

**PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ACADEMY
UNDER THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN**

Research Institute

**Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana
Baseline Study Report**

Astana 2013

Table of contents

Introduction

- 1** Baseline study methodology
- 2** Regional Hub in Civil Service: baseline study findings
 - 2.1** Phase I. Electronic survey of the Regional Hub participating countries
 - 2.2** Phase II. Results of semi-structured interviews of representatives of the Regional Hub participating countries
 - 2.3** Phase III. Results of a questionnaire survey among experts who participated in a pilot training workshop for executives of authorized bodies and educational organizations in the field of civil service in the Regional Hub participating countries on 'Issues of Civil Service Modernization'
- 3** **Recommendations**

Annexes

Introduction

The globalization and modern challenges have raised the importance of improved quality of decisions made by the governments. In its turn, the effectiveness of such decisions largely depends on the professionalism of government officials.

The priorities in reforming civil service, which in fact is a continuous process, depend on the global, regional and country-level factors. The speed of reforms as well as the level of development of civil service is determined by the role of the state, the selected economic model, specific challenges as well as by democratization in a country and political will.

Thus, the reforms in developed countries focus on introducing the concept of new management, building professional civil service based on individual competences of civil servants, improving the quality of public services and satisfying people's needs. In these countries the legislation on civil service is a well-elaborated branch of law and consistent reforms have resulted in gaining rich theoretical and practical knowledge. These countries have special designated government bodies covering various aspects of civil servants' activities, e.g. in the U.S. such bodies are the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board and Office of Comptroller General.

Due to various factors the countries in our region have many common issues. The legislation on civil service is at the early stage of its development. First specialized laws were approved in mid-1990s only. Not all countries have specialized bodies for civil service and continuity and consistency in the reforms is not always secured.

We still lack theoretically substantiated and evidence-based scientific research results in the field of public administration, civil service and human resources policies. It is caused by a number of historical reasons. For instance, in the past, under the Soviet system, studies in the area of HR policies were not supported and even prohibited. Therefore for the countries in the region it is important to build their capacities in research area and to develop a base for regional studies.

The above also dictates the need for pro-active bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the countries which have gained wide experience and have working civil service systems, as well as the need to raise regional cooperation to a new level. This study is mainly aimed at identifying perspective areas of cooperation with due consideration to the opinion of each country.

1 Baseline study methodology

After the participating countries signed the declaration to establish the Regional Hub (15 March 2013), the Academy of Public Administration under the RoK President started designing the below baseline study in accordance with Item 6 of the Action Plan to establish the Regional Hub for the dissemination of knowledge and practice in the field of civil service approved on January 17, 2013 by Order of the Head of the RoK Presidential Administration.

The purpose of the study is to analyse priority areas of cooperation under the framework of the Regional Hub of Civil Service.

The findings of the study will be the source of information and guidance for future activities of the Regional Hub.

The baseline study consists of three phases to ensure its quality and validity.

Phase I (September - October 2013). The Academy of Public Administration under the RoK President, together with the Agency for Civil Service Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Regional Hub Secretariat with the assistance of international experts developed a **questionnaire** consisting of 18 questions, 2 of which relate to the appointment of country experts and members of the editorial team.

The report from Phase I was presented on October 28, 2013 during a pilot workshop for civil service executives from the countries of the region on 'Issues of Civil Service Modernization'. The questionnaire is attached (*Annex 1*).

Phase II (October – November 2013). At Phase II semi-structured interviews were held with experts from the Hub participating countries. Representatives of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan and Armenia were interviewed. These countries were selected because they were strongly interested in the Hub's activities. Questions asked during the interviews are attached (*Annex 2*).

Phase III (October 2013). At Phase III a questionnaire consisting of 12 questions was prepared. The respondents to the questionnaire were the participants of the pilot workshop. The questionnaire was aimed to improve the quality of future Hub activities. The questionnaire is attached (*Annex 3*).

The survey at Phase I covered **18 respondents**, representatives of authorized bodies in the area of civil service and specialized educational organizations for training and development of civil servants in the participating countries (Table 1).

No.	Country	Authorized bodies in the area of civil service	Specialized educational organizations for training and development of civil servants
1	Azerbaijan	Commission on Civil Service Issues under the President of Azerbaijan	Academy of Public Administration under the President of Azerbaijan
2	Armenia	Civil Service Council of the Republic of Armenia	Public Administration Academy of Armenia
3	Afghanistan	Commission on Civil Service of Afghanistan	Civil Service Institute of Afghanistan
4	Belarus	-	Academy of Administration under the President of the Republic of Belarus
5	Georgia	Bureau of Civil Service of Georgia	Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA)
6	Kazakhstan	Agency for Civil Service Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan	Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan

7	Kyrgyzstan	Government Personnel Service of Kyrgyz Republic	Academy of Public Administration under the President of Kyrgyz Republic (2 responses)
8	Moldova	No response received	Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Moldova
9	Russia	n/a	Russian Academy of National Economy and Civil Service under the President of the Russian Federation
10	Tajikistan	No response received	No response received
11	Turkmenistan	No response received	No response received
12	Uzbekistan	No response received	No response received
13	Ukraine	n/a	National Academy of Public Administration under the President of Ukraine

Table 1. Regional Hub participating countries which participated in the survey

At Phase II, semi-structured interviews were conducted with:

Dr. Osman Osmani, General Director of the Civil Service Institute of Afghanistan under the Independent Commission on Administrative Reforms and Civil Service of Afghanistan,

Mr. Samwell Vassilyan, Deputy Chairman of the Civil Service Council of the Republic of Armenia, who agreed to answer the questions and the responses to be recorded for authenticity,

Mr. Rauf Aliyev, Senior Consultant, Recruitment Department of the Commission on Civil Service Issues under the President of Azerbaijan.

The survey **at Phase III** covered 19 representatives of the Regional Hub participating countries who participated in the pilot workshop (Table 2).

No.	Name	Position, institution
1.	Rauf Aliyev	Senior Consultant, Recruitment Department of the Commission on Civil Service Issues under the President of Azerbaijan
2.	Seimur Aliyev	Senior Consultant, Recruitment Department of the Commission on Civil Service Issues under the President of Azerbaijan
3.	Gegam Sargsyan	Head of Research and Training Section, Civil Service Council of the Republic of Armenia
4.	Osman Osmani	General Director of the Civil Service Institute of Afghanistan
5.	Igor Gancherenok	Vice Principal for International Cooperation, Academy of Administration under the President of the Republic of Belarus
6.	Tamta Coccashvili	Head of Civil Service Development and Reform Department of Georgia

7.	Liliya Melnik	Deputy Head of Central Public Administration Department, No response received
8.	Dinara Minnigulova	Head of Department, Bashkir Academy of Civil Service and Administration under the President of Bashkortostan
9.	Svetlana Petrova	Director, Centre of Civil Service Development, Institute of Labour and Insurance under the President of the Russian Federation
10.	Grež Kossimov	Deputy Head, Civil Service Office under the President of Tajikistan
11.	Sadygul Alymkulova	Head of Testing Centre, Government Personnel Service of Kyrgyz Republic
12.	Yulia Likhach	Vice Head of the Centre Civil Service Adaptation to the European Union Standards of the National Ukrainian Agency on Civil Service Affairs
13.	O Te Dong	Expert in e-government and public administration reform, Republic of Korea
14.	Saltanat Dzhanenova	Nazarbayev University faculty member
15.	Aidos Zhumabek	President, National Centre for Personnel Management in Civil Service
16.	Murat Baissalov	Senior Expert, Public Services Evaluation and Inspection Section of the Agency for Civil Service Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan
17.	Chingiz Alekeshev	Expert, Public Services Evaluation and Inspection Section of the Agency for Civil Service Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan
18.	George Mirogiannis	Team Leader of the EU Project ‘Civil Service Reform and Modernization of the Government of Kazakhstan’
19.	Eduard Zakharchenko	Key expert, ‘Civil Service Reform and Modernization of the Government of Kazakhstan’

Table 2. Participants of the pilot workshop

2 Regional Hub in Civil Service baseline study findings

2.1 Phase I. Electronic survey of the Regional Hub participating countries

The survey was conducted in three areas (*Annex 4*):

Area 1. Cooperation between countries of the region

Clear understanding of its objectives and areas of development is key to any organization's activities. As the Regional Hub is an international organization and was established for sharing knowledge and practice in the field of civil service, consideration should be given to each participant's opinion and participants' expectations from Hub's activities should be identified.

To this end, the respondents were asked a question as to what results they expect from their participation in the activities of the Regional Hub of Civil Service.

According to the survey, the key result expected from participation in the Regional Hub should be improved regional cooperation – 72.2%, implementation of joint projects and programmes – 66.6%, as well as the creation of an institutional platform for continuous sharing of knowledge and practice – 61.1% (Figure 1).

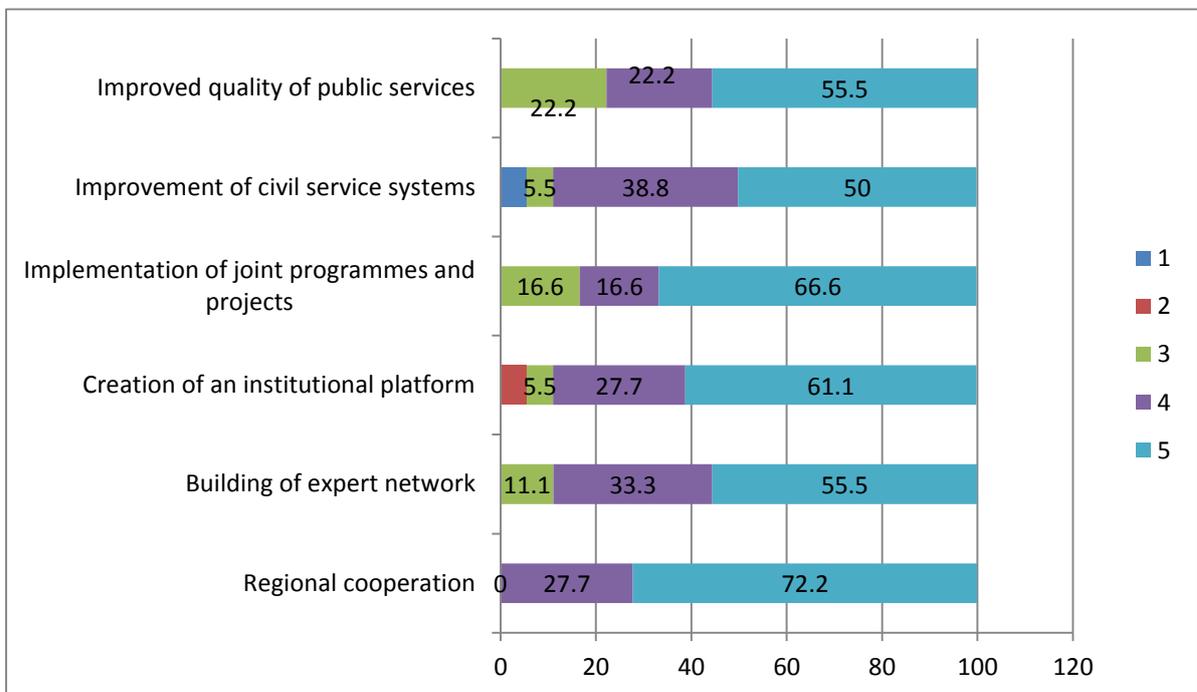


Figure 1. What results do you expect from the participation in the activities of the Regional Hub of Civil Service?

At the same time, the respondents demonstrated a strong interest in reviewing the activities of government bodies of the region's countries. The respondents noted that during training in a region's country they would like to learn about the activities of the authorized body in the field of civil service (100%). In addition, the respondents demonstrated interest in the activities of an authorized body responsible for monitoring public service delivery (50%) and the activities of Community Service Centres and an authorized body in the field of economy (33.3%) (Figure 2).

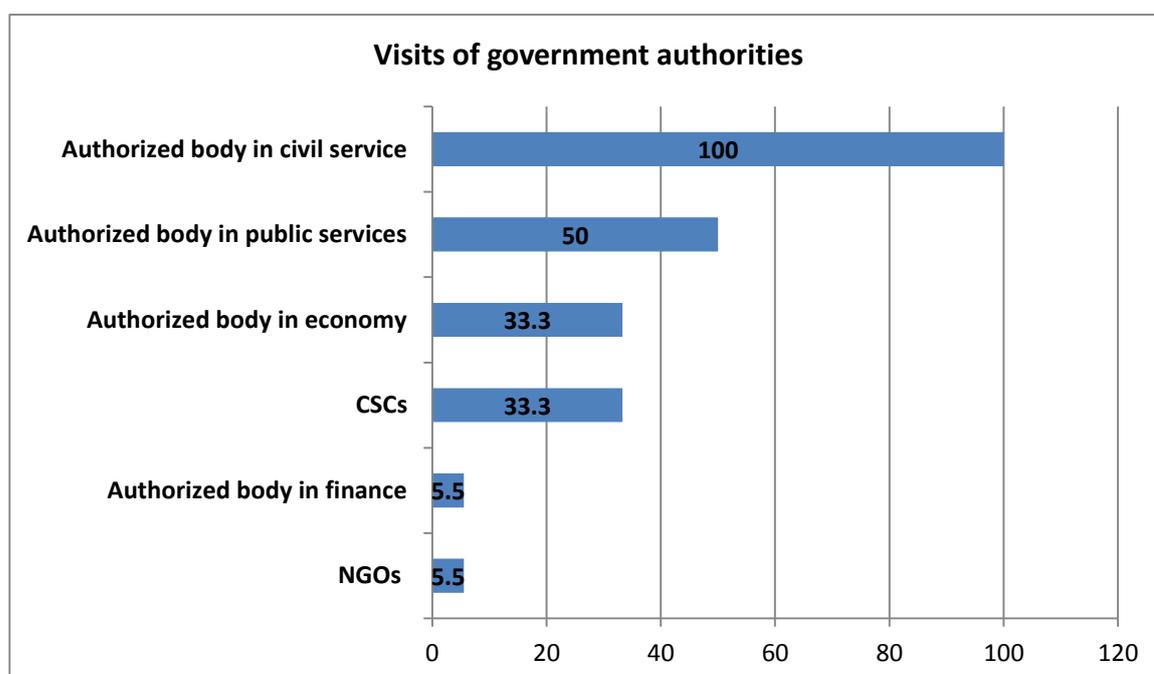


Figure 2. During a training event in a country what government authorities would you like to visit?

At the same time, the respondents noted insufficient level of cooperation and exchange of experience in the field of civil service between/among region's countries. Thus, when answering the question about the level of efficiency of cooperation, the opinions split: 66.6% of respondents rated it as 'very low' and 'low', and 33.3% rated it as 'moderate' (Figure 3).

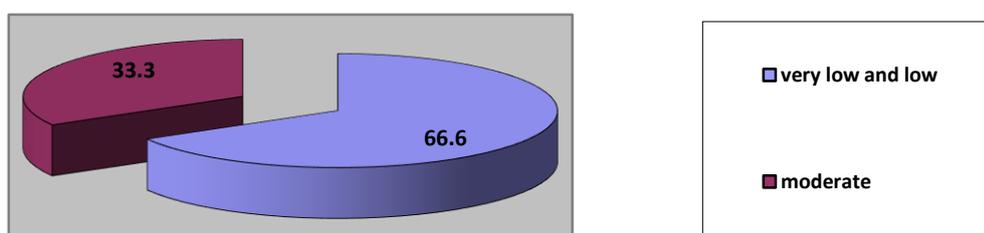


Figure3. What in your opinion is the level of efficiency of cooperation in the field of civil service among the countries participating in the survey?

When answering the question 'How often do you cooperate and share experience on the below issues with other countries?' most respondents responded 'from time to time when possible' (Figure 4). This proves that the cooperation between the countries of the region is insufficiently developed and is rather intermittent but Figure 1 proves that the countries are interested in active sharing of knowledge and experience on various issues of civil service.

No.	Issue	From time to time when possible	Often and very often	Rarely and very rarely
1	Development of an institutional network for sharing knowledge in public administration/civil service/public services	49.9	27.7	22.1
2	Elaboration and implementation of joint initiatives in public administration/civil service/public services	38.8	22.2	38.8
3	Improvement of public administration/civil service/public services models	38.8	27.7	33.2

4	Preparation and dissemination of knowledge products in public administration/civil service/public services	38.8	22.2	38.8
5	Improvement of legislative framework in public administration/civil service/public services	38.8	33.3	27.8
6	Human capacity building in government authorities	33.3	44.4	22.2
7	Public administration/civil service/public services standards	33.3	27.7	38.8
8	Transparency in public administration/civil service/public services	33.3	38.8	27.7
9	Improvement of personnel selection mechanisms for civil service	33.2	33.3	33.3
10	Accountability in public administration/civil service/public services	27.7	22.2	49.9
11	Implementation of best practice in the interaction between central and local governments	22.2	44.4	27.7
12	Improving accessibility of public services for people (including vulnerable people)	22.2	44.4	27.7
13	Institutional capacity building of government authorities	22.2	33.3	38.8

Figure 4. How often do you cooperate and share experience on the below issues with other countries participating in the survey?

The respondents noted that some ideas and innovations in civil service resulted from the cooperation with countries of the region. Thus, 70.5% of respondents noted that they received from 1 to 5 innovative ideas from such cooperation and another 11.7% respondents noted that they received from 5 to 10 innovative ideas (Figure 5).

Though the cooperation is still low between countries of the region and there are no clear mechanisms for sharing knowledge and experience, the countries of the region received some innovative ideas. Given this the Regional Hub has a strong potential to develop and establish clear mechanisms for mutually beneficial cooperation.

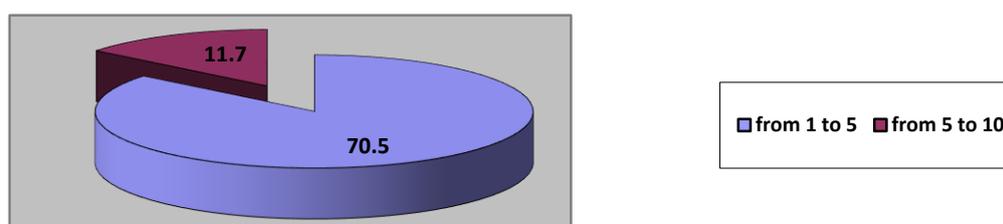


Figure 5. Specify how many innovative ideas for improving civil service you became aware of in the result of cooperation with the countries participating in the survey.

Area 2. Training and research

Improving the quality of education and training of civil servants is an important area of cooperation between countries of the region.

For assessing the needs, the survey proposed several areas of training for civil servants in the participating countries. Most respondents (77.7%) selected ‘strategic national planning’ and ‘performance evaluation of civil servants’ as the most important topics of training. In addition, the respondents also noted such topics as ‘anticorruption policies, integrity’ and ‘e-government’ (72.2%) (Figure 6).

Figure 5 demonstrates that though the countries of the region are following different paths of civil service development, most of them face similar issues in its further modernization. Research in these areas is important for Kazakhstan as well.

No.	Topic	Scores from 1 to 5			
		5	4	3	2
1	Strategic national planning	77.7	16.6	0	0
2	Performance evaluation of civil servants	77.7	16.6	5.5	0
3	Anticorruption policies. Integrity	72.2	16.6	11.1	0
4	E-government	72.2	16.6	0	5.5
5	Management and performance evaluation of a government authority	66.6	22.2	0	11.1
6	Leadership in public administration and civil service	55.5	27.7	16.6	0
7	Human resources management in civil service	55.5	33.3	5.5	5.5
8	Management in government authorities	55.5	16.6	22.2	5.5
9	Quality of public services	50	38.8	5.5	5.5
10	Civil service in the OECD countries: best practice	50	22.2	16.6	11.1
11	Management in government authorities	44.4	27.7	22.2	5.5
12	Labour management in civil service	44.4	27.7	27.7	0
13	Issues of corruption prevention	44.4	22.2	27.7	5.5
14	Performance evaluation of local governments	44.4	33.3	16.6	0
15	Public administration: methods, structure and separation of power	38.8	16.6	38.8	5.5
16	Compensation in civil service	38.8	27.7	22.2	11.1
17	Social innovations and social media	38.8	38.8	16.6	5.5
18	Civil service in regions: issues and perspectives	33.3	38.8	22.2	5.5
19	Results-based budgeting	33.3	44.4	16.6	5.5
20	Social modernization of a society: development of public dialogue and involvement of community into discussing government policies	33.3	38.8	27.7	0
21	Marketing in public sector	27.7	27.7	33.3	5.5
22	Audit, internal and external control in public administration	22.2	38.8	22.2	11.1

Figure 6. What topics are the most interesting ones for delivering training for civil servants under the Regional Hub?

According to respondents' answers the most efficient training mode for the Regional Hub will be 'exchange of best practice through study tours' (72.2%), 'international study tours' and 'short-term training courses for civil servants (up to 1 week)' (55.6 and 55.5% respectively) (Figure 7).

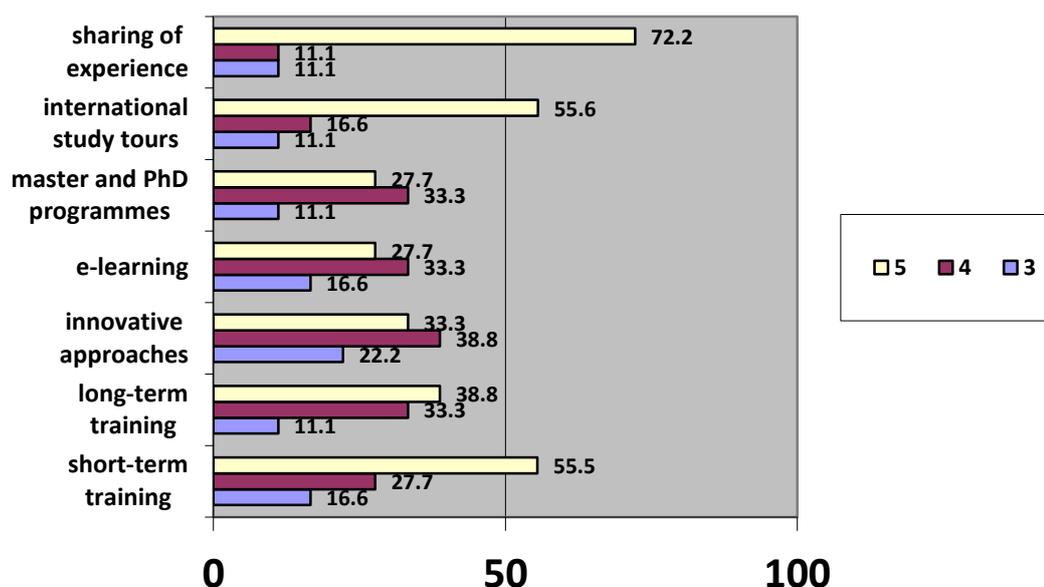


Figure 7. What training modes will work best in the Regional Hub?

At the same time, the respondents demonstrated interest in attending workshops. Almost all respondents demonstrated their interest in assigning civil servants from their countries to participate in workshops provided that costs are covered for one participant from each country.

The respondents were also interested in participating in webinars on anticorruption policies, personnel selection for civil service, performance evaluation of civil servants, quality assistance of training of civil servants, etc.

In addition, the respondents identified persons who will participate in webinars.

Joint research activities represent another aspect of cooperation under the aegis of the Regional Hub. The respondents showed interest in joint research activities in improving the quality of public services – 72.2%, performance evaluation of civil servants and efficient human resources management – 55.5% (Figure 8).

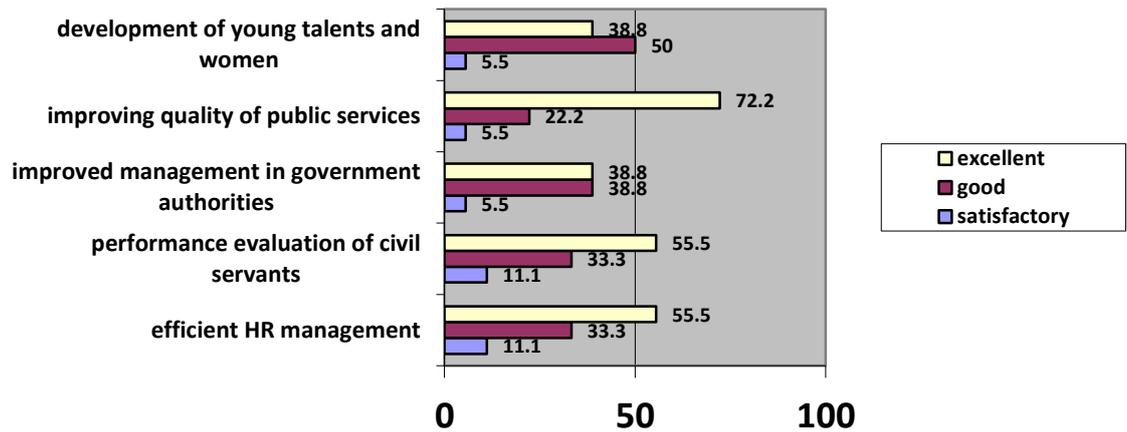


Figure 8. What topics of research projects in the Regional Hub are you mostly interested in?

Area 3. Regional Hub's journal

Under the Regional Hub there are plans to issue a journal which is to become a platform for the countries to learn the experience of other countries of the region and to share their experience as well. To design such journal taking into account the wishes of the participating countries, the respondents were asked a question as to what materials they would like to see in the journal. The following preferred content of the journal was identified based on respondents' answers:

- theory and concepts – 12%
- interviews of chief executive officers – 12%
- methodology – 20%
- thematic research – 21%
- practical experience – 19%
- lessons learnt from international experience – 16%

In addition, the respondents expressed their wish for the journal to contain interviews of leading scientists and practitioners in the field of civil service (Figure 9).

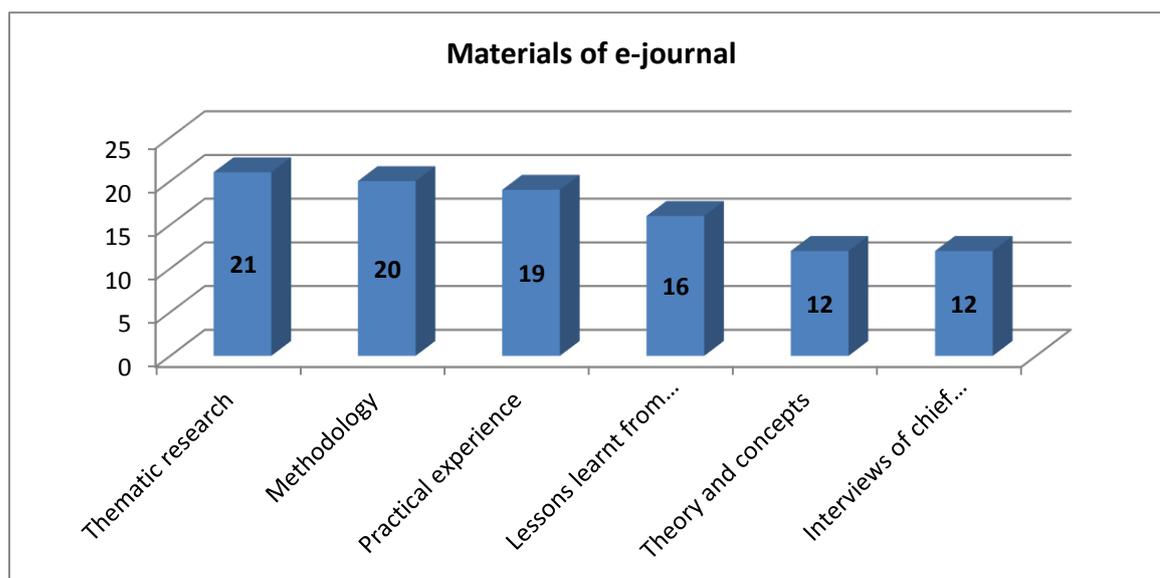


Figure 9. What materials would you like to see in the e-journal of the Regional Hub?

Furthermore, the respondents indicated some academia, experts and practitioners whose interviews would be interesting for them to read in the e-journal of the Regional Hub of Civil Service:

- 1) experts, practitioners of MSU Graduate School of Public Administration
- 2) interviews of top managers of government institutions and practitioners on the issues of the effective public administration and civil service, HR management in civil service, improving quality of public services, etc.
- 3) practitioners in public administration, civil service agencies, principals and professors of leading universities specializing in education and training of civil servants
- 4) leading experts and practitioners with innovative ideas (e.g., Dave Ulrich)
- 5) A.Turchinov, A.Barabashev, I.Kotetishvili, A.Demirjan, F.Zerunyan
- 6) professors of the Russian Academy of National Economy and Civil Service A.Turchinov, V.Grazhdan, G.Atamanchuk, V.Cherepanov and other experts in public administration and civil service
- 7) interviews of top managers on issues of public administration and civil service (practitioners)
- 8) Urkhan Alekperov, Prof. Alikram Abdullayev, Prof. Yekhtibar Nadjarov, Prof. Gulnara Gurbanova, Assistant Prof. Radjab Ragimli, Assistant Prof. Eldar Azadov, Dr. Murtaza Gassanov
- 9) interviews of academia, experts or practitioners from the participating and other countries.

Conclusions

1. The countries of the region are interested in fostering and strengthening of regional cooperation and express their readiness to implement various joint projects and to establish an expert network.

2. The countries of the region are interested in sharing knowledge and experience in the field of civil service and are ready to learn from the experience of the participating countries in the activities of authorized bodies in civil service, public service delivery and Community Service Centres.

3. Though the level of cooperation and knowledge sharing in the field of civil service is insufficient, the respondents noted that some ideas and innovations in civil service were developed in cooperation with countries of the region. If the issues of strengthening regional cooperation are well addressed and mechanisms of such cooperation are clearly set, the Regional Hub has a strong potential to foster improved quality of civil service in the region.

4. Based on common historical past, the countries of the region often have similar needs, including in training. The selected areas of trainings such as ‘strategic national planning’ and ‘performance evaluation of civil servants’ demonstrate that despite of some differences the countries of the region have common views of the systems of public administration and civil service.

5. The countries of the region are interested in cooperation in training of their civil servants under the Regional Hub and give preference to study tours and short-term courses.

6. With a relevant initiative the countries of the region are ready to participate in webinars which is proven by the contact details of future participants.

7. Respondents are interested in using scientific potential of the Regional Hub participating countries for joint studies on improving the quality of civil service.

8. The Regional Hub’s journal will become a good resource base for the participating countries, where they will find the results of thematic research, review practical experience of other countries with the implementation of various methodologies and mechanisms in civil service, etc.

9. The participating countries demonstrate a strong interest in sharing knowledge and experience in the region, including through interviews of top managers of civil service authorized bodies.

2.2 Phase 2. Results of semi-structured interviews of representatives of the Regional Hub participating countries

Respondent 1 - Dr. Osman Osmani, General Director of the Civil Service Institute of Afghanistan under the Independent Commission on Administrative

Reforms and Civil Service of Afghanistan, who agreed to answer the questions and the responses to be recorded for authenticity.

Respondent 2 - Samwell Vassilyan, Deputy Chairman of the Civil Service Council of the Republic of Armenia, who agreed to answer the questions and the responses to be recorded for authenticity.

Respondent 3 - Rauf Aliyev, Senior Consultant, Recruitment Department of the Commission on Civil Service Issues under the President of Azerbaijan, who agreed to answer the questions and the responses to be recorded for authenticity.

Question 1. How often do you cooperate and share information on civil service with the countries of the region?

Respondent 1 said that its institution often cooperates with relevant institutions of Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Georgia and UNDP, about once in 2 weeks. The respondent emphasized that before the Regional Hub was established, the cooperation in the region lacked regularity and that exchange of knowledge and experience took place only during diplomatic events.

Respondent 2 emphasized that such cooperation happens rarely, cooperation in the region lacks regularity. The cooperation is mainly with the European Union and international consultants.

Respondent 3 noted that the cooperation was mainly developed with Turkey, Georgia and Ukraine, but with the establishment of the Regional Hub they hope that such cooperation will also increase with other countries of the region as well. At the same time, he emphasized that by sharing experience the countries may mitigate risks and improve civil service.

Question 2. How efficient do you think is the current level of cooperation between (among) the countries of the region?

Respondent 1 noted that some countries are more proactive than the others. The reasons include language divides as well as limited experience of such countries as Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in reforming civil service.

Respondent 2 clearly noted that the efficiency level is indeed low. But establishment of the Regional Hub is a good solution and a timely initiative. The respondent noted the importance of regular exchanges of experience and knowledge as well as frequent exchanges through online platforms (web conferences, etc.)

Respondent 3 noted that the level of cooperation depends on a country's success because its experience in civil service is then interesting. We are ahead of some countries in civil service development whereas there also other countries that we are lagging behind. We are ready to share our practice with the former countries and want to learn from the latter. And we should not also forget that somebody's experience always needs to be adapted rather than simply copied.

Question 3. What do you expect from the participation in the Regional Hub of Civil Service?

Respondent 1 noted that for active participation the participating countries require:

- More trainings
- Publications, studies
- Comparative studies (e.g. Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to be compared with Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, etc.)

Respondent 2 noted the importance of further strengthening of such cooperation, i.e. to institutionalize such dialogue platform where the secretariat should take a lead and facilitate electronic exchanges, discussions between countries of the region.

In addition, respondent 2 noted the importance to discuss at the initial Hub's events the required forms of support for the countries. It would be useful to establish a shared contact database for the peers from the region. In addition, the respondent noted that the key reason why there is no institutionalized regional expert network in civil service is a lack of stable and sustainable financing for such cooperation.

Importantly, in the past there were no multilateral intergovernmental agreements on cooperation or agreements between civil service authorities.

Respondent 3 emphasized that by participating in the Regional Hub we obtain new knowledge in civil service and it facilitates sharing of experience beneficial for all parties.

Question 4. What topics of trainings for civil servants and research studies are the most important for the Regional Hub of Civil Service?

Respondent 1 noted the following:

- topics of training: change management, management, project management;
- topics of studies: skills and competences of civil servants.

Respondent 2 identified a number of topics, namely:

- public confidence to government authorities;
- government development strategy (division of authorities);
- strategic planning;
- HR management;
- e-government;
- social modernization and engagement of the public; and
- social innovations.

Respondent 3 indicated some topics which in his opinion would be interesting:

- review of countries' practice in the region;
- improvement of civil service legislation;
- use of HR technologies in civil service;
- incentive system in civil service;
- adaptation of civil servants; and
- benchmarking.

Question 5. What training arrangements do you think would be most efficient for the Regional Hub of Civil Service?

Respondent 1 emphasized the usefulness of group work and coaching.

Respondent 2 emphasized that the right combination of theory and practice is required. Specifically, he proposed: the higher is the level of participants the more theory there should be because experienced managers already have practical skills and the information about global concepts, strategic thinking. The lower is the level of participants the larger should be the practical component.

Respondent 3 indicated that workshops and roundtables should be carried out taking into account the issues of civil service which are common for all countries of the region.

Respondent 3 also emphasized the importance of study tour exchanges for civil servants.

Question 6. The Regional Hub of Civil Service plans to deliver a training workshop for civil servants from the participating countries. The Regional Hub's Secretariat is ready to sponsor the participation of one participant from each country. Are you interested in nominating additional participants from your country using other sources of financing?

Respondent 1 unambiguously responded positively and emphasized that he can find such sources of financing through UNDP in Afghanistan, etc. He also noted that other countries of the Hub should be also pro-active and take initiatives.

Respondent 2 unambiguously responded positively and indicated that there is a will to provide such support but everything depends on the available resources. For instance, secondment of an official from some participating countries of the Hub to Astana to work in the Hub's Secretariat is a solvable issue. There are also possibilities to engage UNDP in each country for addressing the issue.

Respondent 3 responded that Azerbaijan is in favour of the Regional Hub's initiative and ready to participate in all activities.

Question 7. What materials would you like to see in the e-journal of the Regional Hub of Civil Service?

Respondent 1 emphasized the following:

- interviews of professionals from the region as well as from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund;
- strong studies on efficient training of civil servants and publications;
- strong analytical articles.

Respondent 2 noted that it would be useful to publish news in civil service from the region and the world as well as articles, specialized interviews of foreign experts on particular issues of civil service.

Respondent 3 responded that the e-journal could be research oriented in order to publish PhD theses from countries of the region to make the e-journal more popular. It is advisable to include the e-journal into the database of Thomson Reuters or Elsevier.

It would be also good to cover specific practices of countries of the region through publishing interviews of top managers of civil service authorities.

Question 8. The Regional Hub of Civil Service plans to conduct online conferences and webinars. Would you like to participate?

Respondent 1 unambiguously responded positively because the relevant institutions of Afghanistan have necessary facilities for such activities.

Furthermore, respondent 1 proposed to second, with Afghan sponsorship, an international consultant to deliver workshops and master classes.

Respondent 2 unambiguously responded positively and noted that the availability of relevant facilities in Armenian government authorities needs to be checked.

Respondent 3 responded positively and noted that they have necessary facilities in the country.

Question 9. Do you have any wishes and proposals for cooperation under the Regional Hub of Civil Service?

Respondent 1 emphasized that it is important to bear in mind that the Regional Hub is the initiative for civil servants rather than for diplomats. Therefore to ensure sustainability of the Hub it is important to spend money efficiently and avoid expensive hotels and dinners. It would be better to host participants of the Hub's events in the Academy's dormitory.

Respondent 2 proposed the following:

- a strong interest should be created among the Regional Hub participating countries to make them continuously involved;
- it is essential to use Hub's technical capabilities through the online platform;
- it is important to make partnerships on civil service between the countries more reliable. This requires straightforward and fair communications among the Hub participating countries rather than politicised events. The countries of the region have common interests and issues and it makes sense to share practical experience.

Respondent 3 noted that the Regional Hub is seen as a platform for sharing knowledge and practice, including through conducting joint events. Azerbaijan expresses its readiness to host the next workshop in 2014. More of such events should be organized for establishing personal contacts as it will considerably facilitate the cooperation in the future.

No	Question	Respondents' answers			Summary
		Respondent 1 (Osman Osmani)	Respondent 2 (Samwell Vassilyan)	Respondent 3 (Rauf Aliyev)	
1	How often do you cooperate	Before the Regional Hub was	Such cooperation happens rarely,	They hope that with the establishment	The countries of the region noted low level of

	and share information on civil service with the countries of the region?	established, the cooperation in the region lacked regularity and exchange of knowledge and experience took place only during diplomatic events.	cooperation in the region lacks regularity.	of the Regional Hub the cooperation among the region's country will increase.	cooperation, but at the same express their interest in active participation and hope that closer cooperation will be established under the Regional Hub
2	How efficient do you think is the current level of cooperation between (among) the countries of the region?	Some countries are more proactive than the others. The reasons include language divides as well as limited experience of such countries as Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in reforming civil service.	Cooperation is inefficient. But establishment of the Regional Hub is a good solution and a timely initiative. It is import to have regular exchanges of experience and knowledge as well as frequent exchanges through online platforms (web conferences, etc.).	The level of cooperation depends on a country's success because its experience in civil service is then interesting. It should be remembered that somebody's experience always needs to be adapted rather than simply copied.	The countries believe that the level of efficiency is low. However, successful experience of civil service reforms is of interest for the countries of the region.
3	What do you expect from the participation in the Regional Hub of Civil Service?	For active participation the participating countries require: – More training – Publications, studies – Comparative studies (e.g. Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to be compared with Azerbaijan,	Such cooperation should be further strengthened, i.e. to institutionalize such dialogue platform where the secretariat should take a lead and facilitate electronic exchanges, discussions between	By participating in the Regional Hub we obtain new knowledge in civil service and it is exchange of experience beneficial for all parties.	The expected results of countries' participation in the Regional Hub include obtaining new knowledge on civil service. Further institutionalization of regional cooperation is required.

		Kazakhstan, etc.)	countries of the region. It is also important to discuss at the initial Hub's events the required forms of support for countries. It would be useful to establish a shared contact database for the peers from the region. The key reason why there is no institutionalized regional expert network in civil service is lack of stable and sustainable financing for such cooperation.		
4	What topics of training for civil servants and research studies are the most important for the Regional Hub of Civil Service?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – topics of training: change management, management, project management; – topics of studies: skills and competences of civil servants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – public confidence to government authorities; – government development strategy (division of authorities); – strategic planning; – HR management; – e-government; – social modernization and engagement of the public; and – social innovations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – review of countries' practice in the region; – improvement of civil service legislation; – use of HR technologies in public service; – incentive system in civil service; – adaptation of civil servants; and – benchmarking. 	The most interesting topics of trainings can be categorized as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HR management in civil service and professionalism improvement. 2. Management in government authorities. 3. E-government. 4. Strategic planning.

5	What training arrangements do you think would be most efficient for the Regional Hub of Civil Service?	Group work and coaching.	The right combination of theory and practice is required. Specifically, he proposed: the higher is the level of participants the more theory there should be because experienced managers already have practical skills and the information about global concepts, strategic thinking. The lower is the level of participants the larger should be the practical component.	Workshops and roundtables should be carried out taking into account the issues of civil service which are common for all countries of the region. It is also important to have study tour exchanges for civil servants.	The respondents believe that for training to be efficient it is important: - to have the right combination of theory and practice; - to identify issues; - to use new training modes (coaching, group work).
6	The Regional Hub of Civil Service plans to deliver a training workshop for civil servants from the participating countries. The Regional Hub's Secretariat is ready to sponsor participation of one participant from each country. Are you interested in	The response is positive. The respondent emphasized that he can find such sources of financing through UNDP in Afghanistan, etc. He also noted that other countries of the Hub should be also pro-active and make initiatives.	The response is positive but everything depends on available resources. For instance, secondment of an official from some participating countries of the Hub to Astana to work in the Hub's Secretariat is a solvable issue. There are also possibilities to engage UNDP in each country	The response is positive. The country is ready to mobilize financing sources from the country.	The countries of the region are interested in participating in the Regional Hub's events. Additional funding should be mobilized from other sources.

	nominating additional participants from your country using other sources of financing?		for addressing the issue.		
7	What materials would you like to see in the e-journal of the Regional Hub of Civil Service?	<p>– interviews of professionals from the region as well as from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund;</p> <p>– strong studies on efficient training of civil servants and publications;</p> <p>– strong analytical articles.</p>	News in civil service from the region and the world as well as articles, specialized interviews of foreign experts on particular issues of civil service.	It is preferably to cover specific practices of countries of the region through publishing interviews of top managers of civil service authorities. It is advisable to include the e-journal into the database of Thomson Reuters or Elsevier. The e-journal could be research-oriented in order to publish PhD theses from countries of the region to make the e-journal more popular.	The respondents stated that the Regional Hub's journal should contain interviews of top managers, international consultants and practitioners, as well as various studies on civil service.
8	The Regional Hub of Civil Service plans to conduct online conferences and webinars. Would you like to participate?	The response is positive. The respondent also proposed to second, with the respondent country's sponsorship, an international consultant to deliver workshops and master classes.	The response is positive. However, the respondent noted the need to have relevant technical facilities.	The response is positive.	The countries of the region are interested in participating in online events of the Regional Hub. They are also ready to engage their experts. However, the availability of technical facilities in the countries

					should be taken into consideration.
9	Do you have any wishes and proposals for cooperation under the Regional Hub of Civil Service?	It is important to bear in mind that the Regional Hub is the initiative for civil servants rather than for diplomats. Therefore to ensure sustainability of the Hub it is important to spend money efficiently and avoid expensive hotels and dinners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong interest should be created among the Regional Hub participating countries to make them continuously involved; – it is essential to use Hub’s technical capabilities through the online platform; – it is important to make partnerships on civil service between the countries more reliable. This requires straightforward and fair communication among the Hub participating countries rather than politicised events. – The countries of the region have common interests and issues and it makes sense to share practical experience. 	The Regional Hub is seen as a platform for sharing knowledge and practice, including through conducting joint events. More of such events should be organized for establishing personal contacts as it will considerably facilitate the cooperation in the future.	The respondents expressed the following wishes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - straightforward and fair dialogue between the Regional Hub participating countries; - many events should be organized for establishing personal contacts among civil servants from the countries; - the events should be adequately financed without excessive costs.

Table 3. Results of expert interviews from the Regional Hub participating countries

Conclusions

1. Establishment of the Regional Hub will help systematizing and developing the cooperation on civil service between and among the countries on a regular basis.
2. Regional Hub’s Secretariat should act as a bridge between the countries of the region and establish contacts with specific experts from each country.

3. The most important areas of trainings for civil servants are HR management in civil service and management in government authorities. Though the countries follow different approaches to civil servants training in the countries, there are common areas of such training.

4. To improve efficiency of civil servants' training there should be a combination of different training modes with a focus on the state-of-the-art modes as well as exchanges of study tours for civil servants.

5. The countries of the region are interested in active participation in the events to be held by the Regional Hub and ready to nominate participants both for the Hub's sponsorship and at their own expense and the countries are interested in participating in online events.

6. The Regional Hub's journal should be have practical orientation by covering specific practices of the region's countries and expert analytical articles on issues of civil service.

2.3 Phase III. Results of a questionnaire survey among experts who participated in a pilot training workshop for executives of authorized bodies and educational organizations in the field of civil service in the participating countries of the Regional Hub on 'Issues of Civil Service Modernization'

1. Topics that the participants would like to study for efficient performance of their functional responsibilities:

- 1) Corporate culture, mentoring in government authorities, e-government;
- 2) Management, rotation of management;
- 3) HR management methodologies;
- 4) Ethics and professional conduct of civil servants;
- 5) Development of competences;
- 6) Rights and responsibilities of civil servants;
- 7) Communications;
- 8) Setting of goals and objectives in the identification of functional responsibilities;
- 9) Government development: methods, structure and division of authorities;
- 10) Strategic public administration;

- 11) Ethics in civil service;
- 12) Scholarly apparatus of civil service.

2. Wishes and proposals for improving a training workshop for senior management of government authorities and educational institutions in the field of civil service of the Regional Hub participating countries:

- 1) To identify one topic for discussions, to identify common issues, solutions, resources;
- 2) To identify clear areas of research; purposes of research; research methodology based on the needs assessment of the Hub's participating countries;
- 3) To hold at least 3 annual workshops;
- 4) To pursue distance learning;
- 5) To include HR departments into workshops, 2-3 participants from each country

3. Most interesting topics of Regional Hub's trainings for civil servants

No.	Topic	Scores from 1 to 5			
		5	4	3	2
1.	E-government	100			
2.	Remuneration of civil servants	85.7	14.3		
3.	Strategic public administration	83.3	16.7		
4.	Anticorruption policies. Official ethics	77.8	22.2		
5.	Civil service in regions: issues and perspectives	75.0	12.5	12.5	
6.	Civil service in the OECD countries: best practice	25.0	37.5	25.0	12.5
7.	HR management in civil service	62.5	37.5		
8.	Quality of public service delivery	62.5	25.0	12.5	
9.	Performance evaluation of civil servants	57.1	14.3	28.6	
10.	Labour management of civil servants	57.1	28.6	14.3	
11.	Results-based budgeting	57.1	28.6	14.3	
12.	Government development: methods, structure and division of authorities	50.0		50.0	
13.	Leadership in public administration and civil service	44.4	44.4	11.1	
14.	Management and performance evaluation of a government authority	42.9	14.3		
15.	Marketing in public sector	40.0	60.0		
16.	Social innovations and social media	33.3	16.7	16.7	33.3

17.	Performance evaluation of local governments	33.3	66.7		
18.	Issues of corruption prevention	25.0	75.0		
19.	Management in government authorities	16.7	66.7	16.7	
20.	Social modernization: social dialogue and involvement of the public into discussions of public policies	16.7	66.7	16.7	
21.	Audit, internal and external control in public administration		57.1	42.9	
22.	Management of government authorities' activities	16.7	66.7	16.7	

Figure 10. Most interesting topics of trainings for the Regional Hub

The most interesting topics are:

- 1) e-government (100%);
- 2) remuneration of civil servants (85.7%);
- 3) strategic public administration (83.3%);
- 4) anticorruption policies and official ethics (77.8%)
- 5) civil service in regions: issues and perspectives (75%);
- 6) quality of public service delivery (62.5%);
- 7) HR management in civil service (62.5%).

Wishes and proposals:

- 1) New meetings, regular workshops, maintenance of institutionalization.
- 2) For other Regional Hub participating countries: preparation of step-by-step plan how to deliver such events in the most effective and efficient way indicating potential issues and solutions.

9. Most efficient training modes for the Regional Hub of Civil Service
(scores from 1 to 5)

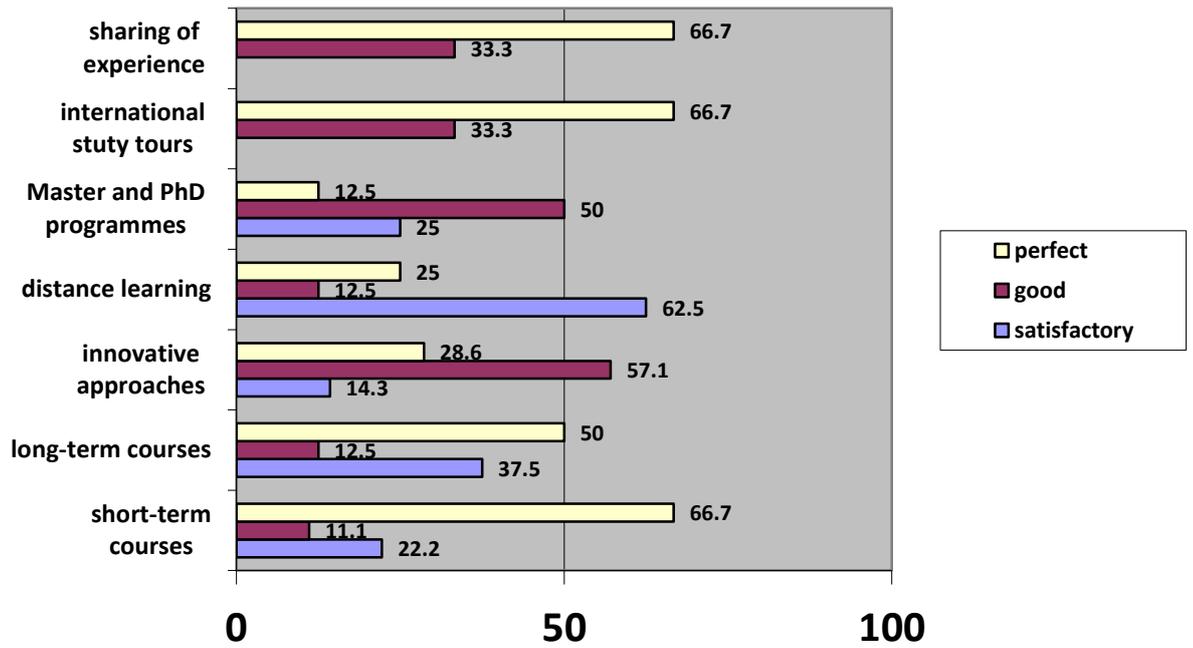


Figure 11. Most efficient training modes of the Regional Hub

The most efficient training modes under the Regional Hub are considered to be short-term training courses for civil servants (up to a week), international study tours and exchange of best practice – 66.7%.

10. Topics of research projects under the Regional Hub of Civil Service
(scores from 1 to 5)

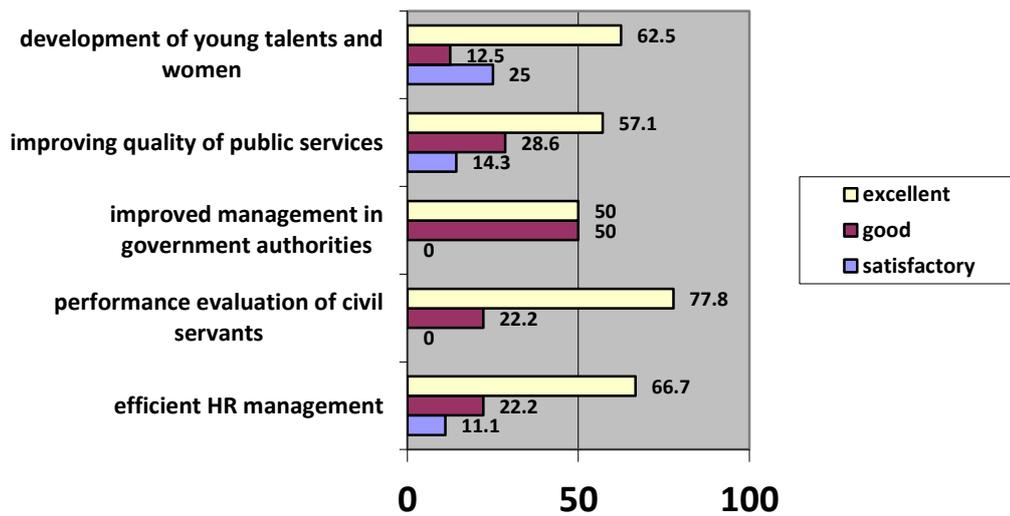


Figure 12. Topics of research projects under the Regional Hub

Among the topics of research projects the preference was given to ‘Performance evaluation of civil servants’ (77.8%) and ‘Efficient HR management in civil service’ (66.7%).

11. Materials that the participants would like to see in the Regional Hub's e-journal (ratios)

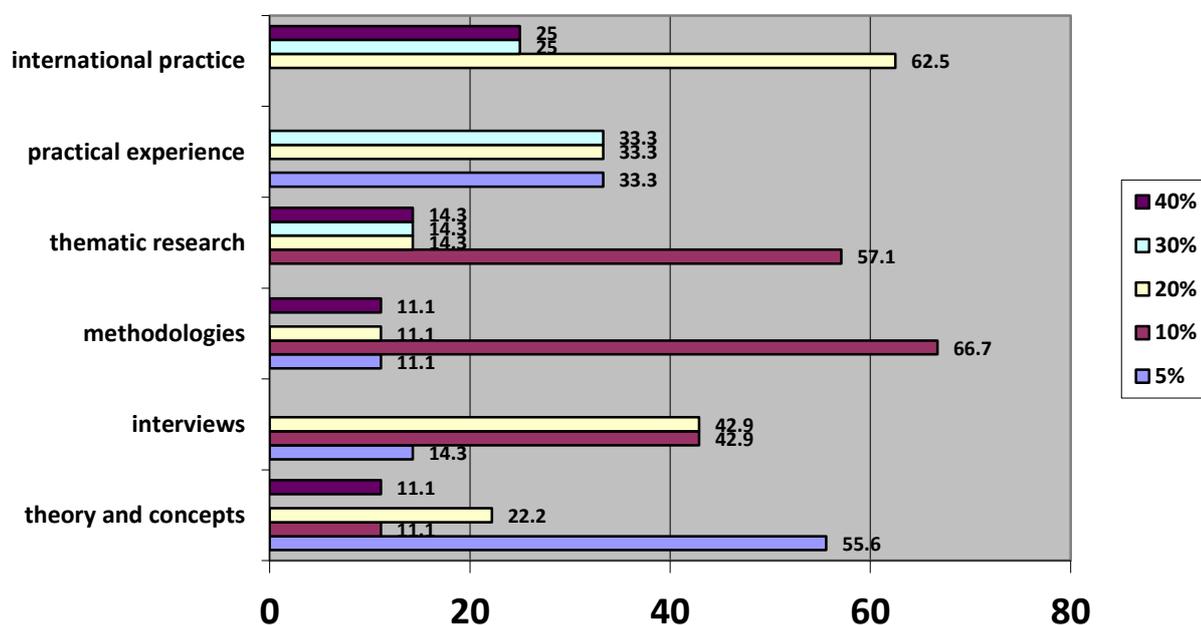


Figure 13. Materials the participants would like to see in the Regional Hub's e-journal

The participants would like to see in the e-journal thematic research and interviews of top managers on the issues of public administration and civil service (10% and 20%). Over 30% of materials should be focused on practical experience (33.3%) and lessons learnt from international best practice (25%).

Proposals:

- 1) Materials based on the civil service practice of Singapore, Korea, Canada, Netherlands and Kazakhstan;
- 2) Materials on e-government;
- 3) Materials based on the experience and expert reports.

12. Wishes and proposals for cooperation under the Regional Hub of Civil Service:

- 1) To establish an institution of Hub's authorized persons in each country; to create an expert network on specific topics;
- 2) To hold Hub's events in other participating countries in order to learn about their practice and issues in civil service;
- 3) To ensure sustainable activities.

In general, the results of the survey demonstrated that the participants gave high evaluation to the lecturers and were satisfied with the quality of training (88.9%), as well as with a good balance of theoretical and practical materials (77.8%). The

participants demonstrated interest in selecting topics of trainings and research and identified short-term courses, international study tours and exchange of experience as the most efficient training modes (66.7%).

3. Recommendations for priority areas of cooperation under the Regional Hub of Civil Service

1. The Regional Hub Secretariat to intensify collaboration with the working groups on their subject matters to promote regional cooperation. Consideration is to be given to the possibility of developing a road map of joint projects and programmes. Clear vision is required on the future Hub's development and its activities.

2. The Regional Hub Secretariat to establish cooperation with the focal points for timely coordination of activities under the Regional Hub.

3. Given the countries' needs in training of civil servants consideration is to be given to a possibility to increase financing and number of workshops, seminars and master classes under the Regional Hub with the involvement of leading international experts; this will enable establishing personal contacts and closer cooperation between the countries of the region.

4. In addition to workshops, seminars and master classes, the Regional Hub should consider the possibility to arrange study tours and training courses for civil servants from the region's countries.

5. For future trainings under the Regional Hub to consider delivering trainings on such topics as 'Strategic public administration', 'Performance evaluation of civil servants' and 'E-government'.

6. To deliver training events based on the region's countries identified through annual surveys (similar to a baseline study).

7. To consider inviting (financing might be required) senior management and officials of government authorities in the field of civil service to participate in the Global Conference on Civil Service under the Astana Economic Forum.

8. To consider holding Regional Hub's events in other countries of the region and financing or co-financing of such events.

9. To address the issues of cooperation and size of financing for joint research studies.

10. To carry out joint research studies in the field of quality of public services, performance evaluation of civil servants and improving efficiency of HR management in civil service.

11. To decide upon the content of the next issue of the Regional Hub journal taking into account wishes of the participating countries (interviews of what government bodies' leaders to be included, which practical experience to be described, etc.).