

## THE HUMAN RESOURCES RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION IN THE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND SMEs - A CASE STUDY IN CALARASI AND IALOMITA COUNTIES OF ROMANIA

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### **Abstract**

*The present paper addresses some of the most important themes of human resources management (recruitment and selection) from the perspective of employers from the public and private sector, from Ialomița and Călărași counties. Our study aims at identifying the most important recruitment criteria for executive staff and decision makers used at the level of the Romanian organizations as well as the differences in the methods of selection of executive staff and decision makers used by the Romanian, public and private organizations. In this regard, we used the interview and questionnaire survey with closed questions, applied to a number of 157 SMEs and 107 public institutions. Public institutions show a number of differences compared to SMEs, and the situation is also influenced by the labour legislation. In the public institutions, a major role in the final decision on employment is held by the education, compared to the situation at the level of SMEs, where the experience is of the highest importance in the final decision to employ a person, being dominant compared to the “education” criterion.*

**Key words:** SME, public institutions, recruitment, human resources, selection

### **INTRODUCTION**

One of the most important elements of the human resources policy is the recruitment process. Through recruitment, the workforce in an organization can be improved, or the average level of professional competence can be improved or adjusted.

Considering the idea that the organizational decisions, economic and social progress depend to a large extent on the quality of all activities taking place, it is understandable also the special attention given by some specialists to understand the characteristics of this process by a number of specialists in the human resource field.

*Recruitment is the first part of the employment process of a vacant job and includes the careful examination of the job and its requirements, in order to be able to identify the adequate source of the candidates and how they can be attracted to apply for a job” (Cindrea, I., 2008) [2].*

In another vision, “*staff recruitment represents the activity organised by an enterprise to attract the unemployed human*

*resources, in order to satisfy the workforce need in the respective period - action prior to conclude the employment contract and which implies responsibilities from the enterprise”.* (Panișoara, I., 2005) [7].

As regards our country is concerned, the staff recruitment is done to the greatest extent according to the techniques already known, using less the existing practices worldwide. Most companies face today the unstable social economic climate, few jobs are available, and no adequate recruitment technique is available for those available. (Ogarcă, R. F., 2014) [6]. The human resources recruitment has become, in the current social economic context, a very complex issue.

Also, as labour market competition becomes more and more fierce, the difficulty of finding those persons who meet the increasingly demanding conditions imposed by the organizations turned into a real challenge for the companies (Brown and Harvey, 2006) [1]. Recruitment is the first step or first stage in the staff process, as well as the first step in the selection process. Although the traditional staff is more selective, the staff recruitment is

a priority, as a selection of efficient staff can only be achieved if the recruitment process ensures a sufficient number of competitive candidates.

In other words, *the objective of staff recruitment is to identify a sufficiently large number of candidates, so that those who meet the conditions can be selected.* (Ogarcă, R. F., 2014) [6]

The staff selection is the next step, consisting in the evaluation, by various methods, of the candidates and the choice of the most suitable for the post, followed by the employment. The selection follows logically the recruitment process. (Dumitru and Ignătescu, 2013 ) [3].

Recruitment and selection have a high share in human resources management, the result of which depends on the quality of the organization staff.

The first condition of a company success is to attract and retain the best specialists in the sector where it competes.

To this end, a working climate must be created in which each employee can show his talent and be appreciated. The times when the boss was always right, and the subordinates did what they were asked have passed. The valuable employees no longer want only material rewards, but also professional fulfilment through interesting, useful and important work in an organization they are proud of, with leaders they appreciate and inspire respect. This explains the remarkable results in companies where the employees are encouraged to come up with their own ideas. (Grecu and Raboaca, 2006) [4].

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The quantitative field research was carried out during 2018, based on an interview and questionnaire, applied face to face, at the headquarters of the organizations that agreed to be part of the investigated sample.

The interview was based on a list of predefined questions, 5 situational questions, with open response, which allowed the interviewee freedom of expression. Their motivation was to find out the recruitment

criteria and the selection methods used within those organizations.

As a data collection technique, we used the interview and questionnaire survey with closed questions, applied to 157 SMEs and 107 public institutions in Călărași and Ialomița counties.

The questionnaire included aspects of the recruitment criteria for candidates, with 11 closed items as well as the selection methods for candidates with 8 closed items. For the purpose of data processing, the scores method was used, with scales ranging from 1 to 5 (Note: 1- *very important*, 2-*important*, 3-*indifferent*, 4-*little important*, 5-*not important*) for the first set of items and a scale of 1 to 3 (Note: 1- *always*, 2 *frequently*, 3-*sometimes*) for the second set, respectively, the importance of the selection methods of the candidates. Concerning the interview, the discussions took place with the managers of the organizations and/or the human resources managers and focused on the following: the sources and methods of the recruitment methods used, the content and structure of the employment interview, the tests used for the selection of the human resources, the stages of the organization until the decision for employment is made, the structure and composition of the recruitment and selection committee.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The responsibility of any organization derives from the purpose of its activity. In order to achieve this goal (end user satisfaction) or even just to survive, it must take care of the following desires: (Marinas and Manolescu, 2006) [5].

- a) first of all, it must ensure the identification of the candidates skills and qualities in order to be able to choose those who best meet the requirements of the job;
- b) must ensure the use of the most appropriate recruitment methods to identify the most competitive candidates;
- c) throughout this time, it must ensure the compliance with the legislation regarding

giving equal opportunities to the candidates without resorting to discriminatory practices. The success of the recruitment process depends largely on solving such problems successfully. The employees recruitment becomes a costly, independent and complex activity, both through the great work it attracts and the importance it has for the entire organization.

Of the 4,563 existing enterprises in Călărași county and 4,175 existing in Ialomița county, only 1,136 (594 in Călărași and 542 in Ialomița) are in the SME category, respectively 13%. Among these, 157 (83 from Călărași and 74 from Ialomița) and 13.8% were included in the investigated sample. (Figure 1). Regarding the activity field of SMEs in the sample, large enterprises are active in the agricultural and agri-food sectors, the sugar and oil industry, non-ferrous metals, clothing. Small-sized SMEs are active in the agricultural, construction, services, metallic, and commerce sectors.

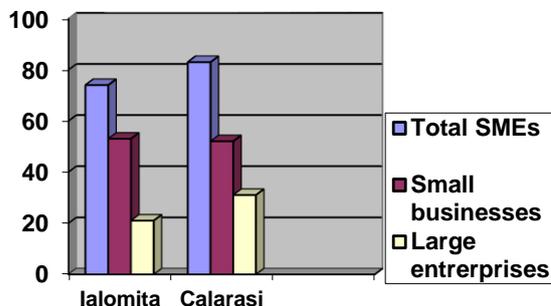


Fig. 1. Structure of SMEs contained in the investigated sample

Source: Own design.

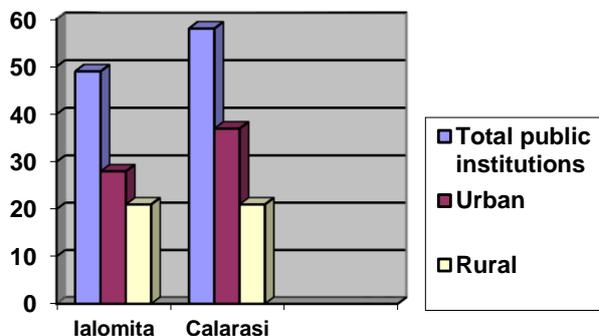


Fig. 2. Structure on areas of the public institutions contained in the investigated sample

Source: Own design.

In the category of the 107 public institutions contained in the sample, there are education institutions, social assistance, town halls, commune medical cabinets etc, in the rural and urban areas of the two counties (Figure 2.).

In order to establish the staff recruitment criteria, the interviewees were asked to evaluate the following statements, according to a scale of 1 to 5 (*Note: 1- very important, 2-important, 3-indifferent, 4- little important, 5-not important*)

The most important four human resources recruitment criteria used by the analyzed organizations are the following: Individual qualities, skills and aptitudes of candidates (2.05), studies (2.17), professional knowledge (2.32) and experience (2.46) (Table 1). This hierarchy of selection criteria means that, when they want to hire new employees, the organizations are considering several criteria according to which future employees are to be selected.

Table 1. Candidates recruitment criteria

Criteria	Score/ organizations		
	SMEs	Public institutions	Average score
Individual skills, aptitudes and qualities	1.86	2.24	2.05
Studies	2.56	1.78	2.17
Professional knowledge	2.44	2.20	2.32
Experience in the field	2.06	2.86	2.46
Recommendations	2.68	2.96	2.82
Age	3.00	3.86	3.43
Physical appearance	3.20	3.98	3.59
Personal relationships	3.16	4.10	3.63
Gender	3.34	4.16	3.75
Nationality	3.56	4.28	3.92
Sign	4.16	4.86	4.51

Source: Own processing.

*Note: 1- very important; 2-important; 3 –indifferent; 4- little important; 5- not important*

The criterion of **individual qualities, skills and aptitudes** is used with a very high frequency in the selection process of the future employees, especially at the level of

SMEs, and in the public institutions this criterion is less important.

In the medium-sized enterprises, the higher the number of employees is, the more important this criterion is, the average score being 1.53.

**Studies** are an important criterion according to which the employees are recruited and selected at the level of the organizations in Romania, except for the public institutions where this criterion holds the highest share in the final decision for employment. Such a situation is also justified by the legislation on the employment of civil servants and employees in the public institutions, generally being the main criterion for the human resources recruitment and selection. The gap between the two categories of organizations is quite high on this criterion, of 0.78 in the favour of the public institutions, which consider this criterion important and very important.

The expertise in the field, validated through the professional knowledge, is another important criterion considered by the employers. In this regard, the two categories of organizations consider public institutions to be more important than SMEs, which tends to take into account the candidate's experience before professional knowledge (2.06 points for experience and 2.44 pts for professional knowledge). In the public institutions, the situation is reversed, in the sense that the experience in the field is surpassed by the professional knowledge with 0.66 pts.

Both categories of organizations are interested in the candidates recommendations of other jobs, while criteria such as age, physical appearance, gender, nationality, and the sign are very little taken into account in the candidates recruitment and selection.

The general manager and/or the human resources specialist were present at the interview. Most said that among the questions asked to the candidates can be listed: What can you tell us about you?; Why did you give up your last job? What do you expect from this job?; Can you work with fixed time, pressure, etc. ?; What were the responsibilities at the last job? How long will you stay with us

?; Why qualities do you think are needed for this job?; Describe the ideal work environment!, why did you choose a career in ...?

Largely considered, the selection is made in two important moments, namely: the selection of the candidates for entering a form of vocational training, the selection of a candidate for a particular post/position within a particular organization, after the individual already has some professional training. (Văcărescu and Hobeau, 2013) [8].

The selection exam requires an analysis of the compatibility between the requirements of the positions or professions and the skills and the individual particularities of the candidates.

The methods and techniques of the human resources selection allow the staff analysis in order to achieve efficiently their objectives, tasks, competences within the organisation. (Verboncu I., 2011) [9].

On the basis of the selection process there are a number of methods and techniques each designed and used in a differentiated way depending on the nature of the positions for which the selection is carried out, the nature of the skills, the skills or the behaviours of the tested persons.

Of the many methods used in the human resources practice, in SMEs and public institutions, the most used are the following:

- (i) The background information provided by writing and presenting your CV and letter of motivation. From the statistical analysis, it is estimated that a large number of candidates are eliminated at this stage, especially in the selection made by the public institutions. Particularly in the public institutions, it is estimated that a candidate must assume responsibility for the very detailed writing of the CV, making a clear analysis of the achievements and proposed objectives. Less attention is given to small enterprises candidates' CV and the interest increases in a well-written CV in medium-sized enterprises.
- (ii) The subsequent stage of CV and letter of motivation submission is the completion of the application files. They offer the selection committee the possibility to form the candidate's profile as accurately as possible,

and in particular to determine the extent to which it meets the requirements of the vacancy. And at this stage, the public institutions are more involved than SMEs.

(iii) Both categories of organizations mentioned that they use the candidates' selection process and tests to get to know and analyze the candidates psychological profile. If several types of tests are used in the public institutions: evaluation of knowledge, skills, personality, etc., medium-sized enterprises generally use only one test that includes skills and personality issues besides those related to knowledge in the field, and in small businesses only the professional test is used.

The selection interview is the most frequently used and at the same times the most controversial selection method.

In order to establish the candidates selection methods, the interviewees were asked to evaluate the following statements, according to a scale from 1 to 3 (Note: 1- always; 2 frequently; 3 – sometimes). (Table 2.).

Table 2. Methods of candidates selection on staff categories

Selection methods	Score/staff categories		
	Executive	Management	Average score
CV and letter of intent	1.36	1.28	1.32
Classical interview	1.26	1.00	1.13
Competences based interview	1.26	2.24	1.75
Skills test	2.28	1.56	1.42
Knowledge evaluation test	1.86	2.24	2.05
Personality test	2.24	1.28	1.76
Practical test	1.96	2.78	2.37
Simulation	2.54	1.86	2.20

Source: Own processing.

Note: 1- always; 2 frequently; 3 – sometimes

As regards **the selection methods** used at the level of the organizations in the investigated sample, there are a number of differences, by categories of employees. Thus, for employing the execution posts, the classical interview, the CV and the letter of intent are the main selection methods of the candidates for both

the executive and the executive positions, with an average score of 1.13 pts for the interview and 1.32 points for CV and letter of intent.

The differences in the methods of selection of executives are even more obvious in types of organizations.

Thus, at the level of SMEs, the tendency recorded at the general level, the CV and the letter of intent and the classical interview, plus the practical test are the main methods used in the selection process of the executive staff. The public institutions show a number of differences compared to SMEs, the main tools used in the process of hiring executives such as CV and letter of intent, interview, and knowledge tests. Regarding the selection of staff for management positions, both types of organizations take the classic interview, followed by a personality and aptitude test that has the same value as the CV and the letter of intent in the hierarchy of the criteria respectively 1.28. Such a situation is also influenced by labour legislation, which regulates work relations in the public sector, and which provides candidates with an employment test consisting of a written test and an oral test.

Regarding the selection of staff for management positions, both types of organizations take the classic interview, followed by a personality and aptitude test that has the same value as the CV and the letter of intent in the hierarchy of the criteria respectively 1.28 pts. It should be mentioned that in the public institutions, for the selection of candidates for a management position, emphasis is also on simulation, namely, the creation of circumstantial situations in which the management staff must make a decision.

## CONCLUSIONS

Recruitment is a Human Resource Management activity that seeks and finds candidates for the organization vacancies so that it can select the most appropriate individuals to meet the needs of the organization while minimizing related costs. Following the recruitment process, the human

resources selection consists in selecting, according to certain criteria, the most suitable candidate to have a position within an organization

Analyzing the existing situation in Ialomița and Călărași counties regarding the process of human resources recruitment and selection, the following specific aspects may be retained in the form of conclusions: the short-term evolution of the activity is the main method of determining the necessary human resources especially in SMEs; the main criteria used in human resources recruitment are: individual knowledge, skills and aptitudes, studies, professional knowledge and experience in the field.

However, SMEs are at risk of developing and promoting the relatives; the experience has the greatest importance in the final decision to employ a person, being dominant compared to the “studies” criterion; in the public institutions, studies have a major role in the final decision on employment, compared to the situation of all SMEs; the relation between the external sources of recruitment and the internal ones is over-unitary, the employment strategy being aimed at attracting potential candidates in the external area of the organization; the job advertisements published inside the company are the main method of recruitment from internal sources of executive and management staff; the lists of former employees are rarely used to fill vacant posts; The Internet, job advertisements published in the press, and the recommendations are the most commonly used external recruitment methods for both executive and management staff; neither public institutions nor SMEs turn to the services of specialized human resource recruitment firms; the lack of partnerships between the business sector and the education institutions and the low level of qualification of most of the job seekers, which are in the database of the National Agency for Workforce Employment are the main causes for which the recruitment of young graduates directly from the education institutions and the offer of the National Agency for Workforce Employment to be external

recruitment methods with a very low frequency; the preponderantly theoretical training of the graduates of the education institutions and the lack of practical skills are also reasons why the organizations rarely go to recruitment from the education institutions to fill the executive and management positions; CV and letters of intent, classical interview, knowledge evaluation test and practice test are the most commonly used selection methods for the executives and for the managers - CV, classical interview, personality and aptitude tests, simulations are the selection methods with the highest frequency of use in the process of selecting managers over the interview and knowledge test or practice test that are used frequently or sometimes, but to a lesser extent than other selection methods.

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