

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN TODAY'S DYNAMIC ENVIRONMENT – DEFINITIONS, FEATURES AND TRENDS –

Lecturer Nehridzhan Arif MEHMED, PhD

*“Georgi Benkovski” Air Force Academy,
Dolna Mitropolija, Bulgaria*

DOI: 10.55535/RMT.2024.4.21

The article shares some essential aspects related to the recruitment and selection of human resources in today's dynamic environment. Definitions of their essence are given and the main steps in recruitment and selection of human resources are highlighted. An attempt was made to examine the activities related to recruitment and selection of personnel in both business and military organizations. Some trends and perspectives in this direction are indicated. Emphasis is placed on the strategic role of recruitment and selection of suitable personnel in business organizations. Given the dynamics in the modern environment, some weaknesses in the recruitment and selection of human resources in business organizations are indicated and ideas for their improvement are proposed.

Keywords: human resources; recruitment; management; selection; business organizations;

INTRODUCTION

The changes that have occurred in recent years in the modern environment provoke an increase in the role of activities related to human resources management and, more specifically, recruitment and selection of human resources. They become a strategic tool with a number of opportunities provided to all sectors, especially the military and business units, to achieve good business results.

The dynamics in the modern socio-economic conditions reinforces the discrepancy between the possessed knowledge, skills and attitudes of human resources and the growing requirements for the performance of labour activities. It brings to the fore the strategic role of recruitment and selection activities, especially for business and military organizations, which are considered in the present study.

The management of human resources and the activities of recruitment and selection of human resources in business organizations as well as in military ones attract the interest of a number of Bulgarian and foreign authors and researchers. In business practice, increasing attention is paid to the effective provision of suitable personnel. It requires clarifying the nature of human resource recruitment and selection activities. In the increasingly complex and dynamic environment, business organizations have an ever-increasing need for recruitment and selection of human resources able to achieve effective results.

With regard to highlighting the weaknesses in the implementation of the activities related to the recruitment and selection of suitable personnel, the business organizations from the sectors “*Transportation and storage*” and “*Hotels and restaurants*” are examined.

The main goal is to reveal the essential aspects of recruitment and selection of human resources, to highlight some features, trends and perspectives in this direction, to reveal some advantages and weaknesses of activities related to recruitment and selection of human resources in the sector “*Transportation and storage*” and in sector “*Hotels and restaurants*”, and to present ideas for their improvement.

There are several reasons to choose the sector “*Transportation and storage*” and in sector “*Hotels and restaurants*”. On the one hand, organizations in the sectors face challenges related to the dynamics of the modern business environment, as a result of which they find it difficult to secure suitable personnel for the sector.

On the other hand, the shortage of well-prepared personnel in sector “*Transportation and storage*” and in sector “*Hotels and restaurants*” requires attention to be paid to the activities related to the recruitment and selection of human resources.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF HUMAN RESOURCES – ESSENTIAL ASPECTS

In today's conditions, the drive to provide suitable personnel in business organizations from various sectors of the economy is distinctive. With the dynamics in the business environment, the importance and role of activities related to the recruitment and selection of human resources for business organizations are growing. It gives rise to the interest of a number of authors and researchers in revealing the essential aspects of the recruitment and selection of human resources in a number of definitions presented in various scientific developments.

In this regard, Michael Armstrong believes that recruitment is the process of finding and hiring the people the organization needs. Selection is that part of the recruitment process concerned with deciding the applicants or candidates that should be appointed to jobs. Recruitment can be costly (Armstrong, 2014). The author's definition is presented relatively fully. It assumes that human resource selection is a part of the human resource recruitment process.

Yosif Iliev and Kaloyan Dimitrov define the activity of recruiting human resources as a natural step in the effective management of human resources. According to the authors, the recruitment activity is followed by a long process of selection of human resources in the business organization (Iliev, 2014).

Another perspective argues that human resource management (HRM) can be considered in both civilian and military organizations as a set of activities and responsibilities related to personnel and aimed at the optimal deployment of employees to contribute to the performance of the organization. In this regard, HRM includes activities such as recruiting, selecting, hiring, training, remuneration, fringe benefits, assessment and development, and outflow or dismissal of employees, as well as the welfare and health of subordinates (Boselie, 2014; Dessler, 2021; cited in: Tessa op den Buijs, 2023, p. 2). The activities related to recruitment and selection of human resources stand out as the first.

Shopov, Evgeniev, Kamenov, Atanasova and Bliznakov point out that the management of human resource is a continuous and purposeful process that starts with the attraction and selection of the most suitable people for the respective positions and jobs (Shopov, 2015). An idea is formed that recruitment and selection of human resources are activities in which a certain sequence of actions is observed

to achieve the set goals, according to the established standards of work in the business organization.

The views of the authors Shopov, Evgeniev, Kamenov, Atanasova and Bliznakov on the issue of human resources selection are interesting. The authors believe that selection and placement can generally be defined as the process of attracting the right candidates for a certain position, assessing their qualities from the point of view of the position, the unit and the business organization as a whole, deciding who to make job offer and appointing the selected persons (Ib.). The definition thus presented is wide-ranging as it also refers to the appointment of the selected candidates to the respective posts and jobs.

According to David A. De Cenzo, Susan L. Verhulst, Stephen P. Robbins, the human dimension of organizational management, including acquiring employees, developing their skills, motivating them to higher levels of performance, and ensuring that they continue to maintain their commitment to the organization is essential to the achievement of organizational goals. It applies regardless of the type of organization – government, business, education, healthcare, recreation or other social activity (De Cenzo, 2016). In this sense, the acquisition of human resources is aimed at achieving the goals of the business organization.

According to Gary Dessler, recruitment and selection start with workforce planning and forecasting. Workforce planning is the process of deciding what positions the firm will have to fill, and how to fill them. It often starts by forecasting personnel needs, perhaps using trend analysis, ratio analysis, scatter plots, or computerized software packages. A significant moment is forecasting the supply of inside candidates. Forecasting the supply of outside candidates is important too, particularly when unemployment is low and good candidates are more difficult to come by (Dessler, 2017, p. 157).

It is necessary to make the distinction that the recruitment of human resources is an activity that provides an opportunity to acquire the number and quality of people necessary to ensure the continuity of the workflow in the organization and the achievement of the organizational goals (Iliev, 2021). In contrast to the recruitment of human resources, the selection of human resources is defined as the activity of choosing a suitable candidate who corresponds to the greatest extent to the requirements of the job (Ib.).

Considering the mentioned definitions of recruitment and selection of human resources and taking into account the significant moments in them, according to us, recruitment of human resources is generally a process of attracting the most suitable people to the relevant positions and jobs in a business organization,

while selection is a continuous and purposeful process of selecting and appointing human resources, according to their qualities, knowledge and skills, in accordance with current and future needs of the workplace, in the structural unit and in the business organization.

In the modern business environment, the effective recruitment and selection of human resources cannot be achieved only on the basis of a good knowledge of their nature. It is necessary to highlight the main steps (elements) in their implementation.

In this regard, despite the fact that there is a difference in the definition of the two concepts (recruitment of human resources and selection of human resources), several steps in their application stand out. As far as they are concerned, these steps are presented in *table 1*.

Table 1: The stages of recruitment and selection (Armstrong, 2014)

No	The stages of recruitment and selection
.1	Defining requirements
.2	Attracting candidates
.3	Sifting applications
.4	Interviewing
.5	Testing
.6	Assessing candidates
.7	Obtaining references
.8	Checking applications
.9	Offering employment
.10	Following up

Undoubtedly the first activity is defining requirements. Requirements are set out in the form of role profiles and person specifications. These provide the information required to post vacancies on the company's website or the internet, draft advertisements, brief agencies or recruitment consultants and assess candidates by means of interviews and selection tests (Armstrong, 2014).

The second step is attracting candidates. In this case the following steps are required when planning how to attract candidates: analyse recruitment strengths and weaknesses to develop an employee value proposition and employer brand; analyse the requirement to establish what sort of person is needed; identify potential sources of candidates (Ib.).

The next step is dealing with applications – if recruitment agencies or consultants are used, they will deliver their client a shortlist of candidates for interview. If not, the organization has to sift the applications itself. This means examining the information supplied by applicants, sorting them and drawing up a shortlist of applicants to be interviewed (Ib.).

A very significant step are the selection methods – the aim of selection is to assess the suitability of candidates by predicting the extent to which they will be able to carry out a role successfully – interviewing, testing (Ib.).

The following activity deserves attention – provisional offers and obtaining references. The main purpose of a reference is to obtain in confidence factual information about a prospective employee (Ib.).

As the next steps stand out – checking applications, offering employment (the final stage in the selection procedure is to confirm the offer of employment after satisfactory references have been obtained, and the applicant has passed the medical examination required for pension and life assurance purposes or because a certain standard of physical fitness is required for the work. The contract of employment should also be prepared at this stage), following up (it is essential to follow up newly engaged employees to ensure that they have settled in and to check on how well they are doing; following up is also important as a means of checking on the selection procedure) and dealing with recruitment problems (Ib.).

Gary Dessler believes that the job analysis identifies the duties and human requirements of each of the company's jobs. The next step is to decide which of these jobs one needs to fill, and to recruit select employees for them. According to the author, the recruiting and selecting process can be envisioned as a series of hurdles (*figure 1*), (Dessler, 2017, p. 128).

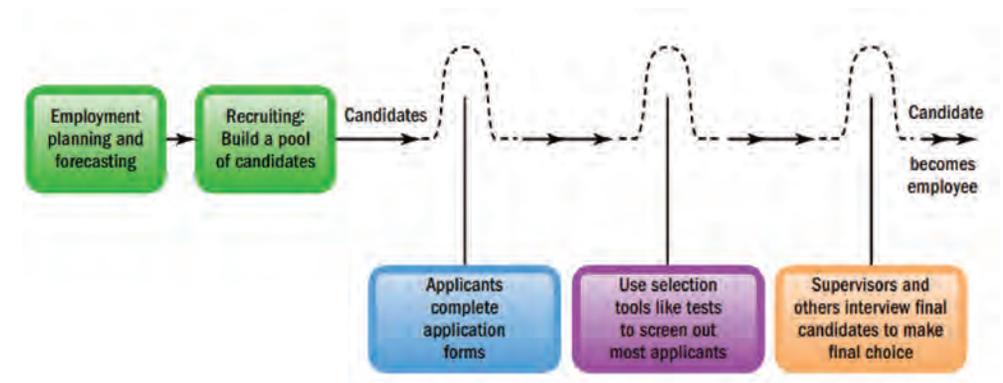


Figure 1: Steps in Recruitment and Selection Process (Ib.)

It is noteworthy that, as a first step in deciding what positions to take, emphasis is placed on planning and forecasting. An essential point of the author's proposal is building a pool of candidates for these jobs, by recruiting internally or externally candidates and having candidates' complete application forms and perhaps undergo initial screening interviews. The final steps in recruitment and selection of human resources include the use of selection tools like tests, background investigations, and physical exams to screen candidates and decide to whom to make an offer, by having the supervisor and perhaps others interview the candidates (Ib.).

Based on the literature review, it can be summarized that:

- In the economic literature, there are definitions of a number of authors for the activities of recruitment and selection of human resources. They emphasize certain aspects of these concepts (recruitment and selection of human resources) that are significant for the activity of the business organization.
- The opinions of authors regarding the steps (elements) of recruitment and selection of human resources are presented. The activities in these elements are interconnected and it is imperative that they continuously adapt to changes in the modern environment.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN TODAY'S DYNAMIC ENVIRONMENT – TRENDS

Regarding the national practice, some elements related to the recruitment and selection of human resources are presented. In this regard, the number of employees under labour contract in business organizations, which, according to the Classifier of economic activities 2008 (KID 2008), are included in sector "Transportation and storage" and in sector "Hotels and restaurants" is presented. For the purposes of this report the period from 2018-2023 is covered.

For the researched period (2018-2023), business organizations in the country with economic activity in the sector "Transportation and storage" report a change in the number of employees labour contract. It is noteworthy that their number decreased significantly in the second half of the period 2018-2023 (figure 2).

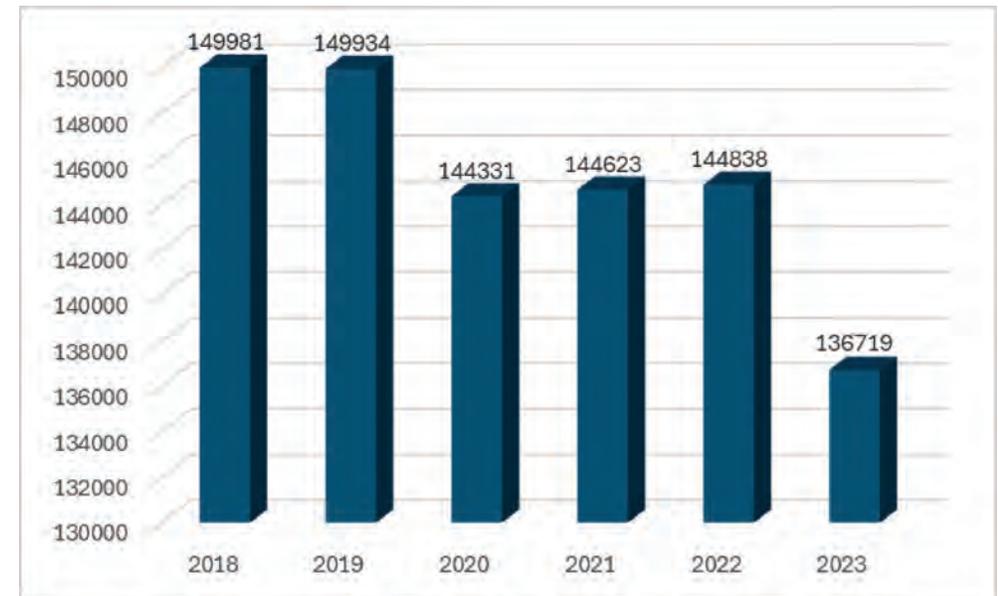


Figure 2: Average number of employees under labour contract in the "Transport and storage" sector for the period 2018-2023

(Adapted from the National Institute of Statistics (BG), 2024, Preliminary data for 2023)

Figure 2 shows that for 2023, compared to 2018, there is a decrease in the number of employees under labour contract in the considered sector – with a negative growth rate (0.09%). For the period under review, the largest decrease in the number of employees under a permanent employment contract in the sector was in 2020 – a negative change of 0.04% was observed compared to 2018 (National Institute of Statistics, 2023 – own calculations based on NIS data).

For the research period (2018-2023), a similar dynamic in the number of employees under labour contract is also observed in the sector "Hotels and restaurants" (figure 3).

Figure 3 shows that the number of people employed under labour contract in the sector is decreasing. For 2023, compared to 2018, the change is 0.22%. It is noteworthy that at the end of the same period (in 2023) there is a positive trend in the number of employees compared to 2020 – a positive growth rate (0.04%) stands out (National Institute of Statistics, 2023 – own calculations based on NIS data). The change in the number of employees in the sector is weak.

It means that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic that occurred in 2019 is significant, due to which problems arise related to the preservation and procurement of human resources in business organizations from both sectors. The consequences reflect on the human resource management system in the business organizations

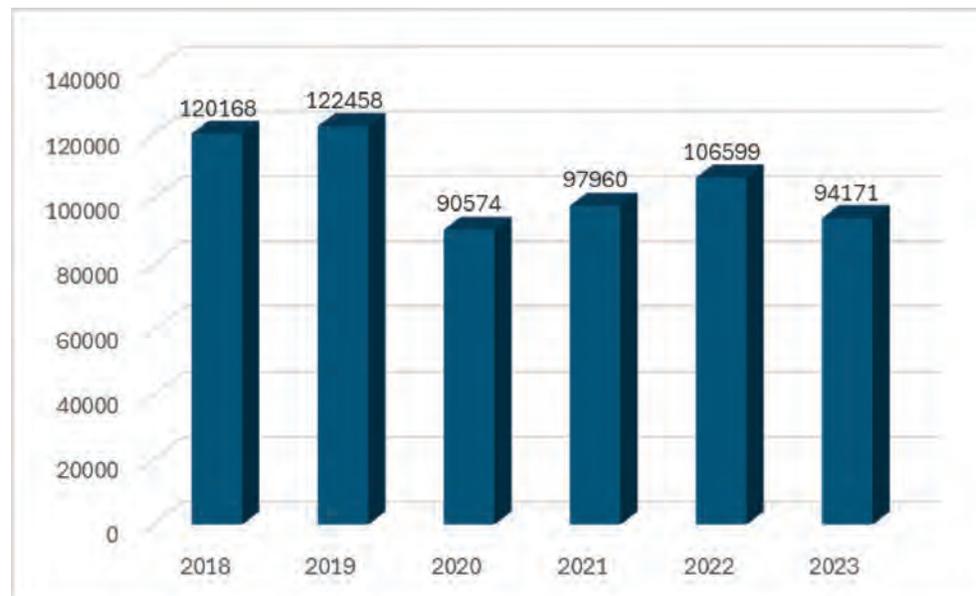


Figure 3: Average number of employees under labour contract in the "Hotels and restaurants" sector for the period 2018-2023

(Adapted from the National Institute of Statistics (BG), 2024, Preliminary data for 2023)

of the sectors and more specifically on their policy for the necessary personnel at work.

For the selected period in Bulgaria, the total costs of employers for labour in the "Transportation and storage" sector and in the "Hotels and restaurants" sector are characterized by significant changes. For example, in the third quarter of 2023 compared to the third quarter of 2022, the total costs of employers for one hour worked by their employees increased by 15.1% (according to preliminary data). Among the economic sectors with the highest recorded growth in total labour costs are "Hotel and restaurant industry" – by 18.8%, and "Transport, warehousing and post" – by 17.4% (National Institute of Statistics, 2024).

On the one hand, the variable demand for the services provided in the specified sectors, caused by the pandemic and its consequences, directs the efforts of the managers of business organizations to follow strategies to improve the quality of the activities performed. Such efforts are accompanied by meeting the needs of professionally trained personnel. On the other hand, the recovery of the considered sectors of the economy after the pandemic leads to a new environment of cooperation, investment, information, innovation, adaptability.

As for HRM practices in the military, they are fundamental to promoting an effective and efficient organization. The military invests heavily in recruiting

and selecting potential candidates, training and development, management of performance, the compensation process and benefits, as well as working atmosphere and employee relations. These practices help ensure that personnel are ready for their jobs, can perform at a high level, and remain motivated and engaged (op den Buijs, 2023, p. 16).

In recent years, important trends relevant for the field of HRM are further IT developments and digitalization, environmental or climate changes, and labour market trends to which organizations have to adapt. For example, there is an increasing attention to sustainable HRM (Müller, 2018; op den Buijs, 2023) and green HRM (O'Donohue, 2016; op den Buijs, 2023). These trends also lead to new directions in HRM (op den Buijs, 2023, pp. 4-5).

They direct employee development so they can perform their jobs with dedication and efficacy, be motivated, and experience job satisfaction. Ideally, both employer and employee are satisfied and know what they gain from each other (Boselie 2014; op den Buijs, 2023).

In most organizations, HRM departments and HR specialists support the line managers. These specialists assist in recruiting, hiring, training, evaluating, and promoting and rewarding personnel, as well as employee safety and health at all levels, among other things. Today, there are many trends that require HR specialists to take a more strategically important role in organizations. All kinds of influences from the environment are causing HRM to change. These influences include technological change, increasing workforce diversity, a new generation of young people and their motivation, the labour market, globalization, and economic influences (op den Buijs, 2023).

In this regard, the need for recruitment and selection of suitable human resources is increasing. It gives rise to the need to study the activities of recruitment and selection of human resources. For their effective implementation, it is necessary for the heads of business organizations to pay attention to the elements of the activities of recruitment and selection of human resources, to highlight the advantages and disadvantages and to look for ways to improve them.

It can be summarized that:

Firstly, on the state of human resources in the "Transportation and storage" sector and in the "Hotels and restaurants" sector:

- The number of persons employed under a permanent employment contract in the "Transport, warehousing and post" sector for the period 2018-2023 has decreased. There is a tendency, although weakly expressed, towards an increase in the number of people employed in the sector. The reasons for the reduction are a reflection of the pandemic and its consequences.

- A similar dynamic in the number of persons employed under a permanent employment contract in the “Hotels and restaurants” sector is observed for the considered period 2018-2023. At the end of the considered period, an increase in their number is observed.

Secondly, total labour costs for both sectors have increased.

Thirdly, the factors of the modern dynamic environment that have an impact on the activities related to the recruitment and selection of human resources, in business organizations, are very diverse, but through their observance and successful reporting, the set goals can be met. It is also necessary to respond in a timely manner to the challenges that have arisen in relation to the recruitment and selection of suitable personnel, namely application of various methods and means for recruitment and selection of suitable human resources.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPROVING HUMAN RESOURCES RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION ACTIVITIES

After the conclusions and summaries for the recruitment and selection of human resources in the business organizations in the “Transportation and storage” sector and in the “Hotels and restaurants” sector, some advantages and weaknesses of these processes are highlighted. Eliminating weaknesses and increasing strengths allows increasing the efficiency of recruitment and selection of human resources. Opportunities to improve recruitment and selection of human resources should be considered in the following sequence:

- Revealing the prerequisites for improving the activities related to the recruitment and selection of human resources in the “Transportation and storage” sector and in the “Hotels and restaurants” sector. They are related to the requirements of the European organizations, as well as the national organization, the peculiarities and requirements of the labour market at the local level, the legal framework of the country, the dynamics of the technical and technological state, the availability of investments, the growth of commodity markets etc.
- With the continuous development of technical progress and changing market conditions, it is expected that the right candidates can be attracted and selected. In this regard, a wider application of flexible methods of recruitment and selection of human resources and implementation of more effective and continuous feedback on the achieved results are necessary.

CONCLUSIONS

In the modern economic reality, the role of recruitment and selection of human resources in business organizations as well as in military ones, both locally and internationally, is significant. This is due to the built strategies that organizations follow. Similar characteristics stand out for business units operating in the “Transportation and storage” sector and in the “Hotels and restaurants” sector.

In this regard, some essential aspects of recruitment and selection of human resources have been studied and defined in a theoretical aspect, a definition has been derived and the main steps in recruitment and selection of human resources have been highlighted. A study of the trends in the average number of employed persons, labour costs in business organizations from the two analysed sectors. Opinions are shared on some perspectives regarding the activities related to the recruitment and selection of suitable personnel, and some features of the same activities. For this purpose, statistics, reports, publications related to human resources management have been used. The results of the conducted theoretical studies give reason to summarize that the effectively implemented activities of recruitment and selection of human resources provide suitable personnel, helping to overcome risky situations and achieve significant success in modern business conditions.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

1. Armstrong M., Taylor S. (2014). *Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice*. 13th edition. London.
2. Boselie, P. (2014). *Strategic human resource management. A balanced approach*. London: McGraw-Hill Education.
3. DeCenzo, D.A., Robbins, S.P., Verhulst, S. (2016). *Fundamentals of human resource management*. 12th edition. USA.
4. Dessler, G. (2017). *Human Resource Management Practice*, 15th Edition.
5. Iliev J. (2014). *Управление на човешките ресурси*. София: ИК – УНСС; (2014). *Human resource management*. Sofia: IC – UNSS.
6. Iliev, Y., Dimitrov, K. (2021). *Управление на човешките ресурси*. София; (2012). *Human resource management*. Sofia.
7. Müller, M., Kiel, D., & Voigt, K. I. (2018). *What drives the implementation of industry 4.0? The role of opportunities and challenges in the context of sustainability*. *Sustainability*, pp. 10, 247.
8. National Institute of Statistics of Bulgaria (BG), 2024.
9. op den Buijs, T., Olsthoorn, P. (2023). *Human Resource Management for Military Organizations: Challenges and Trends*, Netherlands.
10. O'Donohue, W., & Torugsa, N. A. (2016). *The moderating effect of 'green' HRM on the association between proactive environmental management and financial performance in small firms*. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, pp. 27, 239–261.
11. Shopov D., Atanasova, M. (2015). *Управление на човешките ресурси*. София: Тракия-М; (2015). *Human resource management*. Sofia: Trakia-M.