

# Education of Competent Personnel for Public Administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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**Abstract:** Training for action and work in the modern age, characterized by rapid and constant changes, is imposed as an imperative. The key to this is education, that is, the educational system. The education system has become one of the essential pillars in the development of modern societies and countries. The educational system produces personnel with different knowledge, titles, and skills based on which they compete in the labor market. Human capital has become the key to the success and efficiency of almost all institutions and organizations. These institutions include public administration institutions. One of the problems faced by public administration is the need for more educated and competent personnel. This problem is particularly pronounced in transition and developing countries, including Bosnia and Herzegovina. One of the essential reforms that Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to implement on the way to its democratic and social development and European integration is the reform of public administration. More needs to be said about the importance of educating personnel who work or will work in the administration as a significant and essential resource and factor for the success of the public administration reform. The presented examples show that the education of personnel in the field of administration and for work in the administration gives excellent results in strengthening the public administration through improving the skills and competencies of the employees in the administration. Through a comparative analysis of the administrative school model, we will identify positive practices in this area, which will be applied to implement the administrative school model for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Investing in the education of employees to work in public administration is justified and necessary, which ultimately results in a reformed, efficient, and effective public administration, which is what Bosnia and Herzegovina strives for.

**Keywords:** Education, Administration, Employees, Reform, Bosnia and Herzegovina

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## 1. Introduction

For many years, one of the unavoidable daily political and social topics has been the reform of public administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This reform is one of the most significant reforms in developing the Bosnian society and state. Also, public administration reform is one of the prerequisites for integrating Bosnia and Herzegovina into the European Union.

The agenda for the accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the European Union inevitably contains a request for public administration reform by the principles and standards that the Union imposes on all member states. The ultimate goal is for Bosnia and Herzegovina and its public administration to be integral to the European administrative space. In support of this, as early as 2003, recommendations were given at the

European Union summit in Thessaloniki, one of which was called the "Agenda for the Western Balkans." This conclusion envisages the establishment of the Regional School for Higher Education in connection with the reform of public administration [8]. This means that at the national level, special attention must be paid to how education and the design of the organization of the public sector are implemented and that this area is placed on an academic and scientific level. Scientific methodology, especially the methodology of modern scientific research [1], should follow such a plane [13].

## 2. State of Administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina has its

historical foundation and tradition from medieval Bosnia until the post-Dayton period. With its internal structure, the current administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina is based on the Dayton Peace Agreement and the Constitution, which is an integral part of the Agreement [4].

The organization and structure of the administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina are extremely heterogeneous and complex. A high bureaucracy, corruption, overcrowding, and inefficiency characterize it. Significant public funds are used to finance the administration's work, and less and less is invested in infrastructure projects, economic development, and employment. Also, equal national representation of constituent peoples and other citizens is not ensured. This is also clearly defined by the Constitution in Article IX, point 3, where it is said that "the distribution of positions in the administration should generally reflect the composition of the people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This provision is interpreted as a three-part division of management positions, largely reflected in employment in lower positions in state institutions" [5].

A particular problem is the size of the administration, that is, the number of employees working there. It is a devastating fact that this number is increasing every day, which not only burdens the budgets of all levels of government but also slows down the work of the administration and the provision of public services. As a result, citizens' dissatisfaction is constantly growing.

For Bosnia and Herzegovina to become a full member of the European Union, a comprehensive reform of all administration segments must be carried out without delay. This means that European principles and standards should be implemented to adapt public administration and administration to the integration processes into the European Union. This is primarily because "state administration inherited from the era of a one-party, socialist system, unprepared to absorb and implement the demands set by the EU integration and globalization process" [5]. Without a modern, efficient, and functional administration, it is impossible to carry out procedures and actions within the framework of European integration. Namely, the joining and membership process is not ad hoc but highly demanding and long. Bosnia and Herzegovina "as a state, cannot count on a place in the community of European states if its citizens and its political structure: parties and state bodies do not create standards based on which it becomes a member and survives in the European Union" [6]. The administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina must be reformed so that in the accession process, it can continue to improve and adapt to the new conditions of the European administrative area. Also, it is essential to emphasize that even in extraordinary circumstances, such as the COVID-19 epidemic, a reformed administration means an adequate, efficient, and complete service that must be delivered to citizens. European integration must be a path towards improving and permanently adapting the administration.

### **3. The Position of the Administration in the Constitutional Arrangement of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The constitutional structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina was established based on the Dayton Peace Agreement in 1995. [2], which ended the war and found peace. According to the Agreement, a complex and heterogeneous constitutional arrangement of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina was established. It is a semi-federal arrangement since it is determined that Bosnia and Herzegovina will consist of two entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska [8]. In 1999, the Brčko District was formed as a separate administrative-territorial unit within the state. Furthermore, the entity Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is composed of ten (10) cantons. The earlier socialist system essentially takes over the organization of the local level of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Municipalities and cities are positioned as units of local self-government [7].

Within the framework of the constitutional arrangement of the executive power in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a total of 165 ministries operate, plus the offices of the members of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the president and vice-president of the entity, the office of the mayor of Brčko District, and the offices of the cantonal prime ministers. There are also various directorates, agencies, and offices. As a result of such a heterogeneous structure of government, a distinct problem arises in the matter of public decision-making in the state [10].

All the above indicators are the basis for raising the question about the efficiency of governments [11], that is, the efficiency of the entire public administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina and citizens' satisfaction with its work. In this context, some authors emphasize that "it is complicated to measure and evaluate [3] good governance in the state, so any measurement cannot be perfect." There are several concepts of efficiency measurement in the public sector. However, in the world, there is a unique concept of measuring the so-called Worldwide Governance Indicators project that seeks to better assess governance in over 200 countries around the world based on several different dimensions. Based on the World Bank's long-standing research program (Worldwide Governance Indicators - WGI), governance indicators around the world include six key dimensions of governance: freedom of citizens to choose their government, political stability and absence of violence, government efficiency, quality of regulations, the rule of law and control of corruption" [14].

Compared with neighboring countries, Bosnia and Herzegovina is at the bottom of the ranking in government efficiency. It has the smallest index, with a slight increase in the observed ten-year period (2009: 26.89; 2019: 28.85). The inefficient public sector of Bosnia and Herzegovina represents "coupling to the real sector with expensive bureaucracy, tax, and parafiscal levies due to its complexity

and size (public consumption exceeding 40% of GDP). As negative indicators of non-competitiveness and bad management, the appearance of low-quality public services, the short scope of public service provision, the appearance of corruption, the gray economy, trust in the government, the quality of the judiciary, etc., increases the overall dissatisfaction of citizens" [14].

As you know, many people work in the administration; it can be assumed that there is a severe system of education and training of personnel (officials and employees), as well as a scientific approach to creating various public policies and their implementation. The segment of education, as well as the recruitment of personnel into the civil service, is under the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as entity agencies. They all realize education and formally accept personnel for employment in the civil service.

In theory and practice, three basic models of recruitment and selection of the highest administrative staff have been developed, i. e., the highest employees of the state administration. Those three models are:

- 1) the Anglo-Saxon model,
- 2) the French model, and
- 3) the Germanic model.

#### **4. Administrative School Model for Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The first Higher School of Administration, which dealt primarily with administrative science, was formed in 1952. It operated in all capital cities of the former Yugoslavia. Schooling lasted two years. Due to unclear reasons, a possible influence of law school lobbies and other subjects, this school was abolished in 1981. Since that period, the administration has been dominated by personnel of all profiles and scientific orientations, performing the most complex administrative tasks. In 2005, for the first time in its history, the Faculty of Public Administration was established in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with headquarters in Sarajevo. That Faculty took over its curriculum from the Faculty of Administration of the University of Ljubljana. However, this institution was founded by someone other than the one who needs it the most (the state) but by a private agency. To a certain extent, with its work and activities, this higher education institution points to deficiencies in education in administration and the importance of systemic education. Advocates the necessity of a systemic approach to education, education, and the creation of processes in state administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bearing in mind the heterogeneity and complexity of the administrative-legal and political system of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the administration's reform is imposed as one of the essential priorities for the development of the state and society. This reform is also one of the key ones in the process of Bosnia and Herzegovina's accession to the European

Union.

Building a successful administration model in Bosnia and Herzegovina implies adopting and implementing reform projects of the current administration system. That reform means several aspects, and they are key [5]: 1) reform of the legal and normative position of the administration; 2) functional reform in terms of strengthening the capacity to provide services to citizens and 3) reform of the administrative-territorial organization of the state. This part of the reform, the offer of such a model, could be incorporated and observed through all three previously mentioned aspects of the administration reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Activities in this direction should be focused on the education system, with particular reference to the education of employees in and for public administration. According to available data, the rate of satisfaction with teaching in Bosnia and Herzegovina is 57% [14]. A reformed, trained, and modern public administration is expected to improve the government's general performance, primarily in the context of implementing public policies. As a result, we should start from those necessary preliminary works, which are a prerequisite for designing and implementing an adequate model of administrative school in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The first preliminary work could be the full implementation of the Law on Civil Service in the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially those provisions related to the education, training, and training of civil servants.

The second preliminary work is strengthening the institutional framework of administrative employees' existing education and training, such as civil service agencies and human resources departments in institutions, organizations, etc.

The third preliminary work would be the planning and provision of special financial items and funds in the budgets at all levels of government and for the needs of continuous and permanent education, training, and training of future and existing administrative employees.

Fulfilling the previous three prerequisites and prerequisites represents a solid foundation for building a new approach to education and training in the field of public administration. Apart from the Public Administration Reform Strategy and the Action Plan mentioning the establishment of the Institute for Public Administration, further progress has yet to be made. The institute was supposed to be a central institution for the education and training of personnel in the field of public administration, modeled primarily on neighboring countries. Since the idea of founding the Institute for Public Administration has never been implemented, the legitimate question of what to do next arises.

Since in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is no complete and unique social program of administrative reform that would cover all levels of government (from the state to the level of local self-government units - municipalities and cities), there is a need to search for models that are feasible and possible in

such a situation. It is becoming clear that public policies in the domain of public administration reform cannot go only from the top down but also vice versa, from the bottom up. Thus, the segment within which it is possible to carry out and implement practice-specific reform steps is the segment that concerns the introduction of a new model of the administrative school for Bosnia and Herzegovina. This can only be conceived at the cantonal level, in our specific case of Sarajevo Canton. Some identified problems burdening the administration's work will be listed based on the need to create adequate and applicable solutions.

The first neuralgic point is the constant change in workplace systematization to increase employee numbers. Due to frequent government changes, employment moratoriums are often introduced, deliberately, and knowingly violated. Therefore, devising the best solutions and constant systematization of workplaces is a point of urgent resolution.

The competition procedure is such that, at the proposal of one of the authorities, the Civil Service Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina conducts the competition procedure and conducts admission based on the request of the administrative body. However, the process is mainly formal, starting with the competition and the achieved test. After determining the need to hire a new civil servant, a public advertisement is published.

The number of employees at all levels is constantly increasing: municipalities, city administrations, cantons, entities, and the state level, without increasing the workload. This means that party cadres suitable for specific positions are being recruited. Therefore, recruitment and admission to the civil service is a problem points.

Due to the problems mentioned above and revisions in the systematization, it is common for officials with completed technical faculties to work on the most complex administrative tasks. Also, which higher education institution is recognized or not often depends only on the manager or the created systematization for each administrative body individually. Therefore, unified, uniform, and adequate education of civil servants is necessary.

Education of those already employed in the civil service, seminars, and regular counseling in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina entity is carried out by the Civil Service Agency of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Due to inadequate topics (thematic areas and units) and problematic education regions, private institutions make individual calls to educate critical areas such as public procurement. Such essential areas of education must not be left to the free market. Education in certain areas should accompany the reforms, and this area must be viewed together from the fundamental unsolved problems.

When a coalition gains power, management functions [12] are given to people who are often not familiar with the actual situation in the administration and especially in the body, they will lead. It also requires special education and training. Designing processes in public administration requires a scientific approach that has yet to exist today. These are just

r and publi problems that require a unique approach and an adequate response. That answer would imply a clear strategy leading to reforms and activities that would yield the first results quickly.

First of all, one must consider that the Canton of Sarajevo represents a point of interest for the entire country and the region, and this means that all solutions should come from this part of the country.

By analyzing the organization of recruitment and education for administration in the countries not mentioned above, it was noticed that the system in the region's countries is relatively identical and similar. Considering the constitutional arrangement of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the thesis is confirmed that the innovative system should be launched at the local level, i.e., at the cantonal level, according to the model of the German and partially French organization. For this scope of work, an institution is needed which will be able to carry out the education of new staff for public administration, as well as the education of an already existing team.

To obtain adequate data and propose the right solutions, first, it is necessary to subject the current administration of the Canton of Sarajevo to a functional analysis of the systematization of workplaces and the existing number of employees. As part of the institution that would carry out these activities, it is necessary to form an Institute for Public Administration, which would adequately design the best possible organization of the public sector and implement it from a scientific level. All municipal administrations (nine municipalities of Sarajevo Canton) should undergo the same analysis. Based on this, the state of the administration would be reviewed, i.e., the number of adequate staff, the number of administrators (employees in the administration) who need to be trained or retrained, which educational profile should be prepared, which areas should be treated with education, and whether some institutions should perhaps be consolidated or new ones established. These areas must be following adopted public policies and strategies.

After the administrative change of Canton Sarajevo, other cantons would inevitably follow the same procedure. This would create the backbone and backbone of modern administration, and the results would be visible very quickly. A well-conceived administration would break down party barriers in search of adequate solutions. Research and development require a lot of energy, but it is still the only feasible solution [3]. The sooner scientific capacities for analysis and creation are created, the sooner solutions to the identified problems will be reached.

Finally, the question arises, what is an institution's profile that can simultaneously respond to the abovementioned problems? As stated here, it meant an organization that carries out the following activities under its auspices: cyclical education, continuous education of those already employed, short teachings for political officials before the very act of assuming office for a duration of two to five weeks (administrative academy), and which has a body for creating a process that corresponds to the scientific Institute for Public

Administration.

The proposed answer to that question is that we should devote ourselves to what already exists in that area, fully or partially, that is, look back at the institutional framework that already exists and exists. Its focus is the education and training of personnel in the field of public administration. As positive practices, the focus is on the higher education of future and lifelong learning of existing administrative employees; it is necessary to identify which institutions in that context can meet such tasks and needs and whether there are any at all.

Currently, within the University of Sarajevo, the Faculty of Administration has been operating and working as an associated member for many years. Of all the countries in the immediate neighborhood, only the Republic of Slovenia has a Faculty of Administration, which operates within the University of Ljubljana. The Faculty of Administration of the University of Sarajevo is an affiliated member, which means it is financed from its resources. Bearing in mind the activity and social importance of the said Faculty, the question arises: can that Faculty be a concrete model of administrative school in Bosnia and Herzegovina? The Faculty educates current and future employees in the administration through all three study cycles (bachelor's, master's, and doctoral studies). The Center for Lifelong Learning also operates within the Faculty, which can provide training for employees and organize academies for elected politicians. While on the other hand, forming a new scientific institute requires a much more comprehensive approach.

The Center for Lifelong Learning, as a sub-organizational unit of the Faculty of Administration, was established to educate and improve the knowledge of people of all ages.

This concept is designed to establish learning in all periods of life so that the participant is up to date with the latest trends in the field in which he is educated. Also, this implies the repetition of knowledge, skills, and competencies previously established along with the latest experiences of the participants. Let's take into account the current legal and institutional position of the Faculty, past successes in the field of education and scientific and research work, cooperation with renowned institutions in the country, and especially abroad, as well as the Faculty's membership in the significant and reputable world and European organizations in the domain of public administration (ICAMSS and NISPAcee – a network of institutes and schools for public administration in Central and Eastern Europe). We are approaching the specific model of the administration school, and it is necessary to take additional important steps, operationalizing the idea of creating an administrative school model.

*First*, the Faculty of Administration should become an institution of national significance and importance. This means that the state should legally and in every other way position the Faculty as a state higher education institution for the education and training of future and current administrative employees.

*Second*, the financing of the work and activities of the

Faculty should become a state interest, which means that the state and all other levels of government, by their possibilities, direct financial resources to the Faculty and thus provide the economic basis for the education and training of their administrative personnel.

*Third*, additional personnel strengthening of the teaching staff, especially with experts and experts from practice, following the example of administrative schools from the countries of the "old democracy," but also from developed European countries.

*Fourth*, providing support for the certification of existing curricula and designing new ones to contemporary trends and changes in the field of public administration.

*Fifth*, fully affirming and promoting the work and activities of the Faculty in the neighborhood, Europe, and the world, which would include all users of the services that the Faculty provides and would provide in the future. This means spreading the image of the Faculty as a crucial and essential institution for the education and training of employees in public administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This would help the Faculty become a regionally and world-renowned exemplary institution in the education and training of administrative employees, like the French ENA.

By implementing the proposals above, Bosnia and Herzegovina would get a concrete model of an administrative school in the form of a Faculty of Administration. It would receive a state-run higher education institution that could satisfy most of its founders' goals and the public's expectations. The election of the administrative elite and its constant renewal would be ensured. The administration would achieve stability and a good starting position for future development changes and achieving development goals and objectives.

## 5. Conclusion

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the role and importance of education in the work of administration and the process of public administration reform still need to be correctly recognized. As a result, there is still considerable "savings" made on the training of personnel for administration and administration, which has the impact that employees in public administration are often left to learn on their own or take a "quick course on the spot" by educators or programmers (if it is also done with technical-technological aids). Institutions that provide proper forms of education in the administration field can conduct informal forms of education with the support and need of the government. The capacities, as already stated, exist, and only a serious approach by the authorities is needed.

Finally, efficient public administration is obtained by conducting formal and informal education of personnel in public administration and engaging them to work in administration. It is a reform independent of a change in the constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a change in jurisdiction, or a difference in the administrative-territorial division of the state. It is, therefore, a reform that does not

depend on the "big" political issues and problems around which there is still no consensus in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A pilot education, training, and employment project can be created simply at the cantonal level without major political processes. This kind of activity can be a positive example that, after it is adequately prepared and implemented, could be used by other cantons and the entire country. Such and other future revolutionary reform processes in administration must be created from one place, which should undoubtedly be an Institute of Administration. This is a great advantage and an imperative that should be worked on more seriously. Institutions (primarily educational) exist, and only the state should recognize them as support for the functioning of public administration and itself in general.

Considering the constitutional arrangement of Bosnia and Herzegovina, it becomes clear that the mentioned methods for carrying out public administration reform cannot be carried out by the classic techniques of amending the constitution and laws since there is no political consensus for this. However, this public policy proposal should refer to the cantonal level, which has sufficient competence to initiate specific processes to reform the public sector and public administration. As stated, education, training, and design of reform processes can be carried out at the cantonal level, in the specific case of Sarajevo Canton. This process does not require a political consensus at the state level, which would otherwise be a significant and challenging obstacle to overcome in the current circumstances.

The cyclical education process for nine municipalities and the cantonal public administration should be designed to make a detailed projection of how one administrative body should be reformed. For example, precise predictions of how many (numerically) executors (employees) are needed and the goals. Considering the annual turnover of employees who retire or go to other jobs, the previous desired projection would strictly control the hiring process. Thus, the process of public administration reform would take place without unnecessary cuts and the dismissal of employees.

The activities above should be implemented by a scientific institute, which would be formed at the Faculty of Administration, an affiliated member of the University of Sarajevo. The process of cyclical education of the necessary personnel should occur through the mentioned institution. The teaching of civil servants would also happen through the same institution, the Center for Lifelong Learning, as a sub-organizational unit of the Faculty. The Faculty of Administration should have a different legal position and status, which would entail signing a strategic document with the Sarajevo Canton Government. The Faculty of Administration, i.e., its Scientific Institute and Center for Lifelong Learning, is a cantonal Civil Service Agency. This process will take about ten years in the first phase. After a specific time, this system could be evaluated. In the same way, it could do the same in other cantons within the entity of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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