

THE EVOLUTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE AND THE PRINCIPLES BY WHICH IT IS GOVERNED

Taking care of patients in hospital, replying to the demands of individuals or of businesses in a town hall, a prefecture or a distant consulate, teaching in a primary school or in a university, collecting taxes, taking part in operations to maintain public order, drafting a decree or an order: this list reflects only part of the sheer range of civil service missions.

Like the rest of society, the civil service is facing profound change. The need for the domains in which it is involved, for its principles of organisation and operation to evolve, are political stakes of primary importance. These evolutions will have to meet the expectations of society in terms of quality of service provided and of the ability to adapt.

The Prime Minister referred to the Economic, Social and Environmental Council (ESEC) the matter of conducting forward-looking discussions with a view to identifying future options for the civil service.

The first part of the opinion highlights the relevance of the founding principles of the civil service and their strength with regard to what is currently at stake and the expectations that are foreseeable with regard to public action. The ESEC underlines that the civil service, with regard to its statutory organisation and its three branches, is able to make a defining contribution to public policy taking into account the general interest of society, on the condition that meaning and coherence be given to its action.

The principles of equality, independence, responsibility and of statutory employment of civil servants appear to be of such a nature that they provide indispensable guarantees, in a society that is increasingly complex, fractured and individualistic. Giving them up would open the door to a degradation in the meaning of the civil service and the trust it must inspire.

Numbers of people working in the civil service in 2014: 5.448 million civil servants, including:
2.393 million for the State,
1.895 million for local government and
1.161 million for hospitals.

After two months of hearings and concertation, the ESEC which brings together the main elements of civic society, has built its recommendations around three leading ideas:

- carrying out fundamental work on its missions. The choices that will be made as a result shall be taken into account in determining the means required to carry them out;
- validating the founding principles of the civil service, including the statutory principle;
- encouraging the adaptation of the civil service to suit society's expectations (social needs, digital transformation, demand for proximity, simplification, reactivity, etc.).

The ESEC underlines that these transformations require a dynamic and innovative human resources policy, sound social dialogue and civic concertation. Innovative initiatives taken within the civil



Nicole Verdier Naves

at the ESEC, she sits on the Section of Economic Activity where she represents the group of qualified individuals.

Contact:

nicole.verdier-naves@lecese.fr
+33 (0)1-44-43-62-42



Michel Badré

at the ESEC, he sits on the Section for the Environment and on the Delegation for Long-Range Planning and Evaluation of Public Policies where he represents the environment and nature group.

Contact:

michel.badre@lecese.fr
+33 (0)1-44-43-62-42

service must be supported and amplified. These evolutions carry with them transformations and recognition.

The ESEC has identified four themes of a roadmap to make the civil service evolve in accordance with society's expectations.

A DEFINITION OF CIVIL SERVICE MISSIONS

- Giving long-term consideration to the context, what is at stake, foreseeable evolutions
- Defining sound methodological principles
- Co-building reflection on missions within the framework of national and territorial conferences
- Providing stable and coherent policy guidelines, that are assessed periodically

AN AMBITIOUS APPROACH WITH REGARD TO HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY

- Accountable and supported management
- More open recruitment practices particularly to reflect society's diversity, and respectful of the principle of equality between women and men (managers' pool, active certification policy, etc.)
- Facilitated mobility
- Reinforced initial and continued training
- Better management of the employment of contractual workers

SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND CIVIC CONCERTATION, ADAPTATION AND INNOVATION FACTORS

- Internal social dialogue suited to the specificities of civil service and to the evolution of territorial policies
- Paying attention to the quality of life at work
- Civic concertation to take society's expectations into account

A MOVEMENT OF INNOVATION

- Supporting and planning for the effects of the digital and technological revolution: sharing of data, "big data", digital fracture, regulations, etc.
- Preserving the relationship with users
- Encouraging and promoting innovation in departments, innovation that will bring with it transformation and recognition

The civil service is not specific to France. In countries like Germany, Austria or Spain, the majority of civil servants are governed by a unilateral statutory set of regulations.

With 18.3% of the working population employed in public service, in 2013, France was below the average among OECD countries (19.4%).