

The Civil Service System in Taiwan

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Taiwanese Civil Service Workforce

	1995	2012
• total personnel (persons)	440,366	343,861
• male : female (%)	69 % : 31%	60% : 40%
• average age (years)	39.5	43.4
• college degree or higher (%)	57.5 %	85.3 %
• central : local government (%)	55.0 % : 45.0 %	54.6% :45.4 %

Social Status of Civil Servants

- Before entering the 21st century, civil service was credited for Taiwan's outstanding economic performance.
- In the past decade, Taiwanese civil service has degenerated into bureaucratic passivity, and gradually reduced their initiative-taking in policy making.
- Civil service positions are still attractive to young people, but it does not enjoy as much power or receive as much respect from citizens as previously.

Why Bureaucratic Capacity Declined?

- 1) International economic uncertainties and fast-changing globalized world;
- 2) Taiwan's democratization process over the past two decades;
 - Demanding citizens, aggressive legislators, and a nosy mass media jointly transformed the once-insulated bureaucratic organization into a transparent fish tank.

Public Personnel Authority

- Dual supervision – Both the Examination Yuan and the Directorate-General of Personnel Administration (DGPA) of the Executive Yuan are in charge of making and implementing personnel policy.



Public Personnel Authority

- Dual supervision ;
- Centralized management system –
The central government exercises its top-down control through the appointment of all personnel managers in local jurisdictions.

Recruiting & Selection

- Those who want to serve as civil servants must pass a civil service exam and be assigned to a public organization based on exam scores and preferences.
- The independent Examination Yuan is responsible for administering all civil service exams, which are perceived as fair and impartial.

Criticism on Selection

- Low test validities; e.g. most civil service exams employ written tests only.
- The senior-ranked positions are not open to individual outside the civil service.

Training and Development

- providing more systemized training programs, focusing more on senior-ranked officials;
- an emphasis on global vision and international connection;
- including more societal resources to form public-private partnership in training.

Pay and Pensions

- The government pays significantly more for elementary-ranked civil servants than the private sector, but not so for junior- and senior-ranked employees.
- Lucrative retirement pension scheme.
(Under the proposed pension reform, the income-replacement ratio will be limited to no more than 80%.)

Performance Appraisal System

- Civil servants should be rated into grades A, B, C or D. If rated D, he/she is to be dismissed from the civil service.
- The current system sets an upper limit for the % of personnel who can receive grade A in each organization.
- Supervisors not only lack incentives to evaluate employees in accordance with their real job performance, also avoiding giving C or D.

Proposed Reforms & Challenges

- Improve the recruiting and selection process by enhancing test validities;
- Amend the Civil Service Performance Evaluation Act by setting a mandatory ratio of Grade C;
- Reform the public service pension system by raising the retirement age, increasing public servants' contribution to the pension fund, and reducing pension payments.
- To reform civil service, the Executive Yuan and the Examination Yuan need the support of the Legislative Yuan.
