

DEVELOPMENT OF CAREER SYSTEM OF CIVIL SERVICE: THE LITHUANIAN CASE

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Abstract

Career development is inseparable part of the system of human resource management of any civil service. Forming a new conception of the Lithuanian civil service it is necessary to pay more systemic attention to career development as the means of strengthening managerial potential in the service. Many theoretical conceptions were produced and much of empirical material was collected in respect to separate components and processes of career development systems: on one hand about individual career development, having a long history and rich theoretical base, and on the other – human resource development, a relatively young field of study, which is still creating and renewing its theoretical base. However it has to be stressed that quite big gap is still noticeable between these areas of scientific study, therefore they are often considered to be separate and not generating both of them uniting theoretical and research ideas.

The authors looking for the solutions of the mentioned practical and theoretical problems are considering the main principles of functioning of effective career development system and on the basis of that construct the model of career development system for the civil service integrating individual and organizational levels. Systemic analysis of theoretical conceptions, comparative analysis and the best career development practices analysis in public and private organizations were used as the methods modelling the career development system. To ground theoretical assumptions the authors of the article are also presenting the data from pilot study (survey).

Key words: human resource management, civil service, career development system.

Classification JEL: M12 – Personnel Management

1. Introduction

The times when public sector organizations could select the brightest and the best employees without any bigger efforts, when the employees were working led by just patriotism and moral duty are long past and are unlikely to return. However, in spite of the fact that the competition for human resources now is evidently more intensive, up till now the main accent of the reforms in the Lithuanian public sector has been restructuring of the organizations of public sector making the assumption that having good and clear structures it will remain just the formality to fill them with proper people.

Nowadays it is much discussed and argued that Lithuania has to seek for bigger competitiveness in the world, however strategic and systemic approach to the civil servants whose first duty is to help to create the environment benevolent for increase of competitiveness is evidently lacking. The question remains unsolved in respect to what human resources management (HRM) measures could foster the most capable people to stay in the civil service even if they are getting quite solid suggestions of employment form the organizations of other sectors.

The motivated and talented employee, working in the system of civil service, despite the changes of ruling parties, can reasonably expect clear and long term strategy towards his or her career, that having demonstrated exceptional performance results, having proved the abilities to create value for the citizens or clients, the system of the civil service would undertake to assure the space for work and permanent development. This *clear and long term strategy* is first of all expressed through contemporary practice of HRM – career development, applied and investigated in many foreign countries successfully modernizing their public sectors' HRM.

Career development is inseparable part of the system of HRM of any civil service. Currently the issues of career development are particularly relevant for the Lithuanian civil service, which new conception is now under intensive discussion. Formally the Lithuanian civil servants have a right to make vertical, horizontal or even international career (The Lithuanian Republic law on Civil service, 1999). However we have to admit that legal acts, which now are in force, are more declarative and poorly related to the results of empirical investigations of career development and theoretical achievements of this area. In practice we encounter the situation where not enough attention is paid to how legal regulation of the Lithuanian career development system influences the civil servants, wishing to make career, and generally HRM in the civil service.

Thus we would suppose that *creating new conception* of the Lithuanian civil service it is necessary to pay more systemic attention towards career development. The relevance of these questions is recognized by OECD emphasizing the importance of systemic approach to career guidance in the context of life-long learning and assuring social equity (OECD a, 2004).

In the HRM science career is defined as the sequence of the person's work related experiences in one or several organizations (Baruch, 2004; Greenhaus and Callanan, 2006). Thus according to the contemporary sense career comprises not just vertical promotion to higher posts, but also any change of posts, responsibilities and the related learning seeking to acquire various meaningful work experiences. Currently it is almost unanimously recognized that career is owned by the individual, but the organizations via their career development systems can also actively participate in the employees' career development (Baruch, 2004).

Any social organization is always a system where career can be made in principle. However not all the organizations have formalized career development systems which support the individuals who want to implement their career aspirations. Usually career development system provides the main principles, which regulate the careers the employees, it reflects the dynamic aspects of HRM and includes and integrates the majority of HRM processes. Well-designed career systems provide an opportunity for organisations to upraise to the highest levels of management hierarchy the people who are able to generate, create and implement new ideas helping the organisation to adapt to rapidly changing environment. Career development systems applied to the potential managers and the top management team of the organizations has the biggest influence on the organizations (Higgins and Dillon, 2007).

Analyzing research and theory relating to career development systems, it is important to note that much of empirical material was collected and many theoretical conceptions were produced in respect to separate components and processes of the system. One stream of research and theory was individual career development, having a long history and rich theoretical base, and the other – human resource development (HRD), a relatively young field of study, which is still creating and refining its theoretical base. Current career development theory focuses largely on the individual, while the field of HRD is mostly concentrated on the organization or large systems (Upton, 2006). Therefore many scholars of these areas (Savickas, 2001; Upton, 2006; Patton, McMahon, 2006) see the opportunity for convergence of individual career development and HRD theory and research. This approach would provide a chance for HRM professionals to address the goals important to both employees and organizations.

Thus, generalizing **it can be stated that:**

- career development issues are practically important for the reform of the Lithuanian civil service HRM;
- systemic career development issues are relevant on the level of theory;
- career development systems' research is relatively new phenomenon, currently more attention is paid to the investigation of separate components and processes of the systems, but not to the career development system as the whole;

- the existing theoretical conceptions on career development and HRD enables to discern the context of career development and two levels of career development – individual (micro) and organizational (macro);
- each identified level enables to purposefully discern three dimensions of career development: assumptions, processes and outcomes;
- even though some components of career systems are universal and not depending on the sector (public or private), the models of career development system for civil service, considering its the specific nature and environment, including managerial, political, legal, and historical variables are missing in the scientific literature.

Thus, taking into consideration the above stated, the article aims to identify the main contextual factors affecting changes of career development system of the civil service, components of the system at the individual and the organizational levels in the dimensions of assumptions, processes and outcomes, and their interaction, introducing the descriptive model of career development system applied for the Lithuanian civil service.

Systemic analysis of theoretical conceptions, comparative analysis and the best career development practices analysis in public and private organizations were used as methods modelling the career development system. To ground theoretical assumptions the authors of the article are also presenting the data from pilot study, in which 75 respondents were surveyed electronically: 59 of them were employees of various organisations and 16 were top managers of the organisations. To form the research sample, non-random selection method was selected, therefore, it cannot be validly stated that the opinion expressed by the surveyed reflect the opinion of all employees or managers. However, the data of our research are interesting qualitatively because they reveal certain tendencies of career development processes in the Lithuanian organisations.

2. Context of formation of new approach to career development

Modelling career development system for the civil service it is necessary to identify and analyze the most important contextual factors and changes in the context, which could have direct or indirect influence on the structure and processes of the system. The concrete contextual variables, which are identified, depend on the purpose of the research. According to our analysis, modelling career system of the civil service it is purposeful to identify not just political and legal contexts, but first of all *historical and managerial contexts* and the related changes in work and career conception. Namely these contexts are the most influential in respect to career development system of the civil service.

Historically, the bases for career making in civil services of various countries were changing. The earliest systems of administration (before 19 century) shared one important characteristic: they were „personal”, i.e. success of career depended on loyalty to a particular individual such as a king or a minister, instead of being „impersonal”, based on legality and loyalty to the organization and the state. It was very common for those aspiring to employment by the state to resort to patronage or nepotism, relying on friends or relatives for employment, or even by purchasing offices (posts) (Hughes, 2003).

In mid-nineteenth century in the USA and Western Europe the system separating political and administrative powers was started to be formed. Consequentially political and administrative careers were separated. These processes were related to the works of Woodrow Wilson in the United States and Max Weber in Europe. M.Weber formulated the theory of bureaucracy, the idea of a distinct, professional civil service, recruited and appointed by merit, politically neutral, which would remain in office throughout changes in government (Hughes, 2003).

Till the end of 20 century in the former Soviet Union and in the majority of the Eastern European countries the bureaucratic structures and bureaucratic career development systems

prevailed. However due to their political and economic nature they were extremely distorted. This situation much influenced the concept of career and career development in Lithuania. Official career were important as assuring access to various privileges and other values, which were not available for those who were not making career. Possibilities for career were limited and related to dependence and loyalty to the ruling party. Therefore it was not rare case that the career makers were people who at the best of their education and competency could perform just the functions of administrative supervision. It can be supposed that quite short historical period has passed for cardinal changes in thinking of the society and it is very likely that some old career making traditions are still very viable and hardly changeable, which in some ways prevents the reforms in the civil service career development system.

In the ninth decade of the last century majority of democratic countries of the world turned towards other direction reforming their systems of civil service. Due to changes related to globalization and more intensive use of communication and information technologies, the purpose and functions of public organizations were changing. Due to practical application of various novelties of management and HRM, employment relations were changing: new flexible work organization forms were spreading (Reardon, 2000). As the work is considered to be the **essential element of career**, the conception of career and its making principles were changing. Seeking for productivity in the public sector, stressed by new public management paradigm, new career development systems appeared, which related career possibilities to clearly defined and measurable merits, taking into consideration abilities to demonstrate excellent work results, competency and ability to create value.

As it can be noticeable, new historical period and changes in management created the assumptions for new conception the individual career and its nature. In this context M.B.Arthur and D.M.Rousseau (1996) are using the concept of „boundaryless career”, M.Peiperl and Y.Baruch (1997) are speaking about „post-corporate career”, D. H. Pink (2001) states that contemporary career deserves the title of „Lego career”, meaning that employees have to construct and reconstruct their careers from separate parts. The parts could be needs, abilities, possibilities, contracts and etc.

It is understandable that this new approach to career „acquires full rights” just after certain period of time in the public sector (Gražulis et al., 2009). The affect of the mentioned changes in public sector is mediated by its legal and political nature and environment, due to which HRM in this sector is not always based on the grounds of the most effective managerial practices.

As the practice shows, the decisions relating to civil service, including career decisions, are subject to involvement of various interested persons (influence groups), democratic political clearance procedures, and their implementation may also be subject to political involvement of a kind seldom witnessed in commercial companies. Any HRM decisions are related to the requirement that appointed and promoted officials represented the will of the public and the officials appointed to the post via participation in political activity. The most important aspect in this case is to **legitimize these processes** and to provide for appropriate procedures, using which the politicians could influence career related decisions not destroying career possibilities of talented civil servants.

Modelling the career system of the civil service it is necessary to assess the influence of legal variables. It is important to note that even raising the requirement for the civil service to demonstrate the highest effectiveness, constitutional relations between citizens and the state are considered as being above the relations between civil service, as employer, and the same citizens, as employees. In such a case the main focus of attention are rights and liberties of civil servants, honest and unbiased HRM procedures. The state protecting public interest in the sphere of employment relations has no other choice than being the best example of employer, which abides to all legal norms, and due to the same reason is not being maximally flexible. As the result HRM efficiency can not be claimed to be the main value.

Thus, in spite of political and legal limitations of managerial freedom of civil service, the productivity will remain the main requirement for the civil service. Therefore career development system, which could support and help to implement this requirement providing the necessary human potential, must be improved taking into consideration all historical, managerial, political and legal context.

3. Individual level factors of career system

The individual is considered to be the main subsystem of organizational career development system. Therefore identification of individual related factors and the analysis of individual's approach to career provide a solid background for modelling of career development system.

The research carried out by us enables to name concrete reasons for career making, which are relevant for the employees (Figure 1). The dominating answer of the employees and managers in respect to this question is that career making is related to the material rewards (32% and 31%, correspondingly). Every fourth employee distinguishes the wish for development (24%), and every fourth manager distinguishes seeking to implement one's own aims (25%). Similarly, the opinion of employees (15%) and managers (10%) is distributed that the reason for making a career is moral satisfaction. Power acquisition through career is named by 9% of employees and 6% managers.



Figure 1: Reasons for career making, %

Source: own study

Theoretically analyzing the individual related career development factors we encounter wide theoretical base and variety of concepts, which were systematized by J. L. Swanson and C. D'Archiardi (2005). These scholars state that all individual factors could be classified into three categories: contents, process and outcomes of career development. Having applied this classification for modelling of the civil service career development system, we identify the following individual level career development system factors assigned to each of the mentioned categories as shown in Table 1.

Personal career conception is considered to be the basis of individual level career factors. It could be defined as general attitudes to career and its making principles held by the person, which can help or hinder to make career, in spite of the factual conditions provided for career in the organization. Personal career conception much influence the individual's career aspirations expressed in certain contexts. Career aspirations are understood as the desire and intention to pursue a role or a particular position within organization or wider system. Aspirations play an important role in career decisions because they reflect the goals and intentions that influence individuals toward a particular course of action (Greenhaus and Callanan, 2006).

Table 1: Individual level factors of career development

Contents factors/assumptions	Process factors	Outcome factors
Career conception: thoughts and beliefs about career; Career aspirations; Values/needs; Interests; Competencies.	Constructing of work identity and career.	Satisfaction with career; Subjective well-being; Work engagement; Work commitment; Employability.

Source: own study

Thus, individual entering the civil service is bringing not just personal career conception, but also certain career aspirations, which are also based on the individual values/needs, interests and competencies. The latter contents factors due to relatively bigger attention of scholars working in the area of career development sometimes are also called „big three factors” (Swanson and D’Archiardi, 2005).

Majority of authors (Greenhaus and Callanan, 2006) recognize that values represent beliefs about desired aims to be achieved, ideals to be upheld, or courses of action to be chosen rather than thoughts, feelings, or behaviours to be expressed or satisfied. While needs denote wants that activate or energize individual movement (Greenhaus and Callanan, 2006).

Modelling career system of civil service we have to raise the question of peculiarity of values and motivation in public service. Contemporary researches of public service motivation enabled to identify four dimensions: attraction to public policy making, commitment to the public interest and civic duty, compassion and self sacrifice (Perry, 1996). On the basis of these dimensions, it is possible to describe the public service motivation as giving priority to internal (related to the task performance), rather than external rewards (Perry, 1996).

Interests, other individual content factor, have also deserved much of the attention of scholars, who are including them in the models of individual level career development. This concept reveals the areas, which are spontaneously interesting for the individual. It most nearly approximates actual behaviours. J. Holland (1997), the main and till now most influential investigator of human interests, considers them to be the most important personality factor, determining or having to determine career choices.

Competencies, defined as individual characteristics enabling him/her to successfully perform some purposeful work activity, is the last of the three individual contents factors, which can be most easily influenced or modified by the individual’s conscious efforts, actively forming the whole of his/her competencies, also known as the portfolio of competencies. Beside professional and generic competencies, individual career management competencies are of particular importance in this context. They represent the abilities to plan, coordinate, implement and control individual working and learning experiences.

Thus, individual contents factors function as certain career development assumptions influencing individual career development processes related to how the person is making career decisions permanently constructing his/her work identity and individual career in the context of his/her life seeking to optimize the relationship between his/her developing personality and changing environmental characteristics (Savickas, 2002). The person is not just an actor performing work roles assigned to him/her by the society or organization. It is very important to stress the concept „constructing” by which it is meant that career can not be considered programmed genetically or socially or to be the product of maturation of any inner structures. Therefore it can be concluded the person and his/her environment are forming each other creating the possibilities, which did not exist before the interaction (Ibarra, 2003).

Individual process factors reflect the **dynamic aspect of career development** and the efforts of individual to make sense of his/her career, and to achieve the career development purposes relevant for the person. Finally analyzing individual career development factors it is necessary to pay attention to individual outcome factors, comprising all the results of career development important for the individual (Swanson and D'Archiardi, 2005).

The first and the most general outcome of individual level career development is satisfaction with career, which consequently influences subjective well-being (Schimmack, 2008). On the other hand the system of civil service is more interested in other two outcomes of individual level career development processes: work engagement, defined as a positive, fulfilling work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption, and work commitment - a psychological state that characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization and that has implications for decisions to continue or discontinue membership in the organization. Highly committed employees are more likely to retain their jobs in the long run; they also show a high level of job satisfaction, quality of work, and job performance (Robertson et al., 2003).

However it must be stressed here, that satisfaction with career is not a static or one time event. Satisfaction with career is closely related to one more possible individual outcome of career development – employability, which is defined as the whole of competencies of the individual enabling to adjust to changing labour market requirements. It has already been started to be recognized in the European Union the importance of employability development: instead of directly protecting the citizens from social risks, the role of the state is becoming to provide support for the individual's efforts to constantly remain competitive in the labour market (Jacobsson, 2003). The organizations not being able to suggest security and long term employment relations, can suggest the possibilities of employability development providing such work and learning tasks and experiences, which currently and in some period of time would be useful for organization and the employees seeking to retain their competitiveness and demand in labour market. Thus, it is clear that employability must be considered one of the main purposes of individual career development and the organization, wanting the maximum input from the employees, is made to **essentially support them** filling their competencies portfolios.

Generalizing we have to conclude that in spite of importance of individual related career development factors, their substantial influence and relation to organizational career development, HRM scholars' attention to this question currently is evidently insufficient. We propose that individual career development factors should be integrated into career development system model, taking into consideration their specific expression in the civil service.

4. Organizational level factors of career system

Organizational level of career system comprises all the efforts and means of the organization applied for the purpose of employees' career development. Every person selecting the organisation is using the criteria which seem rational to him or her. According to the surveyed employees their essential criteria are salary (78%) and career possibilities (58%), less important is the possibility to use personal capabilities (51%), and the least important – recommendations of others (16%) – Figure 2.

According to the managers, the employees are selecting the organisation first taking into consideration the possibility to use personal capabilities and salary (both 69%), less important criterion for the employees (according to the managers) is career possibilities (32%), and the least important – recommendations of others (13%).

As it was noticed in the research both in the answers of employees and managers the factor of salary dominates. To our opinion, this could be related to the fact that in Lithuania like in other Eastern European countries basic unsatisfied needs are prevailing in the structure of the needs of employees. Our research also indicate that the material criterion is important not for all

the surveyed. Career possibilities and possibilities to use personal capabilities are also mentioned.

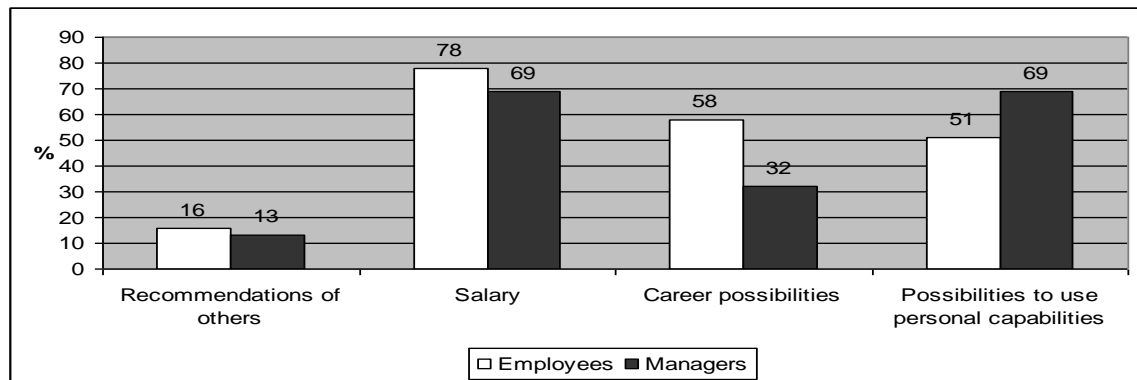


Figure 2: The main criteria of the choice of organisation, %

Source: own study

However, in spite of the fact that the employees selecting the organisation are paying sufficiently much attention to career possibilities, very evident is the fact that the wish to make a career is not dominating in the list of organizational criteria for employees' selection (Figure 3).

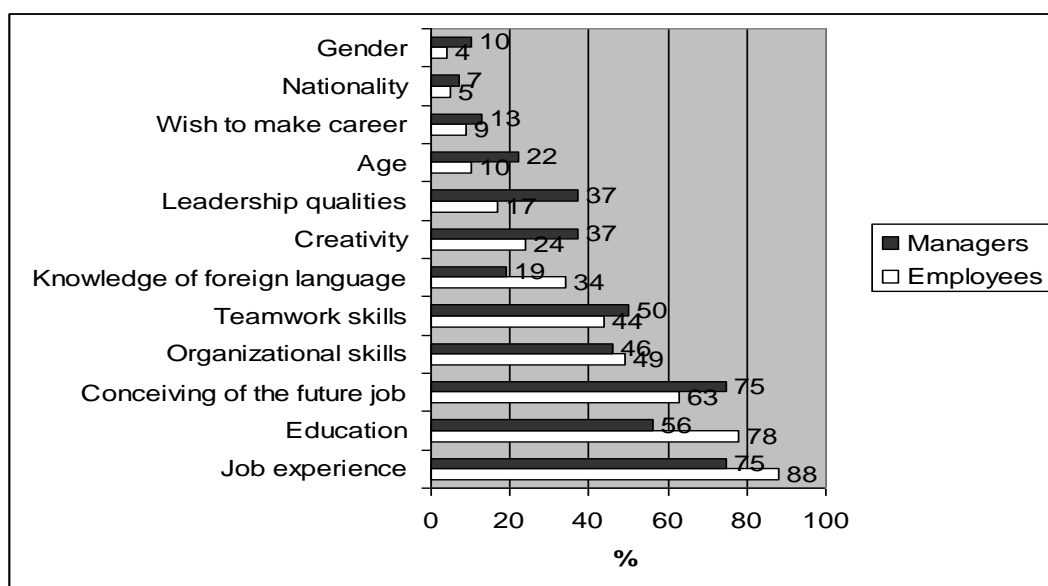


Figure 3: Employees' selection criteria, %

Source: own study

Pursuant to the opinion of employees, managers selecting a new employee according to a priority are paying the most attention to job experience, education, conceiving of the future job, and organisational skills. Slightly less attention is paid to teamwork skills, foreign language knowledge, creativity, and leadership qualities. The least attention is paid to an age, wish to make career, nationality and gender (Figure 3). In comparison to employees, managers while selecting a new employee are paying less attention to job experience, education, organisational skills criteria. However, greater attention is paid to conceiving of the new job. The managers in comparison to employees are stressing teamwork skills, creativity, and leadership qualities criteria.

It is evident from the data of the research that both for the surveyed managers and for the employees the career criterion is not taking an important place (just 13% and 9%, correspondingly). Thus, according to the opinion of managers and employees, „the wish to make career” is not considered to be a sufficiently important selection criteria. Having returned to the contemporary career conception, it is evident that career is namely the sequence of work and learning related experiences, and according to our research they are considered to be the most important selecting the organization (according to the employees) and selecting the employees (according to the managers). Thus the data of the research clearly demonstrate that the organizations are more interested in the past career experiences of potential employees, i.e. work and learning experiences, which they bring to the organization. However future career could be considered to be the common project of the organization and the employee, which is to be implemented in the nearest future.

Majority world-wide research in the area of organizational career development is carried out in private organizations, where the best practices of career development are analysed. However public sector has also accumulated much of practical experience in organizational career development, especially in the countries quickly implementing public sector reforms and actualizing the principles of new public management – Canada, Australia, New Zealand.

Modelling career system of the civil service it is necessary to take into consideration the prevailing model of the service. J. H. Meyer-Sahling and V. Nakrošis state that the Lithuanian civil service uses the integrated (mixed) model of civil service composed of the features distinctive for posts and career models (2009). However the scholars recognize that the characteristics of career civil service model are prevailing and compose 71 % of the model used in practice (Meyer-Sahling and Nakrošis, 2009). This essentially reflects the situation distinctive for the majority countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Loegreid and Wise, 2007). Career model of the civil service is considered to be more closed and less benevolent for the individuals who currently are working outside the civil service. On the world scale it is possible to encounter various models and their combinations, however one tendency is clear in this respect: the systems of civil services of the countries intensively and successfully reforming their public sectors are becoming more open for the careers of all capable and talented employees at all levels of hierarchy, even if they are coming from other sectors (OECD b, 2004).

Thus, taking into consideration the above mentioned and analyzing organizational level career system factors we identify the same dimensions of assumptions, processes and outcomes at this level, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Organizational level factors of career development

Assumptions	Processes	Outcomes
Adjusting of public sector policy formation and implementation with HRM policy; Recognition of strategic importance of career development in HRM; Proper preparation of public sector for career development; The united and integrate career space; Fair criteria and procedures for moving within career space; Differentiated approach to career opportunities provided to employees.	Application of generic HRM and special career development practices and tools: coordination (harmonization) of work and learning experiences with the career plans of civil servants; Involvement of the interested parties and responsibility sharing.	Productivity; Increased possibilities to compete for human resources; Spread of democratic HRM practices.

Source: own study

We attribute the **following factors** to the assumptions of organizational level of career development:

- The necessity to adjust the public sector policy formation and implementation with HRM policy and recognition of strategic importance of career development in HRM. None of political attitude or strategy in public sector can be implemented if they are not grounded by proper human resources. Human resources are becoming the biggest competitive advantage in the contemporary world full of permanent changes (Gražulis, 2008; Boxall, Purcell, 2008);
- Organizational career development is inseparable form reforms taking place in the civil service, especially in the area of HRM. In order to implement effective career system it is necessary to introduce contract based employment systems, performance management systems, competency based HRM, orientation not towards processes or functions, but towards the result at all the levels of management, to provide more benevolent conditions for leadership. Otherwise the suggested principles of career development will not function;
- The united and integrated career space (structure of career paths comprising all the organizations and positions where the civil servants are working) with indicated work roles, relations among them, competencies and other requirements. Career space plays the role of career possibilities for the employees, where they can plan work and learning experiences meaningful for them. The advantage of civil service in the sense of career space is that it as a system is relatively wide therefore sufficiently many and various career opportunities can be designed including vertical, horizontal, international and mixed career paths.
- Fair criteria and procedures for moving within career space. The conditions for inner competition for the most attractive work roles must be assured. Any movements within the career space must be based on merits – proved input into the results of the organization, possession of competencies or potential for development. The main problem of career systems of the civil service in this respect is that career is often made not on the basis of merits, depending on performance and real achievements, but on the basis of political acquaintances or formally required documents, which confirm participation in learning activities, but having nothing to do with real challenges met by the concrete employee.
- Differentiated approach to employees' career possibilities. Though it is recognized that certain career possibilities have to be provided for all employees, however majority of organizations are differentiating their human resources into categories, to which different HRM practices are applied (Harley et al., 2001, In: Boxall, Purcell, 2008). Organizations devote special attention to present and potential leaders' and talents' careers. Namely value and uniqueness of the employees must determine the employment relations suggested by the organization and consequently the career opportunities (Slay, Taylor, 2007). Differentiated approach to HRM in civil service is represented by the institution of senior civil service established in many governments of the developed democracies of the world.

Identification of the main assumptions of organizational career development provides the grounds for the analysis of the whole of concrete actions, which organization can take in the area of career development. Thus, we identify the **following components** in the dimension of the processes:

- Application of generic HRM and special career development practices and tools: coordination (harmonization) of work and learning experiences with the career plans of civil servants. Among the most important organizational career development techniques

are the following: succession planning, job rotation, terms of offices, talent pools, career acceleration pools. The most important aspect is that career development should be integrated into HRM processes, stressing that individual developing as the performer of certain work role, must have the right to develop him/herself in parallel in the areas, which he/she considers important for his/her personal career.

- Involving of the interested parties and responsibility sharing for employees' career development. Taking into consideration new career conception the civil servants must be considered playing the main role in their career development processes and bearing the biggest responsibility. However the organization, its HRM department and the management (heads of institutions), must be actively involved in providing adequate support and feedback in the process of individual's career planning and implementing of the plans. Insufficient preparation of the management to participate in the change processes can become one of the hindrances of career development of employees in the Lithuanian organizations, including civil service organizations (Gražulis et al., 2008).

Thus, having defined and implemented the main career development processes, it is likely to expect to get the **positive outcomes** of organizational career development, which include:

- Increase in productivity as the most general purpose of civil service related to better usage of human potential and higher compliance of civil service HRM policy and practice with the contemporary realities of management and HRM. Well functioning career development system could bring and retain human resources of better quality into management of civil service and as a consequence better quality decisions could be expected (Fitz-Enz, 2002);
- Increased possibilities to compete for the best human resources in the labour market. From the strategic perspective, organizational career development is not merely a tool for enhancing employees' capabilities and performance; it is also a powerful attraction and retention mechanism.
- Use for the society. The structure of career possibilities in the society, expressed via career possibilities in the civil service, is influencing the democratic processes of the society. Due to certain peculiarities of career systems prevailing in a concrete society, it can be more or less democratic, effective or competitive in comparison to other societies. Therefore it can be concluded that effective and fair career system forwards spread of democratic HRM practices and democracy in general.

Thus, generalizing it could be stated that organizational career development aspects cover wide spectrum of assumptions, processes and results. Civil service organizations taking into consideration the specifics of their activities and their needs, have a chance to apply various career development means and instrument, which are functioning as components and processes of career development system producing relevant results at the level of the civil service as a system.

5. Conclusions: model of career development system for the civil service

Individual (micro), organizational (macro) and interaction levels are distinguished in the introduced model of career development system for the civil service (Figure 4). **Three dimensions** are identified at these levels: career development assumptions, processes and outcomes.

In the assumptions' dimension of the model it is stressed that career development is started at the phase of entrance, when the civil service as the system, taking into consideration its strategic purposes, predicts the demand of human resources, their attraction and retaining strategies. Career development possibilities are considered to be one of such contemporary and integrated HRM strategies providing competitive advantages for the system. Thus, the civil

service through the selection mechanisms is evaluating and foreseeing not just momentary value of the future civil servants, fitting them just to certain posts, but also their long term potential and value, which could be created if these people choose to make career in the system. It is obviously very important to pay attention not just to the competencies of the candidates, but especially to their personal values and motivation. The experience evidently demonstrate that there are many capable individuals in each society, however not all of them are suitable for civil service because of their motivational and values' structure. Having selected the best ones they can be suggested the united and integrated career space of the civil service, with indicated work roles, relations among them, competencies and other requirements.

In the same dimension of assumptions it is clearly recognized that not just civil service as the system evaluates the potential candidate, but also the potential candidate evaluates the system seeking to establish to how much having employment relations and making career in the system would be useful for him/her. For the individual it is important to predict, how much the suggested career could forward the development of his/her competencies portfolio and employability, how much he/she could fulfil the main values, needs and interests.

If it happens to reach agreement at the level of assumptions, career development processes are starting in the system. The individual's construction of personal career in the context of his/her life seeking for meaningful life experience is very important here. Creating working identity individual plans his/her career in wide career space of civil service, using various accessible support mechanisms. Thus, the career initiative undoubtedly belongs namely to the civil servant, but not to the civil service system, which purpose is to support or encourage this initiative. This can only be achieved though help in career planning and coordinating (harmonizing) of work and learning experiences in the service with the career plans of civil servants, providing real possibilities of development not just in the areas which at the moment are relevant for the civil service system, but also in the areas, which are important in his/her individual career plan. This can be achieved through application of generic HRM and special career development practices and tools.

In the dimension of career development outcomes at the individual level the most important is satisfaction with career, depending on person's career success criteria. Employability is no less important as it potentially can assure long term satisfaction with career. For the system of the civil service at this level the most important outcomes are considered to be work engagement and commitment, enabling the individual to demonstrate better and long term performance and results.

At the organizational level increase in productivity, better possibilities to compete for human resources and use for society in spreading democratic HRM practices are considered to be the most relevant outcomes. If positive results are achieved at the levels of individual and organization, new assumptions for further cooperation towards the direction useful and meaningful for the both parties are created.

Thus, having analyzed, evaluated and integrated the contemporary career development conceptions and the best practices, we have introduced the descriptive model of career development system for the civil service. We propose the model to be used by legislators and all the involved parties, forming new conception of the Lithuanian civil service, improving legal basis of HRM and career development in the civil service, also by the professionals of civil service department, top managers and professionals of HRM departments of separate institutions, seeking to optimize career development in their organizations, and by the scholars, carrying out the researches in the area of career development and career development systems in public, private and non-profit organizations.

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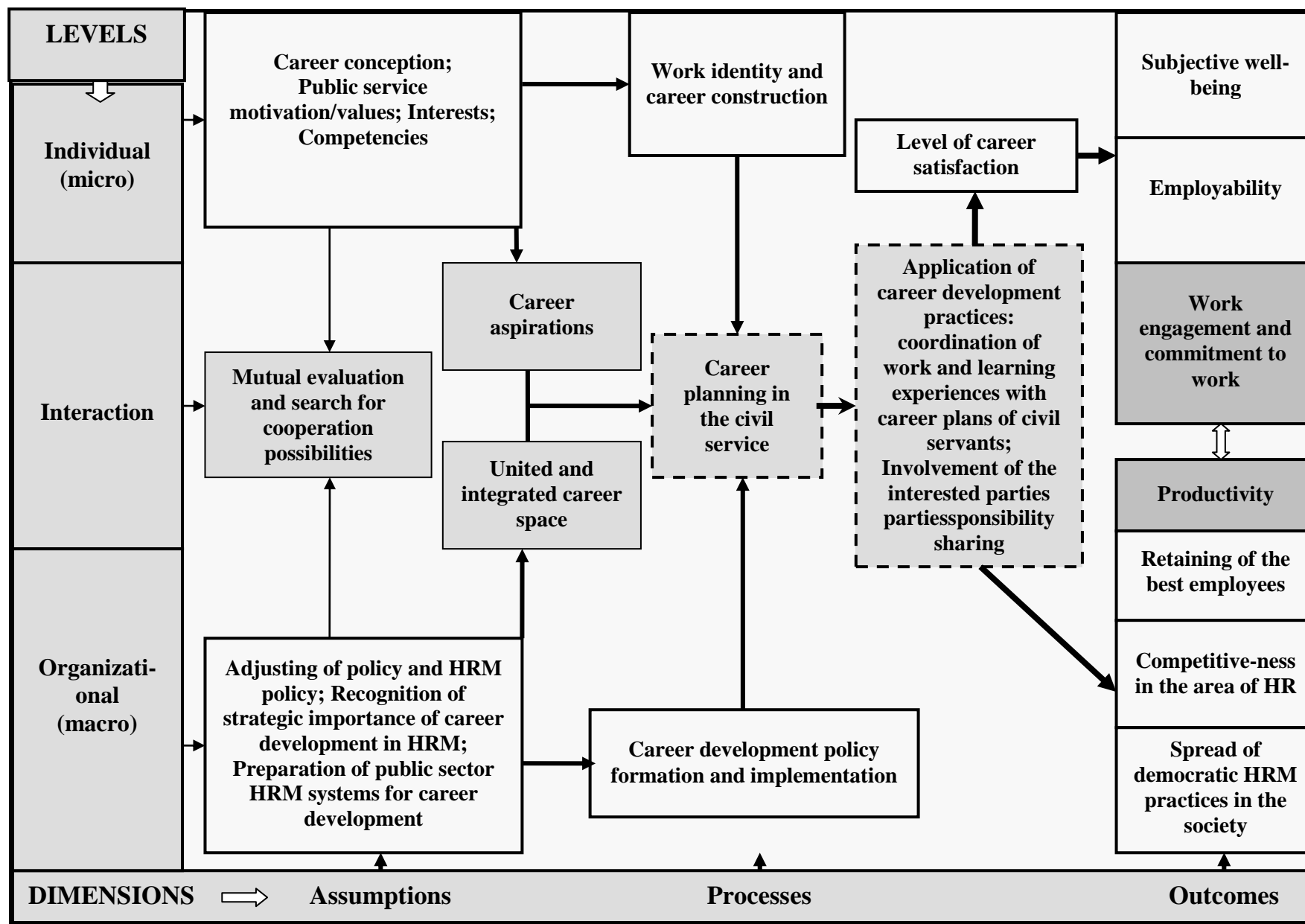


Figure 4: Model of the civil service career development system: levels, dimensions and interaction
 Source: own study

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