



## Quelle

Civil Servants in the Serbian and Yugoslav Social Context: Report by the Belgrade City Administration About Improper Conduct of Junior Civil Servants (1901) and Law on Civil Servants and Other Civil Public Employees of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Yugoslavia) (1923)<sup>1</sup>

1.

Report by the Belgrade City Administration about improper conduct of junior civil servants (1901)  
Belgrade, 2 September 1901

Belgrade City Administration to the Head of the Quarter  
Confidential

Sir:

It came to my attention, and I have noticed the same to some extent myself, that junior civil servants of certain Quarters and Sections do not come to office on time and leave it before the end of office hours, are often absent from duty under various unjustified and sometimes false excuses, loaf in the offices and spend time in futile conversation instead of working as they are obliged to work, in their communication with gendarmes behave too familiarly, and are unhelpful and often arrogant toward public, while Quarter heads do not pay sufficient attention to all this, because if they did, things like that could not happen.

For the first and the last time I hereby issue this order, which you will take note of seriously and communicate it to all civil servants who will certify with their signature that they have been notified thereof, as follows:

If I notice any civil servant outside the office and idle during office hours, I will punish strictly both that civil servant and his chief officer, unless the latter has not already taken measures against this misconduct of his subordinate employee.

Quarter and Section heads must not grant their employees absence from duty for irrelevant reasons, but only in case of justified and urgent needs, and then only if they cannot be dealt with outside office hours. In case of absence due to illness, the chief officer will have to verify this through the Quarter physician, who will report what illness is the employee concerned suffering from and whether that illness indeed prevents him from coming to work. [...]

During the working hours, employees must not only work, but prove with their results that they have actually worked, which shall be the subject of everyday control by their superiors. If they truly work, there will be no backlogs as there are now, and if they persist, that shall be clear evidence that neither the employees worked diligently, nor their superiors adequately supervised their work. [...]

I regret having to instruct civil servants that in their communication with gendarmes they should behave with dignity and superiority, because that is so self-evident and necessary that they should understand it without my notice. Their intimacy with gendarmes is appalling and disgusting.

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1 Živeti u Beogradu 1890–1949. Dokumenti Uprave grada Beograda [Living in Belgrade 1890–1940. Documents of the Belgrade City Administration], vol. 6, Istorijski arhiv Beograda, Belgrade 2008, doc. 24, pp. 62–64; Narodna Skupština Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca. Zakon o činovnicima i ostalim državnim službenicima građanskog reda [Peoples' Parliament of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Law on Civil Servants and Other Civil Public Employees], Belgrade 1923. A printed version of the source is published in: Isabella Löhr, Matthias Middell, Hannes Siegrist (Hgg.): Kultur und Beruf in Europa, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag 2012, S. 248–251, Band 2 der Schriftenreihe Europäische Geschichte in Quellen und Essays.

It harms the reputation of a civil servant and I shall not refrain from adequate punishment of such behaviour.

Likewise, unaccommodating and arrogant behaviour of civil servants to the public should not be allowed. Civil servants should generally in their service behave appropriately for a noble citizen, and nobility is incompatible with unaccommodating attitude, and especially with arrogance. A civil servant's reputation will not be harmed if he receives and listens to everyone kindly, while maintaining the appropriate formal attitude, because that is the best way to prove that he is a worthy member of authority, and will thus raise his reputation.

Communicating you the foregoing, I expect from you, Sir, as the chief officer, to wholeheartedly accept these advices and remarks of mine and do your best that they do not remain a dead letter, because that is required by the interests of service.

[...]

Chief of the City Administration

## 2.

Excerpts from the Law on Civil Servants and other Civil Public Employees of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Yugoslavia) from 1923

### Chapter 1

#### Principal provisions

#### Article 1

A civil servant [...] is a person admitted to government's civil service according to the provisions of the law. [...]

#### Article 2

All titles in all branches of civil service are equally accessible, under legal provisions, to all citizens, both by birth and [...] naturalized, who are of Serbian/Croatian/Slovenian nationality. Other naturalized citizens may enter civil service only after they are residents of the KINGDOM for at least ten years, and pursuant to special authorisation of the State Council, upon the justified proposal of the competent minister. Foreign nationals may be admitted [...] to civil service only as contract employees. [...]

A judge shall take the following oath: "I, [name and surname], swear by Almighty God that I will be loyal to the ruling King [name], that I will discharge my duty correctly and conscientiously, and that I will only observe the law, irrespective of the person, when pronouncing judgments [...]. So help me God". [...]

#### Article 89

A civil servant shall be required to observe the Constitution and the laws; to discharge his duty conscientiously, diligently, fairly and unselfishly, having in view only general public interests and avoiding anything that may harm the duty conferred upon him.

#### Article 90

A civil servant shall be required to execute orders of his superiors, if they are issued within the framework of the law.

When required by the official interest, a civil servant shall, upon the invitation of his superior, perform official duties that fall outside the scope of his work.

[...] A junior civil servant shall never perform at the order of a senior official only those acts prohibited and punishable by penal code and shall be required to report such an order to his superiors. [...]

#### Article 92

A civil servant shall, in the service and outside it, safeguard his reputation and reputation of his superiors and shall avoid anything that may harm the reputation and trust entailed by his position. A retired civil servant shall be equally required to adjust his behaviour to the position he occupied.

In the official communication with the public, a civil servant shall be helpful and courteous. [...]

#### Article 94

A civil servant shall not be allowed to have any auxiliary employment, in addition to his civil service, unless authorised by the minister. He may not occupy any other position that would be contrary to the dignity and honour of his occupation or which would hamper the discharge of his regular official duties.

#### Article 95

Use of authority and position by civil servants for partisan purposes, as well as any influence of senior officials on civil servants in this aim, shall be punishable as misconduct according to Article 165, section 2, 3 or 4 hereof, and in serious cases by dismissal from service. If there is abuse of authority as provided for by the criminal code, its provisions shall apply, either in response to a claim of a private individual or ex officio.

A civil servant who according to Article 73 of the Constitution is not entitled to stand as a candidate for member of the Parliament, or who is not entitled to stand as a candidate in the electoral district of his territorial jurisdiction, shall not [...] convene public partisan and political gatherings, or be an official thereof, or stand as a candidate. He may not organise or represent political parties and groups. If he acts contrary, he shall be punished for misconduct, and if he stands as a candidate – by dismissal from service. [...]

#### Article 96

A civil servant shall not be allowed to be a member of an association whose objectives are contrary to the interests of the State, or contrary to state laws.

Likewise, he shall not be allowed to participate in movements that would be aimed at obstructing or stopping the work in the service.

A civil servant may not belong to a foreign company, regardless of where it is headquartered, without consent of the competent minister.

#### Article 97

Civil servants shall not be parties in public procurement contracts [...].

Civil servants may not be members of managing or supervisory boards of business companies or mutual co-operatives, if by their position in civil service they are in charge of supervising such institutions or deciding and giving opinions in matters in which any of such institutions is a stakeholder. [...]

#### Article 98

A civil servant may not receive, either indirectly or directly, any gift in money or value, nor any profit aimed at influencing his decision-making in official capacity. He shall be punished for such an act according to the penal code. [...]

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Auf diese Quelle bezieht sich ein einführender und erläuternder Essay von Ristović, Milan: In the Government's Service and in the Shadow of the State: Civil Servants in the Serbian and Yugoslav Social Context in the 19th and 20th Centuries. In: Themenportal Europäische Geschichte (2013), URL: <http://www.europa.clio-online.de/2013/Article=623>.