

# ENGAGEMENT BAROMETER

Seventh national survey of the  
attitudes of civil servants



Sofia, 2025

# **BAROMETER OF ENGAGEMENT**

Seventh national survey  
on employee engagement in public administration

Sofia  
Institute of Public Administration



**Commitment** manifests itself through motivation to achieve, initiative, willingness to accept challenges, adaptability, perseverance, and persistence in achieving the organization's goals.

**Committed employees** work better and achieve higher results because their motivation is internal. They find personal meaning in what they do, are more innovative, and have high internal standards that do not allow them to settle for mediocre performance—either from themselves or their colleagues.

**Committed employees** work hard and feel deeply connected to their organization. They achieve personal fulfillment through their work. They are good professionals and know that the results of their professional activities are the best way to show others their strengths.

**Committed employees** are those who believe in the organization and identify with it. They do not need to be controlled in order to work hard. They constantly work to the best of their ability for themselves, their colleagues, and their managers.

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## 1. Summary of the report

The Engagement Barometer is an annual national survey that measures the motivation and satisfaction of employees in the Bulgarian public administration. It is based on the British Civil Service People Survey model and includes an assessment of engagement and the key factors that determine it: leadership, working environment, resource provision, teamwork, rewards, learning and development opportunities, and clarity of organizational goals. In 2025, the survey was conducted for the seventh consecutive year and involved 6,254 respondents from all types of administrative structures. The results of the analysis show that the overall engagement index remains close to the level of previous editions of the Barometer. Since the first survey in 2019,

The share of highly committed employees in the administration is decreasing. The trend is weak but steady—a comparison of the results from 2022 with those from 2025 shows that the share of highly committed employees has almost halved. The key strengths remain

"the internal motivation of employees (74 points) and the clarity of organizational goals (89 points) ( )."

"Opportunities for learning and development (67 points) are also rated positively and exceed the results of British employees." A positive trend is observed in the slight increase in ratings for the engagement factors: leadership, resources and workload, learning and development, and direct manager, each with an increase of 1 point compared to the previous year. The main factor, whose assessment

## Share of highly engaged employees



The "Remuneration" indicator has decreased, recording a decline of 4 points compared to last year and standing at 41 points this year. This result has a negative impact on overall engagement and creates a potential risk for the long-term motivation of employees.

The report recommends taking measures to improve career development, reform

performance appraisal systems, and expanding training opportunities, including with the help of modern technologies such as artificial intelligence and online platforms. An in-depth analysis of the reasons for the decline in the proportion of highly committed employees is also needed to build a more attractive image of the public administration as an employer.

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## 2. Introduction

The "Commitment Barometer" is a traditional anonymous survey of the motivation and satisfaction of employees in the Bulgarian public administration, which has been conducted once a year since 2019. It reflects the thoughts and feelings of public administration employees regarding their work. The survey is anonymous. All administrations receive an invitation to participate and every civil servant has the opportunity to express their opinion. The Institute of Public Administration (IPA) summarizes the responses and publishes the summary results. Regular measurement of employee engagement is very important. Employee motivation accounts for almost 30% of companies' financial results<sup>(1)</sup>. Committed employees are 43% more productive, much more creative and innovative, and provide a better customer experience<sup>(2)</sup>. However, engagement is important not only for business but also for the public sector. In the UK, a similar survey has been conducted annually since 2009.

and its results are discussed in parliament because it is considered a key factor for the success of administrative reforms. In the US, this tradition is even longer and began in the mid-1990s.

The Bulgarian study of civil servants' attitudes uses the British model of an anonymous questionnaire called "The Civil Service People Survey"<sup>3</sup>. Using the same model and questionnaire allows for a comparison of the data from Bulgaria with the results of the survey in the UK and for comparisons to be made. The validity of the questionnaire and its equivalence to the original British questionnaire were verified during the first national survey in 2019. The results of this verification were published in the report on that survey.

1 - Hay Group (2001). Engage employees and boost performance.

2 - IES/Work Foundation report (2008). People and the Bottom Line.

3 - Cabinet Office (2018). Civil Service People Survey: Technical Guide. London

The questionnaire contains 41 statements. These are closed questions with 5 fixed response options. Respondents can select only one answer by clicking on it with the mouse (radio button). If the answer is changed, the selection is automatically changed. In this way, the technology allows only one answer to be given to each question - the last answer selected by the participant remains the final one. The statements measure commitment and the factors that determine it—leadership, rewards, team, organizational goals, direct manager, etc. The content of the questionnaire has not changed over the years and is identical to the initial version of the questionnaire from 2019. This ensures the comparability of the results with previous years and with the results of the British administration, where the content of the questionnaire has also remained unchanged since 2009.

For the first time, in 2022, a brief assessment of subjective well-being, known as the PERMA index, was included in the additional section of the questionnaire. This section was added to the original Civil Service People Survey in 2012, but was introduced in Bulgaria a little later. The index covers five different aspects of well-being, and its name, PERMA, is an acronym of the first letters of each aspect: P (positive emotions), E (engagement), R (interpersonal relationships), M (meaning), and A (achievement). The PERMA index is establishing itself as a metric in the British version of the survey

and seems to be gaining ground in Bulgaria as well.

This year, we are once again researching this index.

Participation in the survey is voluntary and anonymous. The Institute of Public Administration does not provide any other information to the administrations except for summary data on commitment and the factors on which it depends. When selecting demographic and organizational-administrative variables, both the importance of different demographic comparisons and analyses and the need to ensure the anonymity of participants are taken into account. Therefore, only three demographic characteristics are included in the study: age, gender, and years of experience in public administration. Respondents are not required to specify their exact age and experience, but only the age and experience category to which they belong. There are three age categories: up to 35 years, 35–50 years, and over 50 years. The variable "length of service in public administration" is structured into four categories: employees with up to 5 years of service, between 5 and 15 years, between 15 and 25 years, and employees with over 25 years of service in public administration. Guarantees of anonymity for respondents are essential for obtaining reliable and unmanipulated data.

There are four organizational characteristics for which data is collected in the study: type of administration; administrative area in which the relevant administrative structure operates; position of the respondent; and number of employees in the administrative structure.



and type of administration. The type of administration reflects the legally defined classification of administrative structures in Bulgaria. These are: ministries, state agencies, administrations of state commissions, executive agencies, administrations established by normative act, specialized territorial administrations, regional administrations, and municipal administrations. The positions of the respondents are classified into the categories defined in the Civil Servants Act: senior civil servants, employees in managerial positions, expert positions with analytical and/or control functions, expert positions with auxiliary functions, and technical positions. Two categories are distinguished according to the type of administration: general and specialized administration. The administrative areas are all 28 administrative areas in the country. Each year, the report analyzing the results of the Barometer compares data on Bulgarian civil servants with data on civil servants in the United Kingdom from the previous year. This is because the British survey is conducted at the end of the year and the results are published in March of the following year. The Bulgarian survey is conducted in the spring and the data is published in the summer of the same year. In addition to the general report, the IPA gives administrations the opportunity to request an organization-specific analysis of the data. This is based on the responses of employees from the relevant administration.

administration, with requirements for a minimum number of participants from the administration, as well as minimum quotas by position and seniority. This is done in order to ensure the anonymity of civil servants and administrations that will receive their own report, on the one hand, and to ensure the accuracy of comparisons with national data, on the other.

This year, a total of 55 administrations requested an organization-specific report, but only 47 of them met the minimum number of participants and quotas and will receive one.

This report presents summary results for the entire state administration. The next chapter presents the theoretical model of the questionnaire, and the third chapter presents summary data on the participants. The fourth chapter presents the results of the study on the commitment of civil servants and the factors that determine it. The concluding chapter contains conclusions and recommendations.





## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Theoretical model

Commitment can be defined as a specific attitude of employees toward their work and its results. Depending on the level of commitment, the following groups of employees are distinguished:

- ▶ Highly committed employees work "with their hearts." They strive for excellence and high results because they enjoy their work and feel attached to what they do and to their organization. For them, work is a source of meaning and personal satisfaction.
- ▶ Moderately committed employees are motivated, disciplined, and responsible. For them, work is important, but it is not the most significant part of their lives. All over the world, in both the public and private sectors, moderately committed, conscientious, and diligent employees predominate.

and conscientious employees predominate.

- ▶ Uncommitted employees are externally motivated. They are not attached to their work, but do it because they need income and security.
- ▶ The negative pole of commitment is formed by actively uncommitted employees. They dislike or even hate their work, but believe that they cannot risk leaving and changing jobs. Actively disengaged employees are one of the main reasons for low organizational effectiveness and poor service quality.

Gallup International conducts a similar global engagement survey every year. It is based on their own methodology but contains a similar classification of engagement. Gallup's research shows that the ratio between highly engaged and actively disengaged employees is critical to a company's productivity and financial performance. In well-managed organizations, this ratio is above 14, and in general, the higher the number, the better the organizational climate and the more prosperous the company<sup>(4)</sup>.

A similar ratio between "critics" and "promoters" is used in the methodology for assessing employer brand strength (eNPS – employer Net Promoter Score). The methodology itself is based on a single question, which is also included in the Barometer: "Would you recommend your company as a place to work to a close friend or relative?" The answer is rated on a scale from 0 to 10, with 10 being the highest rating and 0 the lowest.

The difference is that eNPS provides 10 possible answers, while the Barometer only provides 5. However, the eNPS methodology is applicable by subtracting the sum of the shares of those who answered negatively or cannot assess from the answers "completely sure." If the difference is a positive number, it means that most employees are engaged. If the value is between 20 and 30, the level of engagement is good. A result above 30 points indicates high engagement<sup>(5)</sup>. Due to the fewer response options in the Barometer, the application of the eNPS methodology leads to slightly lower results, but they still help to further interpret the data. In the methodology, engagement is measured using the following six statements listed below. They reflect different aspects of employees' attachment to their work and organization. Commitment is not a personality trait.

1. I feel proud when I say where I work.
2. I would recommend my administration as a very good place to work.
3. I am committed to the administration where I work.
4. I talk about my administration using "we" rather than "they."
5. I have built friendly relationships with colleagues in my administration.
6. My administration motivates me to do my best.

4 Gallup (2017). State of the Global Workplace. New York: Gallup Press

5. Qualtrics - Calculating eNPS, <https://www.qualtrics.com/uk/experience-management/employee/employee-net-promoter-score>

People are not born committed or uncommitted; they develop these attitudes as a result of several driving factors. The most important of these is leadership in organizations. Leaders are those who set challenging and inspiring goals and manage change:

1. **Leadership and change management** – employees' subjective perceptions of senior management – perceptions of the correctness of its judgments and decisions, its ability to manage change, and to set meaningful and inspiring goals.
2. **My work** – respondents' subjective perceptions related to their own work and daily work routine – how much employees like their work and are motivated to achieve high results in it.
3. **Organizational goals** – how clear the goals of the administration and the structural unit are and how much employees see a connection between their own work (role) and the achievement of these goals.
4. **My manager** – employees' subjective perception of their immediate manager as motivating, supportive, concerned about their development, and providing timely feedback.
5. **Team** – employees' subjective perceptions of the quality of interpersonal and working relationships within the team, as well as the extent to which colleagues are perceived as helpful, supportive, and cooperative.
6. **Learning and development** – respondents' subjective perceptions of the availability of opportunities for

Career and professional development at work, as well as perceptions of their administration as stimulating learning and supporting the development of professional competencies.

7. **Resources and workload** – employees' subjective perceptions of workload and stress at work, the availability of the necessary resources and information to perform their tasks, and the possibility of achieving a work-life balance.
8. **Remuneration** – employees' subjective perceptions of the fairness of remuneration and satisfaction with the remuneration received.

## 3.2. Questionnaire

The questionnaire used to measure engagement contains **41 statements**. In addition to the six statements for assessing engagement shown above, the questionnaire contains between four and six statements designed to assess each of its driving factors (determinants). The statements are rated on a five-point Likert scale, which includes the following responses:

- **Agree**
- **Somewhat agree**
- **Neither agree nor disagree**
- **Rather disagree**
- **Disagree**

Each statement represents a specific aspect of engagement or one of its factors. The report on the results of the first Barometer survey in 2019 provides convincing evidence that the Bulgarian version of the questionnaire is conceptually and functionally equivalent to the original instrument. This means that:

1) engagement in British and Bulgarian culture has a similar scope and content (i.e., engaged or unengaged employees in both countries think and behave in roughly the same way);

2) the factors or determinants of commitment are the same in both cultures, and even their weight or importance for commitment is approximately the same;

3) the reliability and accuracy of the results, respectively the statistical error of the measurement is approximately the same. More technical details regarding the psychometric characteristics of the instrument are provided in Appendices 4 and 5 of the 2019 Report. The results of factor analyses and internal consistency checks of the scales are presented there.

### 3.3. 's assessment system

The algorithm for calculating the results is described in detail in the technical manual of The Civil Service People Survey<sup>6</sup>. First, the responses "agree" are given a weight of 100%, the responses "somewhat agree" responses are given a weight of 75%, "neither agree nor disagree" responses are given a weight of 50%, and "disagree" responses are given a weight of 0%.

"disagree" responses are given a weight of 25%, and "strongly disagree" responses are given a weight of 0%. The arithmetic means are then calculated for each factor and the overall "commitment" index is calculated.

"commitment." The same scoring algorithm was used in the study of commitment in the Bulgarian public administration.



6 Cabinet Office (2018). Civil Service People Survey: Technical Guide. London

Calculation of results for the global index and factors	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree
Statements	100	75	50	25	0
My work is interesting.					
My job encourages me to develop as a professional.					
I feel that I am involved in decision-making related to my work.					
I am committed to the administration I work for.					
I have enough freedom to decide how to carry out my duties.					
Result: <i>My work</i>		$(100+ 75+ 50+ 25+ 0)/5= 50\%$			

The PERMA index calculations include two additional questions, which can be answered on a scale of 0 to 10. They are scored as follows: answer 0 – 0%, answers 1, 2, 3, and 4 – 25%, answers 5 and 6 – 50%, answers 7, 8, and 9 – 75%, answer 10 – 100%.

The summary results for the Bulgarian administration represent the arithmetic mean of all respondents. The results for the different types of administrations or for the individual administrations that will receive an organization-specific report represent the arithmetic mean of the results of the employees from those administrations.

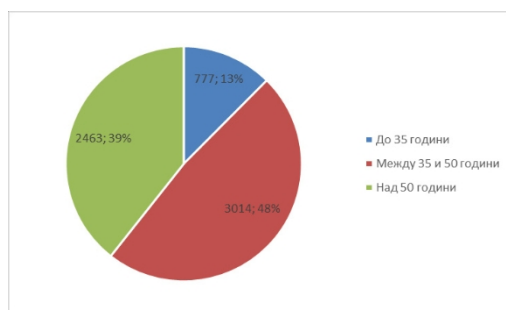


## 4. Excerpt

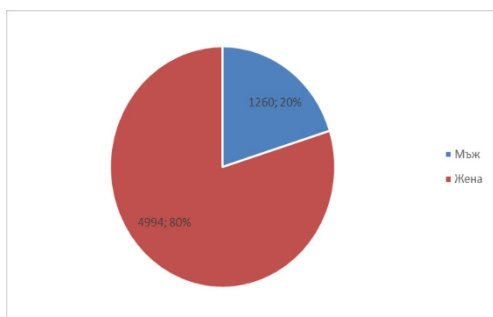
This year's engagement survey was conducted between **April 22 and May 9, 2025**.

A total of 6,254 respondents took part, which is 29% less than in 2023, but almost the same as in 2019, 2020, and 2021. The following graphs show the distribution of respondents by gender, age, position, and length of service in the administration.

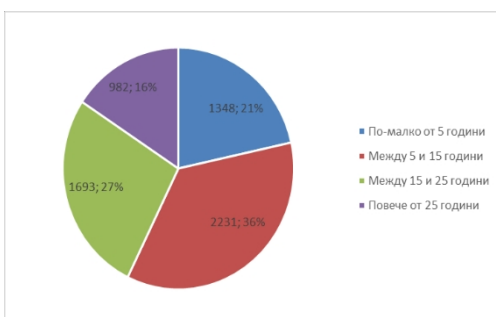
**Figure 2. Distribution of participants by age**



**Figure 1. Distribution of participants by gender**



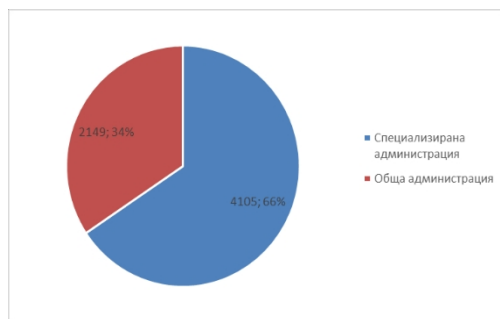
**Figure 3. Distribution of participants by length of service**



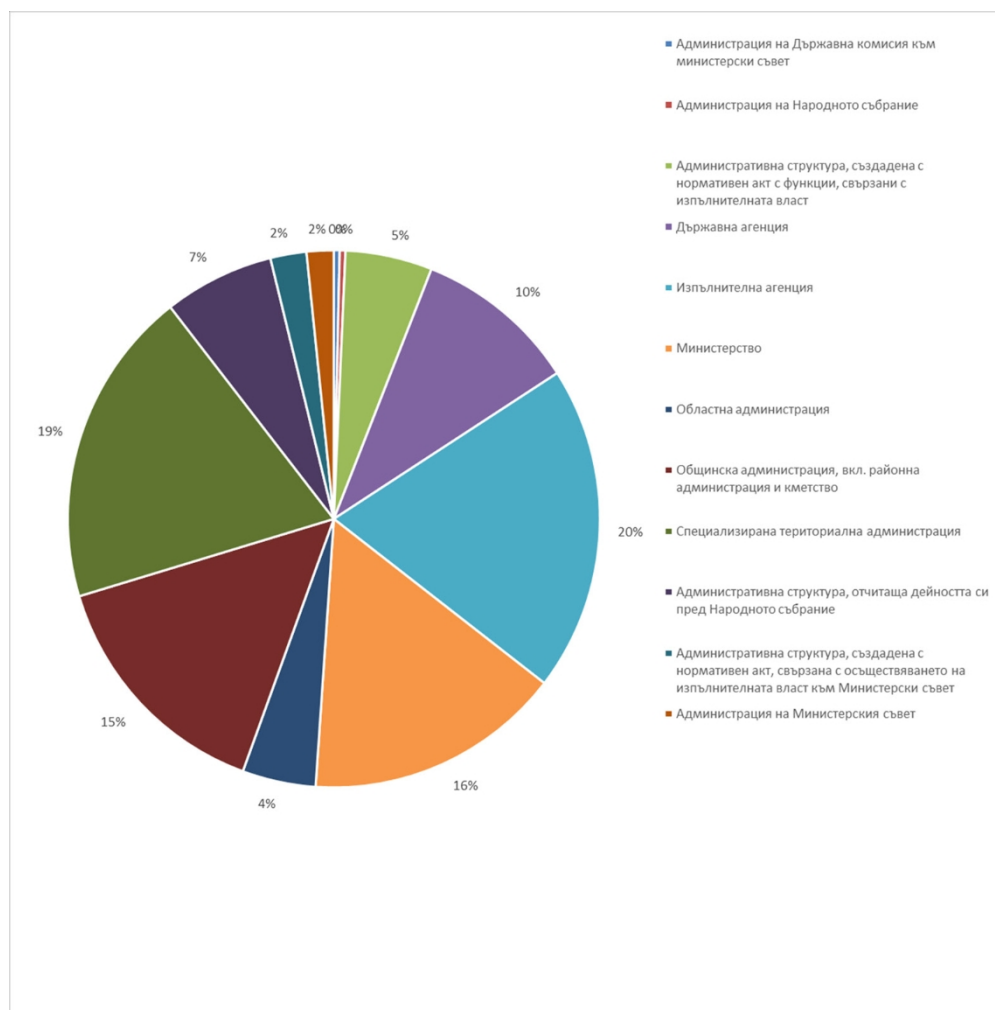
**Figure 4. Distribution of participants by position**



**Figure 5. Distribution of participants by type of administration**

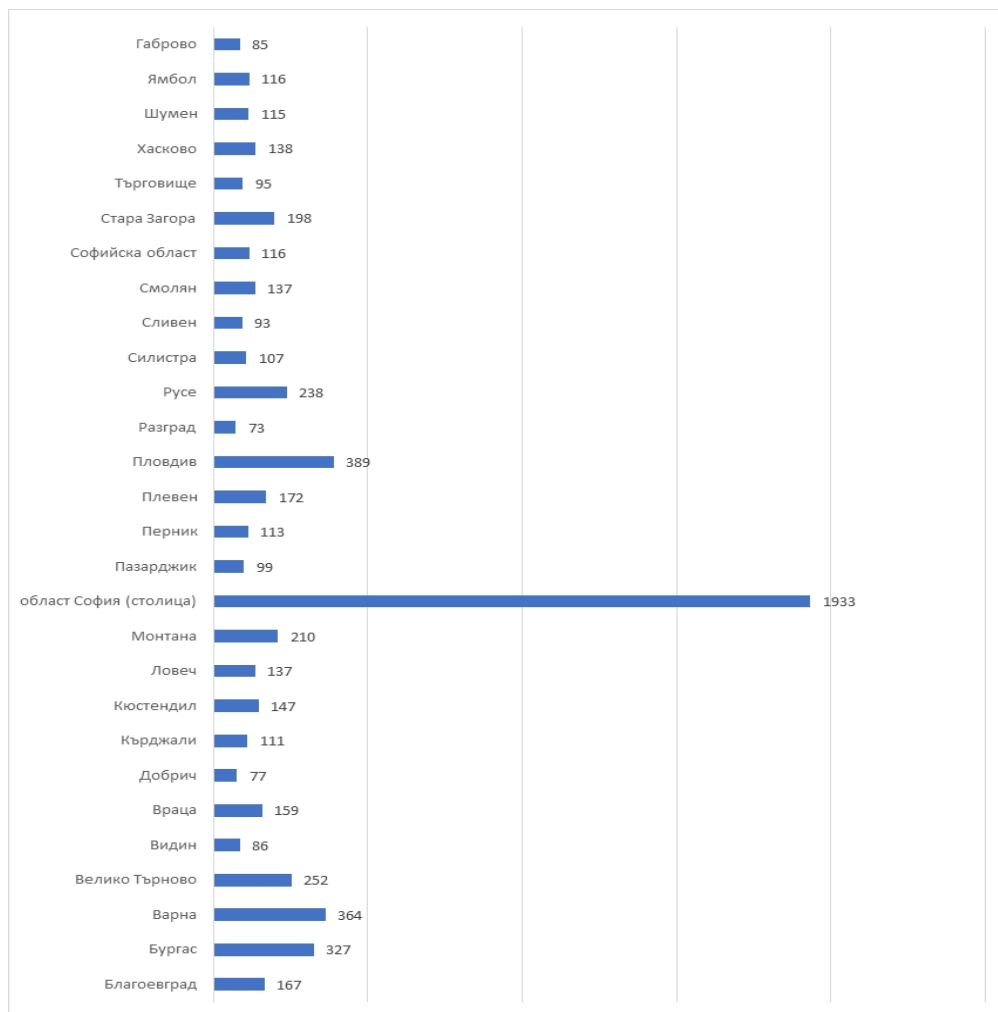


**Figure 6. Distribution of participants by type of administration**





**Figure 7. Distribution of participants by region (the data in the chart represent numbers)**



The distribution of respondents by main demographic characteristics shows close similarity with the data from the Administrative Register and the Report on the State of the Administration (RSA). Demographic characteristics have not changed significantly compared to previous studies.

The same can be said about the distribution of participants by administration, shown in the following graphs. The fact that there are several times more participants from Sofia (city) can be easily explained not only by the size of the region, but also by the centralized structure of the state administration in Bulgaria.



## 5. Results

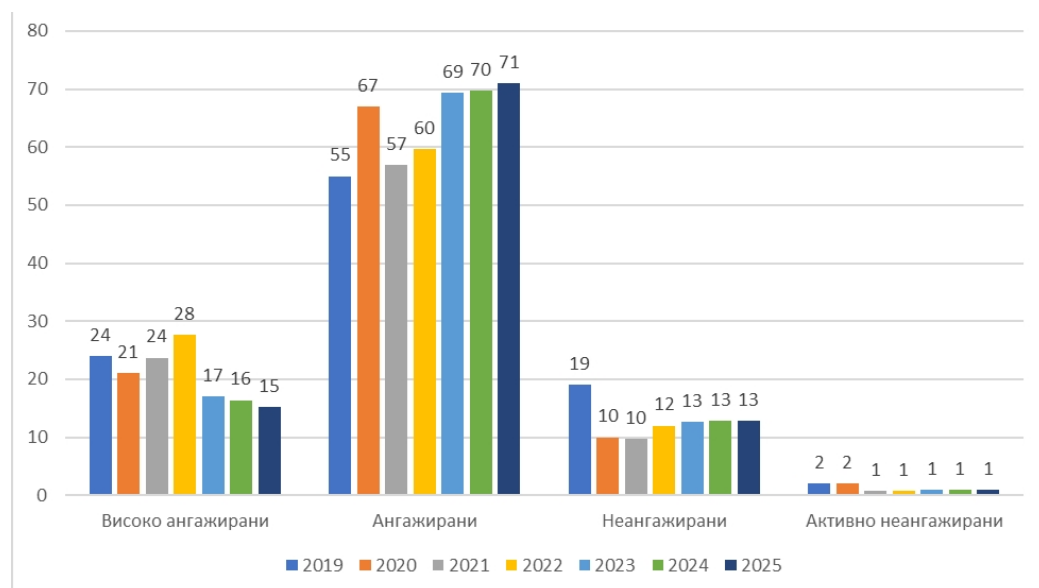
### 5.1. Assessment of commitment

The commitment of civil servants is the central theme of the study. The methodology allows respondents to be divided into four main groups: "highly committed," "committed,"

"not committed" and "actively not committed."

Figure 8 shows the percentage of civil servants falling into each of these groups.

**Figure 8. Distribution of civil servants according to their level of commitment (2019–2025)**

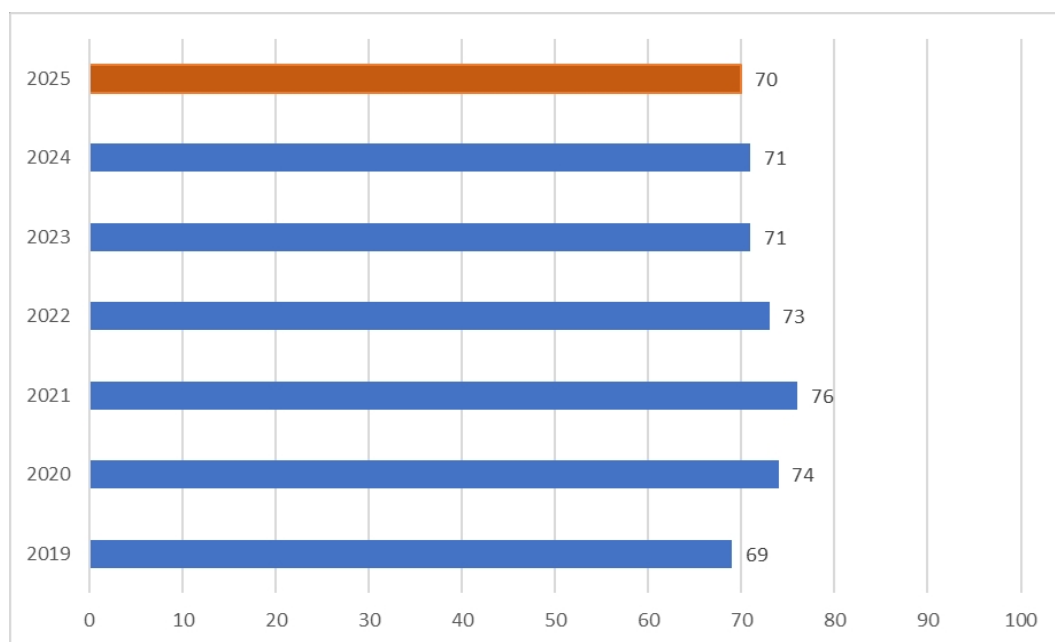


The data in Figure 8 show that the motivation of civil servants in 2025 is generally similar to that in 2024. The only difference is that the share of highly committed employees has decreased by 1%, while the share of committed employees has increased by 1%. These differences are within the statistical margin of error and it can be concluded that the level of commitment of civil servants remains

unchanged compared to last year's level.

Figure 9 presents data on the global engagement index for 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025. They show that the average level of commitment of civil servants is approximately at the level of 2023 and 2024. The decline is again insignificant and within the statistical error.

**Figure 9. Commitment index in the Bulgarian public administration (2019–2025)**



Although there are no statistically significant differences compared to last year, looking at the data from a longer-term perspective, some worrying trends can be observed:

- The overall level of employee engagement in the administration has been declining for the fourth consecutive year

is falling slightly but steadily.

- Every year, the share of highly engaged employees in the administration is decreasing. Again, the trend is weak but steady, and against this backdrop, if we look at the results from 2022, we will see that by 2025 it will have fallen by almost half.

**Figure 10. Distribution of participants' responses to statements related to commitment**

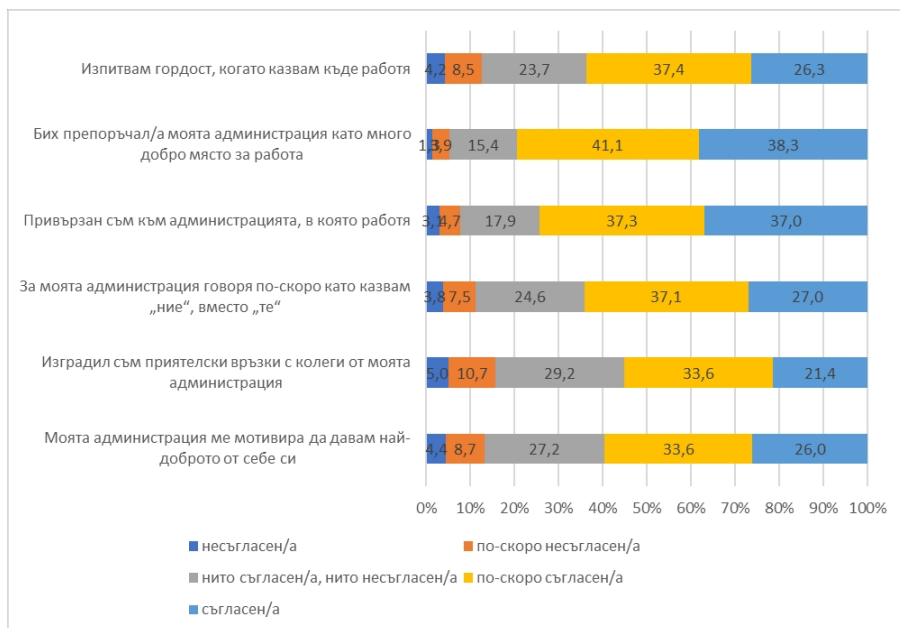
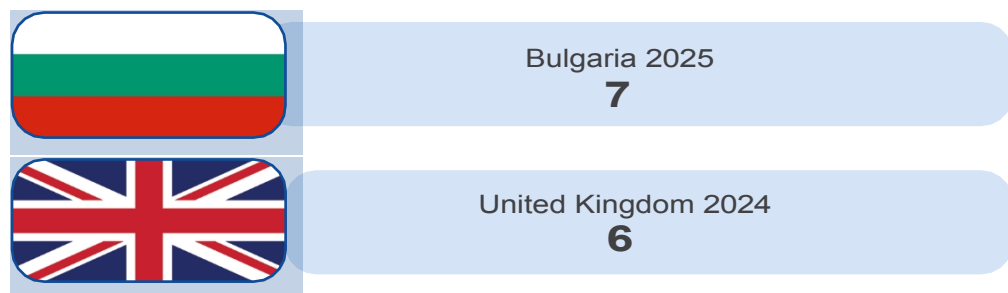


Figure 10 shows the distribution of participants' responses to the six statements used to measure commitment. The detailed data show that a significant part of the commitment of employees in the state administration is due to their identification with the institution in which they work, as well as to their belief that the state administration is an attractive place to work because of the security it provides. To the statement "I would recommend my administration as a very good place to work," 38% of respondents said they would do so and the same percentage said they would probably do so.

However, year after year, the results for the statement "My administration motivates me to give my best" are getting lower. The majority of employees in the administration are satisfied, but every year the proportion of those who are motivated to give their best in the civil service decreases by 1%.

The use of the Civil Service People Survey model allows benchmarking between the results of the Bulgarian public administration and those of the public administration in the United Kingdom. The comparisons are presented in Figure 11. We remind you that the data for the UK are from the survey conducted at the end of 2024.

**Figure 11. Comparison between Bulgaria and the United Kingdom by commitment index**



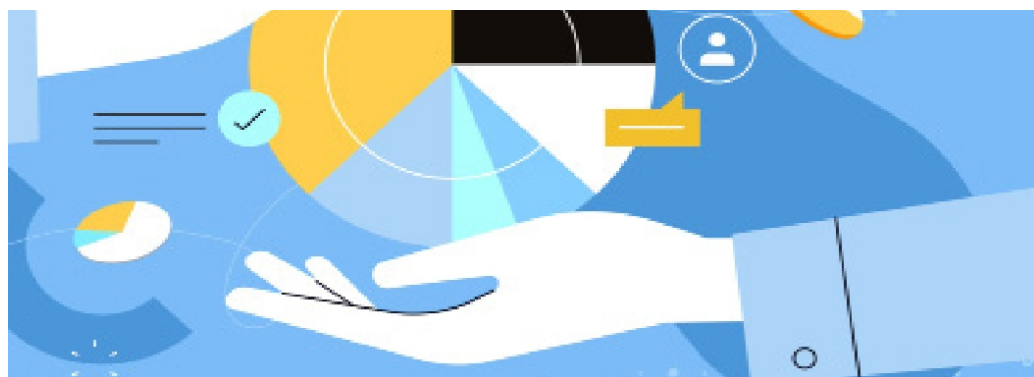
Throughout the years since the Barometer of Commitment has been conducted in Bulgaria, the results of the Bulgarian state administration have been higher than those of the British administration. This is also the case this year. As in Bulgaria, there have been no significant changes in the commitment of civil servants in the UK over the past year, and thus the difference of 7 points has become 6 points, which is not a statistically significant change.

The demographic and organizational-administrative variables included in the study allow for an analysis of commitment according to various statistical and demographic

First, comparisons are presented for the organizational variables, followed by the demographic ones.

First, comparisons by organizational variables are presented, followed by demographic ones.

Figure 12 presents data on commitment by type of administration. Small but statistically significant differences are observed. The highest level of commitment is among employees in regional administrations – 74 points, while the lowest level of motivation is among employees in the National Assembly administration – 64 points, and in state agencies – 66 points. Overall, the trend of territorial and local administration being more committed and motivated than central administration continues.



**Figure 12. Commitment index by type of administration**

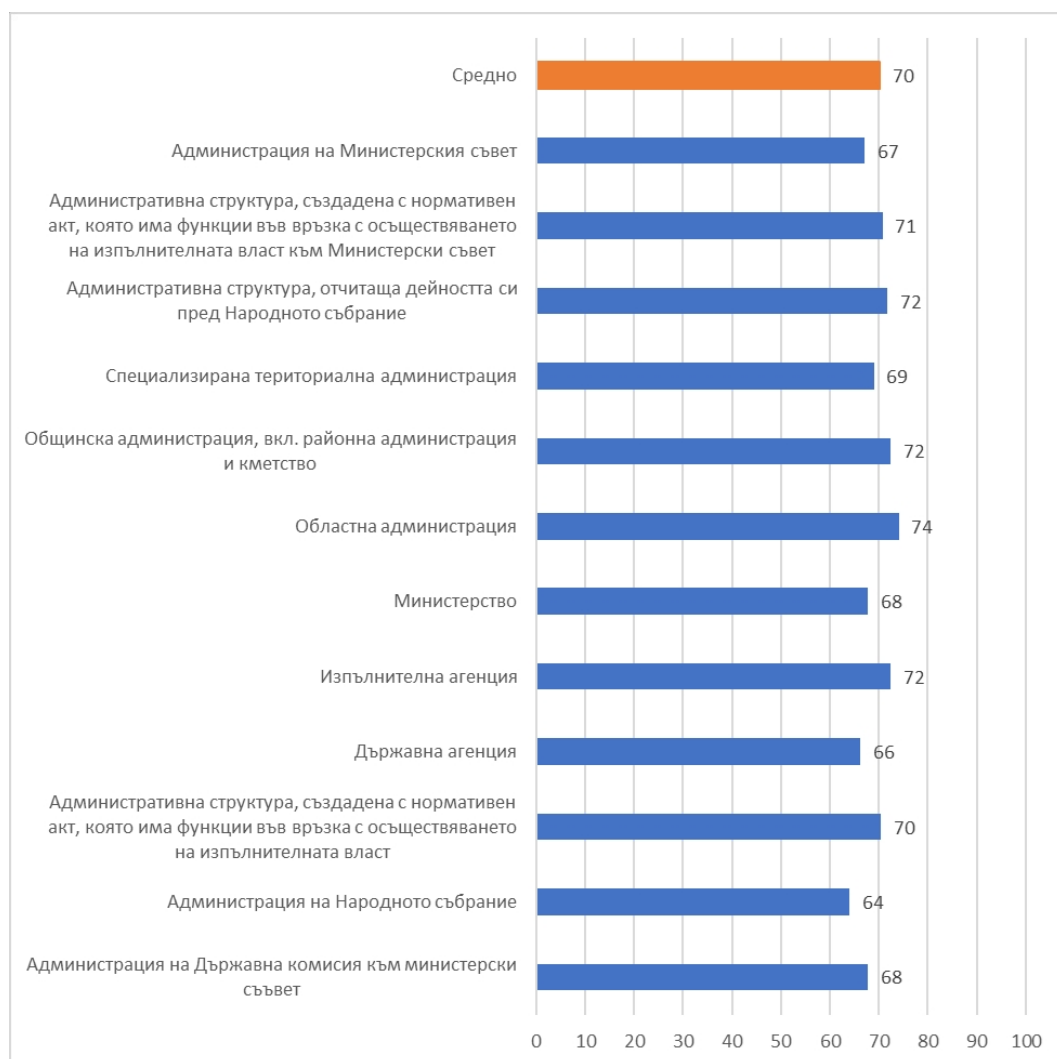


Figure 13 presents a comparison of employee engagement in different areas. Here, too, statistically significant differences can be observed.

There is a continuing trend in lower-income areas to report higher satisfaction with the opportunity to work in public administration, while in Sofia

(city), Varna, and Burgas, the engagement index is below the national average. On the other hand, however, the data in Figure 13 may be related to the previous ones and may reflect to some extent the fact that employees in regional and municipal administrations are among the most engaged.

**Figure 13. Engagement index by region**

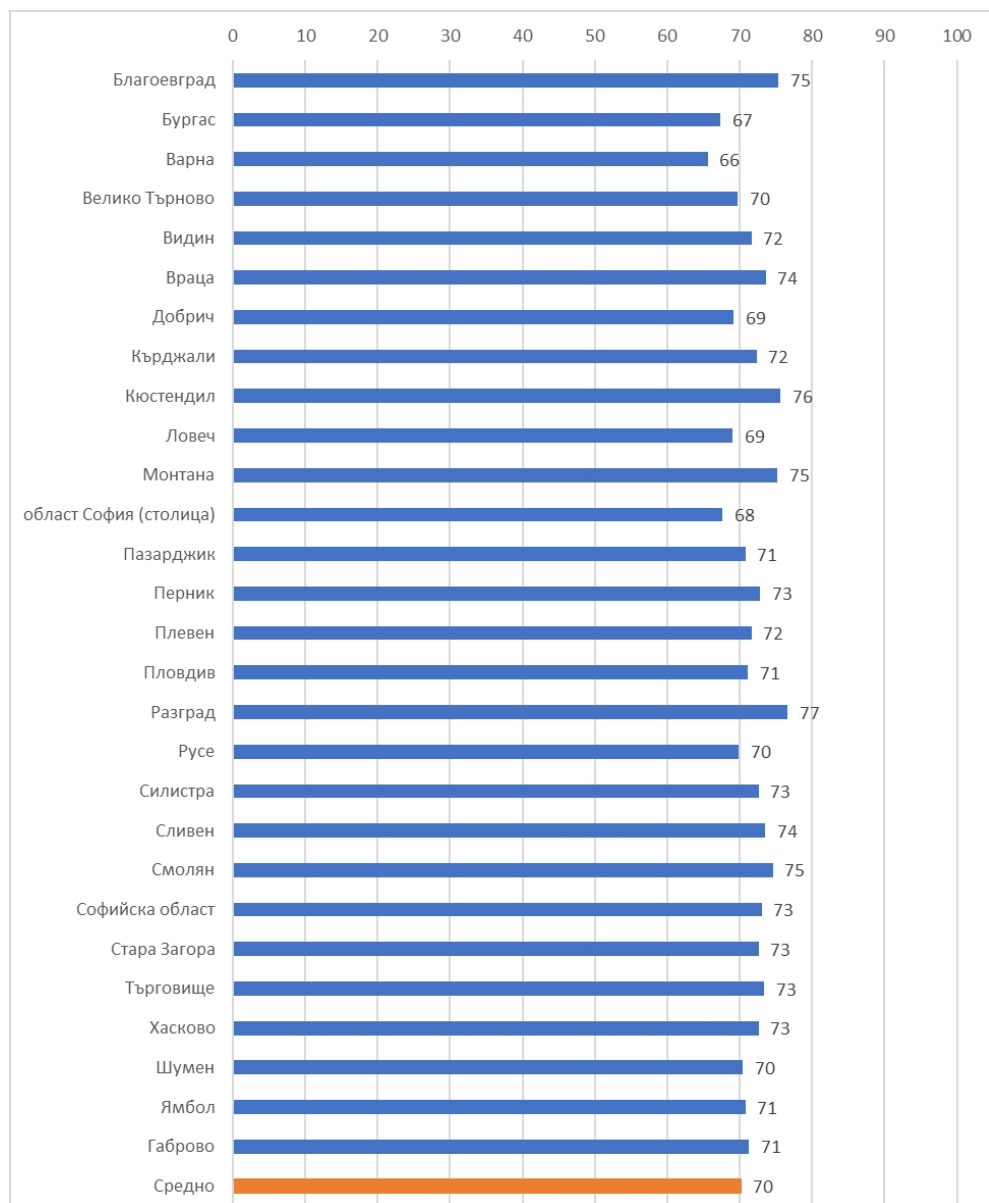
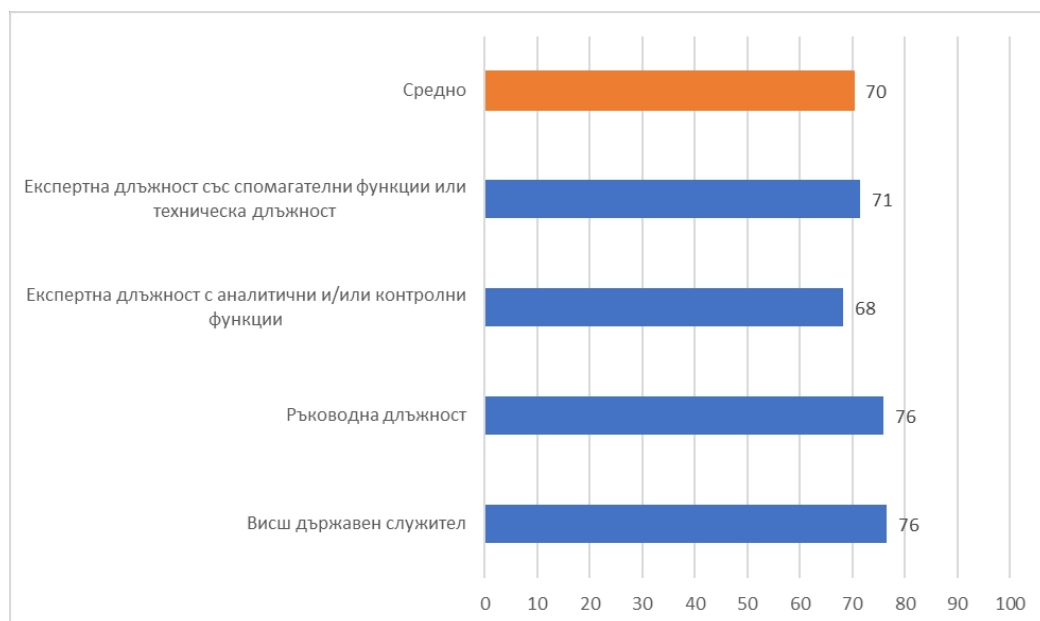


Figure 14 presents comparisons of employee engagement levels by type of position.

**Figure 14. Commitment index by position of respondent**



The observed differences in the level of commitment depending on the position held are significant and statistically significant. As expected, senior civil servants and employees in management positions are the most committed. Similar results were found in all previous surveys.

Senior civil servants and managers are more committed than experts, as they are more actively involved in decision-making processes and in the management of the administrations themselves.

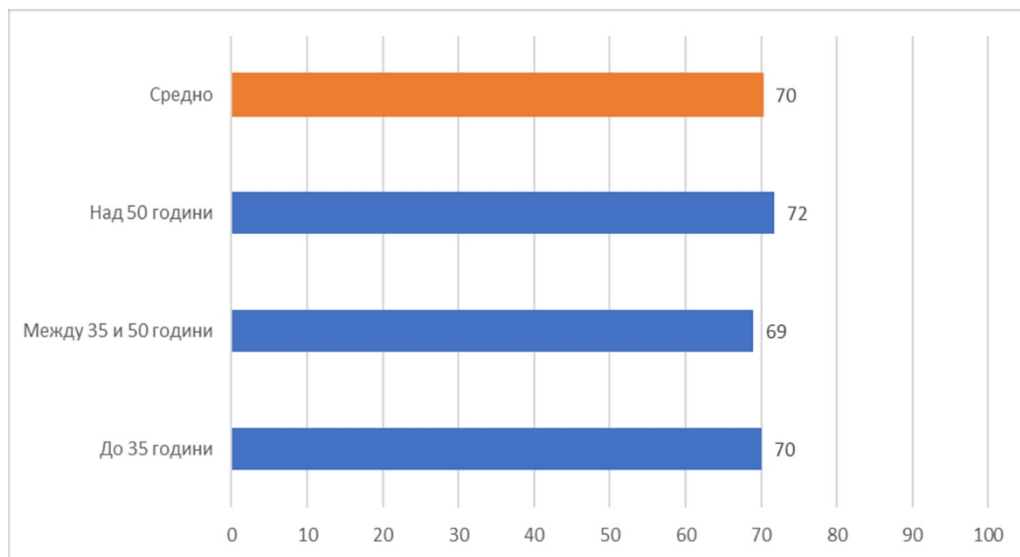
Statistically significant differences are also observed by age. These are presented in Figure 15. As in previous studies, the results show that the youngest and oldest employees are more committed than middle-aged employees. The youngest employees are motivated because they are still in the process of establishing themselves in their jobs. They strive to perform as well as possible in every task assigned to them and to show that they can be relied upon.



At the end of their career, motivation increases again. This happens because employees feel confident in their professional knowledge and skills and want to demonstrate this, as well as pass on their experience and knowledge to younger employees.

However, it is also important to note that that by the mid-1950s, most parents' children were growing up and many of them, both in business and in administration, were devoting themselves entirely to their work, seeking personal fulfillment in it.

**Figure 15. Commitment index by age group**



Comparisons between groups by length of service in Figure 16 reflect the same dynamic. Once again, we see that employees with the shortest and longest service are the most committed, which is related

with the reasons just listed. The differences are small, and their statistical significance is entirely due to the size of the sample.

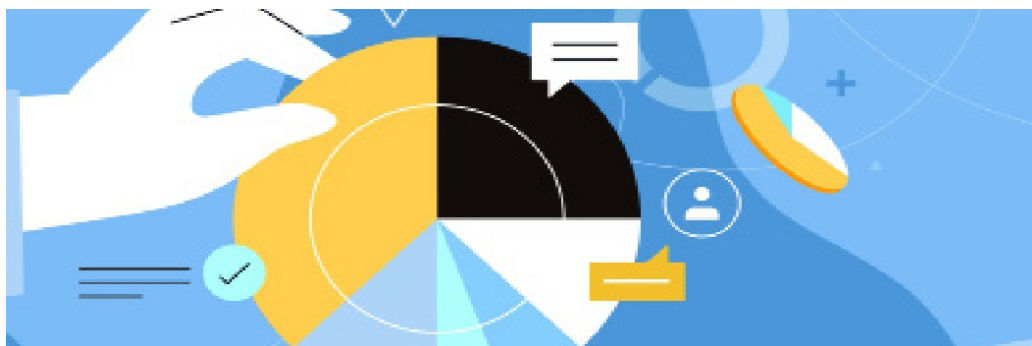
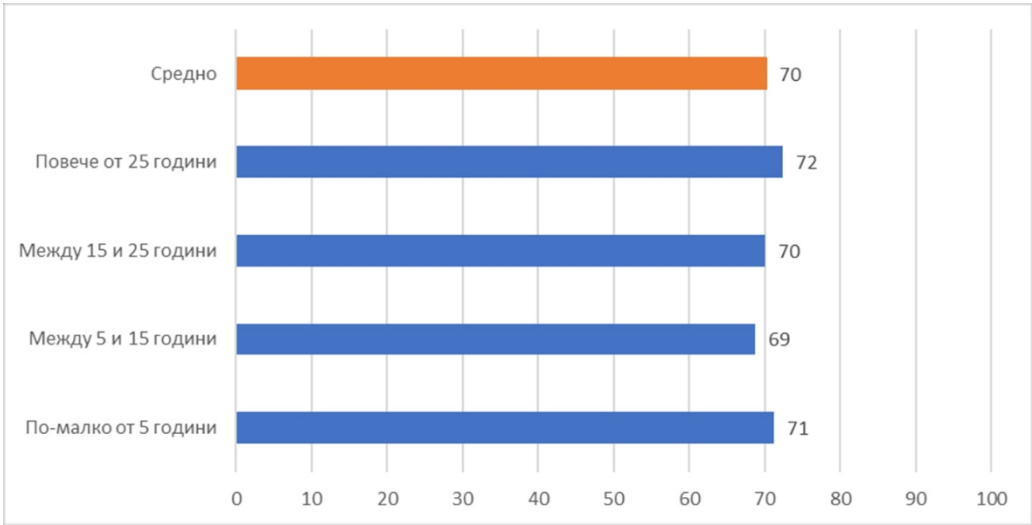


Figure 16. Engagement index by length of service



Most of the engagement studies conducted to date show statistically significant differences. This is also the case in the data for 2025.

Engagement in general administration is higher, albeit slightly, than in specialized administration.

Figure 17. Engagement index by type of administration

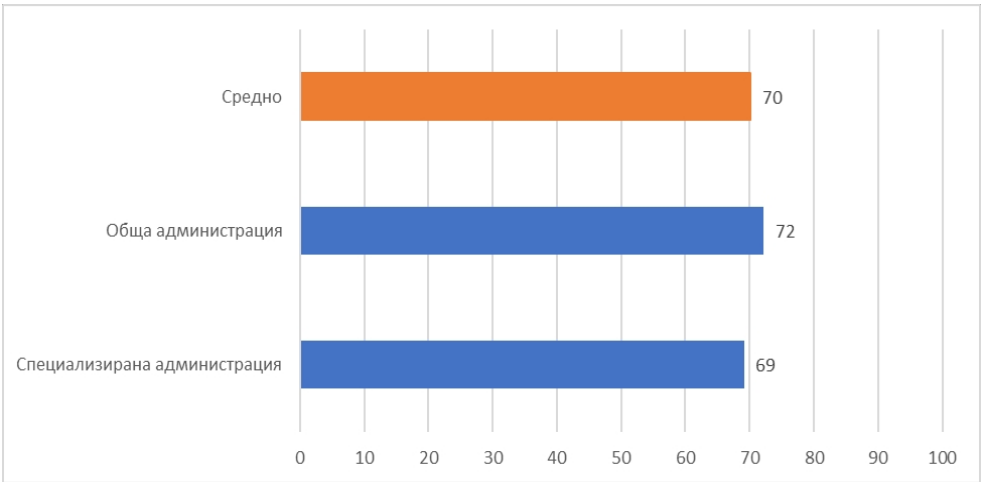
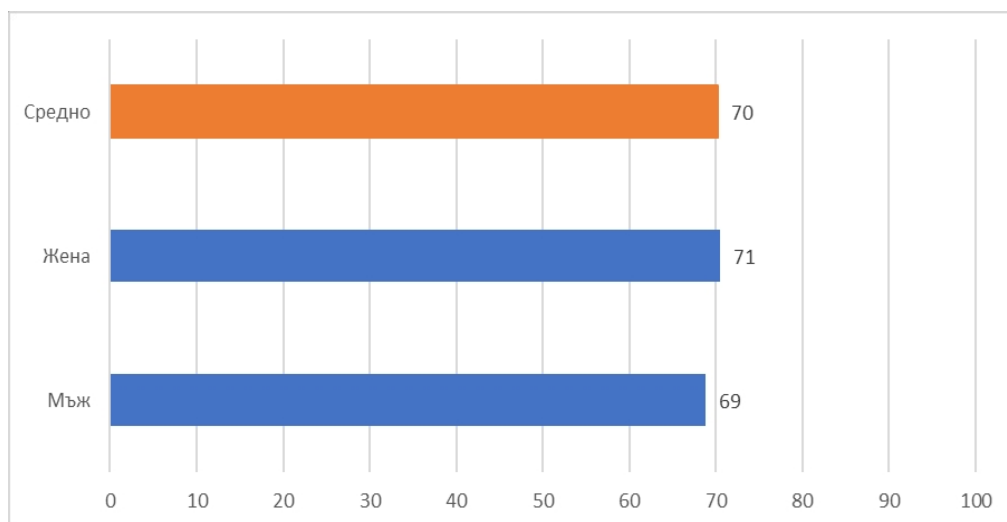
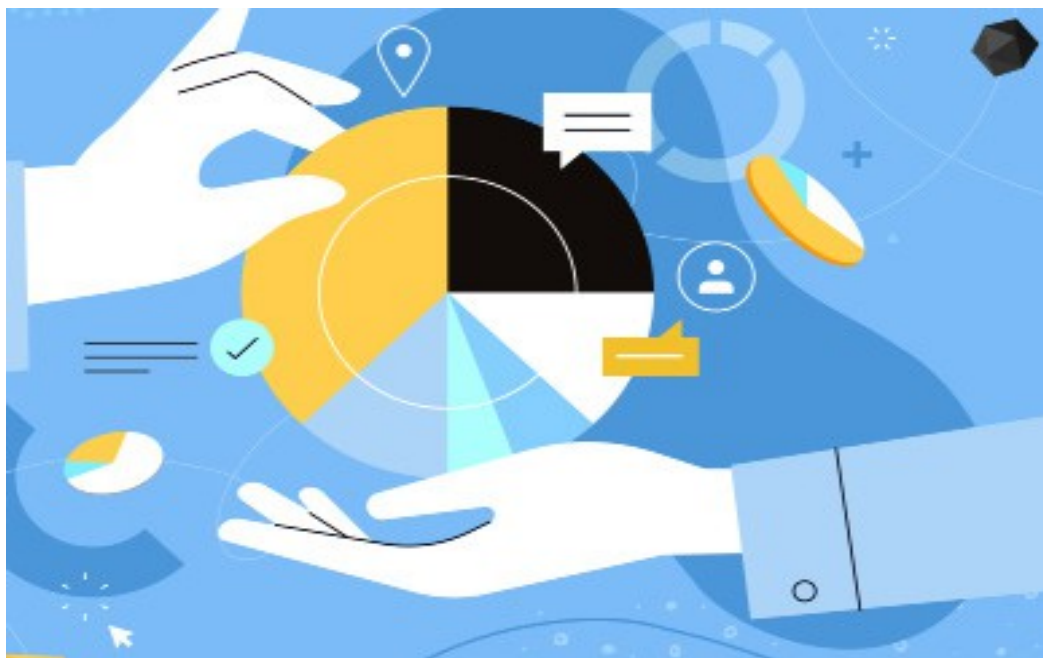


Figure 18. Engagement index by gender of employees



Similar slight differences are observed by gender. The data are shown in Figure 18. As in previous studies, there is a tendency for women to be slightly more engaged than men.

Usually, the difference in motivation varies between 1 and 2 points, which is statistically significant but insignificant.



## 5.2. Analysis of the main factors

The design of the study presented in the introductory chapter shows that the model includes not only the measurement of commitment but also an assessment of the main factors on which it depends. These factors or determinants are strategic leadership (management), organizational goals, the nature of the work itself, the immediate supervisor, the team, opportunities for learning and development, the availability of resources, and employee satisfaction with their compensation.

In previous studies, numerous and consistent evidence from regression analyses has been presented that these factors significantly determine the variation in commitment. The commitment factor indices are presented in summary form in Table 1. It compares the assessments from 2019, 2017, and 2015. The engagement factor indices are summarized in Table 1. It compares the ratings from 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 and the dynamics of the change in the assessments for each of the factors can be traced.

Table 1. Indices of factors determining commitment by year

Factor	2019	20	2	2	2	20	20	Difference from previous year
Leadership	67	74	74	7	70	69	70	+1
My work	75	79	80	76	75	74	74	0
Team	75	79	80	79	76	75	75	0
Remuneration	3	45	49	38	39	44	41	-
Resources and load	76	75	75	7	70	69	70	+
Learning and development	60	67	7	67	67	66	67	+1
Organizational goals	90	92	92	92	90	89	89	0
Direct supervisor	74	78	79	78	75	74	75	+

Table 1 shows that, compared to last year, there are insignificant increases of one point in the factors "Leadership," "Resources and workload," "Learning and development," and "Direct supervisor," while the remaining factors, with the exception of "Remuneration" remained at the same level. The "Remuneration" factor saw a decline of 4 points, which largely explains the slight decline in motivation and commitment. These data provide a good explanation for why the commitment of civil servants has remained at the same level between 2023 and 2024. There are almost no changes

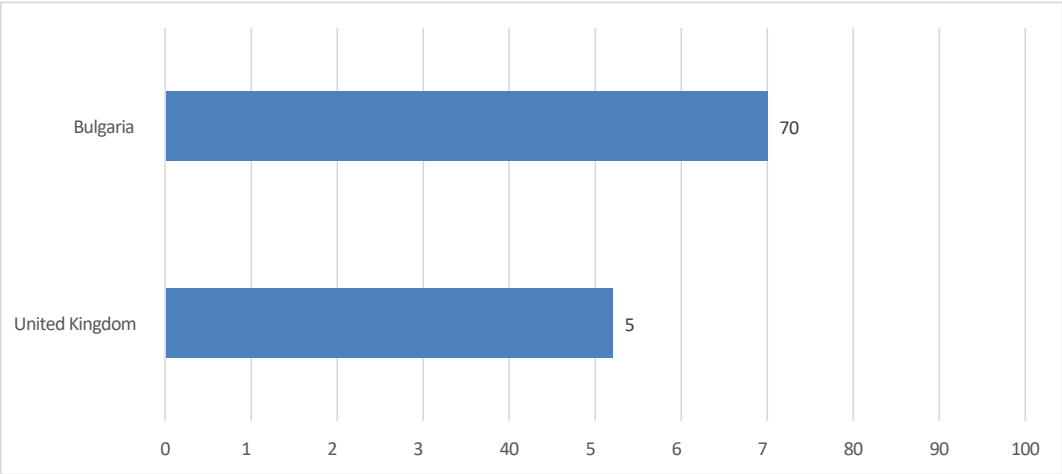
in the factors related to the organizational and working environment, with the exception of satisfaction with remuneration. Overall, the greatest dynamics throughout the period were observed in satisfaction with remuneration, which also largely determined the dynamics of commitment, as the other factors remained relatively constant or changed very little. In the following sections of this chapter, we will examine in detail the results for the individual determinants of engagement.

## Leadership and change management

Figure 19 compares the assessments of Bulgarian and British civil servants regarding senior management in the administration. In both countries, the change compared to last year is positive, but very slight. The trend remains that the result

of the Bulgarian administration on this factor being significantly higher, and this is precisely the indicator where the biggest differences between Bulgarian and British civil servants are observed.

**Figure 19. Results for the factor "Leadership and change management"**



Although the result for leadership and change management has declined for the third consecutive year, it is still good and, as can be seen from Figure 19, significantly higher than the result for strategic management in the British public sector. This continues to be the factor that shows the biggest differences between Bulgarian and British civil servants and which contributes most to the better results in terms of Bulgarian civil servants' commitment.

**Figure 20. Distribution of responses from survey participants "Commitment Barometer" according to statements related to leadership and change management**

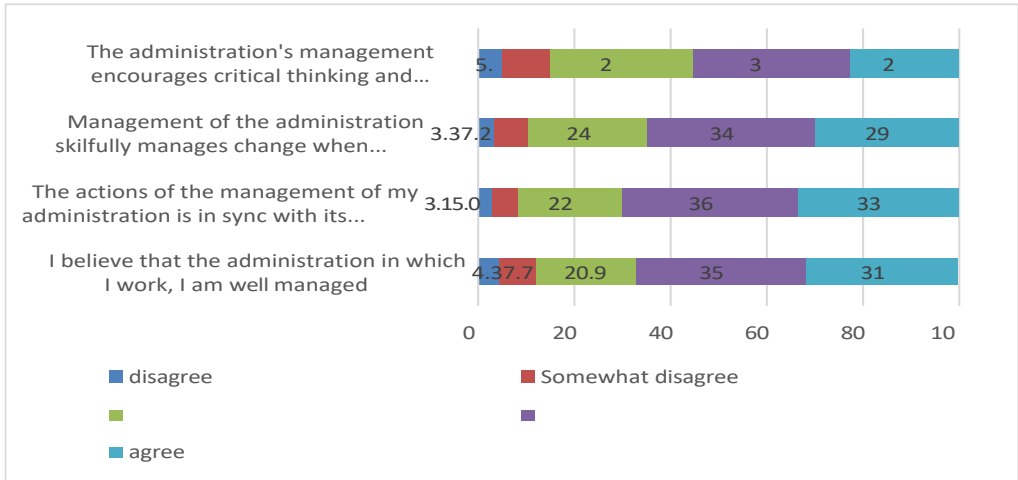


Figure 20 shows the distribution of respondents' answers to the individual statements. Positive assessments prevail—about 60 percent of Bulgarian employees believe that the managers of their administrations make the right decisions, manage change skillfully, have a vision, and

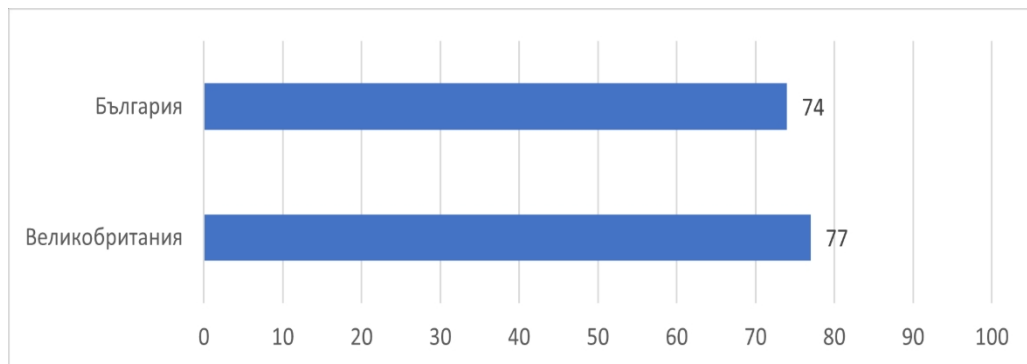
manage their organizations well. A relatively weaker aspect of leaders in the Bulgarian public administration remains the fact that they do not sufficiently encourage critical thinking and innovative thinking. These results are almost identical to last year's results.

### My work

The second most important factor influencing commitment is the content or nature of the work performed. It is linked to a sense of professionalism and professional fulfilment. In the questionnaire, it is referred to as "My work." The data is presented in

Figure 21. Compared to last year, the assessment of the Bulgarian administration has remained at the same level, while in the UK it has fallen by 1 point after reaching its historic high in 2024.

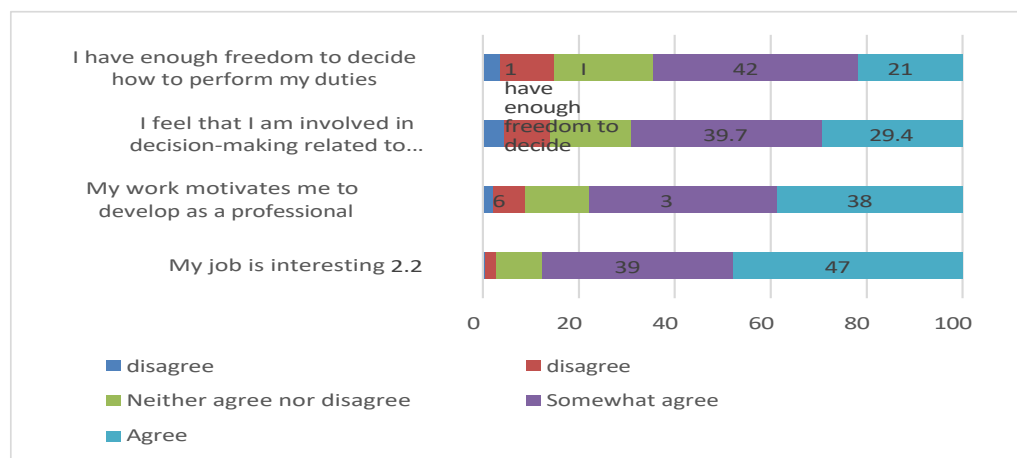
**Figure 21. Results by factor "My job"**



Although lower than the assessment of their British colleagues, 74 points on the "My job" factor is a good result. Internal motivation continues to be one of the pillars of employee engagement in the Bulgarian public administration. Many of them have chosen to work in public administration precisely because they like their job, which is a very important observation, as this choice is the basis for long-term, sustainable, and achievement-oriented professional motivation.

The detailed distribution of responses is presented in Figure 21. The majority of employees in the Bulgarian public administration consider their work interesting (85%) and believe that it develops them as professionals (77%). Most of the respondents answered that they are "involved in the decision-making process that affects their work" (67%) and have the freedom to decide how exactly to perform their duties (62%).

**Figure 22. Distribution of responses from survey participants "Engagement Barometer" according to statements related to work and daily work.**

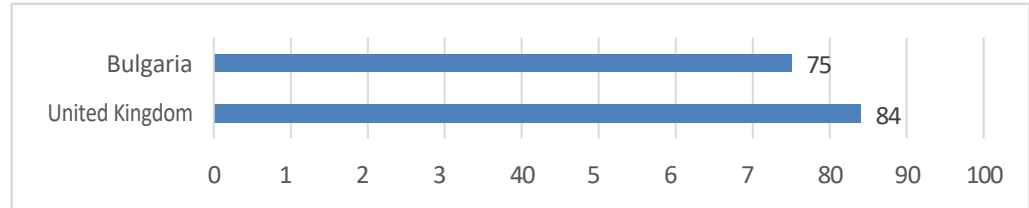


## My team

In all studies to date, the factor "My team" is one of the few where the results of British civil servants are consistently higher than those of employees in the Bulgarian administration.

The ratings of both are good, but those of the British administration are better. Over the years, the difference has not only failed to narrow, but has actually increased. Figure 23. Results for the factor "My team"

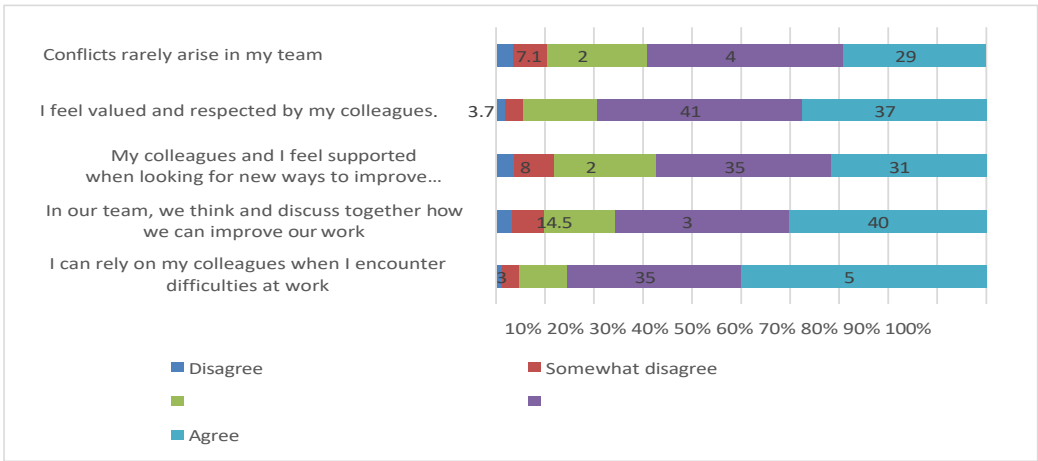
Figure 23. Results for the "My team" factor



The distribution of respondents' answers to the statements in this factor is presented in Figure 23. It shows that the main reason for the lower score of the Bulgarian public administration is the fact that managers in Bulgaria still rarely encourage their teams to seek innovative solutions and opportunities for improvement. On this indicator, the share of those who agree in Bulgaria (the sum of the "Agree" and "Agree somewhat" responses) is about 66%, while in the UK it is 85%.

"Agree" and "Somewhat agree") is around 66%, while in the UK it is 85%. This problem was identified in the first Barometer survey, but it's still on the agenda. There is ample evidence in favor of a team approach in the search for improvements and innovations, but some managers in Bulgarian administrations still prefer not to take it into account.

Figure 24. Distribution of responses from survey participants "Commitment Barometer" based on statements related to teamwork





## Resources and workload

Resource availability and workload are related to stress at work. This is another factor on which the ratings of employees in the Bulgarian public administration are consistently lower

than those of their British counterparts. The data are presented in Figure 25. In both countries, there has been a slight improvement of 1 point, which means that the 6-point difference from last year remains unchanged.

**Figure 25. Results for the factor "Resources and workload"**

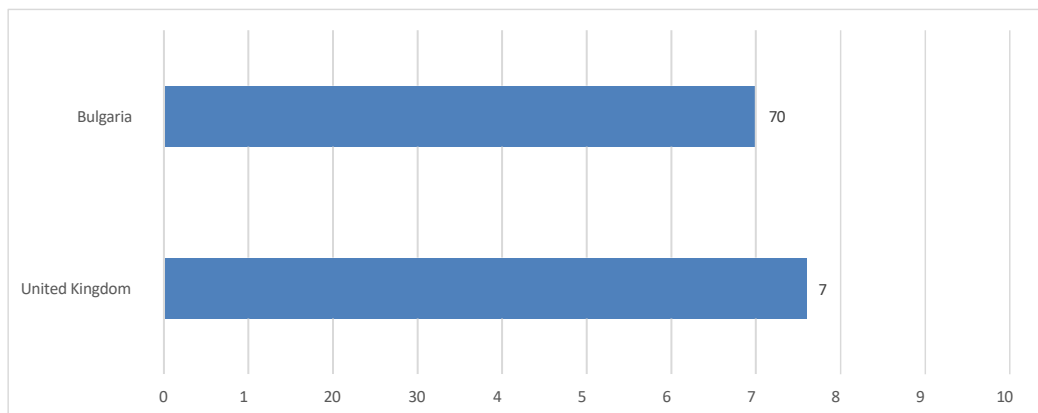
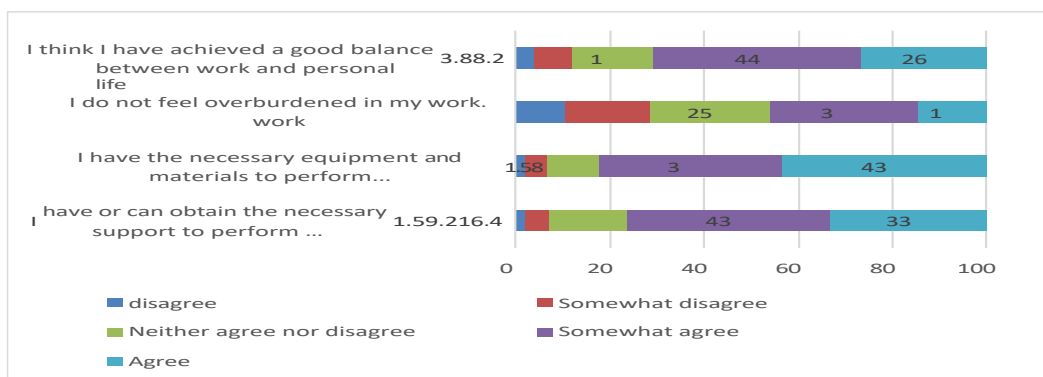


Figure 26 shows the distribution of responses to the statements from this factor.

**Figure 26. Distribution of responses of survey participants "Commitment Barometer" for statements related to the availability of resources and stress at work**



The lowest ratings are for how busy they feel at work, with one in four people in Bulgaria saying they feel overloaded. There has been some improvement in terms of resource availability, but stress and workload remain a hot topic for almost a quarter of civil servants in Bulgaria.

## Learning and development

Since the survey has been conducted in Bulgaria, the Bulgarian public administration's ratings on this factor have been consistently better than those of the UK public sector. Employees in the Bulgarian public administration recall more and more diverse training. In addition, in all previous years except the current one, the IPA found ways to offer a large number of training courses.

funded by European programs, which were free of charge for Bulgarian administrations. This further increased training opportunities and the accessibility of the training itself. The combination of free training and the growing popularity of distance learning are the main reasons for the relatively high performance of the Bulgarian administration on this indicator.

Figure 27. Results by factor "Learning and development"

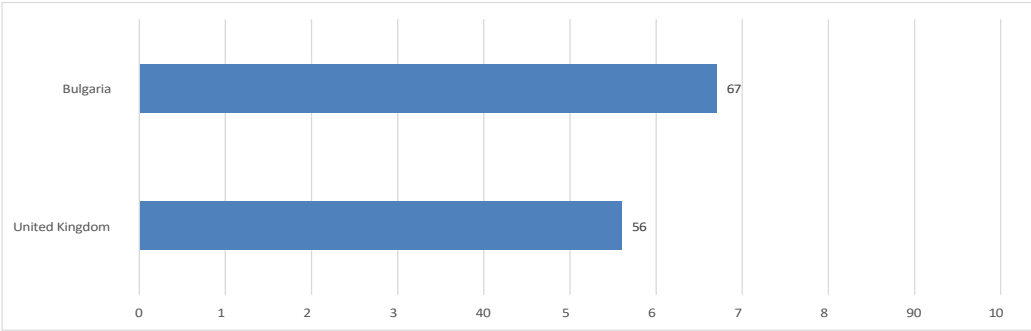
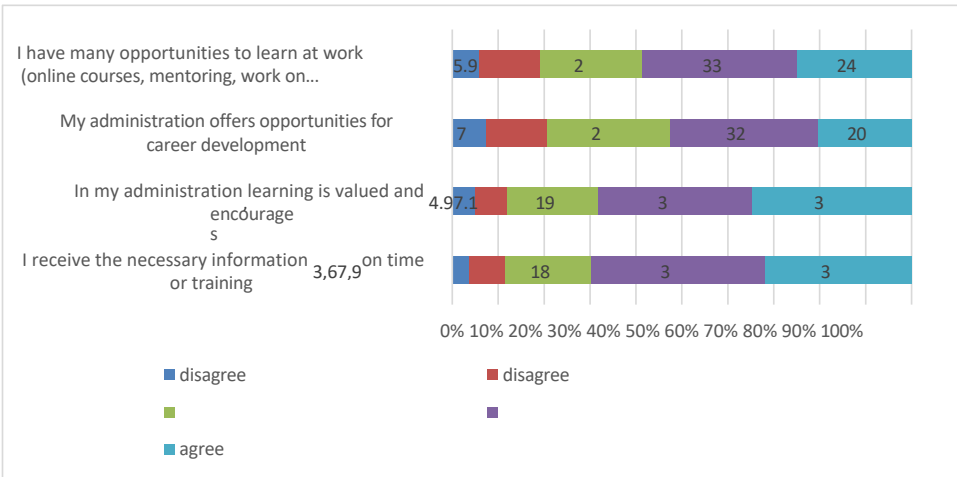


Figure 28. Distribution of responses from survey participants "Commitment Barometer" according to statements related to learning and development



The distribution of responses to the questions on this factor clearly indicates areas for improvement. On the one hand, there is a need to improve career development prospects by creating career paths and mechanisms

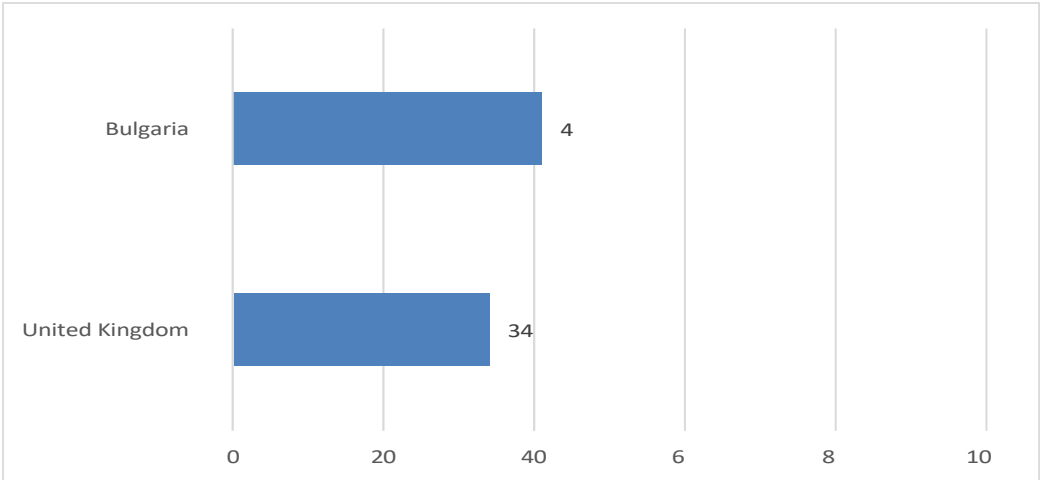
for career advancement, and on the other hand, the need to increase opportunities for learning in the workplace through the introduction of mentoring, coaching, project work, and intelligent information systems.

## Remuneration

This indicator has seen the most changes in Bulgaria over the years. When the Barometer was launched, satisfaction with remuneration was very low. The results of the 2020 and 2021 surveys showed a significant increase in this indicator, which was to some extent objective as it was linked to real wage increases for civil servants during those years. In 2020 and 2021, this factor was largely responsible for the increase in the global engagement index in Bulgaria, but in 2022 it fell dramatically and became the main factor.

This is the reason for the decline. Inflation this year literally "melted" the wage increases and brought satisfaction with remuneration back to 2019 levels. In 2024, there was again a significant improvement in satisfaction with remuneration, with a 5-point increase in the rating, but now there has been another significant deterioration of 4 index points. Despite this, however, for another consecutive year, satisfaction with remuneration in the Bulgarian public sector is significantly higher than in the British administration. The data are presented in Figure 29.

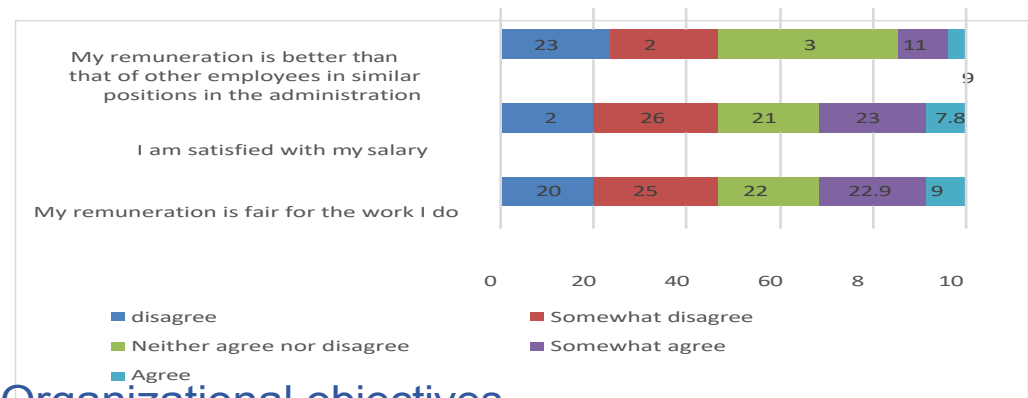
**Figure 29. Results by factor "Remuneration"**



The following figure shows the distribution of ratings for the three statements related to remuneration. While in 2021 almost half of the respondents were satisfied with their salaries,

in 2025 their share has melted to about 30 percent. As in the previous year, only one-third of respondents believe that the remuneration they receive is fair for the work they do.

**Figure 30. Distribution of responses from survey participants "Engagement Barometer" based on statements related to remuneration**

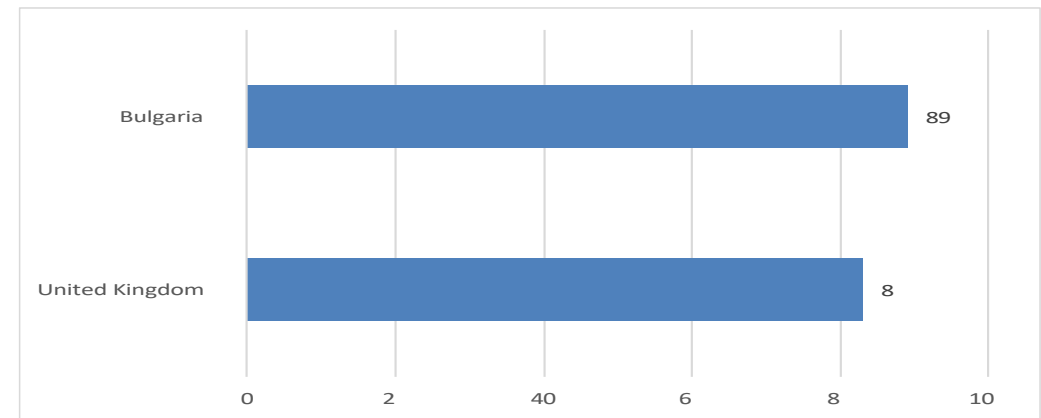


## Organizational objectives

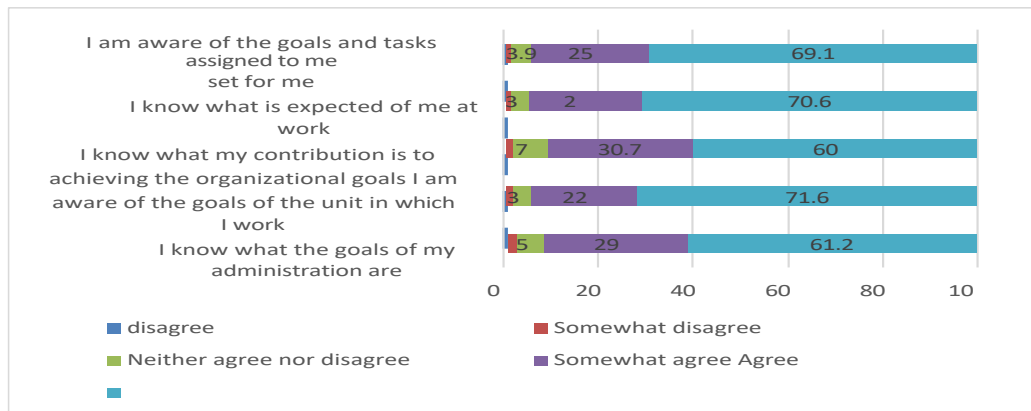
Clear objectives and good work organization are a consistently strong point of the Bulgarian administration. This is consistently the factor that receives the highest rating in all surveys to date. This is also the case this year. The result

is identical to last year's and significantly better than the result for the British administration (a difference of 6 points), regardless of the fact that clarity of objectives is also a strength of the British public sector.

**Figure 31. Results for the factor "Organizational objectives"**



**Figure 32. Distribution of responses from survey participants "Commitment Barometer" according to statements related to organizational goals**



The distribution of responses presented in Figure 32 shows that for all indicators of this factor, over 80% of respondents gave an affirmative answer. Bulgarian

civil servants are aware of their goals and tasks, the goals of the structural unit in which they work, and the goals of their administration.

## My immediate supervisor

Figure 33 presents the benchmarking data for this factor between civil servants in Bulgaria and the United Kingdom. The results of Bulgarian civil servants are good, but the assessments of their British colleagues are even better.

No significant changes have been observed in Bulgaria over the years, while in the United Kingdom there was a significant increase in 2020 and it has continued to improve since then.

**Figure 33. Results for the factor "My immediate supervisor"**

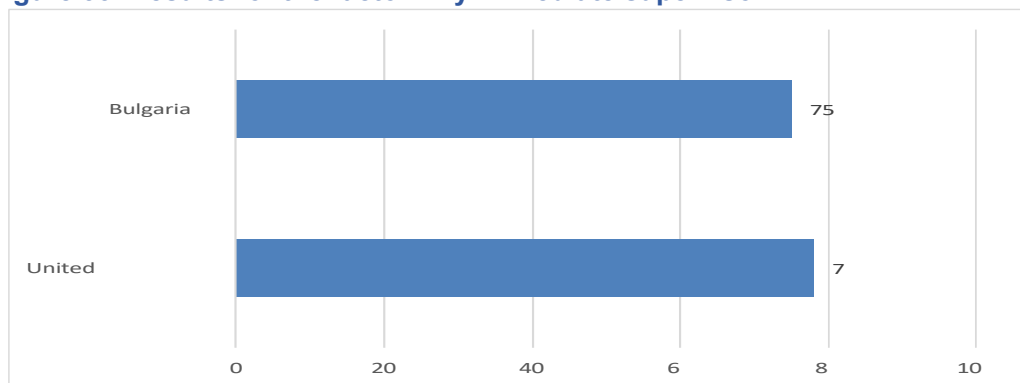
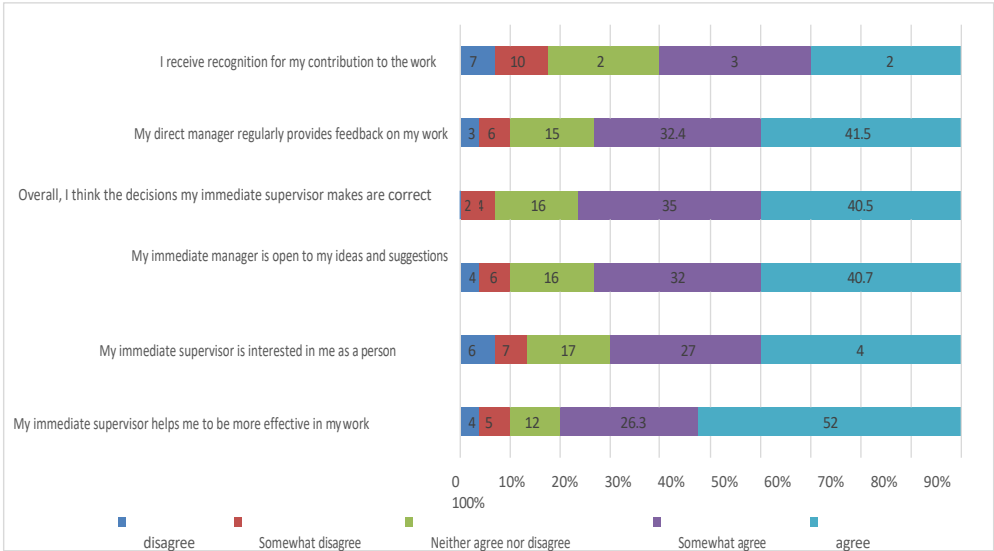


Figure 34 presents the distribution of participants' responses to the statements included in this factor. Positive assessments prevail in all aspects, with satisfaction varying

between 65% and 80%. Areas for improvement include recognizing the contribution of employees to achieving work goals/results.

**Figure 34. Distribution of responses of survey participants "Engagement Barometer" according to statements related to the behavior of the immediate supervisor**

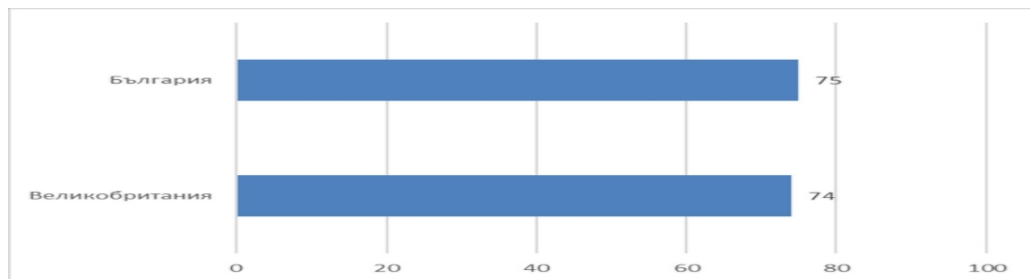


## Well-being index

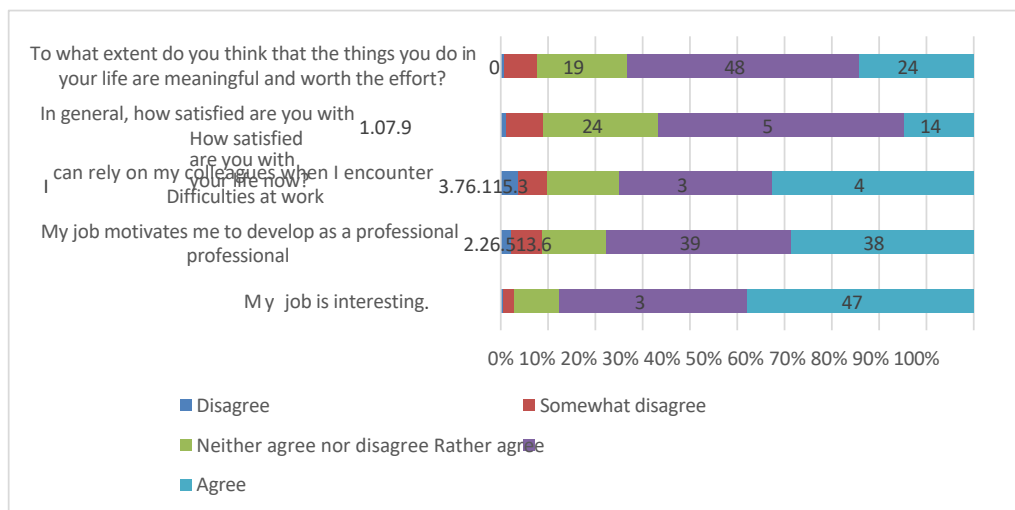
The well-being index was introduced in the British study on civil servant engagement in 2012 at the insistence of the National Statistics Office, which measures the subjective well-being of Britons. The idea is that when people feel engaged in their work, they feel happier and more satisfied with their lives in general.

In 2022, the PERMA index was also introduced in the Bulgarian Engagement Barometer. Figure 35 shows a comparison between the subjective well-being index of Bulgarian and British civil servants. In both countries, there is no change in the results of this index; the detailed distribution of responses to the statements is presented in Figure 35.

**Figure 35. PERMA well-being index**



**Figure 36. Distribution of responses of participants in the "Commitment Barometer" survey on statements related to subjective well-being**



The results in Figure 36 show that almost 75% of employees in the Bulgarian public administration believe that the things they do in their lives are meaningful and worthwhile, and 67% are satisfied with their lives as a whole. The questionnaire also includes several additional questions related to subjective well-being, but these are not included in the PERMA index. Distribution of from

The results are presented in Figures 37 and 38. 69% of the surveyed employees in the Bulgarian public administration responded that they feel happy or rather happy, compared to only 63% of their British colleagues who gave such answers. Approximately 30% of Bulgarian employees feel anxious, compared to 34% of British civil servants.

Figure 37. Distribution of responses to questions related to emotional experiences

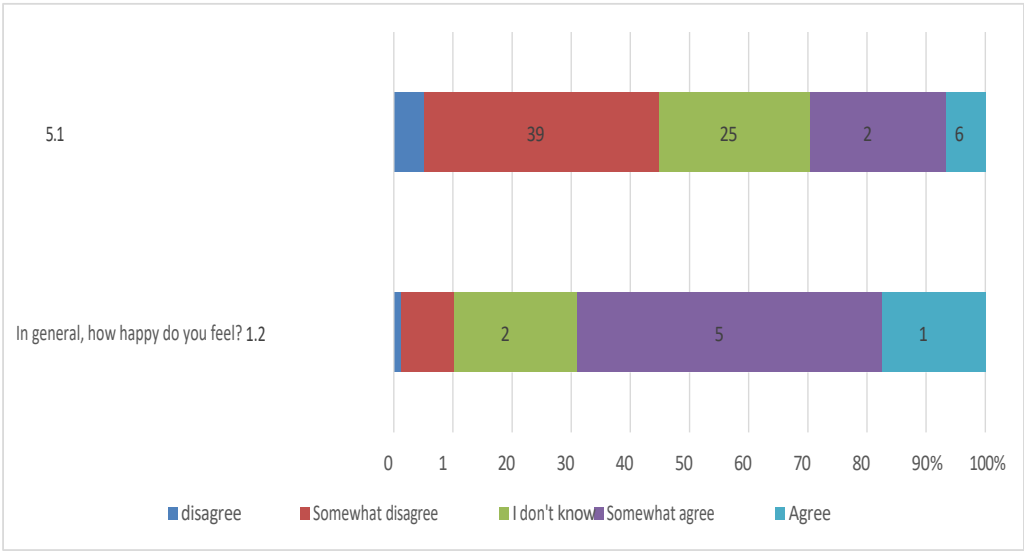
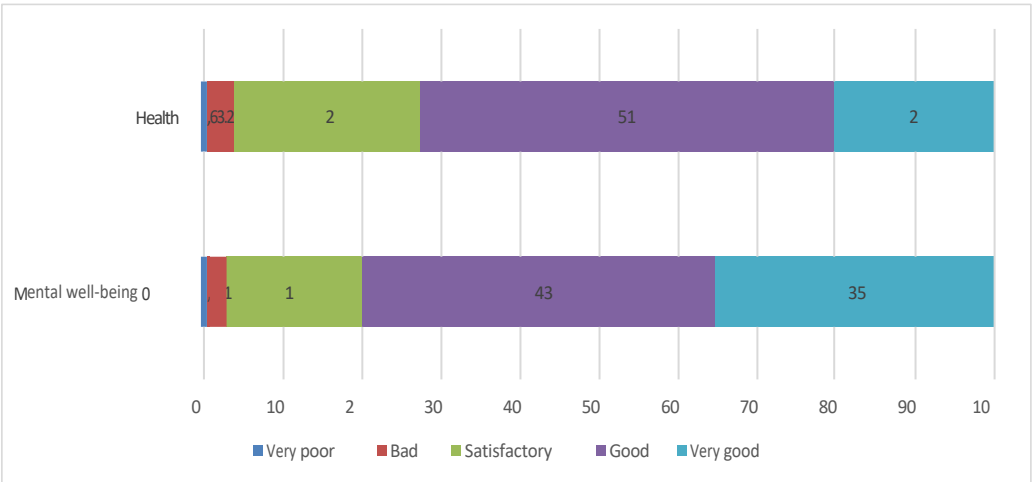


Figure 38. Distribution of responses to questions related to health and mental well-being



In terms of subjective perceptions of mental and emotional health, over 75% of civil servants in Bulgaria rate their mental health as good or very good, while the reference value for British civil servants is 73%. In terms of

subjective perceptions of somatic health, the results of Bulgarian and British civil servants are identical – 72% of them describe their health as good or very good.





## 6. Conclusions and recommendations

Over the years, the Engagement Barometer has established itself as a tool for diagnosing the motivation and engagement of employees in the Bulgarian public administration. The accumulated data allows for more reliable and broader generalizations. It has become apparent that the Barometer is a complex but sensitive tool that can register both an increase in satisfaction when salaries rise and a decline in motivation due to the uncertainty and stress caused by the political crisis in the country, the war in Ukraine, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Compared to last year, the changes in the survey results are minor. The overall assessment of engagement decreased slightly by 1 index point, which is entirely due to lower satisfaction with remuneration. The assessment of this factor fell significantly by 4 index points. However, its negative impact is partially offset by improved results in four factors: leadership, immediate supervisor, learning and development, and resource provision. The increase in these factors is very slight – only 1 point – but this could be explained by the easing of the political crisis in

the country and the establishment of a regular government. If internal political stability is maintained or even improved, we can predict further improvement in the results, at least in the first two of these factors.

Looking more broadly at the dynamics of the survey ratings over the years, it is clear that one indicator remains relatively constant over time and that it is a pillar of the commitment of the state administration. This is the internal motivation of employees or the motivation that comes from the nature of the work itself. The majority of employees in the public sector are satisfied with their work.

They have chosen to work in public administration not only because of the remuneration and economic security, but also because they find meaning in their work and believe that through it they can realize themselves as individuals and professionals. In this respect, Bulgarian and British civil servants are similar, and this factor, as can be seen from the survey data over the years, is not significantly influenced by external factors. In this respect, Bulgarian and British civil servants are similar, and this factor, as can be seen from the survey data over the years, is not significantly influenced by external circumstances.

Another stable factor that supports employee commitment is clear organizational goals. This again applies to both Bulgaria and the UK. Those working in the state administration know their job very well, are aware of the expectations placed on them and of the quality standards for their work. Professional roles and work processes are clear and well established, and areas of personal responsibility are clearly and unambiguously defined.

The third strong point on which the motivation of public administration employees is based is training and development opportunities. No other factor of engagement shows such large and consistent differences between the Bulgarian and British public administrations as training opportunities. The Barometer data show that training in the public administration in Bulgaria is both more accessible and more timely. Therefore, as can be seen most clearly from this year's data, it is not only the free training provided in the past under operational programs that contributes to this, but above all the ability of the IPA to quickly identify needs.

administration and offer a large number of new and relevant training courses each year. In addition, the need for learning and development is met by a wide range of accessible distance learning courses. These significantly reduce the administration's training costs and contribute to the more efficient use of these targeted funds. One of the most central themes in all engagement studies to date has been remuneration. Available data show that satisfaction with remuneration strongly influences the motivation of public administration employees. The importance of this factor became clear in 2020 and 2021, when several consecutive and real wage increases raised the overall engagement score by several index points. In 2022, however, there was a significant decline in satisfaction with remuneration, by as much as 11 points, and this was also seen to have a negative impact on engagement. Remuneration may not be the most important determinant of work motivation, but it is a significant factor, and the longer dissatisfaction with low pay or unfairness grows, the more other pillars of engagement will come under strain. Data from 2025 once again bring the issue of remuneration to the fore, as this is the only indicator that shows a deterioration, but this is enough to lower the overall rating. The perception among public administration employees is that the current level of remuneration is unfair, and that pay rises in certain sectors of the public administration appear to be only

This further increases dissatisfaction and tension.

The most worrying negative trend in the Barometer data for 2025 is the continuing decline in the proportion of highly committed civil servants. Compared to 2021, it has fallen from 28 to 15 percent. Highly committed employees are the "driving force" of any organization. They are the agents of change and the internal reason for maintaining high standards of quality and efficiency at work. If their numbers continue to decline, the productivity of administrations will also decline due to the lack of internal incentives generated by comparisons between individual employee performance.

The recommendations therefore address this specific issue:

- ▶ A special study of the image of the state administration as an employer is needed, focusing on identifying the reasons for the decline in highly motivated employees. This can be done by studying what kind of people with what career expectations enter the administration and what kind of employees leave the public sector and for what reasons.
- ▶ The state administration should expand and open up career development opportunities for ambitious, intelligent, and competent civil servants by reviewing the current performance appraisal system and identifying the factors that lead to its formal application.
- ▶ It is appropriate to review the rules for career development

in public administration should be reviewed. In many cases, they encourage the accumulation of seniority rather than the active and targeted expansion and deepening of professional competence.

- ▶ It is necessary to diversify and enrich the arsenal of leadership styles of managers in public administration. In many administrations, employees are accustomed to passing all complex issues "up the chain," and managers often make all important decisions on their own, without consulting their team. Such a management model is good for passive and not particularly committed employees, but in no way stimulates the professional development and enrichment of the professional competence of their highly motivated and ambitious colleagues.
- ▶ The capacity of the administration to implement modern forms of workplace learning needs to be developed. The learning process is changing, and the boundary between learning and working is becoming increasingly blurred. More and more work tasks require information acquisition and learning in order to be successfully completed. Knowledge must be available immediately when needed, not months or years later. The wide range of possibilities for using artificial intelligence, online training, or information exchange between administrations should be fully exploited to increase the productivity and efficiency of public administration, and public servants should be encouraged to learn and implement them.

## Appendix: Questionnaire

### My work

1. My job is interesting.
2. My job motivates me to develop as a professional.
3. I feel that I am involved in decision-making related to my work.
4. I have enough freedom to decide how to perform my duties.

### Organizational goals

5. I know what the goals of my administration are.
6. I am aware of the goals of the unit in which I work.
7. I know what my contribution is to achieving the organizational goals.
8. I know what is expected of me at work.
9. I am aware of the goals and tasks assigned to me.

### My immediate supervisor

10. My immediate supervisor helps me to be more effective in my work.
11. My immediate supervisor is interested in me as a person.
12. My immediate supervisor is open to my ideas and suggestions.
13. Overall, I believe that the decisions made by my immediate supervisor are correct.
14. My immediate supervisor regularly provides feedback on my work.
15. I receive recognition for my contribution to the work.

### Teamwork

16. I can rely on my colleagues when I encounter difficulties at work.
17. In our team, we think and discuss together how we can improve our work.

- 18. My colleagues and I feel supported when we look for new ways to improve our work.
- 19. I feel valued and respected by my colleagues.
- 20. Conflicts rarely arise in my team.

### **Learning and development**

- 21. I receive the necessary information or training in a timely manner.
- 22. Learning is valued and encouraged in my administration.
- 23. My administration offers opportunities for career development.
- 24. I have many opportunities for learning at work (online courses, mentoring, project work, coaching, etc.).

### **Resources and workload**

- 25. I have or can obtain the necessary support to perform your work effectively.
- 26. I have the necessary equipment and materials to perform my work effectively.
- 27. I do not feel overworked in my job.
- 28. I think I have achieved a good work-life balance.

### **Remuneration**

- 29. My remuneration is fair for the work I do.
- 30. I am satisfied with my salary.
- 31. My remuneration is better than that of other employees in similar positions in the administration.

### **Leadership and change management**

- 32. I believe that the administration I work for is well managed.
- 33. The actions and values of my administration are consistent with its values and goals.
- 34. The administration's leadership manages change skillfully

when necessary.

35. The administration's leadership encourages critical thinking and the proposal of new ideas.

## Commitment

36. I feel proud when I say where I work.
37. I would recommend my administration as a very good place to work.
38. I feel attached to the administration where I work.
39. When talking about my administration, I tend to use "we" rather than "they."
40. I have built friendly relationships with colleagues in my administration.
41. My administration motivates me to do my best.

## Section "Health and well-being at work"

1. In general, how satisfied are you with your life right now?
2. To what extent do you think that the things you do in your life are meaningful and worthwhile?
3. In general, how happy do you feel?
4. In general, how anxious do you feel?
5. Overall, how would you rate your mental health?
6. Overall, how would you rate your physical health?

25  
ГОДИНИ



ИНСТИТУТ  
ПО ПУБЛИЧНА  
АДМИНИСТРАЦИЯ

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