

Editorial on Public Administration

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EDITORIAL

The process of putting government policies into action today, public administration is sometimes thought to have some responsibility for setting government policies and services. It is the planning, arranging, directing, coordinating, and controlling of government activities, in particular. Public administration is a characteristic of all countries, regardless of their political structure. Public administration is practiced at the national, regional, and local levels within countries. Indeed, the interactions between different levels of government within a single country are becoming an increasing public-administration problem.

Public administration has become a distinct discipline in most of the world as a result of the creation of highly qualified managerial, corporate, or directive groups. The civil service is the term used to describe the body of public administrators. The elitist class connotations traditionally associated with the civil service were deliberately abandoned or from the early twentieth century in the United States.

The civil service has traditionally been pitted against other full-time state employees such as the military, the judiciary, and the police. Rather than providing general administrative support,

specialized agencies, also known as scientific or specialist civil services, offer technical assistance. In most countries, a distinction is traditionally made between the domestic civil service and those who are assigned to diplomatic missions abroad. As a result, a civil servant is a member of a group of people who work directly in the administration of the state's internal affairs and whose position and rank are not political, ministerial, military, or constabulary.

Local government and public corporations are not included of the civil service in most nations. Some provincial staffs are civil servants in some countries, especially unitary states where provincial administration is part of the central government. Both levels of government in the United States have their own civil services—federal, state, and local—and a civil service is a specific type of government employee.

The civil service is structured along traditional hierarchical lines, with a command structure that rises in a pyramid-like manner from the lowest to the highest levels. This command entails following a superior's lawful orders, and in order to enforce this structure, the hierarchy of offices is characterized by fixed roles with well-defined responsibilities, distinct powers, and objectively determined salaries and privileges.

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