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# Strengthening Chile's Public Senior Executive Service System:

## A comparative view

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# **Strengthening Chile's Public Senior Executive Service System: A comparative view**

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# Preface

The Civil Service is a decentralized public service with a legal personality and estate of its own. Its relationship with the President of Chile is conducted through the Ministry of Finance. It was created after Law N° 19,882, which “Regulates the New Personnel Policy for Public Servants”, was enacted in June 11, 2003. Its purpose is to strengthen public function and contribute to modernization of the Chilean State by implementing managerial, personnel and senior executive development policies, to promote better public employment and a State that serves citizens.

In conformity with its mission and the guiding role of the Civil Service in areas of public governance and employment, this paper presents the most relevant results of the comparative research undertaken within the framework of the project “Strengthening Chile’s Public Senior Executive Service System (SESS)” implemented between 2013 and 2015. This initiative was backed by the World Bank in 2013 and later was recipient of a grant from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, awarded to conduct studies and consultancies aimed at improving management and performance of the Senior Executive Service System in three dimensions: i) quality, use and timeliness of data available for the Civil Service to manage and develop the SESS; ii) competitiveness and sustainability of remuneration policy, and; iii) performance of senior civil servants through coaching, training, monitoring and performance appraisal, as well as use of non-monetary incentives.

To face this challenge we were joined by consulting companies CDO Consulting, Deloitte Consultores and Surlatina Consultores, who collected the basic data for preparing this report. Also, members of the Council for the Senior Executive Service took a study trip to learn about similar systems in the United Kingdom, Belgium and The Netherlands, and later prepared a comparative report with their main findings.

We wish to give special thanks to the following government agencies for their time, willingness and collaboration with the goals of the project: Service Public Fédéral in Belgium, Secretaria de Gestão Pública in Brazil, Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer in Canada, Secretaría de la Función Pública in Mexico, Bureau Algemene Bestuursdienst in The Netherlands, and Civil Service of the United Kingdom. Likewise, we acknowledge the high quality work performed by the teams in our institution who acted as technical counterparts of the studies and consultancies, and who enabled us to publish this report, drafted by Antoine Maillet, Doctor in Political Science and assistant professor at the Public Affairs Institute of Universidad de Chile.



We hope that this paper will contribute to the debate on how to enhance the elements that make up the Chilean Public Senior Executive System, and also that it will become a source of reference material for decision-makers and relevant actors of Civil Services in other countries. As an institution, we are convinced that it is essential to continue to move forward to improve management of public institutions in our countries.

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# I. Introduction





Currently there is a widespread consensus as to the importance that the State be able to promote development and modernization processes. Among other aspects, in operational terms this certainty involves counting on highly qualified and motivated human resources able to meet challenges faced by countries. Professional quality and experience of senior civil servants play a particularly strategic role because they are responsible for managing State institutions. This report analyzes comparative evidence with a view to strengthen Chile's Public Senior Executive Service System (SESS).

Since its creation in 2003 Chile's Public SESS has matured, is acknowledged internationally for its efficiency, and is now at a crossroads: whether to enhance the system or let it come to a standstill, risking involution. After consolidation as the key actor in recruitment and selection of over a thousand senior level positions in the public administration, the system needs to take a qualitative leap towards enhancing development of senior civil servants. Inspiration may be sought from best practices in other countries. For this purpose we chose a sample of OECD member countries in Europe and Latin America. On one hand this revealed the high level Chile has attained in this matter, and on the other, it helped us to outline specific measures that would continue to define standards in the region.

To contribute towards strengthening Chile's Public SESS, we organized the comparative

evidence of best practices designed and applied by other countries. Thus, this paper analyzes best practices of OECD member countries in Europe and others in Latin America, revealing the high level reached by Chile and also presenting specific measures to continue defining standards in our region.

The report starts with a presentation of the theoretical framework guiding analysis of senior civil service systems. It is structured around four dimensions: training and development; recruitment and selection; compensation; and institutional structure. It continues with a revision of the Chilean SESS, then examines experiences in Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom. This selective exploration allows a set of best practices to be viewed in terms of the four dimensions considered of interest for an effective development of human capital embodied in senior civil servants. Finally, the conclusions identify opportunities and challenges for future development of Chile's SESS.



## **II. Analytical basis: Multiple dimensions of senior civil servant systems**

Senior civil servant systems are the result of long historical processes and the outcome of negotiations not exempt from contingencies and political interests.

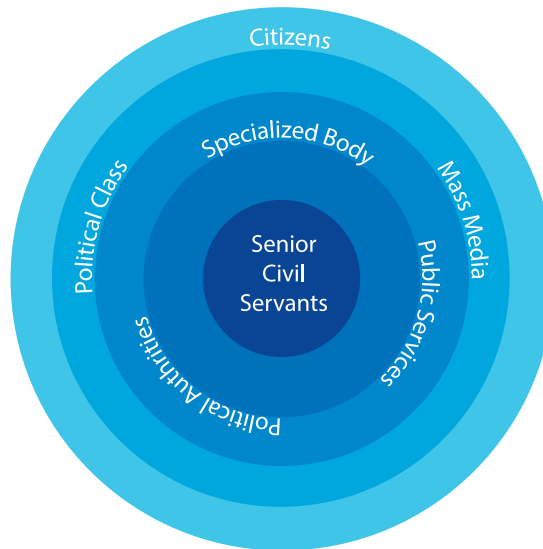
Accordingly, to analyze them it is necessary to remove oneself from traditional theoretical categories established by Weberianism, New Public Management or Neo-Weberianism (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011, Rogers & Gúzman, 2015). In fact, although discussion on this topic may reveal the presence of different paradigms, these schools of thought are fairly poor for guiding an operational classification of existing systems, since in practice senior civil servant systems never reflect ideal types.

Therefore, in this analysis we prefer to use operational definitions defined around a series of problem areas and later apply them to the Chilean case and to comparative experience. For this, first we analyze some classical problem areas regarding access and exercise of senior civil service positions, and then present the conceptual proposal centered on four dimensions.

## 1. Classical problem areas in senior civil service analysis

Analyzing senior civil services requires specifying the notion of system used. In this case, it is a set of elements linked among themselves but with different levels of significance. At the center of the system are senior civil servants themselves, then in a first and immediate circle, playing significant roles are the specialized agency which- if existing- may participate in the life cycle processes of senior civil servants, as well as the public services where they actually perform their duties as such, and the political authorities who occasionally play a role in their access to or dismissal from the position. In a second and a third circle are peripheral actors: the political class, the mass media and other stakeholders, and finally, citizens or public opinion created through the media's intermediation in the agenda of the political class. These circles not only define the context but their components are also relevant for the system's legitimacy.

**Figure 1**  
**A senior civil service system in its environment<sup>1</sup>**



Source: Internally developed

<sup>1</sup> This report refers both to senior civil service systems in general (in small letters) as well as to the Chilean Public Senior Executive Service System (SESS) (in capital letters).



The system in which senior civil servants are embedded is crucial for determining analytically useful criteria. The following criteria were deemed interesting to address: traditional opposition between career-based and position-based systems, tension between politicization and professionalization, degree of coverage, nature of the governing body and public-private alliances.

The first analytical criterion that distinguishes a career-based system from a position-based one is determined by the type of access to civil service positions faced by senior executives. Indeed, the system may be a career-based one when it is closed or confined only to career civil servants, or it may be based on open employment when any person can have access to it and there is mobility between the public and private sector (Hood & Lodge, 2006, Ramos & Scrollini, 2013). The existing differentiation has led to pose the question of what competences are required for public positions, specially of clarifying if they are identical to those of equivalent private sector positions. In this sense, after a very favorable stance towards the introduction of private sector practices was adopted in the public sector, nonetheless acknowledging the need for a managerial outlook to enable public value to be created, currently there is a tendency to highlight the specific nature of directive functions in the state apparatus.

Parallel to this there have been inquiries regarding tensions between politicization and

professionalization of systems, i.e., to what extent appointment to positions and career development are conditioned to belonging to certain organizations or political groups. Although no intellectual school of thought defends politicization itself, the fact is that it has been a common practice in Latin America (Grindle, 2012). It is a practice that tends to weaken professionalization of systems because careers are not guided exclusively by merit-based criteria. Nonetheless, those criteria may function concomitantly in one or another direction, as shown by technopols, individuals who are able to articulate both professional as well as political resources (Joignant, 2011). Therefore, rather than regarding them as conflicting criteria, there is special interest in the coexistence of professional ability and a certain degree of responsibility and political commitment by holders of the positions. Besides, reflecting on professionalization is also associated with the existence, or not, of a policy of monetary incentives, specially as it relates to competitiveness with the private sector (Hondeghem & Steen, 2013).

The question over the possible need for political affinity with the government in office is linked to a rising concern over coordination of public action (Lægneid, Verhoest, & Jann, 2008). The New Public Management paradigm has tended to make public executives focus on the challenges of their own organizations, leading some of them to neglect their environment in favor of autonomy from hierarchical structures. To avoid this, greater emphasis is being placed on the necessary but difficult coordination among sectors,



which involves generating horizontal and vertical relations within the state apparatus. The question of coordination is also related to the profile and outlook of holders of these positions. There is an ongoing debate as to the competences expected of senior executives in terms of specificity for a certain activity compared to usefulness across the state apparatus. Of course this question also affects the thinking over open and closed systems.

The impossibility of settling these dilemmas theoretically reveals the importance of empirically observing how different senior civil service systems have positioned themselves over time. For that purpose it is necessary to consider certain key aspects regarding procedures, such as coverage, how many services are covered, and what positions are held by senior executives. The vertical aspect is particularly interesting, both upwards, where there are different cut-off points to distinguish positions considered as senior civil service ones from those that are explicitly political, and also downwards, where there is no consensus as to what hierarchical level should be the limit to be considered senior civil service positions.

On the matter of operation of these systems, questions arise as to the institutions that articulate them, centrally referred to if they are situated within the corresponding civil service, or specialized agencies if they are outside the system. Selection processes also usually attract much public attention and are subject to ample discussion. For instance, issues under discussion are whether selection

should depend on a centralized agency or is to be conducted in a decentralized fashion, or whether recruitment processes are to be managed externally by private organizations specializing in human resources management.

Finally, and in line with the concern over coordination of public action and proper performance of senior executives, the other focal point of interest is accompaniment of senior civil executives in different ways and in the different stages they go through while exercising their functions. The trend is to intensify the presence of institutions conducting these processes.

## **2. Multiple dimensions for a comparative analysis**

The aforementioned problems are central to any discussion over attribution of directive positions within the State, and any analysis on this subject should include them. To organize a deliberation useful as an inspiration for Chile we defined four dimensions which allow arranging observations of the international cases considered as well as giving an account of the path already covered by Chile and also of pending challenges.

The first is training and development of senior executives. Its broad purpose is to create conditions necessary for them to carry out their public role in the best possible way. It is a basic challenge in order to have human capital to serve citizens. In this dimension, aspects of special interest are induction and



training programs, accompaniment of senior executives, and also proposals for early detection and training of talent. Thus, training and development leads to operational answers to the questions of professionalization and competences of senior public executives.

The second dimension is recruitment and selection for senior executive service positions. The process of hiring and terminating contracts of high level professionals in the State usually attracts a lot of attention from peripheral actors such as the political class and the mass media. However, although this dimension must be considered, senior civil service systems must not be confined merely to the selection process. In more conceptual terms, it is there that a significant part of the open or closed nature of the system is played out, and thus, of the magnitude or scope of the community of senior civil servants that there is a wish to create. Also, it is access that allows screening in order to restrain politicization from taking over the State administration.

The third dimension deals with compensations received by senior civil servants. These include remunerations in a strict sense, a matter in which the usual concern has to do with a possible gap with the private sector. Also to be considered are elements such as the relationship between remuneration and performance, compensations and benefits. Finally, an aspect of compensations that is not minor is the intangible reward to senior civil servants in terms of satisfaction for their commitment to public service. This introduces elements that create tensions because of

a possible differentiation between a public manager and his/her private sector peer.

The fourth analytical dimension is the **institutional** structure that supervises the system in its procedural aspects. In the first place, it is important to know whether there is a specialized agency in charge of the senior civil service. If so, as occurs in the cases studied, it is necessary to take note of its structure and position in the public apparatus. Secondly, it is particularly relevant to analyze the role that private actors may play in outsourcing part of the processes pertaining to the former three dimensions. Finally, other characteristics of the system are also considered in this analysis, as is the case of its coverage within the public apparatus.

The four aforementioned dimensions are covered in the Chilean case and then in the other country-cases.



### **III. Chile's Public Senior Executive Service System: Origin and current situation**



The Chilean SESS is the result of two processes that took place over the last decade of the Twentieth Century. The first is the modernization of the State that political authorities initiated in 1990 through a set of actions geared at professionalizing public management (Doña, 2006). The second process arose from a temporary situation related to the way in which in 2003 political authorities faced the problems raised by the existence of an informal and irregular system that generated extra pay to some senior employees of the public sector (Waissblut & Inostroza, 2006).

That same year a political consensus was reached. Among other matters, it addressed the need to regulate the process of public acquisitions and to install the SESS (Lambertini & Silva, 2009). It is interesting to note that before its implementation, high level directive positions in the public sector were appointed politically, i.e., not subject to competitions, although in practice there was some balance between technical and political criteria (Siavelis, 2009). Because there was no formal guarantee of suitability of holders of public positions, clearly the SESS is a breaking point in the Chilean public administration tradition (Olavarría, Navarrete, & Figueroa, 2011).

The SESS installs objective and transparent procedures for selecting professionals interested in occupying high level directive positions in the State. Development of the

SESS has allowed recruiting professionals for the highest hierarchical levels of the public sector through public competitions. Competitions were applied to first and second-level positions entrusted with implementation and/or provision of public services. Positions requiring political confidence and which are responsible for defining public policies, such as those of ministers or undersecretaries, were excluded from the system.

Summing up, to initiate a competition process it is necessary that a position be vacant and a profile defined. This gives rise to a recruitment process carried out by consultants with expertise in hiring senior-level staff. Later, these consultants conduct a preliminary screening of applicants and prepare a shortlist of preselected candidates who are interviewed by the Council for the Senior Executive Service or by a selection committee (Costa & Waissblut, 2007). Finally, lists of three, four or five candidates are drawn up for the corresponding authority to make the final appointment.

As may be seen, the SESS combines a strong merit-based feature with strict selection criteria and elements of political confidence. It is a hybrid model that balances professionalization and politicization of senior civil service positions.



**Figure 2**  
The SESS process



**Source:** Internally developed and [www.serviciocivil.cl](http://www.serviciocivil.cl)

Positions subject to SESS competitions are classified into two types: affiliated and non-affiliated. The first are directive positions of the central government filled through the Senior Executive Service System. They are appointed for a three-year term which is renewable up to two times without requiring a

second competition. These public executives are entitled to compensation for petition of resignation or non-renewal of position, and are awarded a special allowance that may amount to 100% of their base salary (Costa and Waissbluth, 2007). These are positions of trust of the President of Chile –first-level



positions or the highest authority in the case of second-level positions-, and are therefore subject to requests of resignation at any moment (González-Bustamante, Olivares L., Abarca, & Molina, 2015). Non-affiliated positions are those belonging to several agencies and public institutions that use the Senior Executive Service only as a selection process for filling certain positions. In this case, the professionals selected are not subject to the performance conditions just described. Among others, this is the case for judges and secretaries of Customs and Tax Courts, Ministers of Environmental Courts, Directors of the Copper Corporation, Directors of Public Educational Establishments and of Municipal Education Departments.

As to coverage, according to legal definitions, 48 agencies were to be incorporated into the system in 2004, and, beginning in 2006, a further ten would join the system annually<sup>2</sup>. In 2007 a decision was made to speed up the process, and that year a total of 101 services had been incorporated to the SESS (Costa & Waissblut, 2007, Morales, 2014). Up to mid-2015 the total number of public services of the central government joining the system summed 114.

As may be inferred, to this date the balance for SESS is a positive one, in spite of the controversies over the effects of political alternation on the continuity of executives

selected through competitions. Since the beginning of the system, 74% of competitions have ended with an appointment, 14% with the authority entitled to make the appointment declaring the competition void, and 12% with a declaration by the Council for the Senior Executive Service or the Selection Committee that the competition was declared void. Likewise, the average number of applications for positions are 115 per competition, and progress has been made in terms of gender, with almost 28% of appointments made to women (Servicio Civil, 2015).

Both in terms of positions and services the trend shows continued growth in SESS coverage, proof that the change in paradigm regarding high level public employment that has been taking place since 2003 has been consolidating. There is widespread acknowledgment of the role played by the SESS, which is recognized as a guide in subjects related to recruitment and selection of senior public officers, notwithstanding that it has also progressed in other aspects of the remaining three dimensions of this study. Naturally, when thinking about what steps it should take to develop further, compared experience is an unequalled source of inspiration. With that goal, we explored institutions and practices regarding senior civil services in the six countries chosen.

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<sup>2</sup> Transitory article 14 of Law 19,882 stated: "Public services will be incorporated progressively to the Senior Executive Service System, according to the following calendar: a) During the year 2004, at least 48 public services will join the system, and b) Between 2006 and 2010, including both years, at least 10 services will join the system annually so that the process ends during 2010 at the latest. For that purpose, the President of Chile, by means of supreme decrees issued through the Ministry of Finance, will designate the services to be incorporated into the system each time".

**SESS in municipal education**

Law Number 20,501 on “Quality and Equity of Education” came into effect on February 26, 2011. Its aim is to optimize management and administration of municipal education as a whole. It places special emphasis on strengthening and improving performance at the directive level. For that purpose it established a new recruitment and selection system and defined responsibilities and incentives of Directors of Municipal Educational Establishments and Heads of Municipal Education Departments (DAEM).

Public competitions were introduced to recruit both types of directors. They consider direct and indirect participation of the Senior Executive Service (SES) according to the type of position involved. In the case of Directors of Municipal Educational Establishments, the law defined direct participation of SES by appointing a representative of the SES Council in the competition processes. The total number of national competitions covers around 3,900 positions, 1,644 of which have been appointed.

Regarding competitions to fill positions of Heads of DAEM, it was determined that they would be filled according to a procedure analogous to a SES competition for second-level hierarchical positions. Thus, after several stages of the process, the assesment committee draws up a shortlist of three to five suitable candidates to present to the sustainer who makes the appointment.



## **IV. Comparative experiences: Multidimensional analysis of the senior civil service system in six countries**

Following are analytical fact sheets of senior civil service (SCS) systems in the six countries studied, i.e., Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, The Netherlands and United Kingdom. They are structured on the basis of the four dimensions of interest. For greater clarity, they start with the institutional structure and continue with training and development, recruitment and selection, and finally, compensations of senior executives.

## 1. Belgium

<b>Institutional structure</b>	<p>The Copernicus Reform Plan initiated in 1999 installed the <i>Service Public Fédéral</i> (Public Federal Service, SPF<sup>3</sup>), which replaced the traditional organization of Ministères. The PFS Personnel et Organisation (SPF P&amp;O) is a specialized service devoted to matters of personnel and organization. It is in charge of development management, recruitment and remuneration of civil servants at the federal level.</p> <p>The close to 180 directive positions belonging to the senior civil service are Presidents (Chairmen), Directors General and Directors, all of whom are appointed for six-year terms, after which they may reapply unless the period is extended because of an outstanding performance assessment.</p>
<b>Training and Development</b>	<p>The <i>Institut de Formation de l'Administration Fédérale</i>, which is part of SPF P&amp;O, provides a complete training program based on innovative educational practices. Training activities are aimed at all federal civil servants, and therefore are not specific to senior civil servants.</p>
<b>Recruitment and Selection</b>	<p>The SPF P&amp;O is in charge of the recruitment process for all civil servants. The Office Sélection et Orientation (Selection and Orientation, SELOR) is the bureau in charge of organizing exams for the selection process. External companies specializing in search for applicants are hired for participating in the process of selecting candidates.</p> <p>The recruitment and selection process of public servants is ordered by modules: review of background data, assessment of generic competences, and appraisal of specific competences. Depending on the position for which they apply, candidates undergo different tests that are presented in more detail in the following chapter on best practices.</p>
<b>Compensations</b>	<p>Income is defined in relation to the critical nature of the position, and the remuneration scheme does not include a variable component linked to performance. Criteria to define the critical nature of a position are: knowledge, experience, an overarching educational background, understanding of context, complexity, capacity and need of innovation, leadership, management of work conditions, interaction and personnel management, planning and coordination, ability to manage change skillfully, autonomy and independence, impact, and breadth of territory where competence is exercised.</p> <p>As a non-monetary benefit, executives are granted an extension of their annual vacation, a company car, and occasional reimbursement of some expenses.</p>

<sup>3</sup> Non-affiliated positions include 197 Head of DAEM positions of municipalities whose average enrollment is over 1,200 students. These competitions are conducted through the Senior Executive Service System.

## 2. Brazil

<b>Institutional structure</b>	<p>The three highest level positions of <i>Direção e Assessoramento Superior</i> (Superior Direction and Advisory System, DAS), created in 1967, are those that belong to the Brazilian federal senior civil service system.</p> <p>The DAS group includes ministries and agencies directly controlled by a minister, called direct administration. The number of DAS positions is ruled by the statute or budget of each organization, and the first three levels account for around 4 thousand people.</p> <p>Although definition of regulations is centralized by the <i>Secretaria de Gestão Pública</i> (Secretariat for Public Management) of the <i>Ministério de Planejamento, Orçamento y Gestão</i> (Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management), the processes are delegated to secretariats (equivalent to ministries).</p>
<b>Training and Development</b>	<p>There is no specific plan or program for professional development of senior servants of the State Public Administration. Nonetheless, the aim of the <i>Política Nacional de Desenvolvimento de Pessoal</i> (National Policy for Personnel Development) is to promote permanent development of civil servants in general, with the expectation that they will adapt to the competences required to meet goals of the institutions. Within this framework, senior civil servants may participate in courses given by the <i>Escola Nacional de Administração Pública</i> (National School of Public Administration) , which coordinates a <i>Sistema de Escolas de Governo</i> (SEGU).</p>
<b>Recruitment and Selection</b>	<p>The DAS system is geared towards temporary employment for people who have the confidence of the relevant authority. It is an exception to the general rule, because entrance to the Brazilian public administration is through open competition, including formal exams. Therefore, secondments in DAS positions may be viewed as a system for filling senior level positions rather than as a senior civil service system as such.</p>
<b>Compensations</b>	<p>The pay structure in Brazil considers five elements: base salary, DAS allowance, guaranteed bonus, variable income or performance-related bonuses, allowances or benefits due to compensations and monetary pay. They also receive non-monetary benefits such as a company car, and others such as housing, health care, child care, among others.</p>

### 3. Canada

<b>Institutional structure</b>	<p>The 2003 Public Service Employment Act (PSEA) gives the Public Service Commission (PSC) authority to make appointments and also to delegate that task to other levels. Around 4,500 positions are considered senior civil service positions.</p> <p>The PSC is an independent agency whose president is appointed by Parliament for a seven-year term. It is accountable to Parliament and is responsible for ensuring that the values defined for Public Service Employment are honored by the government.</p> <p>Within the framework of established policies and regulations, departments or ministries are delegated to define requirements for the positions, and also to conduct recruitment and selection processes that respect the values defined for public employment staffing. In this task they are aided by the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer, which is accountable to the Treasury Board, an institution that safeguards the proper operation of public administration in general.</p>
<b>Training and Development</b>	<p>The <i>Canada School of Public Service</i> offers mandatory induction courses open to all civil servants.</p> <p>It also conducts some external training courses, both in the traditional classroom modality or as at a distance courses, to individuals or to groups. These courses are delivered by universities or private training companies.</p>
<b>Recruitment and Selection</b>	<p>The PSC is an institution that plays a supervisory role, but that also acts as a service provider helping department heads in recruitment and selection processes, as is the case of assessment.</p> <p>It offers complete professional assessment services adapted to the needs of public institutions and also provides tools, counsel and support for technological innovation.</p>
<b>Compensations</b>	<p>The TB is the cabinet agency responsible for federal government management, ranging from setting policies to managing information on administration of human resources. Remuneration of each directive position joining the public administration is analyzed first by an external committee, later by the TB or the Prime Minister's services, who make the final decision on remuneration, checking that its amount lies within the salary range applicable to the position.</p> <p>Canadian senior civil servants receive a host of associated benefits, among others, transportation, moving expenses, savings plan, accommodation, work trips, bilingual plans.</p>

## 4. Mexico

<b>Institutional structure</b>	<p>The goal of the Professional Career Service (SPC) is to count on a body of professional civil servants for the federal administration based on principles of merit, equal opportunities, efficiency and responsibility.</p> <p>It was designed as a career-based system, but in practice it operates as an employment service due to instability associated to political changes.</p> <p>The SPC encompasses strategic mid and top-level directive positions in the Federal Public Administration. It comprises six levels: i) director general, ii) assistant director general, iii) area directors, iv) deputy directors, v) heads of departments, vi) liaisons. Staff sums 30 thousand civil servants across approximately 75 institutions. The breadth of the SPC and the difficulty to overcome instability of the most sensitive positions means that it is not a senior civil service in a strict sense.</p>
<b>Training and Development</b>	<p>The Professional Development Sub-System contains procedures for defining individual career plans for civil servants, for clearly identifying possible development paths and for allowing them to occupy positions of equal or higher hierarchical level and pay, provided they meet the established requirements.</p> <p>Each service or office has a Professionalization Technical Committee responsible for implementing, running and assessing the professional career service through generation of strategies and analysis in order to improve human resources and thus provide a better public service.</p>
<b>Recruitment and Selection</b>	<p>Each office has Selection Technical Committees (CTS), which are collegiate bodies in charge of running selection processes. The CTS defines the proficiency exams and skill assessments to be applied for each position, the minimum score for qualification, the specific assessment rules for filling the position, as well as the criteria for appraisal through interviews. Members of the CTS are the immediate supervisor of the vacant position, who presides over the committee and has a right to veto decisions, the incumbent General Director of Human Resources, and a representative of the Ministry of Public Administration (SPF), usually the head of the audit area. Decisions are taken according to the majority vote.</p> <p>The SPF, together with the National Council for Standardization and Certification of Labor Competences (CONOCER), has created transversal competence standards that may be applied to all the federal, state and municipal public administration.</p>
<b>Compensations</b>	<p>Remunerations of Mexican senior civil servants consist of a base salary, fringe benefits which are a bonus and an end-year gratuity, and benefits. Performance and remuneration are not linked. There are also benefits such as company cars, among others.</p>



## 5. The Netherlands

<p><b>Institutional structure</b></p>	<p>The <i>Bureau Algemene Bestuursdienst</i> (BABD, Office of the Senior Civil Service) was founded in 1995. It is an autonomous body managed by a Director General who provides professional support to leaders of the highest ranks in public administration, in two areas: composition of teams in charge of management and recruitment, and development of talent and experience.</p> <p>BABD acts as employer of the 65 executives who make up the <i>Top Management Group</i> (TMG), whose members are Secretaries General and Directors General appointed for seven-year terms at the most. In addition to the TMG, Directors -whose employers are the services where they perform- are also considered senior executives. Total number of senior civil servants is 450.</p> <p>Some groups such as <i>ABD TOP Consult</i> and <i>ABD Interim</i> are particularly important.</p>
<p><b>Training and Development</b></p>	<p>BABD has set up a variety of development programs.</p> <p>The “Candidate’s Program” applies a talent management perspective, making an early selection of candidates who have the potential to become executives in the future.</p> <p>A “Peer Consultancy Program” organizes workshops on subjects that interest senior civil servants cross-wise.</p> <p>The “Leadership in a Globalized Arena Program” is carried out jointly with senior civil servants of the United States and Harvard’s <i>Kennedy School of Government</i>.</p> <p>The <i>ABD Interim</i> is considered a directive development tool since it allows public managers to promote their careers and resumes by broadening their professional perspectives and developing specific competences.</p>
<p><b>Recruitment and Selection</b></p>	<p>To call for a competition, the BABD uses several methods: institutional networks, social media, <i>head hunters</i>, newspapers and others.</p> <p>A pre-selection committee advises the BABD Director General on recruitment and selection of TMG members.</p> <p>For lower ranking positions, the final responsibility for appointments lies in the ministries, but BABD participates in selection panels as well as in calls for competitions and preliminary assessments.</p>
<p><b>Compensations</b></p>	<p>The structure of remunerations of senior civil servants in The Netherlands includes a base salary, guaranteed bonus, and allowances.</p> <p>The pay scale has been defined according to the educational background and professional training of civil servants. Performance of senior executives is assessed annually in order to determine whether they may be moved upwards in the pay scale. Secretaries General -part of TMG- receive an additional 5% over their base salary as payment for specific functions. Directors receive a discretionary bonus decided on by their supervisors.</p> <p>In The Netherlands, the pay gap with the private sector is considered natural, because working in the public sector is due to other motivations.</p>

## 6. United Kingdom

<b>Institutional structure</b>	<p>The <i>Senior Civil Service</i> (SCS) is a position-based system, i.e., it is not career-based. It is accountable to the <i>Civil Service</i> (CS) and is directly related to the Prime Minister's <i>Cabinet Office</i>.</p> <p>The senior civil service includes two levels of executives. The first level comprises 38 Permanent Secretaries and 150 Directors General; the second includes 680 Directors and 3,700 Deputy Directors.</p> <p>The SCS is currently governed by a Civil Service Directorate created in 1996 with a single set of regulations. However, each ministry has its own unit of personnel management.</p> <p>The <i>Civil Service Commission</i> is a body independent of the government, made up of commissioners appointed by the Crown. It controls SCS recruitment, safeguarding that the selection process of senior civil servants is merit-based, open and competitive; it also promotes CS values.</p>
<b>Training and Development</b>	<p>The CS Human Resources department proposes different types of activities for individual and collective development based on sharing experiences.</p> <p>The <i>Annual Cross-Departmental Moderation Process</i> identifies across-the-board requirements for development and selects participants whose performance is good and who have the potential for these activities.</p> <p>To promote talent, the CS relies on the <i>Civil Service High Potential Scheme</i>, which is a program that supports civil servants who are interested in reaching directive positions and whose potential is high.</p>
<b>Recruitment and Selection</b>	<p>The specific recruitment and selection procedure of senior civil servants involves public competitions, emphasizing those of an internal nature. The call is opened only when no suitable candidate for the position is found. The position to be filled, including its requirements, is disseminated. For positions of the highest hierarchical levels, the <i>Senior Leadership Committee</i> gives recommendations to the Director of the CS. Appointments are confirmed by the Crown.</p>
<b>Compensations</b>	<p>The <i>Senior Salaries Review Body</i> (SSRB) is an independent public body whose purpose is to provide independent advice to the Prime Minister and other State authorities, on remuneration of the SCS, judges, senior officers of the armed forces and other holders of public positions. Every three years it conducts a revision of the pay scheme and proposes remunerations that have two components: a base salary and another linked to performance.</p> <p>The Prime Minister is also advised by the <i>Permanent Secretary Remuneration Committee</i>. Remuneration includes a base salary, payment for pension, and a performance-based variable remuneration. The Senior Civil Service pay system has set up a "fund"- currently standing at 8.6% of the total amount spent on base salaries- which is used to give annual compensations to the best employees.</p>



## **V. Best international practices and their importance for the SESS**



Revision of six country experiences provides a state-of-the-art view on the organization and management of senior civil service systems. It is a starting point for focusing on some best practices in each dimension of interest for strengthening the Chilean SESS.

## **1. Training and development**

Some best practices in Brazil, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom stand out in this dimension of the SESS.

### **a. Training system for civil servants in Brazil**

The *Escola Nacional de Administração Pública* (National School of Public Administration, ENAP) was created in 1986, sponsored by the *Ministério de Planejamento, Orçamento y Gestão* (Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management), as part of a State modernization process and in the context of installing a career-based civil service in Brazil.

The purpose of ENAP is to develop competences of civil servants to improve overall government capacity for designing and implementing public policies. To achieve this goal, it offers courses in several areas related to Public Administration to all civil servants who enroll in them. Among them, a specific area covers management and technical development, including programs and courses for public managers. The number of courses

has been steadily increasing during recent years, particularly in distant learning courses using e-learning platforms.

In recent years, ENAP has also established a policy of incentives through the use of “Prizes for Innovation in Federal Public Management”. These are competitions that honor innovative and efficient practices contributing to modernization of public management.

To broaden and improve the availability of training opportunities for civil servants, it has entered into alliances with Government Schools across the country and has signed a large number of agreements with international organizations, particularly European ones. Besides, since 2006 a “National Policy for Development of Civil Servants” is being applied. Its guidelines point at developing personal and institutional competences, enhancing human capital development in the public sector.

### **b. Cooperation and accompaniment practices in The Netherlands**

A characteristic feature of BABD is that it generates numerous opportunities for exchange and mutual support among senior civil servants which is reflected in the institutional structure. Noteworthy are innovations such as the ABD TOP Consult, which facilitates internal counselling relevant for reflecting on training and development.



Directly related to this subject, BABD implements several programs of major interest for training and development. Foremost among them the following three programs:

1) Candidate's Program: It is a program for talent development preparing participants to take on strategic leadership roles as senior civil servants. It lasts two years and is aimed at 20 participants under 45 years old.

It consists of nine three-day modules whose main objective is to develop personal leadership in executives. It includes a trip aimed at observing the environment, getting to know new cultures and interacting with different persons, so that upon returning to The Netherlands participants may process the experience and devise new plans to strengthen public management. The aim of the experience gained during the trip is to install in the central government, leaders able to inspire other civil servants in each level of the organization, also complying fully the duties and tasks associated with their position.

2) Peer Consultancy Program: it is aimed at public executives who wish to share their personal experience as leaders. 6 to 8 persons and a facilitator make up a group that is stable in order to generate a friendly and secure environment. It includes ten meetings over a two-year period, with each session lasting from two to three hours. The purpose is to

share experiences and lessons on leadership, political management and senior civil service, managing change, teamwork, work-life balance and career development.

3) Leadership in a Globalized Arena Program: directed at potential and/or current public executives. It comprises two modules, the first lasts three days and takes place in The Hague, the second lasts one week and takes place in Washington DC and Boston. Two colloquiums are held with senior US civil servants, and one session with the Director of the Senior Executive Service of the United States Federal Government. Senior executives also attend presentations at the *Kennedy School of Government of Harvard University*.

### **c. Talent detection and development in the United Kingdom**

There are three institutions in the British SCS devoted to promoting development of its senior civil servants. The Senior Leadership Committee (SLC) is devoted to strengthening competences of senior executives. Its strategic subjects are succession plans and interventions geared at creating development, and its work is accompanied by strict performance assessments used to measure executives' potential. On its part, the Talent Review Board supports the SLC in developing corporate succession plans and talent management by identifying the most capable executives so as to ensure their personal and



career development. Finally, the Civil Service Talent Board is devoted to detecting potential talent, allowing a culture of talent detection and management to be installed within departments.

Besides these entities the British system has also set up various programs aimed at facilitating development and training of executives. Outstanding among them are the following.

1) *Fast Stream*: it is an accelerated development program for graduates, designed to create future leaders for the public sector. Around 30,000 candidates apply for 700 vacancies. The program lasts four years and considers monthly meetings with a talent coach. At the end of the program there is an assessment whose results determine to which department the person will be appointed, as well as the grade and the pay. Program participants take on SCS positions within approximately ten years, in other words, four years ahead of other employees, due to the fact that they are selected through a strict process.

2) *Future Leaders*: it is a standard program whose purpose is to develop corporate leadership capacity of civil servants who are in low hierarchical levels but who have the potential to be promoted to Deputy Director. The program is built around workshops on leadership and commercial skills. Its goal is

to attain competences necessary for taking on the position of Deputy Director.

3) *Senior Leaders*: it prepares participants to develop the competences needed for the Director level. This is done through corporate leadership workshops, strategic alliances, *mentoring* activities and corporate challenges. Learning objectives are to acquire competences required to take on *senior* leadership positions.

4) *Civil Service High Potential Development Scheme*: it is a highly competitive program whose purpose is to speed up development of potential directors.



## ■ Relevance for Chile

The SESS still has ample room for improvement in areas related to management of human capital highly specialized in public matters. A first avenue of development is accompaniment of senior executives while they are occupying a position and not only by an initial induction limited to some activities as it is now, but rather through a long-term process that sets in motion expert support for accompanying them, including *mentoring* and *coaching* techniques. It is possible to seek inspiration for this in some aforementioned British initiatives and regulations of the Dutch BABD.

Another more ambitious avenue is to devise programs devoted to identifying and guiding individuals with high potential in their first steps in the public service. In career-based systems, programs geared at talent are increasingly present. For an employment-based system such as the Chilean one, second level executives could be accompanied, given that they may take on first-level positions sometime in the future. Development of individuals who do not yet belong to the senior service system is an avenue of thought that the SESS could explore jointly with the Civil Service, as is already the case in the program *Prácticas Chile* (Internships for Chile).

Strengthening capacity in this field also involves generating further institutional

development, because even if some services were to be outsourced it would be necessary to increase capacity for designing programs aimed at senior civil servants. Setting up an advisory group experienced in senior civil service could be a way of benefitting from the experience gained during ten years of SESS operation, with the Dutch *ABD TOPConsult* and its internal counseling as a benchmark on this subject.

## 2. Recruitment and Selection

For this dimension we considered some practices in Belgium, Mexico and a variety of countries in the case of diversity issues.

### a. Belgian internal process based on competences

The Belgian senior civil service system includes the FPS P&O, which is entrusted with monitoring the work environment so that each individual may develop satisfactorily. It also works in tandem with SELOR, an office in charge of organizing selection exams.

The selection process itself is geared towards quality, efficiency and equal opportunities. It is conducted in three stages: review of background information, assessment of generic competences and assessment of specific ones. Among the most innovative tests, the situational judgment assessment stands out. It measures how persons approach



different situations faced in the workplace. These tests usually present hypothetical but realistic situations so that candidates choose an answer from a multiple choice grid. In this way it is possible to determine trends in a person's behavior, projecting how he/she would act in specific situations. Ultimately, results may or may not be adequate for the functions and environment faced by an executive of the organization, depending on the position to be filled.

Besides, as part of the evaluation, candidates must present a case, which serves as an exercise in strategic and analytical development that is aimed at measuring technical competences. Later, selected candidates go on to the interview stage which is conducted by a jury of 7 members: it is presided over by a representative of SELOR, and other members are two technical experts, two human resources management experts from the public sector and two from the private sector. After the interviews, candidates are classified in categories A, B, C or D, which range from "very adequate" to "inadequate". In the next stage, a shortlist of candidates classified as A or B is sent to the client seeking that a position be filled. The client conducts a final interview and then makes the appointment, which is for a six-year term.

### **b. Mexican recruitment dissemination process**

In Mexico the process of calls for competition begins with the will to fill a vacant or a new

position. The dissemination process for recruitment of civil servants is extensive because the Selection Technical Committee in each unit is responsible for setting up procedures to attract the largest possible number of applicants to competitions for entering the system.

Nonetheless, the competition has to be disseminated as an open public call through the Federation's Official Gazette and the web page which is managed by SPF and is connected to the remaining functions of the RH Net portal (<http://www.rhnet.gob.mx/>). There are also other dissemination methods such as social service programs, labor fairs, employment exchange services, and inserts in mass media such as radio and television.

The particular case of the IT system managed by SPF is designed as a single window entrance to administration and control of data regarding recruitment processes. The system receives and processes applications to competitions, sends messages to aspiring applicants, candidates and/or finalists, and disseminates the results of each stage of the process.

All this effort is undertaken to comply with the SPC entry sub-system, which aims at attracting the best candidates to public positions, on the basis of access through merit and equal opportunities.



### c. Diversity in Brazil, Canada and The Netherlands

In Brazil, the *Ministério de Planejamento, Orçamento y Gestão* (Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management) applies current rules providing for positive discrimination in favor of vulnerable groups when it selects civil servants. Accordingly, there is a *Política Nacional para a Integração da Pessoa Portadora de Deficiência* (National Policy for Incorporation of Persons with Disabilities), which states that persons with disabilities have the right to apply openly and in conditions equal to any other candidates, for occupying public sector positions whose duties are compatible with their disability. Competitions include at least 5% of openings for persons with disabilities. On the other hand, current legislation reserves 20% of vacancies for people of African descent in competitions for public positions and those of the Federal Administration and public sector corporations.

Canada, on its part, is traditionally considered a country that respects minorities, a characteristic reflected in the equality and inclusion policies within the PSC. This is accounted for by its Employment Equity subdivision, in charge of implementing employment equity programs for women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and other minorities.

In the case of persons with disabilities, the purpose of the policy is to ensure full

participation of them in the public federal administration, either as candidates to public employment or as actual civil servants.

The approach adopted by The Netherlands to favor access of minorities to public employment is also interesting, because their inclusion is dealt with in an indirect fashion, through a system of rewards to public managers who actively hire both women and ethnic minorities. Regarding the latter, specific goals for hiring these persons have also been established.





## ■ Importance for Chile

Recruitment and selection is the dimension in which the Chilean SESS has made the greatest progress. Recruitment and selection processes are acknowledged across the country and also internationally for their quality, because they ensure merit-based standards for all hiring conducted according to its procedures. This acknowledgment is expressed by the constant growth in positions affiliated to the system and it is an indication of professionalization and integrity in selection of employees, thus enhancing legitimacy of the public apparatus as a whole.

Best practices compiled in this study point out some improvements that in some aspects could be adopted in Chile. For example, the Belgian SELOR selection tests are particularly interesting for focusing on competences pertaining to public management, as they allow detecting and testing skills necessary across the public sector and also specific to the duties of the position to be filled. In addition, the emphasis that the Mexican SPF puts on wide-reaching dissemination of calls for competitions may also be an inspiration for enhancing procedures.

On the other hand, the position of SELOR within the Belgian public system raises the question of whether it is appropriate to outsource recruitment processes. Conducting the process internally may lower costs, but above

all it reinforces assurance that competences particular to the public sector are incorporated. Overall, integrating this dimension with the previous training and development dimension, there are indications of an international tendency towards enhancing internal capacity. In fact, it is something to be considered in forward long-term thinking for the Chilean senior public service, taking account of the fact that those options would involve not only the SESS itself but also the Civil Service and the public apparatus in general.

Finally, from a broader perspective and considering diversity, initiatives that increase representativeness of the general population in the Chilean Senior Executive Service are deemed attractive.

## 3. Compensations

For this dimension we consider some practices in the United Kingdom. In the first place, a highlight of the system is the role of the *Senior Salaries Review Body* (SSRB), which reviews the pay scheme every three years, introducing the dynamism needed to address changes in the active population and in personnel management practices.

The compensation system in force in the Senior Civil Service (SCS) is interesting because it includes a base salary and a performance-linked component. Although there is a single pay system for Permanent



Secretaries, it has defined three bands for annual salaries; 142,000 to 160,000, 160,000 to 180,000, and 180,000 to 225,000 pounds sterling<sup>4</sup>. The highest range applies to the most complex positions, which are Cabinet Secretary and Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, among others. Remunerations of other senior executives –Directors General (SCS 2)<sup>5</sup>, Directors (SCS3)<sup>6</sup> and Deputy Directors (SCS 3) – are managed centrally and amount to 150,000, 120,000 and 100,000 pounds per year, respectively.

For the assessment process, objectives of the performance agreement are decided during February and March. The agreement is revised in May, to check how progress towards the goals is going, and adjustments are introduced if deemed necessary. There are also monthly follow-up meetings with the immediate supervisor to monitor agreements. In October the three main inputs established in the agreement are reviewed by the senior executive in charge of the unit and by external senior executives<sup>7</sup>.

As to performance-linked remuneration, meetings take place during April and May to agree upon mechanisms for proving performance of all Permanent Secretaries and the method for distributing among everyone the prize associated to performance compliance. In June the evidence is presented and the corresponding agreements are adopted and approved by the Prime Minister for them to become effective.

As to non-monetary compensation, work-life balance is sought by means of parental leaves, shared working to facilitate part-time hours, 30-day vacation and maternity leaves longer than in the private sector. No health insurance is associated to the position, but pension is a significant motivation. Because of these factors, while the resignation rate is only 2.9% per year, the annual replacement rate fluctuates between 10 and 15%.

### ■ Importance for Chile

The thinking about public sector compensations usually centers on salaries and on the gap with the private sector. In Chile, that gap only exists crosswise at the first hierarchical level of the senior executive service and in the public healthcare sector. For second-level positions of equal responsibilities, wages are similar to those of the private sector<sup>8</sup>.

As to first level positions, the thinking is that commitment to public service and other symbolic elements compensate the relative sacrifice involved in working in the public sector. The most acute problem affects public health sector positions, because doctors working in senior executive positions in the public sector face significant opportunity costs, making it difficult to carry out competitions and causing significant operational problems. More generally, it is very important that the SESS reflects on the pertinence of making a more sophisticated classification of senior

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**4** As of September 4, 2015, the pay bands expressed in Chilean pesos are: \$149,423,772 - \$168,364,814; \$168,364,815 - \$189,410,416; \$189,410,416 - \$236,763,020. **5** Senior executive band II. **6** Senior executive band III. **7** Non Executive Directors (NED).

**8** This reflection is based on the "Study of Job Valuation and Determination of Market Wage Curve" conducted by Deloitte for the National Civil Service Agency. The study was carried out in two stages, between 2011 and 2014.



civil service positions, based less on formal criteria and more on an overall assessment on their critical nature.

As to remunerations, another key issue is the linkage to senior civil servant performance, which is very weak in Chile. Following the British example, there is a need for agreements that more operational and possible to evaluate, and whose degree of compliance has some impact on pay, such as a bonus linked to high performance. It is worth noting that a bill currently under discussion makes proposals that would involve moving forward in this direction.

Nonetheless, compensations involve more than remunerations. Non-monetary aspects play a significant role in how senior professionals of countries in this study value public service. Thus, the problem for first-level positions lies in developing non-monetary elements of compensations rather than in closing the gap with the private sector. In those cases where there is more tradition of senior civil service there is a perception that public service is an honor.

Commitment to service may also be accompanied by other elements that, although non-monetary, are material, as occurs in the case of termination of contract of senior civil servants. Currently, termination of contract is a relatively traumatic experience, thus causing possible entry barriers for risk-averse

persons. More favorable regulations for the senior public executive in case of termination of contract would have a positive impact on the recruitment and selection dimension, following some practices observed in the Dutch case.

#### **4. Institutional structure**

For this dimension we consider some practices of The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

##### **a. The Netherlands**

On this matter, some institutional innovations adopted by The Netherlands, such as the *ABD Interim* and the *ABD TOPConsult*, are particularly interesting.

Both institutions were created with the purpose of forming a body of interim managers intended to retain knowledge, and of limiting costs associated to hiring external consultants, considering that executives developed leadership capacities and then returned to the private sector. As a response, a decision was made to form a pool of 150 managers to be assigned wherever they were needed, and thus to respond to requirements of an ever-changing public administration. With their vast experience, useful for responding to changes, crisis management or implementation of new programs, in their interim functions they become *sparring* and *coach* of executives of the services where they act. Therefore, the



*ABD Interim* provides suitable executives in an agile and flexible way, as they are able to start working quickly because they know the public sector and are familiar with the work environment.

The maximum term for a task assigned to an interim manager is 3 years. To take up the position, a profile for the specific task is drawn up, so that the goals to be met are known by interims at the beginning of their term. Because they are effective, they are described as "growth accelerators", given that they stimulate, with their experience and ability, development of organizations.

On its part, *ABD TOPConsult* is a group of consultants devoted to provide counsel in complex subjects of the highest level, in order to facilitate management by senior executives. This innovation is part of a long-term effort of the *BABD* to promote development of a community of senior civil servants by building on the experience they have been accumulating.

## **b. United Kingdom**

Outstanding in the United Kingdom institutional arrangement are the different *Civil Service Governance Boards*, which reveal a persistent effort to update and provide strategic projection to the Civil Service. The Civil Service Board is the most important. It is composed of ten to twelve Permanent Secretaries who

provide strategic institutional leadership. The *Senior Leadership Committee* is made up of some members of the CSB, and it is crucial in strengthening and enhancing SC leadership through effective talent administration of senior executives. The SLC focuses on strategic issues and fields of interest, such as succession plans and interventions geared at generating development. Its work is supported by strict assessments of performance and potential of Directors General and Directors by applying a "Nine-box talent grid", which is a model used across the Government.

The *Talent Review Board* is presided over by a Permanent Secretary and is composed of ten Directors-General. Its role is to support the SLC in developing plans for corporate succession and talent administration in the SCS, by identifying the most talented Directors and ensuring that both their personal development and career progress are managed with a corporate perspective. Finally, the Civil Service Talent Board is presided over by a Permanent Secretary and is composed of ten Directors General in charge of planning succession and managing and developing talent in the SCS up to the Deputy Director level.

### **■ Importance for Chile**

On the matter of institutional structure, the creation of the SESS and its Council were a significant change in Chile which turned out to be successful. Currently, both are well



consolidated. As a result, best practices compiled for this study point at specific aspects, in line with some potential innovations mentioned in the previous dimensions, which it would be interesting to develop in order to promote public value delivered by the SESS. In that sense, it is necessary to insist upon the importance of promoting enhanced development of public capacities for training and developing senior public executives. On the other hand, the Dutch experience with mechanisms that allow learning and

experience gained in the public sector to be exploited, either through internal counselling (*ABD TOPConsult*) or by occupying positions in certain specific situations (*ABD Interim*), opens up avenues to think about how similar structures could be set up in Chile. Through a body of interim managers it is possible to provide executives of the highest level in a limited time span, and, faced with critical scenarios, the government in office would be able to act quickly because it would count on effective experience in the public sector.



## **VI. From best practices to implementation. Debate and challenges to SESS**



The Chilean SESS faces a crucial moment. Debates on how to continue improving processes and strengthening its capacity for action have come to a turning point. The system may either make a qualitative leap towards enhanced development or continue without changing its action framework or processes, thus running the risk of stagnation. In addition, the current debate on integrity in politics provides an opportunity to reinforce some ideas on the importance of high-quality public function. In that sense, this report aims to become an input for analysis, within the framework of the bill destined to strengthen the Public Senior Executive Service System which is currently being discussed in Parliament, and, more generally, of initiatives to permanently improve its processes and products.

In the search of strategies, experiences and practices for strengthening the system as a whole, the following cases were analyzed: Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom. From these experiences it is possible to highlight some best practices which, irrespective of the national context may be useful as discussion elements and as action guide in Chile, also considering adaptations required by the domestic environment. This precaution is specially valid to accommodate proposals stemming from career-based systems to the Chilean context, which is an employment-based system.

Following the categories defined in the report, it is specially significant to highlight the following aspects:

a) As to training and development, the SESS still has ample room for action, specially regarding accompaniment of senior civil servants. The current practice is to conduct an induction process in the most relevant activities of the position, however, once finalized, it is necessary to incorporate other tools such as *mentoring* and *coaching*, destined to facilitate transmission of knowledge applied to public management and building institutional memory. More generally, accumulation of experience within the public sector is a store of wealth for strengthening competences, something that is only now beginning to be valued.

b) Considering that most senior public executives come from the state apparatus, the system would benefit from creating instances for early detection of talent. In practice, to move away from a system that is only concerned with recruitment to one that promotes development, it is necessary to look at the experience of career-based systems. Indeed, in an employment-based system such as the Chilean one, on one hand, executives of lower levels—second and third levels, and maybe even younger ones, could be accompanied; on the other hand, it would be feasible to develop strategies aimed at promoting young talents, considering that





they may be destined at some point to take on senior civil service positions. Setting up an advisory group with experience in the system could be a way of profiting from the experience accumulated by the SESS in its first ten years.

c) As mentioned, it is in matters of recruitment and selection where the SESS has been more successful, as is witnessed by the fact that SESS selection processes are widely acknowledged for their quality. Evidence of this acknowledgment is the continued growth in non-affiliated positions filled according to procedures and standards of the system each time a decision is taken to show signs of professionalization and integrity in public sector personnel selection in order to give more legitimacy to the overall public apparatus. Best practices picked up in this study present some improvements that could be discussed, as is the case of assessment instruments that place more emphasis on transversal and specific competences pertaining to the public sector. On more specific matters, the bill under discussion includes several proposals to speed up competitions.

d) The thinking about compensations usually centers around salaries and the gap with the private sector. This issue is specially sensitive in the health sector, because the high opportunity costs faced by doctors working in public sector senior executive positions hinders competitions from being successful. The suggested changes to the Public Senior Executive Allowance could contribute to close that gap.

Compensations involve more than remunerations. Non-monetary aspects play a significant role in how senior professionals of countries considered in this study value public service. Thus, the problem for first-level positions is not so much closing the gap as developing non-monetary aspects of compensations. In countries with more tradition of senior civil service, there is a perception that public service is an honor. Strengthening bonds within the SESS will also allow cultivating community spirit which is noted for its origin and for sharing commitment to public service, something inseparable from any reflection on senior civil service.

The bill that is currently being discussed would be a great step forward regarding the aforementioned problem areas. In this respect, leading the SESS in the direction of becoming a comprehensive system poses a double challenge to its actors. First, the discussion of the bill is a test of the acceptance of professionalization of the senior civil service by the political class. Although public dissertation is usually in favor of cutting discretionary political allocation of senior positions in the public sector, in practice this may not be so. Therefore, the challenge is to transmit that the changes are desirable across-the-board, because the SESS reflects a State policy that points at developing the country as a whole.

The second challenge is implementing these legal norms. Indeed, as previously mentioned,



the SESS has been able to conduct an increasing number of competitions, revealing a significant ability to respond to growing demands. Now it faces the strategic challenge of making a qualitative improvement in

development of senior civil servants for Chile. To achieve this, it probably needs to grow in institutional aspects, building up capacity from the public sector so that the role of persons working for the State may flourish.

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