requirements regarding graduates of the public administration program, by the management and human resources division, not only is the value of all individual public servants for statistical bodies considered but also their real chances of career growth.

22. Human resource planning has a lot in common with other types of planning; however, it has its own specifics which are associated with the complexity of forecasting the labour conduct of employees. Further, in the statistical bodies of Ukraine, employees are almost all women (93 % of the total; from those 61 % are in the productive ages) which also, to some degree, has an effect on forecasting the utilization of human resources. Even though, nowadays, in our statistical system we can observe a relatively low turnover of personnel (around 55 % of employees work in the statistical field for more than 10 years, and every fifth employee works for more than 20 years), the stress of the job and dissatisfaction with the compensation for work (which is lower than in some other sectors of the public service, or in the banking or business sectors) forces some employees, particularly young specialists, to search for new jobs to which they could apply their knowledge.

23. Issues regarding planning of the utilization of human resources arise also in work with special groups, such as those of youth or workers of pre-retirement age. In view of the fact that the public service has not reached a desirable level of prestige and is characterized by relatively low levels of pay, it is difficult to avoid employment vacancies created by employees who decide to leave for better-paid jobs. However, the SSCU conducts policies directed at a maximum attraction of young cadres through collaboration with universities that train specialists in the field of statistics and economics. Also, in the framework of stipulations of the legislation “On Public Service”, in many cases we allow our most valuable employees to work beyond their retirement age, with an aim to have the important previously started projects finished, and in order to train appropriate replacements.

VII. SUMMARY

24. The system of planning of human resources is an indelible part of a general system of substantive planning of activities of statistical services, both strategic and short-term. As to the long-term strategic planning, the main attention should be paid to forecasting possible organizational and human resource changes in accordance with the tasks standing before the statistical bodies, and with an aim to secure the timely training of necessary personnel. For countries with transformational economies, this issue is extremely important because the reforms that are introduced and which lead to the socio-economic changes need a speedy adaptation to the changing conditions and the mastering of appropriate statistical methods. This, in turn, gives rise to higher requirements regarding training and qualification upgrades of personnel in the statistical services.

25. The training of personnel and upgrading of their qualifications is one of the most cost-demanding activities of the statistical services, particularly for the countries with transformational economies and those countries that have only recently attained the status of market economy states. In this respect, a vital role is played by programmes of international technical cooperation, which require, in our opinion, a substantial increase in the share of funding allocated for these purposes, and, which should, simultaneously, increase coordination work in this area, to be carried out at the expense of both the countries with a transformational economy and the various international programmes.

26. In the process of short-term planning of statistical activities, the key role is performed by the continuous analysis of efficacy in the utilization of human resources. The tools such as the automated system of recording hours worked and the monitoring of results of activities of individual statistical departments of the SSCU, allowing us to obtain detailed information on work loads and quality of work performance, are therefore very important in the work of statistical services. The issues of the creation and development of systems of this type are very topical and could therefore become one of the topics for discussion at future sessions during the Conference of European Statisticians.

27. For successful solutions to all of the complex issues associated with the planning and the development of human resources in the statistical system, it is necessary to have a national strategy. It is important also that such a strategy is supported by the top level of government to facilitate its implementation and financial support. Countries that plan or have already developed such strategies, may find it useful to learn about the experience of statistical services of other countries, which have applied, with positive results, modern approaches to the implementation of human resources policies. In this respect, it would be desirable to consider the issue of preparing a manual for the countries of the UN EEC region. The manual would include materials on the positive experiences of various national statistical offices regarding the planning of human resources (in the context of the corresponding chapter of the Handbook of Statistical Organization published by the United Nations Statistics Division). Such a manual would be very useful not only for national statistical services but also for other international organizations in order to exchange information regarding this topic.

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