

MOTIVATION OF PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES*Jozef HABÁNIK, Adriana MARTOŠOVÁ, Monika GULLEROVÁ,***Abstract**

The concept of public administration has been the subject matter of scientific interpretation in social, political and legal theories both home and abroad. In general, there has been a consensus on the two components of public administration, i.e. state administration and local government. There have been many interpretations of the concept of public administration. The concept of public administration is central to administrative law. Its origins can be traced back to Roman law from which it spread to other languages. The current approach to the interpretation of such a complex and dynamic phenomenon as public administration can be objected its jurisdictional nature since less attention is paid to opinions on the effectiveness of public administration and society and the need to address the related problems. When a crisis occurs, orders are falling and companies are dismissing employees. Public sector, however, follows special laws and regulations. Working for public interest is essential in good times as well as the times of crisis. This makes the public sector missions distinct from those of the private sector. Motivation plays a key role in both sectors. Motivating employees is one of the key functions of managers. Mistakenly, monetary incentives are considered to be the best motivational tool. What does really motivate public sector employees? There are various prejudices about the factors of motivation in the public sector. The paper addresses the motivation of public sector employees and its distinctive features as well as the key role that managers play in employee motivation.

Key words

Employees, manager, motivation, market, private company, public administration, wages, remuneration.

JEL Classification: H70, H83, Z00

Introduction

Public administration and motivation have been dealt with by many authors both home and abroad. In any case, public administration is about managing the issues of public interest. The process is subject to public control within the public sector whose people are parts of. Kútík and Karbach (2011) argue that public administration refers to real and work-related activities during its actual functioning in a given social system under certain historical circumstances, and to the structure of the organization and the management of state administration and self-government. For public administration and any other business entity to work smoothly and efficiently, employee motivation is a must. It is much more demanding to motivate public sector employees than private sector employees. The paper addresses the public employee motivation as opposed to private sector employee motivation, and the key role of managers.

Goal and Methodology

Employee motivation aims to achieve as high performance as possible. When motivated correctly, it is easier to attain the goals set. The purpose of the paper is to direct the attention towards the public employee motivation based on the analysis of the public sector reward system. The data were gathered from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic and used to compare the wages of employees working in Public Administration and Defence Sectors: compulsory social security contributions. The theoretical section gives an outline of available and recent relevant information whereas the empirical section provides an analysis of the findings.

Findings

The research findings are presented both theoretically and practically. Wages is considered to be the driving force for improving employee performance. In public sector, however, employees can be motivated by other incentives, such as training or educational opportunities or health care schemes. Other incentives could include the positive recognition of employees' work, a comprehensive system of fringe benefits, employee of the month

program. This program has been successful in Japan and other Eastern cultures. It has been frequently used in the US as an important component of motivation. Being named employee of the month is a great honour in the workplace with much positive feedback from colleagues.

Theoretical framework

In order to define the concept of public administration, its relationship to public sector must be specified. In any case, public sector is an area that influences significantly the overall living conditions of people and economic development of societies. Kútík and Klierová (2013) perceive the public sector as a part of social reality or a subsystem of individual areas of social life that are owned by public and subject to public scrutiny. The mission of public sector is to address social, economic and political issues by applying certain procedures. Thus, public administration is a subsystem of the public sector. Public administration is commonly referred to as administration. In professional literature, several authors have dealt with issues of public administration and motivation. Even sociologists and historians have dealt with the concept of administration. If one wanted to trace back the origins of administration and its management, one would need to study early examples of administration practices in ancient Egypt and China. This issue was also addressed by Keller who said that "we had not quite been successful in achieving the excellence of ancient Egyptian and Roman authorities or reports". In the late 20th century, the concept of public administration emerged in various works that addressed the so called New Public Management. According to Hasprová (2007), public administration is a complex and unclear social phenomenon that addresses the relationships between the state, society, citizens, the state as a whole and its territorial and regional entities.

Motivation is essential in any organization, not excluding public organizations. It is a challenging task to motivate employees; therefore the issue of motivation must be paid close attention.

Employees working in businesses, organizations, health services and education sectors, government or

local government institutions want to be motivated not only with wages but also some other incentives. There have been several theories associated with motivation. They have mainly emphasized the importance of meeting the employee needs and examined the factors of motivation. Any organization of today needs to have their employees motivated.

Among the most notable are the theories by Maslow, Herzberg, Mclelland and McGregor. Maslow argued that motivational theories are based on human needs and their satisfaction.

Thus, motivation is a type of specific psychic regulatory activity and one of the highest forms of psychological determination of activities. Motivation helps develop talents, achieve new goals, and above all, act and think actively for stimuli to occur. Živčicová (2006) maintains that activating factors, such as motives, needs, interests, attitudes, aspirations, life goals, and values need to be paid close attention to. She also argues that the term motivation is derived from Latin word *motio* with the meaning movement, passion. It provides us with a clear picture of what a person is experiencing, what s/he longs for, what s/he detests, what s/he is trying to achieve and what s/he wants. According to Vojtovič (2008), motivation meets employee needs and can also increase the return on investment in human resource development.

Motivation is influenced by various factors, both internal and external. Motivational factors are essential to effective employee performance which is supported by Armstrong (2007) who argues that employee performance depends on these factors and the value of importance that is attached to each of them. This was researched by Herzberg who came up with top ten factors that affect the work performance of employees.

Research section

The research section focused on the comparison of employee salaries in the Public Administration and Defence sector: compulsory social security by NUTS III regions. The data are for businesses and organizations with 20 or more employees, including employees working abroad.

Table 1. Employee average nominal monthly wage (EUR) in Public Administration and Defence sector: compulsory social security

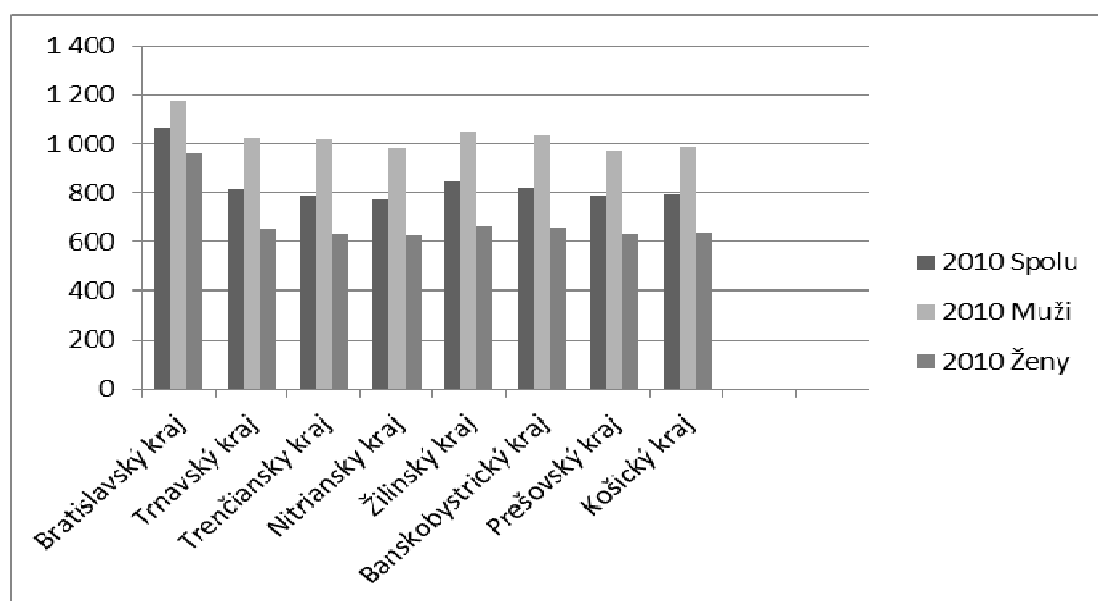
Regions	2010		
	Total (EUR)	Men (EUR)	Women (EUR)
Bratislava region	1,066	1,174	958
Trnava region	812	1,025	654
Trenčín region	789	1,016	632
Nitra region	771	982	624
Žilina region	844	1,053	664
Banská Bystrica region	818	1,035	660
Prešov region	786	968	631
Košice region	793	988	639

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on the data from the SO SR

Table 1 shows the data on the average nominal wages as well as the gender pay gap. In 2010, the highest wage was in the Bratislava region with

a difference of 2.6% between genders. The lowest nominal wages was earned by employees in the Nitra region and Prešov region.

Graph 1. Employee average nominal monthly wage (EUR) in Public Administration and Defence sector: compulsory social security



Source: Authors' own elaboration based on the data from the SO SR

The data on the employee average nominal monthly wage by sex and region are shown in Graph 1. The highest average employee wages was

recorded in the Bratislava region and the lowest wages in the Prešov and Nitra regions.

Table 2. Employee average nominal monthly wage (EUR) in Public Administration and Defence sector: compulsory social security

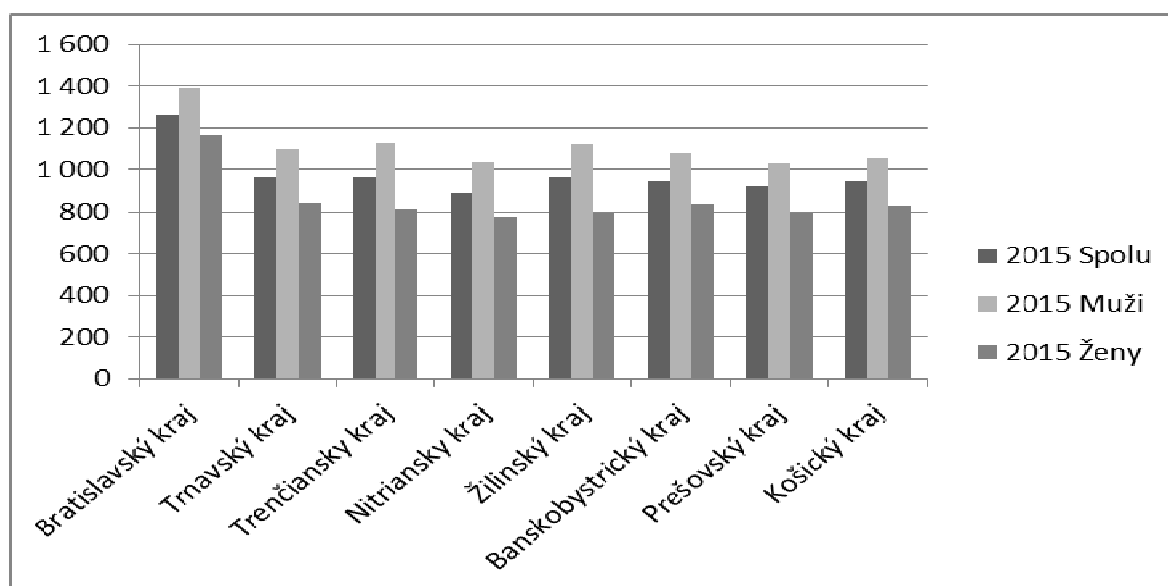
Regions	2015		
	Total (EUR)	Men (EUR)	Women (EUR)
Bratislava region	1,262	1,391	1,167
Trnava region	964	1,097	847
Trenčín region	959	1,127	814
Nitra region	890	1,032	775
Žilina region	963	1,121	795
Banská Bystrica region	940	1,081	836
Prešov region	916	1,026	794
Košice region	940	1,052	835

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on the data from the SO SR

Based on the data from the Slovak Statistical Office, average monthly wages grew in 2015 for both men and women in comparison to 2010. It follows

from Table 2 that the average monthly wages of men grew above EUR 1,000 in all 8 Slovak regions whereas that of women only in the Bratislava region.

Graph 2. Employee average nominal monthly wage (EUR) in Public Administration and Defence sector: compulsory social security



Source: Authors' own elaboration based on the data from the SO SR

It follows from Graph 2 that the average monthly wage of men grew to EUR 1,000 in the following regions: Nitra region (growth by 0.50%), Prešov

region (growth by 0.58%) and Košice region ((growth by 0.64%).

Table 3. Employee average nominal monthly wage (EUR) in Public Administration and Defence sector: compulsory social security

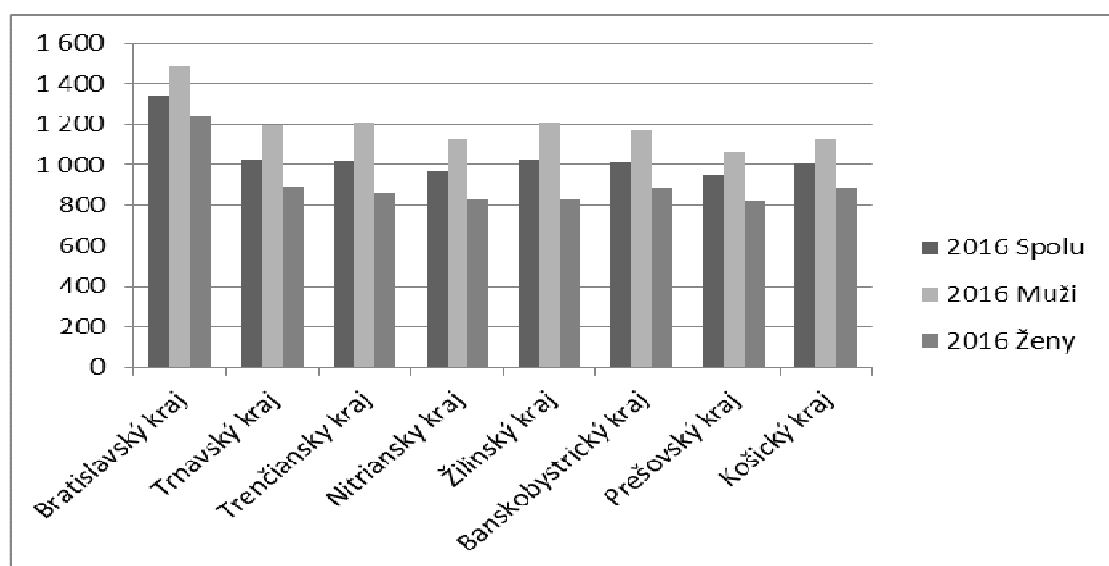
Regions	2016		
	Total (EUR)	Men (EUR)	Women (EUR)
Bratislava region	1,345	1,492	1,240
Trnava region	1,029	1,192	892
Trenčín region	1,015	1,206	860
Nitra region	966	1,127	835
Žilina region	1,025	1,207	831
Banská Bystrica region	1,008	1,172	888
Prešov region	947	1,067	825
Košice region	1,005	1,126	887

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on the data from the SO SR

As seen from Table 3, the employee average monthly wages grew also in 2016. The average monthly wages of men grew above EUR 1,000 in all 8 Slovak regions whereas that of women only in the

Bratislava region. The highest wages were recorded in the Bratislava region and the lowest wages were recorded in the Prešov and Nitra regions.

Graph 3. Employee average nominal monthly wage (EUR) in Public Administration and Defence sector: compulsory social security



Source: Authors' own elaboration based on the data from the SO SR

Graph 3 shows that the average monthly wages of men grew by 1.01% in the Bratislava region. The wages in the Bratislava region was the highest of all eight Slovak regions for both men and women. The average monthly wages of women grew by 0.73%.

The lowest wages for men was recorded in the Nitra region, Prešov region and Košice region. The lowest wages for women was recorded in the Prešov Region, Žilina Region and Nitra Region.

Table 4. Comparison of employee wages in the Public Administration and Defence sector: compulsory social security in %

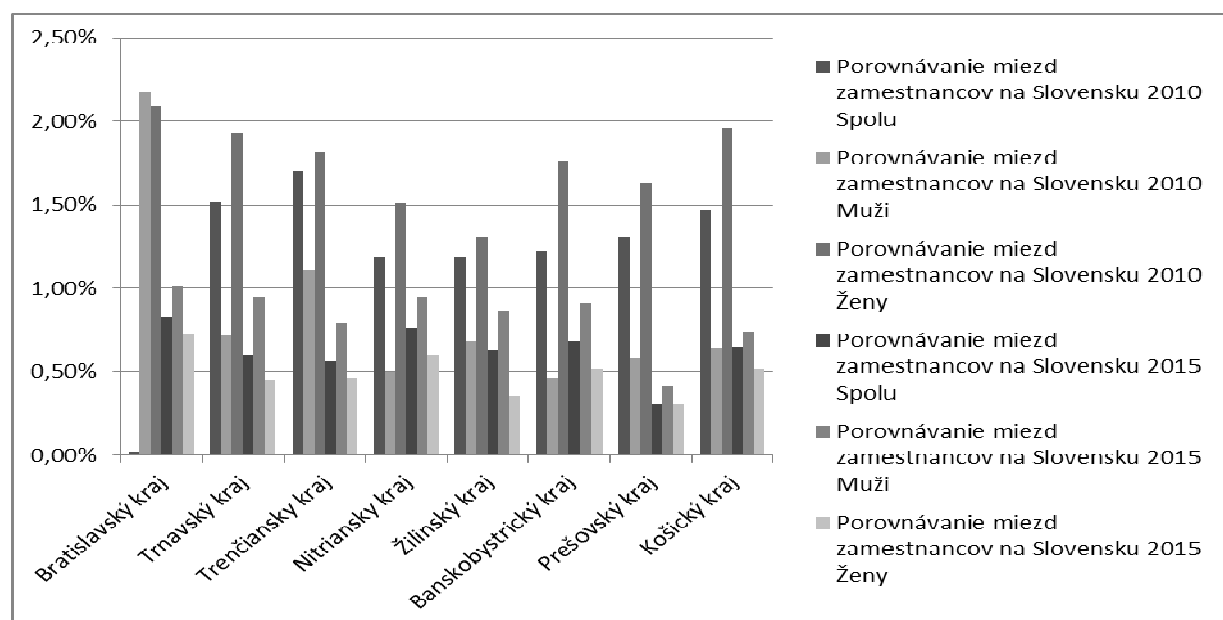
Regions	Comparison of employee wages in Slovakia					
	2010			2015		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Bratislava region	0.02%	2.17%	2.09%	0.83%	1.01%	0.73%
Trnava region	1.52%	0.72%	1.93%	0.60%	0.95%	0.45%
Trenčín region	1.70%	1.11%	1.82%	0.56%	0.79%	0.46%
Nitra region	1.19%	0.50%	1.51%	0.76%	0.95%	0.60%
Žilina region	1.19%	0.68%	1.31%	0.63%	0.86%	0.36%
Banská Bystrica region	1.22%	0.46%	1.76%	0.68%	0.91%	0.52%
Prešov region	1.30%	0.58%	1.63%	0.31%	0.41%	0.31%
Košice region	1.47%	0.64%	1.96%	0.65%	0.74%	0.52%

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on the data from the SO SR

In 2009, the first negative effects of the economic crisis and recession could be observed. It was a period of time when, among other effects, the wages stopped growing in Slovakia. From 2010 to 2015, the average wages grew by 2% - 3%. In 2010, the average wages grew highest in the Bratislava region – average wages of men grew by 2.17% and that of women by 2.09%.

The lowest wages growth of men was recorded in the Banská Bystrica region (by 0.46%) and that of women in the Žilina region (by 1.31%). In 2015, the lowest wages growth of men by 0.41% and women by 0.31% was recorded in the Prešov region. Graph 4 compares employee wages in 2010 and 2015.

Graph 4. Comparison of employee wages in the Public Administration and Defence sector: compulsory social security in %



Source: Authors' own elaboration based on the data from the SO SR

Graph 4 illustrates the comparison of wages between 2010 and 2015. All figures are expressed in %.

Conclusion

There have been many changes, including redundancies, in the public administration recently. In case of redundancies, those left behind get an increased workload which makes them work long hours and feel frustrated. This all leads to employee dissatisfaction. One of the dimensions of work satisfaction are personality characteristics that let employees adapt to the increased demands resulting from changes. There are sound assumptions for believing that stable, innate personality traits predispose people to higher or lower job satisfaction in public administration. In general, public servants have better working conditions than other categories of employees. In most EU countries, public administration careers are considered to be more secure and more attractive than careers in private companies. Public administration careers are nine-to-five jobs with flexitime arrangements offering better training opportunities funded by public administration institutions, higher and stable wages, job security, and so on. It was found that the average monthly wages of public servants rose above EUR 1,000 especially in

the Bratislava region since 2015. Based on the theoretical and practical knowledge, however, motivation should be supported in any organization. Employees are ready to improve their performance especially when their work is appreciated and recognized.

It is crucial for superiors to be able to motivate their subordinates, which requires the knowledge on the process of motivation. Superiors need to know what motivates people, what their needs, interests, values and aspirations are. Extrinsic and intrinsic motivators vary from one individual to another, but generally all employees want to work in growing businesses, want to be fairly compensated and want to have the potential for professional and career development. There are, however, differences between public and private sectors. Unlike the private sector, public servants are not motivated by performance as they are paid according to their respective salary grades. Thus, work motivation in the public sector should be encouraged through the governmental revision of the salary grade system in light of measurable goals set.

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