

Key words: *human resources management (HRM), parliamentary reform, public administration, human resources (HR), Verkhovna Rada (Parliament of Ukraine), Secretariat modernization.*

Introduction.

Ukraine started the implementation of a large-scale parliamentary reform and the modernization of the public administration system [23].

In this regard, the particular attention is paid to the issues related to the development and further implementation of the new innovative tools and the human resources (HR) management practices in the State bodies, in particular in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (VRU) Apparatus.

Taking into account key provisions of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union ratified by the Law of Ukraine as of 16 September 2014 No 1678-VII, in February 2016 the European Parliamentary Needs Assessment Mission (hereinafter – the European Parliament Mission) developed and presented the Report and the Roadmap on strengthening institutional capacity of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine [5].

Some of these recommendations directly concern the modernization of the VRU Secretariat and developing the new human resources management (HRM) practices.

At the same time, the analysis of the best practices and the experiences of other European countries as well as the recommendations of the European Parliament and other international organizations shows the necessity to elaborate and to implement a wide-scope HRM Strategy of the VRU Secretariat.

The realization of this Strategy should include the new innovative HR management tools and practices in VRU Secretariat, i.e.: gender audit, quality management, talent management, promoting the new corporate culture, setting up the new mentors' system, facilitating the adaptation of the newly appointed civil servants in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Apparatus, improvement of the appraisal system of the public servants, Human Resources Management Information System (HRMIS), promoting personnel mobility, increasing the

motivation level of the civil servants, leadership development, career development and increasing the motivation level of staff members, change management etc.

At the same time, it is analyzed all possible advantages and weaknesses as well as the key stages for the mentioned Strategy realization. It is noted the implementation of this HRM Strategy should be linked with the introduction of the strategic planning tool in VRU Secretariat.

Following the research, it has been presented the concrete proposals and recommendations regarding further modernization of the activity of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Secretariat, in particular in the field of human resources management and strategic planning development.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The problem of parliamentary reform implementation has occupied one of the leading places in the scientific researches of the national (Ukrainian) and international experts, lawyers, philosophers, sociologists, political scientists. In this regard, it should be noted the works of S. Alekseev, Y. Bersheda, V. Emelianov, V. Goshovska, B. Gurne, R. Hertzog, I. Khmilko, Y. Lykhach, V. Lytvyn, A. Maliuga, G. Marcou, O. Kopylenko, O. Povazhniy, E. Rakhimkulov, M. Tepluk, V. Tolkovanov and other scientists. However, despite the large number of the scientific publications of the mentioned scientists, today there is no comprehensive study regarding strategic development of the VRU Secretariat modernization and innovative approaches for human resources management.

Statement of research objectives. The purpose of this article is to study the regulatory and institutional framework for developing of the new Human Resources Management Strategy of the VRU Secretariat, in particular in the framework of the parliamentary reform implementation.

Results. In today's context, the new challenges arise regarding the mental, professional, regulatory and legal compatibility of the activities of the VRU Secretariat and other parliamentary secretariats in European countries. The European integration policy highlights the need to prioritize efforts to improve performance of the Secretariat and human resources development in line with the European standards and best practices of other countries [14].

Recently, the leadership of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (VRU) Secretariat made considerable efforts in order to renew and improve competencies of the Secretariat staff (i.e. respect to the law, integrity, protection of the national interests, gender equality, humanism, etc.).

At the same time, the new challenges regarding to further reform of the Secretariat are emerging. First of all, it concerns the protection of human rights and the development of anti-corruption mechanisms in the area of human resources management. It is a matter of implementing the constitutional provisions on equal rights to access to the civil service, career development with respect to the principle of meritocracy, combatting corruption, biased personnel appointments, etc.

The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and its Secretariat should become as open as possible, and their activities should be clearly regulated by the effective legislation, determined by humanistic values and moral standards [10]. It will facilitate the recruitment of professionals committed to the development of Ukraine.

As it has been already mentioned, the European Parliamentary Needs Assessment Mission (hereinafter – the European Parliament Mission) developed and presented in February 2016 the Report and the Roadmap on strengthening institutional capacity of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (VRU) and its Secretariat [5]. Some of these recommendations (in particular, the points 38, 39) directly concern the modernization of the VRU Secretariat and developing the new human resources management (HRM) practices (more detailed information is presented in the figure 1 below).

The Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine “On Measures to Implement Recommendations on Internal Reform and Strengthening Institutional Capacity of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine” as of 17 March 2016 No 1035-VIII [19], adopted in the follow-up to recommendations of the European Parliament Mission [5] identified the priority areas for internal reform and human resources development of the Secretariat, in particular:

In the structure of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine a new and modern Human Resource Service should be established;

A comprehensive human resources development strategy of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine should be elaborated, led by properly resourced strategic training opportunities, including languages,

and individualised career development plans identified through the regular performance appraisal system. A policy on staff mobility should be developed and encouraged;

Short term internships as regards terms and conditions of employment should be distinguished from those of the permanent civil servants and in line with international practice internships should carry no implicit commitment to full time employment;

In the longer-term perspective, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine could consider moving towards the establishment of an independent parliamentary civil service.

Figure 1

PRECONDITIONS AND LEGAL BACKGROUND



Report and Roadmap on Internal Reform and Capacity-Building for the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine based on the **European Parliament's Needs Assessment Mission** envisages realization of the following recommendations:

- ✓ **38.** The VRU Secretariat's structure should establish a new and modern Human Resource Service and policy
- ✓ **39.** A comprehensive human resource development strategy should be elaborated, led by properly resourced strategic training opportunities, including languages, and individualised career development plans identified through the regular performance appraisal system. A policy on staff mobility should be developed and encouraged

The new Human Resources Management (HRM) Strategy of the VRU Secretariat (hereinafter – the Secretariat) should contain the main objectives (presented in the Figure 2 below) in order to ensure increasing the level of efficiency and effectiveness of the activity of the Secretariat.

It should be also noted that on 1 May 2016, the new Law of Ukraine “On Civil Service” as of 10 December 2015 No 889-VIII [26] entered into force. It defined the general framework, legal and organizational principles of civil service and established that the right of equal access of citizens to the civil service is based on their personal qualities and achievements.

Therefore, the priorities are to modernize the management paradigm in the field of HR policy, and to develop a model of continuous, sustainable, effective work with staff, to introduce new HR practices and information technologies in the activities of the Secretariat [9]. In this context, the following issues have to be addressed immediately:

Figure 2



Aligning the main areas of work with the staff of the Secretariat with the requirements of the transformation processes in the implementation of reforms, primarily in view of the ability to analyze, develop, implement, timely make and adjust management decisions, and bear responsibility for the assigned tasks;

Ensuring further development of the legislative framework taking into account the respective European standards;

Implementing strategic management of professional development of personnel in order to constantly ensure monitoring, evaluation, forecasting, planning of work with personnel in the Secretariat;

Ensuring the continuity of institutional memory that is manifested in the absence of a professional vacuum between generations by an optimal combination of activities of experienced and young employees;

Creating conditions for planning of career and professional development of employees of the Secretariat – continuous, conscious, targeted process of personal and professional growth of the staff based on the integration of knowledge, skills and competencies;

Improving the system of professional training of employees of the Secretariat in order to meet the need of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine for highly professional specialists and to provide conditions for improving their professional competency by creating and developing a virtual educational environment for the staff to exercise their right to build, improve their qualifications, to provide internships and self-training through modern communication services;

Applying the scientific approaches in the development and implementation of HR policy of the Secretariat;

Promoting the development of corporate culture in the Secretariat, implementation of effective internal communications, improvement of the prestige of work in the Secretariat, adhering to moral and spiritual values of public service and professionalism, high standards of ethics and behaviour;

Creating the conditions for professional environment of zero tolerance to corruption;

Improving the systems of search, selection, competitive recruitment, career support of personnel, information support of HR activities, developing the system of personnel indicators and professional profiling.

The Strategy is aimed at optimizing, retaining, strengthening and developing the human capacity of the Secretariat so that the officials are capable of competently and responsibly fulfilling their duties and functions, promptly promoting innovative processes for effective exercise of the powers of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine [4; 15; 18].

We consider that the main goal of the Strategy should be to create an effective human resource management system, as well as to develop the staffing capacity of the Secretariat, in particular through the introduction of modern practices and technologies that should strengthen the institutional capacity of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and its Secretariat, and facilitate further development of parliamentarism in Ukraine [25]. At the same time, the implementation of the mentioned

Strategy has to be based on the following principles:

- Legality;
- Comprehensiveness and consistency;
- Efficiency and responsibility;
- Professionalism and competency;
- Openness and transparency;
- Mutual respect;
- Ensuring gender equality;
- Democracy and social justice;
- Continuity of experience, knowledge and traditions;
- Optimal combination of interests of a public authority and civil servants.

It will be also necessary to identify the prior tasks for human resources (HR) development of the VRU Secretariat, taking into account the particularities of the different fields [8; 11; 13; 21; 24; 27].

Thus, in the field of the legal and regulatory framework development, the following tasks could be identified:

Creating a legal and regulatory framework in order to ensure functioning of an effective parliamentary service in Ukraine in accordance with the European Parliament assessment mission recommendations, including determining the status of employees of the Secretariat, particularities of recruitment, implementation and termination of civil service, executive support services, and other employees in the legislation that regulates the activities of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and its Secretariat;

Amending the legal framework to enable application of the European Parliament experience in competitive selection of employees, taking into account the competency-based approach to make sure that the knowledge and skills of applicants match the tasks of the secretariats of the committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine within the remit of these committees and other divisions of the Secretariat (testing the competencies of applicants for vacant positions);

Determining the procedure for appointment and dismissal of executive support service personnel and other employees of the Secretariat (including on a contractual basis);

Determining the procedure of continuous professional development of employees in the VRU Secretariat;

In the field of the organization development the following tasks could be determined:

Ensuring annual monitoring and forecasting of the need for specialists in relevant qualifications in the structural units of the Secretariat;

Creating a database of talented youth and other specialists (if staff reserve is not available) to competitively replace the positions of executive support service and civil service with highly professional specialists;

Improvement of the procedure of competitive selection of applicants for vacant positions in the Secretariat by developing special competency-based requirements for applicants;

Improvement of the Procedure of performance appraisal of civil servants of the Secretariat so it takes into account the individual professional development programme, as well as the indicators specified in the civil service contracts (if signed), as well as introducing appropriate incentives (incentives, bonuses etc.);

Ensuring that the functional analysis of the Secretariat is carried out on the regular basis in order to clarify and provide the implementation of its tasks and functions to the full extent, as well as to prepare proposals for structural transformations based on its results (with a clear definition of the set of knowledge, skills, values and personal qualities of employees required to accomplish tasks at the respective positions), to align the provisions on the structural units of the Secretariat and job descriptions of employees of the Secretariat with the needs of today;

Development and implementation of the human resources management quality system in the Secretariat;

Ensuring the adaptation of newly recruited employees to the operating procedures in the Secretariat;

Conducting gender audit of human resourcing and developing recommendations on gender mainstreaming in the Secretariat's activities;

Introduction of anti-corruption mechanisms in order to address and prevent conflicts of interest of persons authorized to perform the

functions of the state, as well as to ensure ethical standards of the staff of the Secretariat;

Development and implementation of the system of non-financial motivation of the staff of the Secretariat;

Designing and implementing modern approaches to the development of corporate culture in the Secretariat, introduction of a system of effective internal communications, developing a system of corporate values of employees of the Secretariat;

Mainstreaming the latest information and communication technologies of human resources management;

Organization of information and communication activities on the functioning of the Secretariat, shaping positive information landscape in the media, Internet, etc.

The issues of the professional development of the key parliamentary stakeholders are extremely important for successful implementation of the parliamentary reform in Ukraine [8; 11; 12; 17; 22]. Therefore the following main tasks in the field of education and professional development could be highlighted:

Establishment of a modern parliamentary education/training center for providing mobile and flexible professional training to the staff of the Secretariat and enabling it to enter into contracts with higher education institutions NGOs for professional training, advanced training, internships and self-training;

Improvement of the Regulation on the system of professional training of the staff of the Secretariat, taking into account the experience of the European Parliament and the best practices of national parliaments of the EU Member States;

Development of special professional and short-term training curricula for staff of the Secretariat based on the unification of forms and methods of training and reflective of the peculiarities of the activities of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and its Secretariat;

Improvement of training and professional Master programmes on parliamentarism under specialty 281 “Public management and administration,” gaining practical skills during internship in the Secretariat;

Carrying out activities within the framework of the implementation of international projects and programmes to improve qualification of the Secretariat staff jointly with the relevant NGOs;

Intensifying measures to improve staff proficiency in foreign languages, in particular taking into account European integration processes;

Ongoing analysis of the professional training needs of the staff of the Secretariat;

Development and monitoring of the implementation of individual programmes on improving professional competency of the staff of Secretariat.

The social sphere represents a high importance for further modernization of the VRU Secretariat. In this regard, the following important tasks in this field are highlighted:

Creation of an effective system of social protection of the staff of the Secretariat from social risks and challenges;

Approval of a new Collective Agreement between the administration and the staff of the Secretariat in order to provide additional preferences for the staff (in accordance with the legislation);

Guaranteeing safe working conditions, taking into account the particularities of the VRU work;

Ensuring gender equality standards in the VRU Secretariat;

Ensuring the implementation of the rights guaranteed by the staff of the Secretariat for combining work and raising children, including the provision of paid holidays and other benefits.

Implementation of the new HRM Strategy should contribute to introducing the strategic planning tools in the VRU Secretariat activity.

The strategic planning in the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (hereinafter – the Secretariat) is being implemented in order to use modern instruments within the work organization and to ensure the effective process of transformation of the structure and processes within the Secretariat, that will contribute to the development of parliamentarism in Ukraine and provide support to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine as the unique body of legislative power at a qualitatively new level. Thus, the new Strategic Plan should determine the vision of the long-term development

of the Secretariat, its transformation into realistic goals and objectives, identify new opportunities and approaches in the work organization of the Secretariat, increase the efficiency of using available resources.

The mission of the Secretariat is to ensure the implementation of representative, legislative and control functions of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine [4; 5]. At the same time, the vision of the long-term development of the Secretariat is a permanent goal, the ultimate standard for the Secretariat and it envisages providing the people's deputies of Ukraine with quality services and ensuring the effective functioning of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

In this regard, it seems important to identify the key strategic priorities of the mentioned HRM Strategy, i.e.:

Preventing duplication of functions by different structural units;

Securing optimal balance of the processes of staff capacity renewal of the Secretariat by developing the effective mechanisms for recruiting highly qualified specialists for proper performance of the Secretariat;

Improvement of competency-based recruitment system for holding managerial positions from among the employees who have experience at lower-level positions in the respective fields;

Creating an effective system for planning the career advancement of employees for holding managerial positions;

Strengthening the requirements for the moral qualities of persons at managerial positions in order to avoid corruption;

Introducing modern technologies of HR management in order to monitor the need for the staff professional development to have managerial tasks properly implemented, ensuring continuous lifelong learning;

Introducing mechanisms of stimulation and motivation of human resources through a system of incentives and preferences that will help to ensure the efficiency of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and its Secretariat;

Improving the efficiency of the HRM system;

Development of internal communications between managers and subordinates (direct communication and feedback) as well as horizontal communications, in-service and professional awareness raising;

Development and implementation of a system to measure HR-related indicators, performance and competency criteria, evaluation policies and standards, transparent and comprehensible performance appraisal systems;

Establishment of a parliamentary training center to meet the training needs; taking measures to improve professional competency of employees in order to create an environment of continuous training and self-training; expanding opportunities and forms of training;

Implementation of knowledge management techniques for the accumulation, exchange and use of professional knowledge, management of expert and intellectual resources, exchange of experience, improving the efficiency of processing typical and non-standard cases;

Conducting scientific and practical research as well as supporting initiatives of employees of the Secretariat in acquiring additional professional knowledge in the field of parliamentarism and parliamentary activities.

Taking into account an important scope of the defined priorities and tasks, the mentioned HRM Strategy has to be implemented in two stages (at least two years should be foreseen for the implementation of each stage). During the first implementation phase it will be necessary to foresee the following actions:

Establishing the working group (Task Force) on the Strategy implementation, in particular by involving the key parliamentary stakeholders as well as the key local and international experts in the area of public management and administration;

Developing an action plan for the implementation of the Strategy that specifies the responsible persons and a timeframe;

Conducting functional analysis of the Secretariat and drafting proposals on streamlining its structure based on its findings;

Ensuring the forecasting of the need for specialists in the relevant qualification in the structural units of the Secretariat for the medium-term (up to three years) and long-term (up to ten years);

Developing and approving the Provisions on Staff Career (Professional Development) of employees of the Secretariat;

Creating an effective database of personnel (staff reserve);

Revising and refining the Provisions on the system of professional training of the staff of the Secretariat, reflective of the experience of the European Parliament and best practices of national parliaments of the EU Member States;

Improving the system of professional development and foreign languages of employees of the Secretariat;

Involvement of international technical assistance projects in the implementation of activities for the professional training of the staff of the Secretariat;

Development of rules of corporate culture of employees of the Secretariat.

The second stage of the Strategy implementation period could include the following activities:

Developing a regulatory framework for realization of a parliamentary civil service in Ukraine at the legislative level as specified in the Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine “On Measures to Implement Recommendations on Internal Reform and Strengthening Institutional Capacity of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine” as of 17 March 2016 No 1035-VIII [19], adopted in follow-up to the European Parliament Mission’s recommendations [5];

Reviewing and approving job descriptions of the staff of the Secretariat based on the profiles of professional competency required to perform duties at the respective positions;

Developing and implementing a new on-line training platform “Knowledge Management” in order to improve the quality and accessibility of education to the staff of the Secretariat, to ensure quality lifelong education;

Development of special professional and short-term training curricula for the staff of the Secretariat based on the unification of forms and methods of training and taking into account the peculiarities of the activities of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and its Secretariat;

Taking measures to increase academic mobility of the staff by supporting professional training of talented youth in top domestic and foreign higher education institutions in the area of parliamentarism and parliamentary activities;

Development and approval of anti-corruption measures to address and prevent conflicts of interest of persons authorized to perform the functions of the state;

Conducting (in cooperation with the National Academy for Public Administration under the President of Ukraine, other educational and scientific institutions, public organizations, etc.) systematic research and drafting annual reports on the development of the parliamentary civil service;

Developing a new automated human resources management system in the Secretariat;

Conducting regular gender audit of the staffing needs of the Secretariat;

Developing an internal quality management system in the Secretariat (based on the international quality management systems, best national and international practices).

Conclusions. Development and implementation of the new HRM Strategy of the VRU Secretariat represents an important part for further implementation of the parliamentary reform in Ukraine (taking into account the recommendations of the European Parliament and other international organizations). At the same time, the realisation of this Strategy will allow to carry out comprehensive reform of human resources management in the Secretariat, to make this work more systematic and predictable as well as to have effective human resources capable to solve the set tasks. The mentioned Strategy should be based on the following principles:

Professionalism – competent, objective and impartial performance of official duties by the staff member of the Secretariat, constant improvement of his / her professional competence, fluency in the state language and desire to be fluent in one of the foreign languages, which is the official language of the Council of Europe;

Cooperation and communication – exchange of information, experience, knowledge, achievements among the staff members of the Secretariat, the management of the Secretariat and other employees.

Integrity – the focus of the actions of the staff member of the Secretariat on the protection of public interests and the refusal to prevail of private interest while performing official duties;

Efficiency– rational and effective use of working time and other resources by staff members of the Secretariat while performing official duties;

Political impartiality – preventing the influence of political views on the actions and decisions of staff members of the Secretariat as well as refraining from demonstrating their attitude to political parties, demonstrating their own political views while performing official duties.

At the same time, the HRM Strategy implementation process should be linked with introducing the strategic planning in VRU Secretariat activity. In this regard, it is possible to point out the following key strategic objectives for further VRU Secretariat development and modernization, i.e.:

Improvement of the structure of the VRU Secretariat, enhancement of internal procedures and processes as well HR development and improvement of HRM system;

Development and implementation of electronic parliamentarism tools as well as ensuring the openness of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and its Secretariat, development of effective interaction with citizens, promoting citizens' confidence to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine;

Improvement of analytical and research support of the legislative process in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, enhancement of the quality of bills submitted to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine;

Strengthening the effectiveness of parliamentary control over the implementation process of the adopted laws and the activity of the executive power bodies.

Received: 05.07.20

Ключові слова: управління людськими ресурсами (УЛР), парламентська реформа, публічне управління, людські ресурси, Верховна Рада (Парламент України), Секретаріат, модернізація.

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