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FOREIGN MODELS OF TRAINING YOUNG EXECUTIVE CADRES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THEIR ADAPTATION IN UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract: The article identifies key elements of foreign models for training young executive personnel that are applicable to the state civil service system of Uzbekistan. Based on a comparative-institutional and structural-functional analysis of the experience in the United Kingdom, Singapore, France, the Republic of Korea, and Kazakhstan, it was established that effective models encompass the full personnel cycle: open selection, potential assessment, practical training, rotation, mentorship, and career monitoring. An integrated model tailored for Uzbekistan is proposed, featuring a dual-track selection process, an 18-month development program, interagency rotation, independent assessment, and a three-year outcome monitoring mechanism. The necessity of adapting functions and standards—rather than mechanically copying foreign institutions—is substantiated.

Keywords: young executive cadres; state civil service; talent pool; leadership competencies; meritocracy; rotation; talent management; Uzbekistan.

Introduction

The quality of public administration depends not only on the regulatory powers of authorities but also on the ability of personnel to translate political decisions into measurable social outcomes. Digitalization, rising cross-sectoral risks, accelerated administrative reforms, and increasing public expectations for service quality are redefining the profile of a modern leader. Alongside legal and sector-specific competence, modern leaders require analytical thinking, project management skills, digital literacy, ethical resilience, and the capability to coordinate stakeholders beyond their own agencies. Therefore, the preparation of young executive personnel is not merely a narrow educational task, but a core element of the institutional sustainability of the state.

In this article, the term "young executive personnel" is used as an analytical category representing the early stage of a managerial career, rather than a literal reproduction of a single statutory age threshold.[1] This approach enables the simultaneous examination of graduates, young civil servants, and specialists from the non-governmental sector who possess the potential to subsequently occupy leadership positions.

Academic literature defines talent management as a system of identifying key positions, forming a pool of high-potential candidates, and establishing a differentiated architecture for their development (Collings & Mellahi, 2009). Concurrently, critical reviews warn that an overly narrow, elitist approach risks ignoring public value, procedural fairness, and the interests of diverse stakeholders (Thunnissen et al., 2013). For the public sector, this distinction is fundamental: a talent pool must simultaneously deliver performance, equal access, political neutrality, and public trust. The OECD Recommendation links a capable civil service to three pillars—values-based leadership, professional capability, and adaptability—emphasizing transparent appointment, continuous development, and workforce mobility (OECD, 2019).

In Uzbekistan, a substantial regulatory and organizational foundation for this transition has been established. The Law "On the State Civil Service" defines the National Talent Pool as a system for centralized selection, preparation, retraining, and continuous professional development aimed at filling leadership positions (Republic of Uzbekistan, 2022, Art. 25). Decree No. UP-78 reorganized the

specialized Academy and mandated civil servant development based on advanced international experience (President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2025a). Decree No. UP-243 expanded digital mechanisms for job vacancies, performance evaluation, and individual development plans for reservists (President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2025b). However, the existence of standalone institutions does not automatically guarantee their integration into a unified managerial conveyor belt "from selection to appointment and outcome evaluation."

The core problem of this study stems from the fact that foreign experience is often described as a mere catalog of successful practices without analyzing the conditions required for their transferability. Ultimately, successful outcomes are driven not by the title of an institution or reserve, but by the functional alignment of selection, training, mobility, placement, and accountability. The objective of this article is to determine which elements of foreign models can be functionally integrated into Uzbekistan's existing institutional system. The research question is formulated as follows: What combination of open competition, competency-based assessment, practical training, and career tracking provides the most realistic model for training young executive personnel in Uzbekistan? The working hypothesis posits that mutual complementary mechanisms—unified by a single cycle and protected by transparency procedures—exhibit the highest transferability, rather than whole national models.

Materials and Methods

This study utilizes a qualitative comparative design. The sample encompasses five countries representing diverse administrative traditions and mechanisms for reproducing executive personnel: the UK (an open accelerated career track); Singapore (a centralized system for developing government-wide leadership); France (a professional school for senior civil service); the Republic of Korea (a competency-based promotion model); and Kazakhstan (a youth talent pool institutionally close to Central Asian contexts). Uzbekistan is analyzed as the receiving system, where the compatibility of functions—rather than formal institutional similarity—is evaluated.

The first method employed is comparative-institutional analysis. The unit of analysis was not the country as a whole, but a stable combination of rules and organizations governing six links of the personnel cycle: program entry; potential assessment; training content; workplace learning; linkage to appointment; and performance tracking. The comparison was conducted using official program descriptions, regulatory acts, and scientific studies. This design allows universal mechanisms—such as assessment centers or individual development plans—to be separated from elements that are strictly bound to a national administrative tradition.

The second method is structural-functional analysis. Each foreign institution was evaluated according to its function: expanding the intake pool, reducing selection errors, developing cross-agency thinking, deepening sectoral expertise, reinforcing ethics, or ensuring continuity. This function was then mapped to existing Uzbek organizations and digital platforms. Here, institutional adaptation is understood as transferring the mechanism's purpose and standard while altering its organizational form to align with domestic law, resources, and managerial culture.[2]

The source base comprises 15 items: official materials from five foreign systems, OECD documents, two studies on strategic talent management, a doctoral dissertation, a national dissertation abstract, and three key legislative acts of Uzbekistan. The time frame spans from 2006 to 2026: the lower boundary marks the introduction of competency assessment for senior civil servants in the Republic of Korea, while the upper boundary corresponds to Uzbekistan's current institutional configuration. The study is limited by the documentary nature of its data: it illuminates institutional logic and transfer potential but does not empirically prove the causal impact of individual programs on state efficiency. Consequently, the quantitative parameters of the proposed pilot scheme are project-based rather than regulatory.

Results

1. Typology of Foreign Models

The comparison demonstrates that the analyzed systems differ primarily in their entry point into the personnel cycle. In the UK, entry is organized via mass open competitions for graduates and current civil servants; in Singapore, through centralized identification and long-term nurturing of leadership potential; in France, via competitive entrance to a professional school; in Korea, through integrating training with job-based competency assessment; and in Kazakhstan, through a dedicated youth talent pool. Despite structural variations, all models share a common objective: bridging the gap between formal education and operational readiness for administrative decision-making.

- **United Kingdom: Open Accelerated Track.** The Civil Service Fast Stream serves as an accelerated path for leadership development through sequential placements across diverse government departments. In the 2025/2026 cycle, 17 professional schemes were operational, featuring selection procedures that included online tests, a virtual assessment center, and, for specific streams, a final selection board. The assessment center simulates real administrative tasks: drafting policy recommendations, communicating with stakeholders, and conducting professional development discussions (Civil Service Careers, 2026). The strength of this model lies in its open access and early immersion in diverse state functions; its limitation is the risk of turning universal mobility into superficial role-shifting if rotations do not build specialized sectoral expertise.
- **Singapore: Centralized Government-Wide Leadership Nurturing.** The Administrative Service and the Public Service Leadership Programme constitute the core tracks for executive development. In early stages, participants gain exposure across at least two sectors in roles spanning policy, operations, and stakeholder engagement; subsequent phases allow for sectoral or cross-sectoral specialization. The Administrative Service incorporates targeted expertise building across two to three sectors, regular postings, milestone training, and executive coaching (Public Service Division, 2025). Its primary functional advantage is developing a "whole-of-government perspective"—the ability to recognize cross-sectoral interdependencies. The inherent risk is potential insularity within the leadership cadre if inclusion and exit criteria lack clarity for external candidates.
- **France: Professionalization and Profile Matching.** The Institut national du service public (INSP) integrates competitive selection, competency-based instruction, and practical field missions. The revamped curriculum spans 24 months. A pivotal reform replaced traditional exit rankings with a profile-to-post matching procedure, simultaneously balancing the graduate's competency profile, professional project, and the operational needs of public employers (INSP, 2023). For Uzbekistan, three aspects are particularly instructive: a core competency framework, individualized career pathways, and mandatory practical field experience.
- **Republic of Korea: Competencies as the Link in the Personnel Cycle.** Since 2006, candidates for the Senior Civil Service undergo standardized competency assessments based on job analysis. Competency evaluation is applied not as a standalone exam, but as a operational tool for placement and promotion (Ministry of Personnel Management, n.d.). Moon and Lee demonstrate that weaknesses in rank- and seniority-based closed civil service systems can be overcome through a "3C" strategy (competition, competence, confidence), recommending a matrix career management approach combining vertical and horizontal mobility (Moon & Lee, 2017). The Korean experience confirms that training becomes effective when a single competency framework governs selection, development, assessment, and advancement.
- **Kazakhstan: Youth Talent Pool.** The Presidential Youth Personnel Reserve targetedly attracts young professionals into the public administration system. Selection comprises six stages: document verification, verbal and numerical reasoning testing, situational task solving, assessment center and competency interviews, expert panel interviews, and the final decision of the National Commission. In the 2023 cycle, 50 candidates were selected (Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan

for Civil Service Affairs, 2023). The model is relevant to Uzbekistan due to regional and institutional comparability, as well as its transparent, sequential evaluation structure.

Table 1. Comparative Matrix of Foreign Executive Cadre Preparation Models

Model	Institutional Core	Key Mechanisms	Elements Transferable to Uzbekistan
United Kingdom	Open accelerated career track	Multi-stage competition; online tests; assessment center; interagency postings	Open intake and simulation of real administrative tasks
Singapore	Centralized leadership cadre development	Dual leadership tracks; postings across at least two sectors; coaching; milestone placements	Cross-sectoral rotation and whole-of-government perspective
France	Senior civil service professional school	24-month program; practical missions; custom tracks; profile-to-post matching	"Competency – Training – Position" alignment
Republic of Korea	Competency-based career management	Job analysis; competency assessment; integration with placement and promotion	Unified competency dictionary across the personnel cycle
Kazakhstan	Presidential Youth Personnel Reserve	Age-bound track; 6 selection stages; intake of 50 candidates (2023 cycle)	Dedicated recruitment channel for young specialists with clear stage gating

Note. Compiled by the author based on Civil Service Careers (2026), Public Service Division (2025), INSP (2023), Ministry of Personnel Management (n.d.), and Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan for Civil Service Affairs (2023).

2. Uzbekistan's Institutional Readiness

Uzbekistan is not initiating reforms from scratch. Rakhimov highlights the current stage of civil service development dating back to 2017, noting the establishment of a specialized personnel body, legal foundations for competitive entry, the Academy, and mechanisms for international training (Rakhimov, 2023, pp. 12–14). His analysis emphasizes the need to bind preparation, selection, placement, and reservation into a coherent organizational-legal system. This aligns with Soroko's

systemic framework, which asserts that a talent reserve is effective only when spanning the full lifecycle: formation, assessment, development, rotation, deployment, and information tracking (Soroko, 2011).

The current legal architecture contains many essential nodes. Law No. ZRU-788 establishes meritocracy, professional competence, continuous learning, and the National Talent Pool (Republic of Uzbekistan, 2022). Decree No. UP-78 designates the Academy of Public Policy and Governance as the primary institution for training and retraining executive personnel, introducing curricula informed by leading international experience and linking training to state orders (President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2025a). Decree No. UP-243 (effective March 1, 2026) mandates automated qualification checks and job vacancy processing through vacancy.gov.uz, offering additional professional evaluations via the Executive Assessment Center. For reservists, dynamic tracking of individual development plans is facilitated via zaxira.bsa.uz, empowering the authorized body to directly identify high-performing officers bypassed by immediate supervisors (President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2025b). The latter provision acts as a vital safeguard against departmental hoarding of talent.

Concurrently, documentary analysis reveals four operational gaps:

1. Procedures for general hiring, talent pool creation, and Academy instruction operate under interconnected rules but lack integration into a seamless fast-track program for early-career executives.
2. Individual development plans risk turning into administrative compliance exercises if not grounded in diagnostic competency baseline tests and followed by re-evaluation.
3. Systemic rotation—currently implemented for specific geographical regions and duties—is not yet equivalent to educational rotations across central organs, regional administrations, and front-line service delivery points.
4. Publicly available documents lack a unified reporting system for key performance metrics of talent reserves (e.g., appointment rates, time-to-placement, retention rates, competency dynamics, and post-promotion performance).

3. Proposed Integrated Adaptation Model

Rather than copying a single foreign system, Uzbekistan would benefit from an integrated, full-cycle model. Institutional coordination could be led by the Governance Efficiency Agency, educational delivery by the Academy of Public Policy and Governance, and practical placements provided by ministries, regional/district khokimiyats, and public-facing organizations. Assessment independence should be reinforced by external experts from universities, professional bodies, and civil society institutions.

- **Dual-Track Intake:** A early-attraction track targeting graduates and young specialists up to age 30, alongside an executive reserve track targeting early-career candidates up to age 35 with proven track records (final age limits determined by competition rules in compliance with legislation). This distinction prevents direct competition between recent graduates and established mid-level managers while opening access to talent from the private sector, academia, and civil society. Selection must involve automated eligibility screening, anonymized analytical testing, situational exercises, assessment centers, structured interviews, and integrity checks. Each stage requires public criteria, cut-off thresholds, and appeal mechanisms.
- **Unified Competency Framework:** Drawing on Korean and French models, 8–10 measurable competencies should be codified across four blocks: public value and ethics, policy analysis and data literacy, implementation management, and leadership and interagency collaboration. Behavioral indicators must define proficiency levels ranging from junior specialist to head of department. This unified dictionary should apply continuously across diagnostic assessments, individual development planning, mid-term reviews, final certifications, and job matching.
- **18-Month Practice-Oriented Cycle:** Combining concise academic modules with three 4-month rotations:

1. Central agency: Understanding policy formulation;
2. Regional/District administration: Experiencing execution constraints;
3. Public service delivery unit, digital project, or non-governmental partner: Cultivating customer-centric and cross-sectoral thinking.

The remaining months are allocated to baseline diagnostics, a applied public policy capstone project, and final assessment. Each rotation requires clear deliverables, an assigned mentor, and tangible outputs.

- **Profile-to-Post Matching:** Modeled on INSP reforms, the program should yield a comprehensive competency profile and a list of validated role types rather than a linear ranking system. Final hiring authority remains with the employer under governing law, but digital platforms will display empirical matching scores between candidate competencies and position requirements. This mitigates two risks: arbitrary placement without functional fit, and prolonged stagnation of qualified reservists without viable career pathways.
- **Three-Year Longitudinal Monitoring:** Program efficacy should be evaluated along a chain of outcomes: completion rates → competency gains → placement in target roles within 6–12 months → 2-year retention → execution of individual/departmental KPIs → capstone project implementation → service delivery satisfaction metrics. To isolate program impact, cohort outcomes should be benchmarked against a control group of qualified applicants who passed early selection stages but were not enrolled in the pilot.

Discussion

The findings support the working hypothesis: functions demonstrate higher transferability than their national institutional shells. The UK's open competition model can be realized through Uzbekistan's evolving digital infrastructure; Singaporean cross-sectoral rotation through temporary postings across national, regional, and municipal levels; French profile-matching via algorithmic alignment of candidate competencies with job specifications; the Korean model through a unified competency framework; and Kazakh stage-gating through a dedicated youth intake within the National Talent Pool. This synthesis aligns with OECD recommendations emphasizing that leadership capability must be sustained through coherent systems of appointment, development, and accountability (OECD, 2019; Gerson, 2020).

However, successful adaptation requires robust safeguards:

1. **Risk of Institutional Elitism ("Cadre Caste"):** Labeling candidates as "top talent" can create unearned advantages independent of performance. To counter this, reservist status must be time-bound, contingent on annual progress, and never bypass job-specific selection requirements. Unsuccessful applicants should receive developmental feedback and remain eligible for re-application, transforming the competition from an exclusion filter into a mechanism for broadening total administrative capacity.
2. **Risk of Patronage in Nominations:** Decree No. UP-243 partially mitigates this by allowing the central authority to directly identify high-performing officers. Supplementary measures should include open self-registration, anonymized early stages, standardized interviews, recorded assessment center sessions, conflict-of-interest declarations, and random external audits of selection decisions. Regional and female representation must be secured through equal access to prep resources and digital tools, with demographic reports published regularly.
3. **Risk of Rotation Without Domain Expertise:** Singapore's experience demonstrates that cross-sectoral thinking should complement, not replace, domain depth. Executives must progressively build competence in two to three related domains. Following the general rotational cycle, candidates should pick a professional specialization (e.g., social policy, regional development, digital government, economics and finance, infrastructure, or regulatory policy). Subsequent assignments must deepen this concentration rather than permit unstructured shuffling.

4. **Risk of Evaluating Training by Activity Rather Than Impact:** Module counts, certificates issued, and attendance figures are process metrics. For executive programs, the true metrics are decision quality, project delivery speed, interagency coordination, and public satisfaction. The proposed 3-year monitoring framework establishes a feedback loop between talent investments and administrative performance. Causal claims must be made carefully, requiring comparative control groups and independent evaluations.

Implementation should proceed in phases. The preparatory phase requires analyzing 30–40 benchmark management roles to craft the competency dictionary. The pilot phase should launch with an interagency cohort of approximately 100 participants drawn from central organs and select regions. Full scaling should occur only after external validation of selection tools, placement accuracy, rotation quality, and cost-effectiveness. This phased approach minimizes implementation risks and allows for iterative refinements.[3]

Conclusion

This analysis demonstrates that preparing young executive personnel is effective only when education is fully embedded within an end-to-end talent lifecycle. While foreign models reflect diverse administrative cultures, they converge on five principles: meritocratic entry, observable competency assessment, experiential learning through real tasks, structured mobility, and direct links between training outcomes and job placements.

For Uzbekistan, the most viable path is a combined adaptation model built upon established legal and digital foundations. Core components should include a dual-track open recruitment process, a unified competency framework, an 18-month experiential cycle with three mandatory rotations, independent certification, profile-to-post matching, and a three-year outcome tracking system. Institutional coordination can be led by the Governance Efficiency Agency, educational content delivered by the Academy of Public Policy and Governance, and practical placements hosted by line ministries and local governments.

The primary conclusion is that adapting foreign experience must not collapse into creating another static roster of reservists or a short-term training course. Institutional impact emerges only when selection, development, placement, and accountability are linked into a transparent system. Configured this way, the youth executive track can serve not as a privileged fast lane, but as an engine for civil service modernization, meritocratic expansion, and improved governance in the public interest.

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16. [1] The category is used solely for comparative analysis. Specific age parameters during actual program deployment should be defined by applicable legislation and competition rules.
17. [2] Functional transfer entails preserving the purpose of a mechanism (e.g., independent assessment) while allowing adjustments to organizational structure, duration, and supervisory bodies.
18. [3] The target metrics of 30–40 roles and approximately 100 participants represent proposed pilot parameters rather than official statutory targets.