

COUNTRY PROFILE

Republic of Armenia

I. BACKGROUND

Area:	29,743 sq. km
Population:	3,006 million (2014)
GDP:	USD 11,64 billion (2014)
GNI per capita:	USD 8,124 (2014)
HDI:	0.733; ranked 85 out of 188 countries (2014)
Life expectancy at birth:	74.7 years (2014)
Mean years of schooling:	10.9

Source: UNDP HDI; World Bank (2015)

a. Indicators on Quality of Public Service:

Indicator	2000	2005	2010	2013	2014
Government effectiveness	31.71	51.71	49.28	58.37	46.15
Regulatory quality	45.10	55.39	60.29	58.85	60.10
Rule of Law	36.84	41.15	39.81	45.02	43.76
Control of corruption	30.24	32.20	30.48	39.23	40.38

Source: World Bank (2015)

b. Political and Administrative Structure

The Republic of Armenia (RA) is a democratic state with a quasi-presidential system of government. State power is exercised in compliance with the Constitution and laws based on the principle of separation of the legislative, executive and judicial powers.

The **President of the Republic of Armenia** is the Head of State. The President ensures adherence to the Constitution. He provides for the smooth, uninterrupted and proper functioning of the

legislative, executive and judicial authorities. He is also the guarantor of the Republic's sovereignty, territorial integrity and security. The President is elected by the citizens of the Republic for a term of five years.

Legislative Power. The National Assembly is unicameral and the supreme legislative authority of the Republic. It consists of 131 deputies, of which 90 are elected by proportional and 41 by majority representation. The members of the National Assembly are elected through general elections; its members serve for terms of five years.

Executive Power. The Executive power is exercised by the Government. The Government is composed of the Prime Minister and Ministers. Based on consultations held with the parties represented in the National Assembly, the President appoints the person nominated by the parliamentary majority to be Prime Minister. The President of the Republic appoints and dismisses the members of the Government, in accordance with the Prime Minister's proposal.

The Government's policies are designed and implemented in executive bodies (18 ministries and 6 public administration bodies adjunct to the Government), which may be established, restructured and/or dissolved by Presidential Decree following recommendations of the Prime Minister.

The Ministry is the body overseeing other state bodies and organizations within its jurisdiction. A Ministry is composed of the Minister, Deputy Ministers, Advisers, Press Secretary, Assistants and Aides, Ministry Staff, regional units, relevant state bodies, as well as non-profit organizations working under a Ministry's jurisdiction. A public administration body adjunct to the Government is comprised of the Head, Deputy Heads, staff, regional units, as well as non-profit organizations under its jurisdiction. The Staff of Republican Executive Bodies are comprised of structural units (departments, divisions and secretariats) and standalone units (agencies and inspectorates), whose tasks and responsibilities are defined by the Government.

The Republic's **administrative and territorial units** are composed of *marzes* (regions) and communities. The country is divided into 10 *marzes*. The Government appoints and dismisses the *Marzpets* (Marz / Regional Governors), who exercise discretionary powers and are accountable to the Government. *Marzpets* implement the government's regional policy, coordinate activities related to the regional services of executive bodies, as determined by applicable laws. The *marzes* encompass urban and rural communities, all administered by local self-governments. There are 915 communities in Armenia: 49 urban and 866 rural communities. The capital city of Yerevan also has the status of a "community".

II. CIVIL SERVICE PROFILE

a. Legal basis of the civil service

Measures to establish the country's civil service were initiated barely a decade after independence from the Soviet Union, in 1991. In fact, it was not until 1998 when several working groups were set up to develop a draft law on civil service, when the Government assigned the Public Administration Reform Commission to propose civil service reforms aimed at building a new civil service system in the country. The Commission's deliberations led to the adoption of the Law on Civil Service (2001) and the establishment of the Civil Service Council (2002). Subsequently, the Law on Public Service was enacted to allow for comprehensive regulation of public and community civil service (2011).

The legal framework for the civil service of Armenia is based on the Constitution, international agreements signed by the Republic, the Law on Civil Service of 2001, the Law on Public Service of 2011, legal acts and regulations of the Civil Service Council and other legal acts. Following its establishment, in January 2002, the Civil Service Council initiated the development and adoption of regulations falling within its jurisdiction. These included: Regulation on Holding Competitions and Attestations, Regulation on Training, Regulation on Enrolment in the Personnel Reserve, as well as other acts and regulations. Such other issues as remuneration of civil servants are regulated by the Law on Remuneration of Civil Servants, while employment-related issues, not explicitly regulated by the civil service legislation, are subject to provisions in the general labour legislation. The legal framework for public service includes:

- RA Law “On Public Service”, adopted on 26 May 2011;
- RA Law “On Civil Service”, adopted on 4 December 2001;
- RA Law “On Remuneration of Persons Occupying State Positions”, adopted on 12 December 2013;
- Decision N 3 of 29 January 2002 of the Civil Service Council of the Republic of Armenia “On Approval of the Charter of the RA Civil Service Council”;
- Decision N 17-N of 13 June 2002 of the Civil Service Council of the Republic of Armenia “On Establishing a Procedure for the Conduct of Competitions for the purpose of Filling Vacant Civil Service Positions”;
- Decision N 546-N of 26 June 2006 of the Civil Service Council of the Republic of Armenia “On Establishing the Procedure of Secondment of Civil Servants for Training, Improvement of Professional Knowledge and Work Skills”;
- Decision N 818–N of 12 October 2010 of the Civil Service Council of the Republic of Armenia “On Establishing Procedures for Testing and Certification of Junior Civil Service Positions and for Occupying Vacant Junior Civil Service Positions”;
- Decision N 1510- N of the Government of 20 October 2011 “On Approving the Procedure for Developing Work Plans, Accessing and Approving Work Plans into Electronic Document Flow System, Appraising Performance through the System and Relating Pay to Performance in RA Public Administration Bodies”.

The **Civil Service Law of 2001** covers civil service positions in the President’s Administration, ministries, executive bodies at the republican and regional levels, other government administrative bodies established by law, excluding the Central Bank. In nine chapters, the Civil Service Law of 2001 regulates relations pertaining to the civil service, namely:

- Definitions and the Law’s applicability; terms of which state bodies, positions and position holders are included;
- Main principles regulating the civil service and delineation of legislation regarding the civil service; including the subsidiary application of the Labour Code to some aspects of the employment relationships and working conditions;
- Classification of civil service positions (11 levels in four groups) and corresponding grading system for the position holders; regulation of the “roster” of Civil Service positions and the “passport” of each individual position as key elements of the civil service system¹;
- General requirements and conditions governing access to civil service positions and the methods used in filling vacancies through the Civil Service Roster (plus rules on final appointments);
- Mandatory training and “attestation” of civil servants;

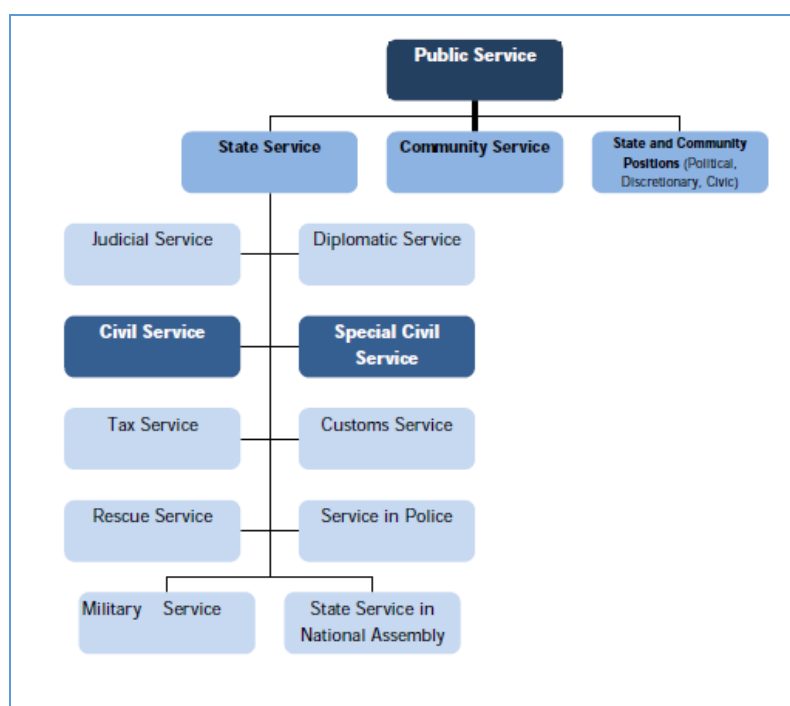
¹ The Law sets the minimum general requirements for such “passports” or job descriptions regarding professional grade and years of experience needed to access such positions.

- Legal status of civil servants (rights, duties, restrictions, incentives, disciplinary regime, retirement age); as well as causes for removal from civil service positions and termination of the civil service relationship/status;
- Civil Service organizations and management bodies”².

b. Definition of civil servant

The Law on Public Service (2011) defines public service as “*the exercise of powers vested in the State under the Constitution and laws of the Republic of Armenia, which shall include state service, community service³ and state and community positions*”. According to the Civil Service Law of 2001 (CSL), state service is defined as “*a professional activity aimed at performing functions and transacting issues conferred upon state entities by Republican legislation*”. The state service incorporates the civil service, judicial service, diplomatic service and special service⁴.

Figure 3: Public Service in Armenia



The same Law defines civil service as “*a professional activity independent from the changes introduced by political powers, as are performed by government bodies included in Clause 1, Article 4 of the CSL⁵, with the purpose of implementing the objectives and functions assigned to*

² OECD/ SIGMA. 2010. Assessment of the Civil Service System of the Republic of Armenia.

³ Community service is defined as a professional activity aimed at performing functions and resolving issues conferred upon local self-governing bodies by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia.

⁴ Special service in, respectively, Defence, National Security, Police, Tax, Customs and Rescue Services of Republican Executive Bodies; State Service in the Staff of the National Assembly of the RA, National Security Council, Investigative Committee of the RA, Department of the Investigative Committee of the RA, as well as other services envisaged by the law.

⁵ These bodies are: (a) the Staff of the President of the RA; (b) The Staff of the Government of the RA; (c) The Staffs of the Republican Executive Bodies of the RA; (c1) The Staffs of state bodies acting in the administrative field of the RA Ministries; (d) The Staffs of the *Marzpetarans* / Regional Governor’s Offices / of the RA; and (e) The Staffs of the permanently operating bodies created by the laws of the RA, except for the Central Bank.

those bodies by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia” (Article 3, Clause 1/a). A Civil Servant is “a person occupying a position envisaged in the Roster of Civil Service Positions (Article 15.1, Clause 1 of the CSL) or listed in the Civil Service Personnel Short-term Reserve” (Article 3, Clause 1/d)⁶.

Civil service positions are classified into four groups: highest, chief, leading and junior positions based on the levels of responsibility, decision-making authority, representation, as well as the complexity of their assigned functions and responsibilities (Article 7 of the CSL of 2001). The group of highest civil service positions is further subdivided into subgroups 1 and 2; the groups of the chief, leading and junior civil service positions into subgroups 1, 2 and 3 (subgroup 1 being considered the highest subgroup of a given group). Each civil servant can move up one grade without a change in the position; not earlier than 3 years upon receiving the grade corresponding to his/her position. The CSL also clarifies that persons occupying political, discretionary and civil positions, as well as technical support personnel in the bodies envisaged under Clause 1 of Article 4 (see also footnote 193) are not considered civil servants.

In September 2002, the Civil Service Personnel Roster was approved. Thus, starting on 1 November 2002, persons occupying positions listed in the Personnel Roster were considered civil servants. This signified a shift to the new system. The newly formed civil service system incorporated 41 state entities with 7,297 civil servants.

c. Civil servants’ profile

Eligibility criteria

The Constitution of the Republic, adopted in 1995 and substantially amended in 2005, recognises and guarantees “equal access of all citizens to the public service” (Article 30.2, Clause 2). Article 11 of the Civil Service Law (CSL) of 2001 stipulates that, to enter into the civil service, candidates must be citizens of the Republic meeting the requirements established by the job description (or Passport) of a given position and that they should possess knowledge of the Armenian language and have attained the age of 18 years.

Total number of civil servants

Total number of civil servants in Armenia was 6,508 as of November 2014⁷.

d. Civil servants’ remuneration structure

The Civil Service Law of 2001 and the Law on Remuneration of Persons Occupying State Positions of 2013 regulate the remuneration of civil servants. According to these Laws, civil servants’ pay includes basic salary (or official pay rate), additional salary and bonuses. The basic salary is estimated on the basis of a common amount, multiplied by a coefficient set for each group (grade), sub-group (class) and duration of service in the relevant sub-group. In turn, this common amount is determined on an annual basis as stipulated by the Law on State Budget⁸. Additional salary includes extra payments, i.e. wage supplements for overtime, work under hazardous

⁶ Temporary vacant positions are exempted from these procedures.

⁷ Civil Service Council of the Republic of Armenia. Selection and Recruitment Procedure of Senior Civil Servants in Armenia, <http://dsc.kprm.gov.pl/sites/default/files/pliki/armenia.pdf>

⁸ As such, the 2014 State Budget set the common base salary for persons holding state positions for the period from 1 July to 31 December at 66,140 Armenian Dram (AMD) per month (about USD 140).

conditions and increments, determined on the basis of rank and work experience. However, any additional salary cannot exceed 30 per cent of the basic salary⁹.

III. BODY RESPONSIBLE FOR HR POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Article 36 of the CSL of 2001 stipulates that the Civil Service Council and the Chiefs of Staff are primarily responsible for the management and organisation of the civil service.

The Civil Service Council is an independent state body in charge of implementing a unified state policy in civil service. Article 37 of the CSL of 2001 regulates the Council. Its seven members are appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister. The Council is an autonomous entity with its own organization and budget.

The main objectives of the Council are: [i] ensure the application of the new civil service system in the Republic of Armenia; [ii] effective management and organization of its activities; and [iii] further improvement, ensuring transparency of the civil service system. Specifically, the Civil Service Council's functions include:

- Developing primary and secondary legislation related to civil service;
- Monitoring enforcement of civil service legislation;
- Approving, updating and amending the Roster of Civil Service Positions;
- Organizing and implementing the competitive processes in filling vacant positions;
- Organizing and holding certification of civil servants;
- Organizing training for civil servants and secondment for the improvement of their professional knowledge and skills;
- Maintaining long- and short-term reserves;
- Dealing with appeals on civil service matters; and
- Monitoring compliance with the Civil Service Code of Ethics.

In addition, the Council supervises human resources management and provides methodological guidance to public administration bodies. However, a SIGMA report¹⁰ notes two important omissions in the Council's functional scope: firstly, that it does not participate in workforce planning in public administration bodies though it manages the personnel registry; and secondly, the Council is not authorised to deal with the management of top-level civil servants (Parrado, 2014). It also points out that the Council's position is weak due partly to its "minor role in policy-making" and partly to the "lack of institutionalisation of its independence".

Ministries have personnel management units responsible for the HR function. This includes the calculation of the seniority/length of experience of personnel, the conduct of competitive recruitment and attestations, the organization of training, the termination of employment and temporary contracts, control over employee labour discipline issues, management of personnel files, record keeping, acceptance acts (handovers), maintenance of personal files, etc.

a. Organisation of the selection and recruitment process in civil service

Recruitment in the civil service is regulated by the Law on Civil Service (2001) and the Civil Service Council Decision N 17-N on "Defining Order on the Conduct of Competitions for Vacant Civil Service Positions" adopted on 13 June 2002.

⁹ For example, in 2015, a junior level civil servant with four years of experience would be paid in the range of approximately 90,000 AMD (or USD 190-260) per month, based on information provided by the Civil Service Council.

¹⁰ OECD/ SIGMA, 2010. Assessment of the Civil Service System of the Republic of Armenia.

According to Article 12(1) of the CSL of 2001, a vacant civil service position must be filled either through the extraordinary, out-of-competition process or through competition procedures. Extraordinary (out-of-competition) procedures apply in the case of an urgent need to fill a vacant position (within a week), or until the announcement of the competition for the position is published. In this case, a civil servant from a particular body, who meets the formal requirements of the job can be appointed to this post. Open competition procedures apply to filling new civil service positions and positions which are not filled by extraordinary processes (Article 14, Clause 1 of the CSL). The CSC manages the recruitment process jointly with the hiring agency / government department. It provides methodological support and monitors the recruitment process. It may also intervene should the merit-based principle be violated in the process.

The Civil Service Council publishes the announcement of a competitive process for the positions at the highest and chief levels; and the hiring government bodies publish the announcement for positions of the leading and junior levels, one month in advance to holding the competition, in the press and another media, as well as online on the official website of the CSC.

The Competition Commission is formed, no sooner than 24 hours before each competitive process is held. It is comprised of CSC representatives (one third), representatives of the hiring body (one third) and experts from scientific and academic institutions in relevant fields of specialisation (one third). Representatives of civil society organisations may also participate as observers.

The competitive process involves two stages: testing and interviewing. Multiple-choice tests are designed to check the applicants' knowledge of the relevant legislation, including the Constitution, civil service legislation and legislation relevant to the hiring body. They are also designed to test the applicants' ability to work in a given position (Article 7 of the CSL). Candidates obtaining a score of at least 90 per cent qualify for an interview. The interview is held by a Competition Commission. The goal is to determine the candidates' professional knowledge, competencies, qualifications and ability to perform the functions of a given position. Following the interview result, the official responsible for the appointment selects and appoints one of the three top-listed candidates within three working days upon receipt of the notification¹¹. Competition results can be appealed in writing and these appeals are dealt by the CSC. Newly recruited civil servants are subject to a probation period of up to six months in compliance with general labour legislation.

Regarding the conditions for termination, the CSL of 2001 in Article 15.1 provides an extensive list of conditions. In most cases, these relate to voluntary resignation and to a lesser extent, dismissal cases resulting from the reorganisation and abolition of government agencies.

The length of service or *seniority* of a civil servant is calculated on the basis of occupancy of a civil service position, or being enlisted in the Civil Service Personnel Short-term Reserve (Article 17 of the CSL). The Law also specifies that ranking and seniority should take into account a civil servant's overall professional service.

¹¹ However, the selection of one candidate out of three need not be substantiated. The SIGMA report (2014) indicates this is one of the flaws of the recruitment process in civil service (Parrado, 2014). Overall, however, SIGMA reports that recruitment of civil servants follows mostly the principles of meritocracy, although "*the scope and the practice are less transparent than advocated*".

b. Promotion process in the civil service

The CSL of 2001 encompasses several provisions on promotion and mobility in the civil service¹². The Law (Article 20, Clause 7) also provides for secondment of civil servants, with a view to improving their professional knowledge and skills.

c. Performance evaluation, training and career development

In accordance with Article 20 of the CSL of 2001, the CSC is responsible for organising, coordinating and assessing training needs jointly with the HR units of relevant agencies. HR units offer their recommendations on training to the CSC, on an annual basis. The CSL mandates that civil servants shall undergo mandatory training at least once every three years. Civil servants are also entitled to receive non-mandatory training for special job requirements to improve their professional skills. Training is organised at the request of the responsible Chief of Staff, in line with a programme approved by the CSC.

As for performance evaluation, Armenia practices both attestation and performance appraisal systems, each serving a different purpose. All civil servants undergo a performance appraisal. This is conducted semi-annually by their immediate supervisor (Article 20.1 of the CSL of 2001). Appraisal includes assessment of work performed by a civil servant, their timeliness and quality of the performed tasks, as well as managerial skills. Performance appraisal results have no direct connection to the promotion or training of a civil servant but they do affect bonus payments.

Another type of performance evaluation, a regular mandatory attestation of civil servants is conducted once every three years. “Extraordinary” attestations may also be conducted on orders from the direct supervisor, after the lapse of one year from the previous attestation. The attestation is carried out in two stages: first, documentary attestation and second, a test and interview. Both aim at verifying that civil servants possess appropriate and relevant knowledge to perform the functions of a position, as specified in the job description. The CSC coordinates the attestation of the highest and chief positions, while public authorities manage attestation of the leading and junior levels in their respective agencies. Attestation is carried out not by the immediate supervisor, but by Attestation Commissions, which are formed in the same manner as Competition Commissions. Attestation results are used to decide whether civil servants comply with the positions they occupy. Attestation results are not linked with a civil servant’s promotion or the identification of his/her training needs¹³, as is also the case with performance appraisal.

IV. ETHICS AND ANTI-CORRUPTION STRUCTURES

The legal framework dealing with corruption prevention and promotion of ethical behaviour of civil servants include the CSL of 2001 and the Public Service Law of 2011. The latter provides rules of ethical conduct for public servants and high-ranking officials (Article 28, Clause 3) to ensure appropriate behaviour, prevent conflicts between public and private interests and enhance public confidence in public institutions. Enforcement of these rules rests on Ethics Commissions, which are established in the respective public institutions. However, there is no one central body responsible for ensuring uniform enforcement of ethics rules in the civil service (OECD, 2014).

¹² A SIGMA report (Parrado, 2014) notes that recruitment based on the extraordinary (“out-of-competition”) procedure presents a promotion process, without applying merit-based principles.

¹³ In relation to these performance evaluation systems, the 2014 SIGMA report (Parrado, 2014, p. 7) points to the existence of these two processes of attestation and performance appraisal noting that “confuses the purpose of a real appraisal of the achievement of results”; hence, recommended abolishing the attestation process.

The Civil Service Council established the Ethics Commissions in 2004 with a view to contributing to the formulation and enhancement of ethics in public administration institutions. Each Commission¹⁴ includes two Council representatives, two public administration body representatives (a civil servant and a representative of a public association / union) and a representative from the Armenian Apostolic Church.

There is a separate Ethics Commission for High-Ranking Officials, established in 2012. It consists of five independent members appointed by the President, in line with Article 38 of the Public Service Law of 2011. The Commission, among its other functions, is responsible for the collection and analysis of asset declarations by high-ranking officials and a new integrity-related system introduced in 2013¹⁵, among other functions.

The Law on Public Service of 2011 also introduced the concept of “whistle-blowing”, requiring public servants to report offences committed by other civil servants, as well as any other unlawful activity, including corruption-related ones (Article 22).

In 2013, a 72-hour anti-corruption course was introduced, as part of a mandatory training programme for civil servants¹⁶. The Ethics Commission for high-ranking officials also delivers anti-corruption training to civil servants though mainly on the topic of asset declaration. The Commission, jointly with SIGMA, is currently elaborating a draft code of conduct for high-ranking officials¹⁷.

Established in 2004, the Anti-Corruption Council, became operational in a revamped format in July 2015 following the Government’s decision No 165-N (19 February 2015) “On Establishing the Council and Expert Task Force”, which also approved the Council’s composition and its rules of procedures. The Council is chaired by the Prime Minister. The Council is responsible for: [i] devising and endorsing the national anti-corruption strategy¹⁸; [ii] developing recommendations for amending the strategy; [iii] endorsing sector-specific programmes developed within the strategic framework; [iv] coordinating and monitoring implementation of activities congruent with the anti-corruption strategy deployed; and [v] ensuring cooperation with the international community, as well as with civil society representatives and other stakeholders in the anti-corruption drive.

The Government Unit on Monitoring Anti-Corruption Programmes acts as a Secretariat to the Anti-Corruption Council responsible for implementing the national anti-corruption strategy for the period 2015–2018. The Government and USAID have signed an agreement for joint implementation of the Strategy¹⁹.

V. CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS: PAST, CURRENT AND PLANNED

¹⁴ However, the OECD (2014) reports these commissions to be non-operational in practice, therefore it recommends that action should be taken to ensure their effectiveness.

¹⁵ However, the Round 3 Monitoring OECD report of the Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan on Armenia notes that these “declarations are narrow in scope”, while the Ethics Commission for High-Ranking Officials “has no mandate or resources to verify the declarations or to sanction non-compliance” (2014, p. 5).

¹⁶ However, the OECD report (p. 54) indicates low levels of completion of this training, in proportion to the total number of civil servants in the country. In 2011, training was provided to 26 officials; in 2012 to 61; in 2013 to 107; and in 2014 (1st half-year) to 38 officials.

¹⁷ The Commission on Ethics of High-Ranking Officials has initiated activities to elaborate the content of public officials’ code of conduct, <http://ethics.am/en/news/item/2016/02/04/news46/>

¹⁸ The strategy’s priority areas are education, health, public revenue and services delivered by the Police.

¹⁹ <http://www.gov.am/en/news/item/8265/>

a. Past reforms

A multitude of measures have been implemented in order to improve the legislative basis of recruitment, performance assessment and other civil service management-related aspects. As reported by the Civil Service Council, these include the following:

- Mandatory medical insurance, introduced in 2012, as part of a social security package;
- A new unified system of remuneration of persons occupying state positions, including civil servants. This envisaged a significant salary increase and was launched on 1 July 2014;
- Following review of the attestation process for civil servants, a performance appraisal system has been deployed;
- A unified certification system has been put into place for candidates to civil service junior positions in order to improve the process of recruitment into the civil service; a point system has been developed for candidates' evaluation during the interview stage of the competition;
- Amendments have been made to the Law "On Civil Service" (June 2014) in order to make the civil service more competitive and attractive, to enhance motivation and to increase flexibility in staff recruitment and promotion. Accordingly, a new scale of requirements pertaining to work experience has been adopted, which significantly narrowed the scope of differences existing between the requirements of the civil service and the non-civil service related work experience;
- The Law "On Public Service", adopted in 2011, with the aim to harmonise differences among civil and other state services and to ensure uniformity of principles across the civil service;
- The new Civil Service Council website (www.csc.am), which has become operational in order to provide a platform for electronic document flow and common databases, as well as to ensure adequate information exchange;
- A draft "Ethics Code for Civil Servants", which has been developed in order to improve the ethics framework for civil servants.

b. Current reforms

Considering the future priorities for the development of the civil service, a new "Policy Paper on Civil Service Reforms" has been developed jointly with EU/SIGMA. It will be followed by the development and implementation of an Action Plan. The Government of the Republic approved the Civil Service Reform Strategy on 29 December 2015. The Strategy purports to depoliticise the Armenian civil service and to promote the building of a body of professional and impartial civil servants. The goal of the strategy is to shift from the current system to a merit and career-based civil service system incorporating both the strengths of the existing one and the best EU practices, standards and principles. Furthermore, the strategy envisages setting up unified principles of performance appraisal of civil servants, of promotion and career development, as well as bringing the code of conduct rules in line with those of the EU and OECD standards.

c. Planned reforms

Based on the new approved strategy, civil service reforms are planned to focus on three main areas²⁰:

²⁰ In addition, the 2014 SIGMA report has provided a list of specific recommendations, which, among other call for higher transparency in the recruitment process, application of merit-based practices to internal competition, conducting organisational and individual training needs assessments and introduction of a unified monitoring mechanism to promote integrity of civil servants.

- Strengthening civil service values and principles in a sustainable manner while focusing on enhancing the efficiency of public administration and improving the quality of services provided to citizens;
- Modernising key HRM mechanisms regarding recruitment and selection, training, performance appraisal, promotion and mobility, ethics rules and integrity, job classification and other related areas²¹; and
- Improving civil service management.

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²¹ For instance, the attestation system for civil servants will be replaced by a performance appraisal system in the beginning of 2017.