Executive summary

The importance of HRM for achieving better quality, more responsive and efficient public services is well recognized by the Dominican government. The public administration's HRM reform strategy is crucially integrated into broader public service reforms which are in turn rooted in the country's national development plan. This gives the reforms a strong political impetus which remains critical to their successful implementation.

The central pillar of ongoing HRM reforms in the Dominican Republic is the creation of the career public service, supported by merit-based recruitment, employment processes and performance-oriented HRM practices. There is now a sound legislative framework in place for public service employment, and strategic HRM practices are being developed that will facilitate rightsizing and reallocation of the workforce. The new job classification system, a common pay structure and competency based job profiles all offer potential opportunities to develop flexibility in workforce management, create a more cohesive career service and foster mobility. A competency management system is under construction and will be a major asset for building the capacity of the workforce and embedding public sector values.

To support improvements in public services, a comprehensive performance management system, comprising an integrated organisational and individual performance framework, is being developed. Systematic and consistent evaluation and reporting is aided by online tools which have increased transparency and accountability.

The greatest challenge now facing the Dominican Republic in their efforts to modernise and professionalise their civil service is to maintain reform momentum and effectively transform plans into reality. This report identifies a number of key institutional, organisational, performance and regulatory bottlenecks that can hinder the capacity to successfully implement public sector reforms and limit the benefits that can be realised from improvements in public employment and strategic HRM.

Institutional fragmentation in the Dominican Republic hampers the efficient allocation of the workforce, undermines strategic HRM and makes it difficult to control employee numbers and costs. It could usefully address institutional fragmentation, duplication and proliferation by reconsidering the structure of the public administration and the relationships between entities. This would lead to a more coherent, accountable, transparent and cost-efficient administration, capable of implementing whole of government reforms in a more timely and effective manner.

The management of leadership is identified as a gap in the Dominican Republic's reform strategy. Sustaining public service reforms will require new leadership and management competencies, new forms of engagement between senior managers and political leaders, and a more corporate and whole-of-government leadership culture. Measures to strengthen leadership and management are lacking in the government's

reform strategy. Areas where an increased focus would yield dividends include more rigorous selection processes, a leadership competency profile, performance objectives that include cross-cutting corporate leadership responsibilities and leadership and management development.

Another area that has received little attention is workforce planning. Despite the government's initiatives to control payroll costs, public employment has continued to grow rapidly in recent years. Even allowing for the need to build capacity in order to improve public services, this tendency needs to be closely controlled and monitored to ensure that increases in employee numbers are affordable, well planned and focused strategically to deliver improvements in the quantity and/or quality of services.

To overcome these and other challenges, the Dominican Republic's reform agenda will require continual reinforcement, sustained leadership commitment from political and administrative levels, and a practical and pragmatic approach to reform sequencing. Drawing on the experience of OECD member countries, this report outlines key recommendations and considerations with a focus on strengthening and sustaining the reforms and their momentum over the short, medium and long term.

Underlying these recommendations are not a vision of "more State", but "better State", focusing on what the state does best and on building trust and sustainable economic growth, supported by solid co-ordination mechanisms and an efficient regulatory framework. Improving the accountability, efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility of public administration requires a whole-of-government approach to government activities, producing an integrated, systematic, incremental, sustained and visible path of change.

Taking a whole-of-government perspective would be a major advantage for managing the size and allocation of the public workforce and avoiding unplanned long-term growth in payroll costs. In the immediate future, undertaking a strategic staffing review would enable the government to establish a baseline for decisions about the reallocation and restructuring of the workforce and could encourage organizations to identify ways of delivering better services within budgetary constraints.

Further measures are recommended to reinforce efforts to expand and institutionalize merit-based recruitment and promotion, such as using accountability frameworks to ensure that ministers and senior managers are held accountable for the implementation of merit focused reforms in the institutions for which they are responsible.

The consolidation of the career public service would be helped by integrating a competency-based HRM framework which could improve the recruitment process, training and development, and performance management. Such a framework can help to identify critical skill gaps in the workforce and build capacity to meet the government's objectives relating to quality management, innovation and tangible results across the public service.

Recommendations also focus on ensuring the HRM framework for the career public service is designed to be a core driver of performance. Designing jobs and job classification structures in ways that open up career structures, as well as increasing opportunities for on-the-job learning and mobility, can contribute to a culture of performance, motivation and diversity. A job classification system that allows for both horizontal and vertical mobility and flexible organization of work has the potential to make a significant contribution to the Dominican Republic's efforts to strengthen performance and innovation.

Finally the experience of OECD countries who have undertaken coherent HRM reforms such as those described throughout this report stress the need for patience, commitment and a strategic approach to incremental sequencing. Outcomes such as building a performance-oriented culture, developing transformational leadership capacity, and building a flexible and agile workforce are still challenges for all OECD countries and are areas of continuous focus and development. As such, the institutional leadership of the country's HRM system needs to ensure it has the capacity, resources and systems in place to maintain the focus to enable continuous improvement in the field of HRM, linked to organisational performance, improved service delivery and innovation in the public administration of Dominican Republic.

The Dominican Republic government's commitment to improving the role played by its civil servants will contribute greatly to the country's ongoing development and future prosperity. This report takes stock of progress made, identifies a number of key bottlenecks and proposes a forward reform agenda through a series of recommendations focused on maintaining reform momentum.

From:

Dominican Republic: Human Resource Management for Innovation in Government

Access the complete publication at:
https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264211353-en

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2015), "Executive summary", in *Dominican Republic: Human Resource Management for Innovation in Government*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264211353-4-en

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

You can copy, download or print OECD content for your own use, and you can include excerpts from OECD publications, databases and multimedia products in your own documents, presentations, blogs, websites and teaching materials, provided that suitable acknowledgment of OECD as source and copyright owner is given. All requests for public or commercial use and translation rights should be submitted to rights@oecd.org. Requests for permission to photocopy portions of this material for public or commercial use shall be addressed directly to the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) at info@copyright.com or the Centre français d'exploitation du droit de copie (CFC) at contact@cfcopies.com.