

Press release

484 BILLION EURO FOR RECOVERY, BUT THE PA IS STILL NOT READY. WE NEED TO SPEED UP ON COMPETITIONS, NEW PROFILES, TRAINING

3.2 million employees, average age 50, skills misaligned with needs: there is an urgent need to build a PA that knows how to work by projects in order to manage the unprecedented resources coming in between the NRP and cohesion policy

There is a rush on the recruitment of PNRR professionals: over 15 thousand already completed. But still slow on the big competitions: between 2019 and 2021, 30 out of 55 have been completed, only 14.5 thousand posts awarded out of 103 thousand on the call for applications

Efficient PA target to 2028: we must reach 4 million civil servants with an average age of 44. To achieve this, we need to hire at least 1.3 million people with an average entry age of 28 over the next six years

FPA's Public Employment 2022 research presented at the opening of FORUM PA 2022. The full report can be downloaded at <https://bit.ly/3xnj40N>

Rome, 14 June 2022 - Between the PNRR and cohesion policy funds, from the end of 2021 to 2029 Italy will receive EUR 484 billion in extraordinary and additional expenditure to be planned, managed, monitored, and reported, an average of EUR 54 billion per year. An unprecedented amount of resources that will have to be coordinated by a public administration that is not in the best of health. Italy's civil servants stand at 3.2 million (against more than 3 million pensioners), 14.5 per cent of the total employed, far from the 5.7 million of France, the 5.3 million of the United Kingdom and the 5 million of Germany. They have an average age of almost 50 years, they do little training (we spend barely 40 euros per person per year on refresher courses) and, despite a good share of university graduates (42.6%), they mainly have legal skills, suited to managing procedures rather than projects, often misaligned with real needs.

The great hope is for public competitions with the new rules aiming to introduce new young and qualified personnel in a short time, the effects of which, after the first months of application, are still uncertain: out of 55 major competitions called between 2019 and 2021, 30 have been concluded and 25 are still in progress, but of the 103 thousand posts called for just 14.5 thousand have been assigned and over 88 thousand (mostly in schools) are still vacant. In order to reach the goal of '4 million civil servants with an average age of 44 and appropriate skills' set by 2028 by Public Administration Minister Renato Brunetta, also considering the expected 500 thousand retirements, within 6 years it would be necessary to hire almost 1.3 million people - about 200 thousand each year - with an average age of 28, by launching a major training plan based on an analysis of the necessary skills.

There is, however, one recruitment campaign that has been very successful and is on schedule, bringing qualified young people into the public sector. It is the one for NRP professionals, for which 160,000 applications were received in 2021 alone and more than 15,000 fixed-term recruitments have already been made (adding up completed, finalised and ongoing procedures). A share of more than 50 per cent of the total planned, which indicates compliance with the timetable set by 2023.

These are some of the results of the Public Work 2022 research carried out by **FPA**, a **DIGITAL360** Group company, presented today at the opening of **FORUM PA 2022 "il Paese che riparte" (the country that is restarting)**, scheduled from 14 to 17 June at the Auditorium della Tecnica congress centre in Rome (and streamed), with moments of discussion on the recovery, the implementation of investments and reforms of the PNRR and European programming among the protagonists of the institutions, the public and private sectors.

"Faced with the challenge of managing an unprecedented amount of resources, there is an urgent need to build a PA that is capable of working by projects, which moves from a culture of fulfilment to one of results," comments **Gianni Dominici**, Director General of FPA. The PA must become more attractive to competent young people, strengthen the identity, motivation and belonging of its employees, and share a common project with the new generations. We must build an agile organisation based on objectives and results, reward merit, recognise high professionalism, and support training'.

"The demand for work is rapidly changing," says **Carlo Mochi Sismondi**, president of FPA, "the attractiveness of the fixed job is fading and the need for a motivating job, in which one can continuously grow, is growing. The PA, in order to be equal to the tasks it has to face, must quickly change its way of being an employer: selection procedures must be improved, which are often still notionalistic; the reception of new recruits must be enhanced, also by using the experience present in the organisations; a career path based on merit and continuous training must be envisaged. People are the main asset of administrations, it is time for them to act accordingly and highlight the great value of working for the common good'.

"The significant amount of financial resources from the PNRR and other incoming European funds represents an unrepeatable opportunity to accelerate the digital transformation process of our country with a view to greater sustainability," says **Andrea Rangone**, President of DIGITAL360. The Public Administration, in partnership with private companies, has the role of leading a path that can finally allow Italy to catch up digitally and build a more competitive future. But it is essential to build an adequate administrative machine, equipped with digital skills and innovation capacity. To win the restart challenge, in PA as in enterprises, it will be people who make the difference'.

THE DETAILS OF THE DATA

Stable staff. Despite expectations, after the growth in 2019 and the new decline in 2020, 2021 was not the year of the big increase in public employees. Estimates by the State Accounting Office point to a weak growth for the stable PA staff (+0.2 %), which consisted of 3,249,337 persons as of 31 December 2021. The release of turnover started in 2019, but the slowdown of competition procedures due to the pandemic and the acceleration of retirements have not yet allowed a rebalancing of entries and exits. And the employment trend is reflected in the government's expenditure figures: expenditure on civil servants' salaries in 2021 was EUR 176.3 billion, +1.6% compared to 2020, a saving of EUR 3.1 billion compared to forecasts.

Major competitions. More than a year after the new rules and less than two months after the release of the PNRR 2 decree, the picture of public competitions is rather mixed. From the monitoring carried out by FPA on 55 of the most significant competition procedures called between 2019 and 2021, it emerges that 30 of these have ended and of the total 103,000 posts put up for competition just 14.5,000 have been assigned. Among the 25 ongoing procedures, in fact, there are large school competitions that increase the number of posts still vacant to over 88 thousand. The times of the completed procedures give hope on an ongoing acceleration: on average, the average days (from the publication of notices to the results) have fallen from 674 for the competitions announced in 2019, to 423 for those of 2020, to 141 for those of 2021. But optimism drops when we look at the long timeframes of the procedures still open: an average of 1,021 days have elapsed since the publication of the 4 2019 procedures still open, 713 for the 6 in 2020, and 248 for the 15 competitions announced in 2021.

Recruitment for the PNRR. There is one recruitment campaign that is marching on schedule: that of the PNRR professionals, which has already generated more than 15,000 hires, more than half of the more than 29,000 hires planned by 2023, so that the duration of the appointments - almost exclusively three years - falls within the planning period, with 2026 as the maximum date for completing the projects. The selective procedures completed have resulted in 1,032 collaborative assignments in the PA for 36 months, 14,103 fixed-term contracts, plus 50 permanent contracts. In 2021 alone, 160,000 applications were received for the calls for tenders launched for the NRP, with a 6% recruitment rate compared to the number of participants. 75% of the staff hired or being hired are graduates.

Flexible contracts. There are about 416 thousand people employed in the PA with flexible employment contracts (thus, in the PA there are 14 employees with fixed-term contracts for every 100 stable ones), of which 70 per cent are in the Education and Research sector, a sector with 292 thousand precarious workers. But from 2022, with the entry of more than 45 thousand fixed-term profiles for the NRP already in the initial three-year period, the incidence of fixed-term staff in the PA is set to increase.

Retirements. As of 1 January 2022, there are 3,082,954 public work pensions, an increase of 1.8% compared to the previous year, with an expenditure of EUR 79,203 million. According to INPS data, 146,110 civil servants retired in 2021, with an average age of 65.6 years. Due to the lack of turnover, at

the end of 2022 we will have about 94.4 pensions paid out for every 100 active contributors (they were 73 in 2002). In the last year, there has been an increase in the percentage of retirements due to old age (59% of the total) compared to those due to old age (17.8%), an effect also of 'Quota 100' (which came into force in 2019 and ended in December 2021), from which 166,000 public employees benefited in the three-year period. As of 1 January 2022, the so-called 'Quota 102' is active for 12 months and 169 thousand public employees who will have accrued 38 years of seniority in 2022, 430 thousand will be aged between 62 and 66, for which a further acceleration of exits is presumable.

A younger PA. With the unblocking of turnover and the Quota 100 push for early retirement, the average age of the PA has fallen. In 2020 public employees will be 49.9 years old on average, with wide differences between sectors, ranging from an average age of 55 at the CNEL, the Prime Minister's Office, the Unioncamere and the Prison Service, to almost 40 years in the Armed Forces. The over-60s account for 16.2 per cent, while the under-30s represent just 4.7 per cent. To raise the average age to 43.9 years in 2028, and reach 4 million employees, it would be necessary to hire 1.3 million people with an average age of 28, which is very low considering that today the average age of entry is around 32.

A more competent PA. Over the past 10 years, the number of graduates in the PA has grown by +23.1%. In 2020, there will be almost 1.4 million, 42.6% of the total number of public employees. But degrees are mainly in economics and law: 13% of PA employees have a degree in law/legal sciences/law/labour or economics, only 5.6% in STEM subjects. In addition, there is a strong need for continuous training: in 2020 we spent just EUR 40.3 per civil servant, a total of EUR 130.7 million, to train and update the PA. A major shift is expected with the investment in training thanks to the resources of the PNRR, the new PON Capacities for Cohesion 2021-2027 and the training fund envisaged in the Budget Law.

The complete FORUM PA 2022 programme: <https://www.forumpa.it/forum-pa-2022-il-paese-che-riparte/>

Press accreditation: <https://www.forumpa.it/ufficio-stampa-2/>

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DIGITAL360

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