

A PROPOSAL TO CREATE
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE SERVICE (NES)

In the year 2002 the Establishment Division (Estab.) initiated a proposal for the creation of an Economic Management Group (EMG) in response to the Chief Executive's directive to study the feasibility of creating an economic cadre of officers in the Federal Government.

2. The Establishment Division articulated the need for creating streams of professional Civil Servants to staff policy-formulation positions in the Federal Government. The basic idea was to competitively select and specially train competent individuals to pursue predetermined patterns of career growth and invigorate the Federal Government with the required quality and capacity for policy formulation.

3. The proposal of the Estab. was placed before the Cabinet in its meeting held on 21st August 2002, and it was decided that a holistic view of all the professional streams should be taken and the proposal should be finalized in coordination with the National Reconstruction Bureau, (NRB), and submitted to the Cabinet by mid-September 2002.

4. The NRB, in the meantime, had also prepared a paper on "Reconstruction of Civil Services - A New Framework", dealing with the entire spectrum of Civil Service Reforms. A presentation was made to the Cabinet on 6th November, 2002, where it was decided that since the politically elected government would be in place shortly, it would be appropriate to present the Reconstruction proposals (including NES) to the incoming Cabinet for decision.

5. The issue of Civil Service Reforms had remained dormant, until the National Commission for Government Reforms (NCGR) was mandated to look at the reorganization of Civil Services of Pakistan in a holistic manner. A framework paper outlining the proposed reorganization of the Civil Services of

Pakistan, at All Pakistan, Federal, Provincial and District levels was produced by the NCGR.

6. The present paper elaborates upon one of the most critical components of the proposed framework i.e. the NES. An earlier draft was deliberated by the Federal Secretaries' Committee on 22nd December, 2006 and recommendations made by the Sub-Committee of the Secretaries finalized in April, 2007 were incorporated in this revised draft. The Secretaries Sub-Committee endorsed the need for creating a N.E.S and made many useful suggestions that form part of the present proposal.

7. The purpose of creating a NES is to identify, develop and place the best talent in policy making positions by drawing upon the entire pool of Civil Servants and other talent from the entire country irrespective of their original cadre, service or affiliation. This presumes that there will be no barriers to entry in NES either for any group or cadre of the Civil Servants or to any suitable professionals from outside the Civil Services. The only stipulation is that the candidates should meet the pre-specified eligibility criteria and then cross the hurdle of a competitive process open to all. The objectives of good governance emphasize responsiveness to the complex problems faced by the public and place persistent demands on the capacity and intellectual endowments of policymakers in the government. Furthermore, the jobs in public sector require highly specialized skills in economics, social development, technical professions, regulation and human resource management. The selectees for the high-level jobs have to prove that they possess a mixture of substantive knowledge and skills combined with leadership traits. The future knowledge-based economy can be effectively managed by individuals who are able to demonstrate, display and practice these attributes.

8. The proposal for the NES was placed before the Task force on Civil Services Reforms in 2019 which was of the view that in the first instance, reforms in Training, Performance Appraisal, Promotion Policy, and Retirement Rules may be undertaken. The reforms would enable the competitive process for NES to make the selection for NES more effective and objective. As the

decisions have now been taken on the reforms of Training, Performance appraisal, Promotion Policy, Retirement Rules the proposal is being resubmitted to the members of the Task Forces on Civil Services Reforms and the Implementation Committee on Reorganizing the Federal Government for their review and comments. A meeting would be scheduled once the present public health restrictions are relaxed. Alternatively, a meeting through video link would be arranged if the situation remains unchanged.

Rationale and justification:

9. The present mode of the superior civil services that attract young men and women through an open competitive examination and spend 30-35 years serving the government had worked reasonably well in the first few decades after Independence. The challenges of the 21st century for public service have become more complex. At the same time the Superior Services are no longer attracting the best talent at the time of entry. Both the numbers of candidates appearing at the examinations and the quality are on a downward slope. There is a general dissatisfaction among the citizens on the responsiveness of the civil servants in the delivery of basic public goods and services. Although a more broad-based program of reforms in the judiciary and local government would address some of these issues in a holistic manner the current role, responsibilities and incentives of the civil servants require rethinking and redesign. Majority of the civil servants are also not satisfied with their working environment – poor compensation, political interference, fear of NAB, the media and judiciary, frequent postings and transfers and a general feeling of insecurity and absence of support from the Government.

10. Therefore, this model of assured career path on the basis of an entry examination at a young age is no longer applicable or sustainable any longer. A new hybrid model which nurtures, promotes and draws upon the expertise and domain knowledge and combines it with the broad-based experience, leadership traits and the ability to synthesize different perspectives and policy inputs is therefore proposed as the way forward. Leadership traits are not exclusively located within any one group but can be found across the groups

too. There are examples in Pakistan where a medical doctor has managed a tertiary hospital and medical college in a highly effective and efficient manner and an engineer has successfully led WAPDA. The same organization i.e WAPDA has also been successfully led by several illustrious officers belonging to the Civil Service of Pakistan. The lessons from these examples lead us to infer that an amalgam of traits such as strategic leadership with execution capability, motivating human resources and managing finances prudently,, and broad understanding of the larger context in which policy decisions are taken –internal and external –should form the core of the NES, burying the present adversarial binary—generalist vs specialist. NES would draw upon the skills and experiences of both the generalists as well as specialists who exhibit the above traits.

11. Many countries across the world have employed the model of what is generally referred to as a Senior Public Service (SPS). Countries including Britain, Japan, South Korea and Singapore in addition to others all have their own versions of senior public services distinct from each other in regard to the degree of openness the system offers. Career-based and position-based systems exist across the world, where career-based systems consist of senior officers recruited into an elite permanent bureaucracy and promoted to the SPS overtime. This system often does not offer room for recruitment to individuals from local and provincial bureaucracies or to those beyond the government. A position-based system, by contrast, is often considered more open as it allows for recruitment from within the elite bureaucracy but is also accessible to other public servants at different levels of government and to private sector candidates with appropriate experience. The proposed hybrid model i.e. The National Executive Service is aimed at combining the advantages of Career-based and position-based systems.

12. The bureaucracy at the higher levels faces a set of three-pronged issues. Firstly, the requisite specialist skills needed to serve the government in different fields are lacking among the cohorts recruited even after spending decades in the service. As only this elite group of officers rise to occupy key

policy making positions, the lack of domain knowledge sometimes dilutes the quality of work they are able to produce. Secondly, there is a mismatch between the skills that officers possess and the jobs they are assigned to do. The prior qualifications and work experience of an officer are rarely taken into account when placement or posting or promotion decisions are made with the result that the skills and experience of an officer in a certain field remain underutilized or misallocated as they do not fit in with the job requirements. A third issue has to do with the frequent and haphazard rotation of generalist across a wide variety of fields from Religious Affairs to Finance without allowing them time and space to acquire competency in any particular cluster of policy making.

13. The pull and push towards few posts that are considered more prestigious and lucrative than others further distorts the allocation process. This new hybrid model in the shape of a National Executive Service (NES) would overcome these weaknesses to some extent. The broad based and open competition among a large number of candidates possessing different skill sets would enrich the quality of intake. The linkage of past performance and training outcomes to the selection process for NES would hopefully incentivize the prospective candidates to improve their efficiency and productivity and invest in their training seriously. The clustering of Division / Ministries under four distinct streams and limiting rotations, promotions and postings within the confines of the chosen stream would equip the generalist who already possess breadth of experience and management expertise with some domain knowledge and a degree of specialization enhancing their decision-making capabilities. The uniformity of compensation and much lucrative package for every one selected under NES would no longer create a tilt towards some Ministries/Divisions. A National Executive Service (NES) that will value specialization, properly post people where they are most suited and be above occupational group allegiances and hierarchies existent today, can effectively address some of these issues.

14. The next question that arises is: How would this cadre be carved out? Should All Pakistan Services would be expanded to include a new cadre i.e. National Executive Service (NES). Under the All Pakistan Services the existing posts in the Federal Secretariat and some posts of the Provincial Secretariats would form the core of the NES cadre, to begin with. The loss of these posts from the existing cadres of All Pakistan Services and the Federal Services would be offset by adding equal number of posts in the equivalent grades to their respective cadres so that their promotion posts are in no way adversely affected (details in Para 52 below). Future recruitment to the Office Management Group (OMG) and the Secretariat Group would no longer be necessary after the creation of NES (more details in the following paras).

15. Recruitment to NES would take place through an open, transparent process conducted by the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC). The FPSC Chairman is already the Chairman of Central Selection Board for promotions from Grade 19 to 20 and Grade 20 to 21. The FPSC would select the candidate on the basis of: -

- (a). Academic Qualification: Higher qualification will be given additional weight age
- (b). Performance appraisal reports.
- (c). Training outcomes.
- (d). Written examination.
- (e). Structured Interviews.
- (f). Psychometric tests.

16. There are several options for selection to NES, the number of streams within this service and the tiers of government which will be manned by officers belonging to the NES. An analysis of the various options on each one of these issues is presented in paragraphs below

STRATEGIC OPTIONS

SELECTION TO NES

17. The guiding principles for selection of NES would be: -
- (a). Open, transparent, merit based, performance driven process.
 - (b). Provide equality of opportunity for all genres of civil servants who meet the eligibility criteria without any consideration of the initial mode of recruitment.
 - (c). The selection would be conducted by the Federal Public Service Commission only.
 - (d). Regional representation and quotas for women and minorities would be observed.
18. Three different options for selection into NES have been analyzed. Each of these options has advantages and disadvantages which are summarized in the following paragraphs:

Option-I:

19. Each existing cadre (All Pakistan, Federal and Provincial Services) is apportioned a fixed quota of posts based on their cadre strength for induction into the NES. Competitive examination and interviews will be held by the Federal Public Service Commission but will be restricted to the pool of eligible candidates belonging to the particular services e.g. If Pakistan Customs Service (PCS) has three vacancies in NES to be filled in, only the officers belonging to the PCS meeting the eligibility criteria will compete for these three vacancies. Candidates from other services/ cadres will not be eligible to compete for these vacancies. The examination and interviews will be common for all the candidates from all services / cadres but the final induction will take place according to the respective allocation of vacancies for each service. To further clarify this point let us assume that there are 10 vacancies to be filled in the National Executive Service (NES) in a particular year. 03 vacancies are to be filled in from the Pakistan Custom Service (PCS), 02 from Pakistan Foreign

Service (PFS), 02 from Police Service of Pakistan (PSP), 02 from Provincial Services and 01 from Inland Revenue Service (IRS). Only officers from these services who meet the prescribed criteria will be eligible to appear at the examination and, if qualified, will be called for the subsequent interview. The allocation of 10 positions in NES will follow the pattern of vacancies available for each service/cadre. In the above example in case no candidate from PCS qualifies the written examination or the interview, the vacancy will be carried forward to the next round for allocation to PCS and the induction to NES this time around will be limited to only 07 positions. In other words, there is no crossover of positions from one service to another.

20. **Advantages:**

- (1) There will be support for the creation of NES from all the existing services/ cadres as they will retain their entitlements and benefit from the earmarked quotas and reservations proposed for each service/ cadre.
- (2) The assurance of reservations in NES will continue to attract those candidates, who form the cadre at Grade 17, motivated by the prospects of pre-determined career path to the highest grade positions up to Grade 21 and 22
- (3) The possibility of entering top policy positions through a competitive process could promote a culture of improved performance and acquisition of knowledge and skills among the aspiring junior and mid-level officers.

21. **Disadvantages:**

- (1) The pool from which NES officers would be drawn will be much smaller and limited reinforcing the present 'exclusive' and 'entitlement-based progression' inherent in the superior services concept and violate the principles of open, merit based, performance driven selection.

- (2) It would also violate the principle of equality of opportunity for all civil servants irrespective of their initial selection mode. The majority of the officers serving in non-cadre or ex-cadre positions will become ineligible for induction into the NES reinforcing the present state of widespread de-motivation and de-moralization and exclusion of technical experts and specialists from policy formulation process.
- (3) Regional representation will not be ensured fueling the grievances of the smaller provinces against non-representation at top policy making positions.

Option-II:

22. Civil servants belonging to cadres, non-cadre, ex-cadre, public sector entities and the Provincial governments can enter the NES through an open competitive process conducted by the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) keeping the existing regional representation quotas intact. The candidates will have to fulfill the eligibility criteria of years of experience, professional qualifications, past performance record etc. The FPSC will prepare a list of successful candidates in order of merit taking the regional representation and quotas for women and minorities into account and recommend allocation into the various streams of NES. Upon successful selection to the NES the officers will sever their connections with their previous services/ cadres/ posts/ organizations and become part of the NES. Their inter-se seniority in each NES stream will be based on the merit list prepared by the FPSC.

23. **Advantages:**

- (1) NES will be able to broaden the intake by opening up the recruitment to attract the best possible talent from Occupational Groups, provincial civil services, ex-cadre, non-cadre, specialists and technical experts based on merit, competence and

transparency providing equality of opportunity to all. The possibility of attaining higher positions on the basis of merit and performance rather than legacy of initial recruitment would, hopefully, end the present inertia and motivate a vast majority of officers outside the Superior Services towards greater diligence and make tangible contribution in their respective fields

- (2) Regional representation and quota system will redress the grievances of the smaller provinces for non – representation at top policy level positions and non-participation in higher level decision making.
- (3) The attraction of fast-track career prospect by induction into NES will upgrade the overall quality and performance of the Civil Servants in the lower grades aspiring for entry into NES.

24. **Disadvantages:**

- (1) The loss of opportunities for automatic advancement without any barriers that is available at present to the incumbents of the existing occupational groups recruited through Central Superior Service examination may create resentment among these who believe they are under contractual obligation to occupy the positions which are being taken away to form the NES cadre.
- (2) The design of the written examination and structured interviews may have to be carefully thought through to eliminate biases to favor any particular cohort of candidates.

Option-III:

25. The recruitment to the NES may be opened up both to the public sector as well as private sector instead of civil servants only. They have to go through the same competitive process-written examination and interviews conducted by the Federal Public Service Commission.

26. **Advantages:**

- (1) Open competition would bring in talented professionals who have gained experience outside the Government to bring in their knowledge and expertise in the service of the Government.
- (2) Private sector inductees may bring in fresh ideas and skills to improve the existing government processes and also enrich the decision-making process.

27. **Disadvantages:**

- (1) Striking equivalence of eligibility criteria between the Civil Servants and the outsiders may invoke some controversy e.g. is Senior Vice President of a small company with a headcount of 20 eligible to compete with others in similar position in large firms having several hundred or thousand employees? Huge variation and diversity in the designations in the private sector may create difficulty in tightening the eligibility criteria and making a level playing field for all the applicants. It is possible, given the increased propensity to legal recourse, that the Government may find itself embroiled in protracted litigation.
- (2) There may be difficulty in designing an examination and interview process that adequately tests the substantive knowledge, skills and leadership qualities of the candidates coming from diverse experience and backgrounds in the private and public sector.
- (3) The induction of those from the private sector who are not familiar with the government rules, regulations, procedures may risk the outcomes of the decision-making process outweighing the benefits of substantive knowledge and skills they bring in.

Preferred Option:

28. Having examined the advantages and disadvantages of all the three options, the Option-II is recommended at this stage. NES may be opened up to all civil servants in the Federal and Provincial public sector employees- cadre, non-cadre and ex-cadre, autonomous bodies, attached department, state owned enterprises, corporations, companies etc.. A number of NES positions in technical ministries may be reserved for direct recruitment from outside the civil service where the requisite qualified and experienced individuals are not available. Option II will ensure induction of best possible human resources for policy making positions and for development management. It will also help in nurturing professional competence, self-confidence, a sense of pride and esprit de corps. There is likely to be a shift in the future from mediocrity to excellence. By broadening the scope to the Provincial Civil Servants and ex-cadre and non-cadre officers, the superior-inferior services dichotomy and the feeling of a denial of opportunity for advancement will disappear gradually and so will the inter-se rivalries among the various cadres/ services for maintaining or enhancing their respective quotas and entitlements. Instead of a zero-sum game in which all services / cadres are fighting for the pieces of a fixed pie the culture of competition and merit will produce a positive sum game in which any one crossing the hurdle is selected without any regard to his or her previous service, cadre or non-cadre affiliation.

29. One of the main benefits of adopting this option will be that the Federation will be strengthened, and a sense of participation and national cohesion will be promoted. At this juncture of our national life after the transfer of autonomy to the provinces, better distribution of divisible pool of financial resources, broader regional representation at the higher echelons of decision making, will make a significant difference in keeping the forces of polarization and confrontation under control. The loss of a few positions on merit far exceeds the huge benefits that will accrue due to enhanced trust and confidence in the Federation. Just to give an example, calculations show that at the C.S.S. examination held in 2000 if all the candidates were selected strictly according to the merit list ignoring regional representation the deviation

from those actually selected would have been 31 out of 204 posts i.e. about 15 percent. In other words, 85 percent of candidates were selected on pure merit. This deviation should be acceptable to accommodate the candidates from the backward regions of the country. For NES it is more likely that the extent of deviation from pure merit-based selection will be even lower – perhaps 10 percent which is within an acceptable range.

STREAMS OF NES

30. The next strategic choice relates to the number of streams within the NES. There is no hard and fast rule that can provide the correct number of streams. The futile debate on generalists vs specialists that has been a constant refrain of every Commission/ Committee on Civil Service Reforms in the past need not be revisited. It may be recognized that there is a continuum between technical skills and knowledge on one end, and strategic management and leadership at the other. The NES streams should therefore strike a balance between technical expertise and leadership qualities tilting more towards the latter for the positions of Secretary. There can be several streams which may lead to too much sub-specialization or there could be one stream that consists of everyone who qualifies through the competitive process. The options examined in this paper are:

Option-I:

31. One stream only to begin with, and subsequently creating more streams as required.

Advantages:

32. This option would by and large maintain status quo in the postings and placements at the positions of Joint Secretary and above except that the competition for entry would be broad based and open to all civil servants.

Disadvantages:

33. In this age of specialization, the emphasis on continuing with a single generalist cadre that can move across all the Divisions of the Federal Government and the Provincial Governments seems to be misplaced.

Option-II:

34. Create four streams within NES, i.e. Economic Management, Social Sector Management, Technical Management and General Management.

35. **Advantages:**

- (1) An inclusionary and expansive approach providing opportunities to domain knowledge experts also to advance to senior positions will boost their overall level of morale, efficiency and productivity at lower tiers.
- (2) Some degree of specialization and sectoral knowledge will have a positive impact on the quality of decision making. The matching between the skill sets possessed by an officer and the job requirements would be much easier to strike.
- (3) The acceptance of service structure is likely to be broad based as there is no discriminatory or preferential treatment for any group of officers.

36. **Disadvantages:**

- (1) The General Management Group officers will have a larger base and more opportunities for rotation among Ministries.
- (2) The promotion prospects to Grades-21 and 22 may not be uniform or equal for all four streams of NES.
- (3) The encadrement of positions within each stream may prove to be controversial particularly in borderline cases which may fall within more than one stream.

Preferred Option:

37. The preferred option is to set up four streams forming NES as it would open up senior executive positions to competition among all Federal and Provincial governments irrespective of their previous background and affiliation. This option would also promote limited specialization as the movement and transfers would take place within a limited cluster of Division/Ministries. The current Federal Ministries/Divisions can be rearranged in the following clusters. While the Ministries of Foreign Affairs would retain its current status with no changes envisaged.

Economic		Social Sectors		General Management		Technical	
1.	Finance and Revenue	1.	Poverty Alleviation & Social Protection	1.	Cabinet Division	1.	Science & Technology
2.	Planning & Development	2.	National Health Services	2.	Establishment Division	2.	Information Tech. & Telecommunication
3.	Economic Affairs	3.	Federal Education & Professional Training	3.	Defence Division	3.	Petroleum
4.	Industries & Production	4.	Human Rights	4.	Defence Production Div.	4.	Power
5.	Commerce & Textiles	5.	National History & Literacy Heritage	5.	Information, Broadcasting & Communications	5.	Housing & Works
6.	National Food Security	6.	Overseas Pakistanis	6.	Interior	6.	Climate Change
7.	Privatization	7.	Religious Affairs	7.	Parliamentary Affairs	7.	Law & Justice Divn.
8.	Revenue			8.	Inter-Provincial coordination	8.	Aviation
				9.	Kashmir Affairs & GB	9.	Communication
				10.	National Security Divn.	10.	Railways
				11.	Narcotics Control	11.	Water Resources
				12.	States & Frontier Regions	12.	Maritime Affairs

The Present configuration of the Ministries/Divisions proposed to be placed under the four streams of NES is placed at Annexure-I.

Tiers of Governments to be manned By NES

38. The third strategic choice relates to the placement policy of NES at various tiers of government. Either the scope of the NES can be limited to the Federal Secretariat only or expanded to man posts at all three tiers of the government, i.e. Local, Provincial, and Federal levels. This choice is extremely

important as it relates to inter-governmental relationship, and also affects the constitution/structure of the service to be created. At the Federal Secretariat, it is proposed to have three hierarchical tiers (i) Deputy Secretary NES-III (ii) Joint Secretary NES-II and (iii) Secretary NES-I. At the Provincial Secretariat also there will be three tiers (i) Deputy Secretary PES-IV (ii) Additional Secretary PES-III and (iii) Secretary PES-II. Chief Secretary, Chairman Planning and Development Department, Additional Chief Secretaries and other designated positions in the provinces will be in NES/PES-I. These two options are analyzed below:

Option-I:

39. NES (including its streams) to man only the posts at the Federal Secretariat.

40. **Advantages:**

- (1) There will be a neat separation of officers belonging to the Federal and Provincial Governments and the Provincial Governments can choose the officers for their Secretariat without prior clearance or requisition from the Federal Government.
- (2) The intimate knowledge of the working combined with many rotational opportunities at the Federal Ministries would speed up fostering of specialization.
- (3) The management and development of the officers of NES would be much easier and effective due to the limited size of the workforce in the NES.

41. **Disadvantages:**

- (1) The absence of inter change of the officers between the Federal and Provincial Secretariats may make decision making at the Federal level more abstract, remote from the ground realities and non-responsive to the needs of the public at large.

- (2) The harmony between the different Federating Units and the emergence of a national outlook based on varying perspectives of the provinces may be harmed.
- (3) The silo like isolated mentality may give rise to more fractious and adversarial relationship between the Federal and the Provincial Governments. The experience gained by working at more than one level of government instils a sense of realism and appreciation of other government's position and viewpoints.

Option-II:

42. NES (including its streams) to man the posts at both the Federal and Provincial Secretariats and in Executive Departments. The Provincial Secretariat positions will be open to both the NES as well as the Provincial Executive Service (PES) officers in the following ratios:

NES/PES-I 60:40 between NES and PES
NES/PES-II 40:60 between NES and PES
NES/PES-III 20:80 between NES and PES
PES-IV 100% for PES

In case the Federal Government cannot place the requisite numbers of NES officers at the disposal of the Provincial Governments the ratio can be adjusted to accommodate PES officers

43. **Advantages:**

- (1) The true spirit and nature of the constitutional provision about an All Pakistan Service will be adhered to.
- (2) The continuous flow and exchange of officers between the Federal and Provincial Government would bring about coherence and consistency in national policy making in national policy formulation and execution which is proving to be difficult since the 18th amendment.

- (3) There will be greater national integration and better appreciation of the problems facing the various geographical regions and segments of the society.

44. **Disadvantages:**

- (1) The Provincial Governments will lose the freedom to select officers of their choice to manage the policy making positions and will remain to some extent dependent on the Federal Government.
- (2) The reluctance of many officers living comfortably in the Provincial headquarters to move physically to Islamabad may deprive the Federal Secretariat of quality manpower.
- (3) The strains on managing a large number of incumbents, training them and looking after their welfare can pose some problem.

OPTION III

45. The Provincial Secretariat would continue to be manned by officers of Pakistan Administrative Service (PAS) and ***the Provincial Services modified to the extent that according to the present arrangements.*** In place of the provincial management services, there would be open competitive recruitment for all provincial civil servants to Provincial Executive Service (PES).

46. **Advantages**

1. PAS cadre and the Provincial officers would feel satisfied that their shares in reserved posts in the provinces right from Assistant Commissioner to the Provincial Chief Secretary would remain untouched .
2. The opening up of the PES to all other services , ex-cadre and non-cadre would improve the motivation and morale of a large number of officers and thus their productivity

47. **Disadvantages**

1. The concept of All Pakistan Services would be diluted as experienced officers from the Federal Secretariat other than those from PAS would not be able to make any contribution in the provinces
2. There is likely to be resentment from the officers of the Provincial Management Service as they would like to have all posts reserved for the Provincial Management Services

Preferred Option:

48. The preferred option is Option II, as the sharing of NES positions between the Federal and the Provincial Governments offers many advantages. The most persuasive argument in favor of this option is that the policy making at the highest level in the Federal Government will not be divorced from an intimate knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the issues, constraints and problems faced at the Provincial and Local Government levels. This integration is absolutely essential for generation of policy proposals that are feasible, widely acceptable, and practicable.

Regional Representation and Quota Preservation:

49. The NES cadre recruitment would follow the existing practice of regional representation and quotas for women, minorities and disabled. The latest Cabinet decision of 17th January 2020, on regional quotas as detailed below would be applied to the recruitment of NES Cadre also: -

Merit	7.5%
Punjab	50%
Urban Sindh	7.6%
Rural Sindh	11.4%
KP	11.5%
Balochistan	6%
FATA	3%
GB	1%

At present, regional representation and quotas are observed at Grade 17 i.e. the entry level. Promotions to grade 18 and 19 do not take into consideration regional or other quotas. On the same analogy, the same principle may be extended for entry to NES at Grade 20 level. Promotions to Grade 21 and 22 would take place on merit only without any formal reservations for regional or other quotas.

50. **Advantages:**

- (1) The backward regions of the country would have representation in higher policy making process.
- (2) A more coherent national viewpoint would inform the decision-making process due to diversity of experiences among those formulating policies.
- (3) Broadening of the candidate pool may bring in high caliber officers competing for regional and other quotas relative to the present restricted and entitlement based pool.

51. **Disadvantages:**

- (1) The concept of merit-based cadre would be diluted as the quality of intake may not always match the expected threshold.
- (2) There may be a disincentive for some potential talented candidates who may otherwise qualify but cannot make it due to quota restrictions.

COMPOSITION OF NES CADRE:

52. In case the preferred option of NES as an All Pakistan Service is accepted the NES Cadre would be carved out of some posts belonging to Pakistan Administrative Service (PAS) drawn from the Federal and Provincial governments. The NES cadre would be expected to include the following posts of the Federal Secretariat: -

50	Secretary or equivalent	NES-I.
150	Joint Secretary or equivalent	NES-II.
300	Deputy Secretary or equivalent	NES-III.
<u>500</u>	<u>Total</u>	

Along with the reserved posts in the Provincial governments, the total initial strength would be around **800**, divided among the four NES streams.

53. All the MP-I, MP-II, MP-III, SPSS posts outside NES Cadre would be open to the NES members, non-NES members, employees of the Provincial Governments, autonomous bodies, executive departments, and private sector under the existing rules. No changes are envisaged in that.

Current Occupational Groups and the NES

54. ***Government officers would have a choice to make after completing minimum 10 years of work experience in BPS 17/18.¹ They can either continue to serve in their respective cadres and move up vertically (the strength and posts in Grades 19-22 of the existing cadres would remain intact) or appear at the competitive examination for entry into NES. If an officer is selected for NES he/she will have to sever the link with his/her original cadre. If he/she is unsuccessful in getting into the NES stream he/she would continue to remain a part of the original cadre retaining his/her seniority.***

55. In order to allay the apprehensions of the young officers belonging to the Pakistan Administrative Service which would lose a large number of Grade 20-22 posts in the Federal and Provincial Secretariats to which they have been entitled under the present rules, there would be a need to add new posts in Grades 20-22 to the Cadre of PAS. For example, as the new local government system with more devolved powers and financial resources is implemented, the posts of Chief Operating Officers (COOs) of all Metropolitan Corporations, the highest non-elected executive, can be added to the Cadre of PAS in Grade 22. While the posts of Director General of Development Authorities or similar bodies can be placed in Grade 21 in PAS Cadre. The posts of COOs of the Municipal Corporations, Municipal Committees and Tehsil Councils in Grades 21 and 20 would provide another avenue for career progression of PAS Officers

¹ It is expected that an officer entering the NES would at least spend 20-25 years in service in the NES.

at the same pace as they are experiencing now. The introduction of NES would therefore no longer adversely affect the career prospects or progresses of PAS officers to higher grades even if they do not opt for the NES. In actual practice, it is expected that a large number of PAS officers would opt for NES due to the experience they gain and the outlook they develop by serving in the field and the secretariat. The mechanics of actual division of the posts between PAS and the Provincial Executive Service in the Provinces would have to be worked out.

UNRESOLVED ISSUES AND SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE FOR NES

56. A number of issues will need to be resolved and supporting infrastructure put in place before the NES can take off. These issues and support system requirements are discussed below:

(a). Eligibility Criteria for Induction:

The eligibility criteria for applying for the NES and appearing at the competitive examination will have to be developed in light of the proposed structure of the service. Any officer belonging to the All Pakistan, Federal and Provincial Government who has completed 10 years of service in Grades 17-18 with minimum prescribed academic qualifications and satisfactory performance record can appear at the NES examination. The performance record, the training record and assessments, the number of rotational assignments, should form part of the eligibility criteria for in-service candidates while similar criteria have to be developed for the outsiders.

Should there be minimum age limit for induction into NES, as it has been noticed that most candidates from Provincial and Local Government Services get left out only because of age limits. Lower age limits tend to go in favor of CSS candidates compared to other candidates. Age limit, if prescribed must create a level playing field for all. In many countries age limits do not apply and younger people, if they qualify, are selected to top cadres and positions.

(b) FPSC Examination / Tests Procedure

(1) The FPSC would conduct the process of selection by combining a written examination, structured interview and psychometric test with performance record and training outcome. What weight age should be given to each of the five components of the selection process is a question that needs discussion.

(2) Type of Written Examination. Since the NES visualizes more than one specialized stream, EMG, SMG, TMG and GMG focus of the exam will be on testing the analytical abilities of the candidates as applied to the real-world issues facing the policy makers. For example, the written examination could contain several parts the most important being preparation of a summary on a particular issue proposing and analyzing the various options and recommending a certain course of action. The evidence, reasoning and logic behind the recommendation would form the crux of the testing. The second part of the written examination could contain questions or analysis pertaining to the particular stream. However, candidates should be allowed to appear for all the four streams and not limited in their choice.

(3) Interviews. The interview should be structured in a way that is able to gauge the communication skills, motivational skills, team building, conflict resolution, interpersonal and leadership skills. Questions that test memory recall of facts and figures needs to be replaced by more sophisticated techniques of probing and assessing the potential of the candidates for occupying high-level decision-making positions.

(4) Psychometric tests. Psychometric tests should be designed and administered to assess the stability, emotional quotient and problem-solving skills, the attitudes, and values of the candidates. Those who exhibit personality disorders or attitudes that are not conducive to benign organizational culture should be screened out.

(5) Capacity Building of FPSC. The FPSC will have to build its own in-house capacity to undertake the NES selection process. The composition of the membership, the criteria for selection of members, the process through which the members are chosen the tenure of office and the reorganization and upgrading capabilities of the staff of the Federal and Provincial Commission are some of the critical issues that need to be addressed.

(c).Eligibility criteria for promotion

The present system of CSB for promotion to Grades 20 and 21 and the High-Powered Selection board for Grade 22 would continue to remain in place for NES officers promotions from NES III to NES II and from NES II to NES I respectively. Clear, fair, and transparent rules and regulations need to be laid down along with safeguards against violations. The officers selected to NES would have at least 20 years to spend in this cadre before they retire. This will provide them with opportunities of several rotations to sharpen their experiential learning. It will also overcome the present problem where most of the Secretaries are appointed only 2-3 years before their retirement at a stage of their career and their level of commitment does not keep up with the rigors of the job.

Minimum Length of Service. Should there be a requirement for minimum length of service in lower level to become eligible for promotion to the next higher level of the NES? As the principle of seniority is being replaced by performance on job and competence, the length of service restriction may impede the progression of bright young officers otherwise qualified and eligible for the post. In the private sector there is no such restriction.

(d).Removal from Service

In order to preserve the pyramidal service structure for the NES, an officer superseded by the Promotion Board would be automatically removed from the service. Early retirement rules would be invoked in case of officers who have completed 20 years of service.

(e).Restructuring of Establishment Division to Handle NES

(1) The Establishment Division must build up its Human Resource Management (HRM) capacity to manage the career record of individual officers starting from their recruitment and including post induction training, performance appraisal reports, career history, mid-career, senior-level and foreign training courses, and their specialists skills. These records should not only be limited to officers of the NES, but also for all officers working in the Federal Secretariat. For this purpose, it is imperative to develop a computerized data base and a dash board for decision support.

(2) **Career Planning (CP).** The CP Wing needs to be further strengthened and computerized to carry out an effective career planning not only of the NES, Pakistan Administrative Service and the Police Service but for all other officers working in the Federal Government in close coordination with the parent departments. Job descriptions will have to be developed for all non-cadre and ex-cadre jobs involving technical / professional / specialized skills.

(3) **Management Services Wing (MSW).** Organizational development tasks, efficiency and cost savings method, creation and abolition of units and organizational entities, conduct of surveys and research require a fully resourced, computerized and skill based Management Services Wing.

(4) **Identification of Posts for NES.** A very deliberate process of identification of posts for inclusion in NES needs to be carried out by the Establishment Division for classification and allocation to different streams of NES. There will, invariably, be efforts and justifications by all Ministries/ Divisions / Departments / Autonomous Bodies, to include maximum number of posts of NES in their respective organizations. Interaction with all these organizations is very essential. However, Establishment Division will need to withstand the group pressures and identify the MINIMUM essential posts for NES. Although the entire

Secretariat positions would be included in the NES a few key positions of critical importance outside the Secretariat may also be included. In such cases care should, however, be taken to ensure that all the professional and occupational groups/ services/ cadres have adequate number of positions at each grade in the pyramid of their own groups/service cadres and only positions in excess of this configuration may be transferred to the NES.

(4) **Seniority Issues.** The issue of seniority creates all sorts of litigation at a mass scale. The Occupational Groups' vested interests and individual interests play a dominant role in these matters. Establishment Division must lay down clearly defined rules to avoid unnecessary and embarrassing litigations. Inter-se seniority would be determined from the date of joining the NES stream. Initial seniority before induction in the NES would become redundant.

(f). **Training**

(1) Role of NSPP and other training institutions in the grooming and evaluation of NES officers must be specified. National Institutes of Management (NIMs), NSPP and all other training institutions should be asked to evaluate the candidates at their training courses for suitability to NES.

(2) **Initial Induction Training.** There should be a post induction training organized by NSPP for the NES recruits. Assessment reports at both post induction and mid-service trainings would be linked to promotion explicitly.

(3) **Mid-Service Training.** The National Management Course should be revisited in the light of the NES's requirements and organized in a way that responds to the needs for shouldering higher responsibilities. Short duration courses on specific topics or skill development may be offered throughout the year.

(g). Compensation Package.

In order to make the NES attractive and at the same time keep the financial burden on the exchequer at a minimum possible level, the candidates at the first level (NES-III) must be given a monetized package equivalent to MP-III while the officers promoted as Joint Secretary (NES-II) should be given equivalent to MP-II scale and Secretary (NES-I) equivalent to MP-I scale. As the number of positions in the equivalent grade at the Federal Secretariat does not exceed 500 the financial implications of this salary package will be quite modest. Those selected for NES cadre would have their pensions frozen at the last salary drawn in their previous post but participate in a Defined Contribution scheme. They would also not be entitled to any Government housing.

(h). Future of the OMG and Secretariat Group.

While the terms and conditions of existing incumbents of the Secretariat Group would not be altered as they would be grand fathered, future recruitment to OMG and the Secretariat Group has to be discontinued for the following reasons:-

- (1) Grade 17/18 Section officers would no longer be required in the Federal Secretariat as the post of Deputy Secretary which is the entry point would be equivalent to Grade 20.
- (2) E-Governance, shared filing and tracking systems, fully loaded websites containing all rules, regulations, circulars, Office Memoranda, notifications, all reference materials and data banks would render the post of Grade 17/18 redundant.
- (3) As the posts of Staff Officers in Grade 18, 19 and 20 would be created to assist Deputy Secretaries, Joint Secretaries and Secretaries to promote horizontal rather than vertical hierarchy their job requirements would not fit in with those recruited as Section Officers.

The existing incumbents belonging to the OMG and SG would continue to have the current terms and conditions of service. They can compete for the NES cadre or selection for Staff Officers or be appointed against other vacancies in the Federal Government.

TRANSITION PLAN:

57. The creation of NES is interlinked with decisions on a number of critical issues without which the present proposal will not be able to make the desired impact. While a number of issues have been discussed in the previous section there are at least seven decisions for transition from the present system to the NES. These are:

- (i). Introduction of E-office suite at the Federal and Provincial Secretariat for all transactions – horizontal and vertical. Recruitment to Secretariat Group and the posts of Section Officers would be discontinued once E-office suite becomes fully operational.
- (ii). The pay structure of the NES has to be delinked from the BPS Grades and brought at par with MP-I, MP-II and MP-III. The existing incumbents can be given the choice to opt for the new scales or retain their grades along with their perks and facilities such as housing etc. A defined contribution scheme for NES officers will be introduced. Those who join NES after reaching pension eligibility threshold would continue to draw their pensions according to the policy in vogue.
- (iii) A redesigned Performance Evaluation Reporting System (PER) that is open, goal-oriented; development needs-based system has to be put in place. A new promotion policy that gives weightage to the PERs, training and skills acquired, breadth and depth of experience and evaluation by the Central Selection Board will also have to be put in place.
- (iv) In order to allay the concerns of the affected Cadres that their existing share and the total number of posts in BPS 20, 21 and 22

will not be reduced, the cadre strengths and composition of each group should be updated. Necessary posts will be created in the Federal and Provincial Government to maintain existing allocations.

- (v) In order to create minimum dislocation in the working of the government the existing incumbents of the Federal and Provincial Secretariats in Grade 20-22 will be given the option to be absorbed in the NES. This one-time initial recruitment into NES on NES-I and NES-II will expedite the institutionalization of NES. Applicants in BPS 20 and 21 that apply for NES-II in NES will be evaluated by the CSB and applicants in Grade 22 will be selected for NES-I by HPSB. This initial induction will only be on 50% of the seats i.e. 20 in NES-I and 80 in NES-II. Initial induction to NES-III on all seats will be done by FPSC through the proposed competitive process.
- (vi) Future vacancies in the NES cadre would be filled only through promotions and new entries in NES-III through the proposed competitive examination process.
- (vii). In order to improve transparency in postings, an online system will be implemented by the Establishment Division that will solicit applications for vacant posts in the Federal Secretariat. A high-powered board will then decide on the postings.

CONCLUSION

58. The creation of the NES has certain clear advantages as it will be able to draw upon a large pool of talent from within the whole range of Civil Services through an open, transparent competitive process. Regional representation and provincial quota system will ensure that the smaller provinces have a sense of participation in the top-level decision making. The specialization in four streams will equip the members of the cadre with skills and knowledge required to analyze the complex issues of economy and society and formulate appropriate strategies and policies. Fast track promotion prospects and attractive compensation package will provide incentives for better performance, high quality output and minimize corruption and rent-seeking.

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

- (1). Whether a NES should be created in addition to the existing All Pakistan Services and Federal Occupational Groups? Should the NES be limited to the Federal Government only?
- (2). Should the NES consist of four specialized streams despite uneven distribution of posts in different streams at the Federal level?² This distribution may change if the provincial secretariat positions are included .
- (3) Should the recruitment to NES be made by observing the existing regional representation and quotas?
- (4). Is it advisable to delink the NES positions from the BPS grades and pay them monetized salaries equivalent to the present MP scales?
- (5) Would the formation of NES raise the motivation, efficiency, and productivity of the Government at large or demotivate the Occupational Groups that would no longer be automatically entitled to occupy the posts under the NES?
- (6) Whether the existing incumbents of the posts in BPS 20-22 in the Federal and Provincial governments be given the opportunity to be absorbed in the NES or should they along with other eligible candidates be screened by the CSB and HPSB for initial induction?

² Technical 210; Economic 481; Social sector 135; General Management 450

**PRESENT CONFIGURATION OF MINISTRIES/DIVISIONS PROPOSED TO BE
PLACED UNDER FOUR STREAMS OF NES**

A. Technical Stream							
S.No.	DIVISIONS	17/18 (SO)	19 (DS)	20 (JS)	21 (AS)	22 (S)	Total
1.	Aviation	11	4	2	0	1	18
2.	Climate Change	10	5	3	1	1	20
3.	Communications	6	2	2	1	1	12
4.	Housing & Works	16	2	2	1	1	22
5.	Information Technology and Telecommunications	7	2	2	1	1	13
6.	Law & Justice	20	5	3	1	1	30
7.	Maritime Affairs	15	2	2	1	1	21
8.	Petroleum and Natural Resources	10	4	2	2	1	19
9.	Power	15	5	5	2	1	28
10.	Railways	0	0	0	0	1	1
11.	Science and Technology	8	2	2	1	1	14
12.	Water Resources	6	3	2	0	1	12
	Total	124	36	27	11	12	210

B. Finance, Economic & Trade Stream							
S.no.	DIVISIONS	17/18 (SO)	19 (DS)	20 (JS)	21 (AS)	22 (S)	Total
13.	Commerce (incl Textile)	35	15	8	2	1	61
14.	Economic Affairs	45	16	8	2	1	72
15.	Finance	128	65	34	7	1	235
16.	Industries & Production	28	10	6	2	1	47
17.	Planning, Development & Reform	18	5	6	2	1	32
18.	National Food Security & Research	10	5	2	1	1	19
19.	Privatisation	2	1	1	1	1	6
20.	Revenue	4	2	1	1	1	9
	Total	270	119	66	18	8	481

C. Social Sector Development Stream							
S.No.	DIVISION	17/18 (SO)	19 (DS)	20 (JS)	21 (AS)	22 (S)	Total
21.	Federal Education & Professional Training	13	6	4	1	1	25
22.	Human Rights	4	2	1	0	1	8
23.	National Health Services Regulations & Coordination**	12	6	3	1	1	23
24.	National History & Literary Heritage	9	4	2	0	1	16
25.	Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development	16	7	3	0	1	27
26.	Religious Affairs and Inter-faith Harmony	9	7	5	1	1	23
27.	Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety	7	3	1	1	1	13
	Total	70	35	19	4	7	135

D. General Management Stream							
S.No.	DIVISION	17/18 (SO)	19 (DS)	20 (JS)	21 (AS)	22 (S)	T
28	Cabinet	45	18	12	3	1	79
29	Defence	42	11	6	3	1	63
30	Defence Production	18	6	2	1	1	28
31	Establishment	63	23	8	2	1	97
32	Inter Provincial Coordination	14	7	4	2	1	28
33	Interior	44	10	6	3	1	64
34	Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit Baltistan	9	2	1	1	1	14
35	Narcotics Control	9	3	1	0	1	14
36	National Security	3	0	1	1	1	6
37	Parliamentary Affairs	12	7	3	1	1	24
38	Information and Broadcasting	8	2	1	1	1	13
39	States & Frontier Regions	12	5	2	0	1	20
	Total	279	94	47	18	12	450
For all streams							
	Total (A+B+C+D)	743	284	159	51	39	1276