



#34 - April 2021

# vision RH

HR Overview - Monitoring Human Resources news from France, Europe and around the world

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vision RH is a newsletter published by the French Directorate General for Administration and the Civil Service (DGAFP). It draws on information sources and reports issued by public administrations, the private sector, international organisations and the press, in several different languages. It aims to provide a broad view of current human resources and civil service initiatives.

The monthly focus of this 34<sup>th</sup> issue is dedicated to **modernizing the HR function** and more particularly the impacts on structuring and professionalising. As usual, we present you the last trends in several countries on this theme and the inspiring ways in which they are implementing them. Beyond the news, you will get acquainted with the **support for working parents** at Essilor as well as the new appraisal system for public servants in **Cyprus**.

We stay at your disposal for your opinions, remarks or suggestions. Do not hesitate to write to us:

[contact-visionrh@kiosque.bercy.gouv.fr](mailto:contact-visionrh@kiosque.bercy.gouv.fr)

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<https://kiosque.bercy.gouv.fr/alyas/abo/edit/envisionrh>

Have a good reading. Take good care of you and others!

The vision RH editorial team

**COVID-19** Il existe des gestes simples pour vous protéger et protéger votre entourage



Se laver les mains très régulièrement



Tousser ou éternuer dans son coude ou dans un mouchoir



Utiliser des mouchoirs à usage unique



Saluer sans se serrer la main, éviter les embrassades

## Structuring and professionalising the HR function: two measures with a major impact

Whether through recruiting, training or supporting personnel, **public HR departments** play an active role in government transformation. As a central part of **reforms**, they are directly involved when **new management frameworks** are introduced and are there to meet the needs of employees.

This trend has led to **structural changes** as well as the **wider professionalisation** of the HR function, driven primarily by the objectives of adapting to needs (at local or sector level) and speeding up decision-making.

There is emerging interest in creating **HR career paths**, akin to what has been done with IT professions. The **United Kingdom** has the Human Resources Profession, comprising **HR professionals across the civil service** working in ministerial departments and government agencies. Organised as an **institutional function**, it includes nine job families and four job levels. A **framework** sets out potential career pathways.

Inspired by this model, other English-speaking countries have taken a similar approach. **Ireland** recently established a **pool of specialist managers**. Managers with primary training or a background in HR work with their teams to develop and **implement local strategies**, part of the move toward regionalisation.

A **good HR system** can make all the difference. In **South Korea**, the government invested in e-Saram, a powerful and comprehensive multi-purpose information system which is used not just for personnel management but also for **setting HR policy**, thanks to decision-making assistance modules. All users have access, based on their profile, to the same up-to-date information. A similar system, DFØ-HR, has been introduced in **Norway**.

While most **national in-service training providers** now offer a diverse range of tiered theory-based courses, **hands-on experience** remains the best way to learn. In **Belgium**, HR professionals can earn **certification** in the areas of candidate selection and expertise, according to a methodology developed internally. Three successive levels of autonomy are offered. The **paths** combine face-to-face and online training and offer **mentoring** support.

Although there is a trend toward decentralisation, in France and elsewhere, some countries are taking the opposite tack. **Finland**, for example, uses a **shared services centre** (*Palkeet*) to which public entities can **contract out** all or part of their HR administration. To date, it has proven to be a **popular method for optimisation** among most administrations, both big and small. The *P-direkt* centre in the **Netherlands** provides a similar service.

Somewhere in between the two approaches is a system that **provides occasional support** for HR needs. It's a model used by two smaller EU countries:

- In **Malta**, where **all HR processes** have been reorganised and departments are now involved in a **continuous improvement** process, the People and Standards Division **actively supports** departments in applying newly developed directives.
- In **Luxembourg**, by creating an **HR skills centre** tasked with providing **tools** and offering support and supervision **services** to departments, the government is taking a more operational approach to responding to one-off requests for assistance and training.

Ensuring that HR professions are **recognized and respected** so that they become a more popular career choice is the objective of the IPMA-HR (1), which is based in the **United States**.

<sup>1</sup> IPMA-HR for "International Public Management Association – Human Resources".

### Notes

For more information: [oecd.org](http://oecd.org)





## NEWS CIVIL SERVICE, HR POLICY AND INNOVATION

### Europe: study on the various civil service models

While all European civil services tend to operate within a general legal framework governed by similar laws or regulations, they are still largely shaped by the national context. To get a better understanding of how each country handles different aspects, the Czech government conducted a detailed comparative study on 15 participating EU countries, including France.

#### Notes

For more information: [mvcr.cz](http://mvcr.cz) (in Czech), (*machine translation into English*)



### Italy: the government presents its recovery plan

Because the public service will play an active role in the country's recovery, while drawing lessons from the crisis, Italy's new Minister of Public Administration presented his recovery objectives. Two major areas of focus will be adapting the recruitment process to needs and diversifying career paths. Regions, provinces and municipalities will have more autonomy to manage their own positions and staff.

#### Notes

For more information: [funzionepubblica.gov.it](http://funzionepubblica.gov.it) (in Italian), (*machine translation into English*)



## France: an innovation hub in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes

Acting as an incubator for regional government departments, Lab @RCHIPEL has made a name for itself by developing a game (“Stade 2 la réussite”) to prepare prospective candidates for competitive exams. The game is now available as a mobile app with new features. Successful candidates starting in a new position can move on to “Integra-game”, a game to help onboard new hires and promote team cohesion.

« ***This new version promotes personal mobilization, provides assistance and advice and ensures follow-up throughout the preparation*** »

### Notes

For more information: [lab-archipel.fr](http://lab-archipel.fr) (in French), *(machine translation into English)*





## NEWS RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND SKILLS

### Spain: the government launches a Twitch channel

Mindful of the need to adapt its communications to the audiences it's trying to reach, the Spanish government has decided to reach out to citizens via live-streaming platform Twitch. The aim of the initiative, which is part of the government's talent acquisition plan, is to start a dialogue by interacting with potential candidates and answering their questions.

#### Notes

For more information: [inap.es](http://inap.es) (in Spanish), (*machine translation into English*)



### Canada: public servant-in-residence initiative

Mid-career public servants in Canada will be able to apply for temporary assignments in the country's universities to conduct research or teach in areas linked to departmental objectives. The government hopes to strengthen ties with universities through knowledge exchange, collaborate on public service recruitment opportunities and provide tomorrow's workforce with an understanding of how government works.

#### Notes

For more information: [csps-efpc.gc.ca](http://csps-efpc.gc.ca)



## Norway: mapping of transferable skills

Transferable skills – abilities that are useful across different professions and tend to be a mix of different skills – are the ones most sought after by recruiters, yet they often aren't listed in existing databases. Norway's Agency for Government Employers decided to address the issue by drawing up an inventory. The exercise will help employers craft better job descriptions and adapt training opportunities accordingly.

« *We want to collect all the information on transversal skills in order to better prepare for the jobs of the future* »

### Notes

For more information: [arbeidsgiver.difi.no](http://arbeidsgiver.difi.no) (in Norwegian), (*machine translation into English*)







## NEWS SENIOR MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP, DIGITALISATION

### Denmark: a stride toward pay equity

Even though Denmark is one of the top-ranked countries for gender equality, it still has a gender wage gap, due in large part to outdated classifications of certain professions. The issue was raised in Parliament, which will vote on a proposal to significantly increase public sector pay scales for female-dominated professions, based on equivalent levels of training for similar positions.

#### Notes

For more information: [ft.dk](https://ft.dk) (in Danish), (*machine translation into English*)



### United Kingdom: a capability framework for senior government analysts

To enhance the profiles of civil servants performing Analysis Function roles in various ministerial departments and help them better position themselves, the UK's civil service decided to develop a capability framework. There are three levels to the framework, which details the required capabilities and responsibilities associated with each. Another aim of the initiative is to give more visibility to employers.

#### Notes

For more information: [gov.uk](https://gov.uk)



## Austria: videoconference document security

While it has been a mainstay of work life over the past year, videoconferencing has presented issues for remote meetings in terms of recording summaries of decisions and securely sharing documents. In Austria, the federal digital services provider developed a solution: participants have their identity confirmed, and once meeting minutes have been electronically approved they can no longer be edited.

« *The interface we offer is compatible with the majority of existing videoconferencing software solutions* »

### Notes

For more information: [dih-ost.at](http://dih-ost.at) (in German), (*machine translation into English*)





## NEWS SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND QUALITY OF WORKING ENVIRONMENT

### France: compilation of new practices to inspire lasting change

The pandemic has introduced new ways of working. To put the lessons learned to good use, France's Interministerial Directorate for Government Transformation (DITP) has published a compilation of practices designed to inspire lasting change. Organised into eight information sheets across three themes, the document offers ideas on how to reshape how teams work, improve how information is disseminated and develop group problem-solving techniques.

#### Notes

For more information: [modernisation.gouv.fr](https://modernisation.gouv.fr) (in French), (*machine translation into English*)



### Germany: agreement reached on special payment

An outcome of collective bargaining with unions representing contract employees, an agreement to make a special payment to German civil servants has been extended to tenured personnel. All civil servants up to and including middle management will receive a one-time payment in compensation for pandemic-related hardships. Three different amounts (ranging from €300 to €600) will be paid out in inverse proportion to job level.

#### Notes

For more information: [bmi.bund.de](https://bmi.bund.de) (in German), (*machine translation into English*)



## Netherlands: reintroducing social interaction to the workplace

According to a survey of government departments in the Netherlands, stress levels are up from having to work more from home and adapt to new conditions. To improve well-being, the government launched the IIR Vital initiative: regular meetings just to stay in touch, with no specific work objective. Preliminary feedback has been very positive so far.

« *It can really be a relief to be able to say freely that things are not always going well for you* »

### Notes

For more information: [ubrijk.nl](http://ubrijk.nl) (in Dutch), (*machine translation into English*)



## Essilor steps up support for working parents

Striking a healthy **work-life balance** has been all the more of a challenge since the start of the pandemic, particularly under lockdown – making **parent-friendly measures** a welcome move from employers.

As part of its recent diversity and inclusion agreement, lens manufacturer Essilor has committed to helping its employees **fully perform their parental duties** alongside their work responsibilities. The following measures, which are more generous than France’s legal minimum requirements, have been introduced:

- Paternity leave has been **doubled** (22 days instead of 11).
- Mothers returning from maternity leave can take off **one paid day per week** for the first two months.
- **Special accommodations** are available to parents pursuing adoption or undergoing fertility treatment.
- In the three years after an employee returns from parental leave, any **required training** must be organised in such a way that travel arrangements and **time away from home** are compatible with the employee’s family situation.

The company has also committed to supporting parents of **school-age children**, signing a **partnership** with *Campus parentalité Nathan* (1), that offers different levels of **support** for families and a selection of fun and educational **resources**.

<sup>1</sup> *Designed by educational experts, the Campus is a digital platform that supports families.*

### Notes

For more information: [essilor.com](https://www.essilor.com)





## Public servants in Cyprus to have a new work appraisal and career advancement system

When it comes to **performance appraisals** in the civil service, it can be difficult to set criteria that are both objective and reflective of reality.

In Cyprus, where the proportion of civil servants **evaluated as “exceptional”** is an unrealistic **97%** (and growing), the government decided to make performance appraisals a **priority** of its reform.

After a **first unsuccessful attempt** in 2016, in early 2020 Parliament voted in favour of a **new reform** that includes the major **amendments** sought by Pasydy, the country’s largest union representing public sector workers.

The new appraisal system is based on **three principles** – objectivity, transparency and merit – and will see civil servants awarded a **grade between 1 and 10** every year. Although **quotas** have been deemed unconstitutional, every grade awarded (whether increased, decreased or the same as the previous year) must be **thoroughly documented** by management and can be **appealed** to the civil service commission (EDY).



One of the government’s objectives is to guarantee **equitable access to promotions** to promote mobility across ministries. The Ministry of Finance decided to **connect the two measures** by making appraisals **the main criterion** for applying to a higher-level position. Prospective applicants must now receive a **score of 5 or higher for at least 3 years**.

To ensure **balance**, other **weighted** criteria are included (score on a selection exam, recognized professional qualifications, experience). The weightings will depend on the responsibilities of the position.

The **only situation** where appraisals will not be a factor is for positions in category A14 and above (1), i.e. senior management, open to both internal and external candidates, to ensure **equal treatment among candidates**.

Additionally, all managers may request a **180-degree evaluation**, where their superior interviews the members of their team. It's an **individual approach** that uses co-worker feedback to **support career advancement**.

According to the minister, the primary objective is to put an end to the culture of “**coasting upwards**”, where promotions are based on nothing more than seniority and agents **aren't incentivised** to work at developing their careers or upgrading their skills.

<sup>1</sup> *There are 16 compensation categories for public service jobs (A1 to A16).*

### Notes

For more information: [mof.gov.cy](http://mof.gov.cy) (in Greek), (*machine translation into English*)





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