

## RECRUITMENT IN THE SPANISH NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE CENTER (CNI)

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*As with most Western intelligence services, the Spanish National Intelligence Center (CNI) has been involved in recent years in a thorough re-structuring process, which has affected both its working methods and its technical and human resources. This restructuring, triggered mainly by the new requirements and demands of counterterrorism has resulted in a pronounced boost to the processes of recruitment and staff selection. This article discusses the different dimensions that make up the CNI Spanish intelligence service recruitment, in particular entry requirements, recruitment sources, jobs offered and the organizational culture transmitted to the employees. Due to the special characteristics of assignments and duties that the CNI performs and the specific characteristics of the legal framework and Human Resource management, the staff selection process is also described.*

**Key words:** Recruitment, Staff selection, Intelligence Services, CNI, Organizational culture, Terrorism.

*Al igual que la mayoría de los servicios de inteligencia occidentales, el Centro Nacional de Inteligencia español (CNI) se ha visto envuelto en la última década en un profundo proceso de reestructuración, que ha afectado tanto a sus métodos de trabajo como a sus medios técnicos y humanos. Esta reestructuración, consecuencia fundamentalmente de las necesidades y exigencias de la lucha anti-terrorista, conllevó un fuerte impulso a los procesos de reclutamiento y selección de personal. En este artículo se analizan las distintas dimensiones que conforman el sistema de reclutamiento del CNI, en concreto los requisitos de acceso, fuentes de reclutamiento, puestos de trabajo ofertados y la cultura organizacional transmitida a sus empleados. Debido a la especial naturaleza de las funciones que realiza y a las características específicas de su régimen jurídico y de gestión de recursos humanos, se describe también el proceso de selección de personal que realiza dicho organismo.*

**Palabras clave:** Reclutamiento, Selección de personal, Servicios de inteligencia, CNI, Cultura organizativa, Terrorismo.

**R**ecruitment is an essential phase of the selection process, which aims to attract a sufficient number of candidates for the position to be covered, sufficiently qualified to perform the duties and tasks that the post requires (Alcaide, González and Flores, 1996; Peiró, 1984). It is therefore a process of great importance for the correct functioning of any organization, since this largely depends on the success of the subsequent selection and quality of new employees (Morell and Brunet, 1999). Thus, recruitment is particularly relevant in the case of the intelligence services, where the human factor is an essential aspect, largely responsible for the success, quality and efficiency of the work and assignments carried out.

Over the last decade Western intelligence services have been involved in a number of thorough reform processes, due to a range of factors and events. On the one hand, globalization and new technologies have created a revolution in the world of information and

communication, often beyond the control of governments (Saiz, 2008). On the other hand, there is the need to adapt to the new world geo-strategic scenario and the emergence of new risks, most notably the rise of organized and transnational crime, the proliferation of failed states, uncontrolled migration and, fundamentally, jihadist terrorism.

The requirements of this new geostrategic context, marked by the fight against terrorism, have led almost all Western intelligence services to make profound changes in their structures, technical and human resources, working methods and intelligence procedures. The most notable of these changes is the impetus given to the recruitment of new staff, primarily analysts, operative agents and translators of Islamic languages (Martínez Sánchez, 2010).

In 2001, the staff of what was the Higher Center for Defense Information (CESID) consisted of about 2,300 troops, and its budget was barely over € 100 million, a low figure compared to other European intelligence services and insufficient to fight the new risks and threats effectively. Regrettably, it was the attacks of 9-11 in the U.S. and the 2004 train bombings in Madrid that forced

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the government to significantly boost the human and material resources of the National Intelligence Center (CNI). Consequently, the budget was progressively increased, rising from approximately € 138 million in 2003 to € 264.7 million in 2008 (Guzmán, 2010), with a parallel increase in allocations for staff costs. This enabled, as an immediate measure, the hiring in 2004 of 250 new agents for the international fight against terrorism (González, 2004), representing a 10% increase in senior staff, a figure which has continued to increase in recent years, such that in 2010 the staff headcount was 3,500 (Sanz, 2010). Instrumental in this workforce expansion process, was the recruitment of civilian personnel, whose presence in the center is in the majority. At present, 59.88% of the workforce comes from the civil sphere, 28.55% from the Armed Forces and 11.57% from the State Security Forces (CNI, n.d.c.). The negative aspects of this increase in staff have been identified as problems relating to personnel management, transmission of organizational culture and structural flexibility (Díaz, 2006).

### RECRUITMENT IN THE CNI

Traditionally, the Spanish intelligence services have had a strong military character, in terms of its structure, its assignments and its staff. The CNI inherited from its predecessor -the CESID- a workforce comprised mainly of military personnel and members of the Police and Civil Guard. Endogamy and the priority given to the hiring of military and police personnel, both characteristics of the recruitment of the previous intelligence service, were justified by the organization's need to protect itself from infiltration by other foreign intelligence services (Díaz, 2005). Consequently the recruitment of civilian staff in the CESID was minimal, and limited to administrative positions, translators and drivers. It was not until the eighties that major changes were made in personnel policy, including a tentative drive to recruit civilians, especially women. The subsequent enactment of the CESID Staff Regulations (Spanish Government, 1995) was an important milestone in the history of the Spanish intelligence services in general, and personnel policy in particular, since it enabled the streamlining of the admission, training and professionalization of its members, and it also facilitated the establishment of a more defined and appropriate selection policy.

Article 5 of the Law governing the CNI establishes the classified and secret nature of all aspects regarding

personnel and the information or data that may lead to their being revealed (Spanish Government, 2002). Given the methodological limitations this imposes, the main defining elements of the CNI recruitment system are outlined below.

### *Positions and jobs offered*

Analysis of the jobs offered by an organization allows us to understand the needs of the organization, the professional profiles that it seeks and the tasks it carries out. This information is essential to the processes of recruitment and selection of staff, which are intended to enable future candidates to conform to a professional profile previously established by the organization (Peiró, 1984), largely determining the decision of these future candidates to access the organization (Alcaide, González & Flores, 1996; Palací & Peiró, 1995). Due to the special nature of its functions, the CNI has a special recruitment scheme exempt from the usual procedures of other public administrations, and as such it makes no public offer of employment and it does not consider admission by the usual "oppositions" examination system of the civil service. However, for several years it has offered jobs via its website, which is currently offering employment for a total of seventeen posts, categorized in five professional areas (Table 1).

### *Entry requirements*

There are several types of requirements for entering the CNI: some are general, and must be met by all the candidates, and others specific, applicable only to certain candidates based on the characteristics of the post to which they are applying and the functions to be carried out. We also mention a number of additional requirements that are not obligatory but are valued positively in the subsequent selection process.

The general requirements are set out in the Staff Regulations and they include being of legal age, holding Spanish nationality and possessing the qualifications required for the post to which they are applying. Other general requirements are that applicants must not have been suspended from public service by disciplinary action, nor must they be disqualified from public service. The absence of any disease or physical defect disabling them for service is another requirement, as well as having possession of or being able to obtain the security clearance required (Spanish Government, 1995). Furthermore, the website of the CNI adds geographic



availability, due to the requirement of the Center to address threats and risks both within the country and abroad in areas of strategic importance for national defense (CNI, n.d.d).

In turn, the specific requirements refer to aspects such as knowledge of foreign languages, specialized technical training and a series of specific professional qualities. Thus, having adequate analytical capabilities and abstract reasoning are prerequisites for intelligence officials and technicians, while good abilities of reasoning, speaking and management of ideas and concepts are required of translators and interpreters.

**Recruitment sources**

The recruitment sources are of great significance, as they affect the selection process and the subsequent adaptation of the individual to the organization (Palací & Peiró, 1995). Thus, the intelligence services have diverse and varied ways of attracting and recruiting staff. The Armed Forces (FAS) have been an important source of personnel

feeding into the Spanish intelligence services, given the traditionally military nature of the latter, and the usefulness of being able to draw from military personnel (Dezcallar, 2002). However, the percentage of soldiers serving in the CNI has gradually decreased to 28.55% today. Despite this decline, the balance between civilian and military personnel depends on the specific needs of the service, so it is to be expected that the military will continue to make up an important part of the workforce.

Similarly, personnel from the State Security Corps (CSE) are especially useful due to their preparation, training and previous experience, often in matters of great interest to the service (information, counter-terrorism, foreign operations, etc.) (Martínez Sánchez, 2012). Moreover, their status as civil servants allows them to integrate back into their original corps upon leaving the CNI, which is a guarantee of the safety and confidentiality of the information managed during their stay at the Center.

The arrival of democracy in our country made the University a potential source for the recruitment of qualified personnel for the newly created CESID. More recently, the Defense Ministry has occasionally publicized job offers for analysts of international politics at some faculties (Díaz, 2005). Thus, when it needs staff with specific and highly qualified training, the CNI usually turns to the universities, either directly or by attracting students through tutors and lecturers, with an interest in the students with the highest aptitudes (Dezcallar, 2002). Important in this regard is the close relationship that the CNI has with academia, including the signing of agreements with various Spanish universities.

A recruitment pathway traditionally used as a means of perpetuating the endogamous nature of the CNI personnel has been to contact candidates recommended by other members of the Center who, either due to their personal connection or knowledge, think that an individual has the skills and characteristics of interest to the Center (Díaz, 2005). Similarly, the Center has occasionally resorted to requesting CVs from professional associations to search for candidates for specific positions, such as doctors or psychologists.

Finally, we highlight the recruitment at the initiative of the interested party, who sends their CV either by mail to Human Resources of the CNI or more commonly via their website. In this respect, the Internet has been one of the main means of recruitment for the Spanish intelligence services since the then CESID launched its web site in 1997. Through the website the candidate can apply to

**TABLE 1**  
**JOBS OFFERED BY THE CNI**

Professional area	Intelligence
Intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Intelligence Official (Group A)</li> <li>✓ Intelligence Technician (Group B)</li> <li>✓ Operative Technician (Group C)</li> </ul>
Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Superior Technician (Group A)</li> <li>✓ Telecommunications and Information Systems Technician (Group B)</li> <li>✓ Telecommunications and Information Systems Specialist (Group C)</li> <li>✓ Telecommunications and Information Systems Specialist (Group D)</li> </ul>
Management-Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Legal Technician (Group A)</li> <li>✓ Human Resources and Administration Technician (Group A)</li> <li>✓ Assistant (Group D)</li> </ul>
Translator – Interpreter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Translator / Interpreter (Group B)</li> <li>✓ Translator (Group C)</li> </ul>
Other posts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Infrastructure and Maintenance Technician (Group A)</li> <li>✓ Intermediate Infrastructure and Maintenance Technician (Group B)</li> <li>✓ Infrastructure and Maintenance Specialist (Group C)</li> <li>✓ Maintenance and Crafts Assistant (Group D)</li> <li>✓ Security Area (Group D)</li> </ul>

Source: <http://www.cni.es/es/ingreso/perfiles/index.html?rutaGrupo=Todos> [accessed: 25/05/2012]



participate in the selection processes, without the need to carry out inconvenient administrative processes, by simply completing an online form with his or her personal data, educational background and work experience (See: <https://www.cni.es/action/cargalInicialCurriculum?meth od=cargalInicialDatosPersonalesCurriculum>).

This provides the center with a database containing detailed information on each candidate, so if an individual fits the profile sought, he or she “[...] will be contacted by telephone by a recruiter” (CNI, n.d. a).

### ***Institutional culture***

Institutional culture is the set of beliefs, values and behavioral norms that identify an organization (López, 2004; López & Sánchez, 2004; Palací & Peiró, 1995) and is conveyed and shared by its members. Among the other functions that organizational culture performs, it attracts or deters potential candidates to access the organization (Palací & Peiró, 1995), it shapes the behavior of employees (Rodríguez, 1993) and promotes organizational cohesion and socialization (López, 2004), facilitating the assumption of roles as well as participation and involvement in the assignments and activities of the organization (Palací & Peiró, 1995). In addition, organizational culture determines the behavior of organizations (Montero, 2004), influencing the ways of attracting and selecting personnel.

Despite the reforms undertaken in recent years and the increasing presence of civilian personnel, the institutional culture of the CNI has a strong military character, justified on several accounts. The first reason is the undoubted military tradition of its immediate predecessors, the Central Documentation Service (CESED) and the subsequent CESID. Similarly we can indicate that it was an organizational unit of the Ministry of Defense from its origin until the year 2011, it has a typically military hierarchical organization structure and its members are subjugated to a disciplinary system similar to that of the FAS. Finally, we note the presence of a significant number of military and civil guards among the personnel, including many of the middle managers and directors, and the current Managing Director, Lieutenant General Félix Sanz Roldán. This military dimension permeates several key components of the culture of the Center, such as the values, rights, duties and obligations of its staff.

### ***Values and principles of action***

Values are an essential part of organizational culture

(Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952), since they establish and guide the conduct of members. In the case of the CNI, these aspects are of great importance in preventing malpractice among personnel (Sanz, 2010).

We can observe various rules and regulations that apply to the CNI and its staff in order to identify these values and principles. The Basic Statute for Civil Servants contains a number of principles governing the activities of public employees, such as objectivity, integrity, neutrality, responsibility, impartiality, confidentiality, dedication to service, transparency, exemplariness, austerity, honesty and efficacy (Spanish Government, 2007). In addition to the aforementioned regulations, the Law governing the CNI subjects its activities to parliamentary scrutiny, and prior judicial control of those concerning the inviolability of the home and secrecy of communications; cooperation and coordination with other government and information services of the state security corps in order to help them to carry out their assignments; and the functional autonomy of its organization, budgetary-economic system and personnel (Spanish Government, 2002).

Other principles that govern the actions of the CNI include collaboration and cooperation with the intelligence services of other countries and ongoing adaptation to the international context and the emergence of new risks and threats (Saiz, 2008). Finally, given the strong military component of the institutional culture of the Center, it is necessary to turn to the Royal Ordinances for the Armed Forces (Spanish Government, 2009), which define the values and principles that should guide the conduct of military personnel, and the personal and professional qualities they should aspire to possess. These values include dignity, justice, equality, solidarity, comradeship, patriotism, self-denial, spirit of sacrifice, discipline, obedience, loyalty and honor. As for the essential qualities, we cite discretion, constant dedication and availability for service, exemplariness and responsibility in the exercise of their profession, competence and diligence in their professional performance, objectivity, creativity, initiative, work capacity and ability to adapt to different assignments and scenarios.

### ***Benefits and Rights***

The benefits that an organization offers to its staff are an aspect to consider in recruitment from two perspectives. Firstly, the benefits should be considered from the point-of-view of “publicity”, as they may determine whether or



not a subject decides to join the organization. But also, another perspective should be considered in relation to the quality of the personnel policy developed by the company and the level of employee satisfaction with it.

The unique characteristics of the tasks and functions performed by members of the CNI -often subject to special conditions of availability, dedication and risk- mean that they are the recipients of a number of benefits that, in certain aspects, surpass those of other public officials (Jiménez, 2005). We refer, for example to the guaranteed confidentiality in the administration of their working life and, above all, the right to security and legal protection from the Center (Spanish Government, 2004). This gives CNI staff the confidence of knowing that they are legally supported in their actions, bearing in mind that these are often carried out at the limits of legality (Moret, 2005; Ruiz, 2002). Other rights and benefits set out in the Staff Regulations applicable to the CNI (Spanish Government, 1995; Spanish Government, 2004) are:

- a) The right to career development (training, promotion and advancement).
- b) A specific financial rewards scheme which includes a series of complements for dedication, danger, productivity and contribution to the achievement of objectives and results.
- c) The possibility of moving to reserve status after completing 25 years of public service, if at least fifteen of them have been in the CNI.
- d) Holiday arrangements, permits, licenses and leave, similar to the rest of the staff of the General State Administration, to be enjoyed without prejudice to the service.
- e) Exemption from the minimum time-in-grade requirement for the promotion of military personnel serving in the CNI.
- f) Other social benefits, such as affiliation to the regime of pension rights for state officials and the ISFAS [Social Institute for the Armed Forces] or unemployment protection for non-permanent staff.

#### *Duties and obligations*

The Staff Regulations also includes a series of duties and obligations of strict adherence for the staff of the Center (Spanish Government, 1995). First, there is the commitment to maintain strict political and trade union neutrality, which justifies the limitation of the right to organize, to strike and to protest or associate with political purpose. Furthermore, CNI members are bound

by the Constitution and all other legal provisions, and must comply with the internal rules of the Center, obligations of service and orders from their superiors. Regarding the security of the Center, its members are also required to prevent their private and public life from causing vulnerabilities; and they must therefore provide, at the request of the Center, all documents relating to their financial and tax situation, collaborating with the security investigations carried out in this respect. For security reasons, the staff of the CNI are also required to preserve confidentiality and maintain the necessary discretion regarding their organization, sources, media, activities and installations, not being permitted to combine their activities with other employment (absolute dedication on an exclusive basis) and having to abstain from any activities related to matters in which they have intervened or obtained knowledge due to their professional practice.

#### **THE SELECTION PROCESS OF THE CNI**

Based on its objectives the CNI estimates its staffing needs and prepares a list of posts to be covered, specifying the group, level and benefits for each post (Díaz, 2005). These posts have been defined by their specific characteristics (profiles) and grouped into the five families mentioned above, which enables the CNI to identify both the tasks or roles pertaining to each professional area and position and the necessary requirements and qualifications to perform them (see Table 2).

From this moment the search for candidates begins in the "Recruitment Sources Database" available to the Department of Human Resources of the CNI, which contains information on potential candidates from various recruitment sources, grouped by professional areas or profiles, facilitating the search for candidates for each position (Jiménez, 2005).

Once the candidates of interest to the Center have been selected, they are contacted, usually by telephone, to inform them that they have been chosen to participate in a selection process to cover a specific Ministry of Defense position, without the true identity of the post being revealed for security reasons. In this conversation, the candidate is summoned to start the selection process either in the headquarters of the CNI or in one of the safe houses it owns in Madrid (Rueda, 2011; Diaz, 2005). In 2010, 800 applicants were invited to the selection tests in this way (Sanz, 2010).



Through the selection phase the organization seeks consistency between the skills and abilities of the candidates and the conditions and requirements of the position (Palací & Peiro, 1995). Thus, the selection of personnel at the CNI is carried out according to the principles of merit and ability (Spanish Government, 2002), so candidates must pass a series of tests in order to “[...] determine whether they fulfill the necessary conditions to carry out the duties relating to the job they are applying for” (Spanish Government, 1995, p. 25849). In this sense the CNI seeks to select people with suitable intellectual potential, a good capacity and willingness to learn, the ability to work both as an individual and in a team, flexibility, creativity, initiative, loyalty and discretion. Given the nature of the activities they carry out and the intense psychological pressure to which they are often subjected, emotional stability is a fundamental quality for CNI staff. Equally important is personal and ideological honesty and a clear vocation to serve the country, aside from other professional financial or personal motivations (Jiménez, 2005).

The selection process is specific to the positions of each professional area, so the number and type of phases and component tests varies in each case (Rueda, 2010a; Jiménez, 2005). In any case, in the first meeting candidates are provided with brief information regarding the Center’s recruitment process, the characteristics of the post to be filled and the geographical and functional

requirements. At that time candidates are given the choice to withdraw from or commence the selection process. This takes place in eliminatory stages and may continue for a period of between six and twelve months (CNI, n.d.b.). This process includes a complete set of tests: cultural, aptitude and general intelligence, the objective of which is to assess the candidate’s intellectual potential, together with different personality questionnaires. The latter are of great importance to the selection process because they allow the CNI to rule out candidates with unsuitable psychological profiles (Jiménez, 2005) and they are also good predictors of fit between the needs of the candidate and the organizational culture (Wanou, 1992). The applicant may also be requested to write a composition on the activities undertaken over the last week, facilitating an assessment of their ability to synthesize and express themselves. This also provides substantial material for a potential handwriting analysis. Other tests used in the selection process include group dynamics, technical knowledge tests, application of tools and specific software, mnemonics and visual retention tests, preparation of a synthesis of written materials and tests of oral and written foreign languages (see in this regard: CNI, n.d.d; Rueda, 2011; Jiménez, 2005).

For posts in the area of intelligence, exclusive to such organizations, the CNI applies a competency-based selection system based on the observation and extrapolation of the defining characteristics of the high

**TABLE 2**  
**DESCRIPTIVE PROFILE OF POSTS IN THE AREA OF INTELLIGENCE**

Post	Category	Description	Requirements
<b>Intelligence official</b>	Group A	Responsible for producing the analysis of the CNI’s work and presenting this to the government, the main recipient and user of the intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ University degree</li> <li>✓ Fluency in foreign language</li> <li>✓ Analytical capability and conceptual thinking</li> <li>✓ Capability for social relations</li> <li>✓ Initiative and flexibility</li> <li>✓ Team-working capability</li> </ul>
<b>Intelligence technician</b>	Group B	Forms part of the team responsible for producing the analysis of the results of the work of the entire organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Superior technical diploma, Baccalaureate or equivalent</li> <li>✓ Between 22 and 33 years of age</li> <li>✓ Driving license category B</li> <li>✓ Physically fit</li> <li>✓ Sensorial concentration capability</li> <li>✓ Full time availability</li> <li>✓ Discipline, loyalty and discretion</li> <li>✓ Team-working</li> <li>✓ Communication skills</li> <li>✓ Tolerance to pressure</li> </ul>
<b>Operative technician</b>	Group C	Responsible for carrying out activities aimed at obtaining information by means, procedures or feats of communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Superior technical diploma, Baccalaureate or equivalent</li> <li>✓ Between 22 and 33 years of age</li> <li>✓ Driving license category B</li> <li>✓ Physically fit</li> <li>✓ Sensorial concentration capability</li> <li>✓ Full time availability</li> <li>✓ Discipline, loyalty and discretion</li> <li>✓ Team-working</li> <li>✓ Communication skills</li> <li>✓ Tolerance to pressure</li> </ul>

Source: <http://www.cni.es/es/ingreso/perfiles/index.html?ver=0> [accessed: 25/05/2012]



performing subjects in these jobs. This enables the Center to produce a series of skills profiles, in which the knowledge, skills, abilities and personality traits that lead to success in a given organization are expressed in concrete behaviors that are assessable in the selection process (Jiménez, 2005). A decisive factor in selection for operating agent positions are situational tests or operational simulation exercises, in which the candidate is exposed to a position as close as possible to the actual job to evaluate their performance in such circumstances (Jiménez, 2005). Examples of these situations are to find out certain information from an unknown person, to gain entry to a house by talking to the owner or to watch a particular person without being seen.

A distinctive aspect of the recruitment and selection processes of the intelligence services is the priority given to security issues. The website of the Center itself requires candidates not to tell anyone, other than a spouse or close relatives, of their application to participate in the selection process, warning them that “[...] whether or not you maintain the confidentiality of your application may affect the final outcome of the selection process” (CNI, n.d.a). Likewise, during the selection phase, candidates must sign a document in which, subject to the laws concerning the Center and Official Secrets, they agree not to disclose the contents of the selection process (Rueda, 2010, April 22). All candidates that enter the CNI must also complete an extensive questionnaire entitled “complementary data.doc”, in which biographical information is requested related to their personal life, work and family; they must also provide supporting documentation regarding their economic situation and assets (Rueda, 2011). This information provides the basis for investigations and security checks which are aimed at detecting potential vulnerabilities of the candidate that could jeopardize their own safety and that of the Center. These investigations, the purpose of which is “[...] to complete the framework of security enforceable on any member of the Center” (Jiménez, 2005, p. 174), include personal tracking and contact with related persons, involving the domestic and economic situation of the candidate, their political and religious ideology and even their sex life, as the then Defense Minister Serra admitted in 1998 (Congress of Deputies, 1998). As part of the security investigations, the selection process includes several personal interviews in which the candidate is interrogated about his or her personal life to contrast with the information he or she previously provided and to delve into the aspects that are fundamental for security investigations.

As a final step in the selection process, data from the candidates who have passed all the previous stages and tests are integrated and analyzed, and those best suited to fill the jobs vacancies are put forward.

## CONCLUSIONS

The personnel management system of the CNI has an autonomous and specific nature, arising from the special nature of its activities and assignments, and closely related to the requirements of discretion that are characteristic of the organization’s activities. Thus, the recruitment, selection and incorporation of CNI personnel is carried out through specific mechanisms that are different from those of the rest of the public authorities, and that give the Center substantial leeway when it comes to hiring staff. Several aspects define the recruitment and selection process of the CNI. First, its dynamic and flexible nature that has allowed it to adapt to the historical events and new threats of the 21st century, which have resulted in a remarkable increase in the number of posts offered in recent years to fight jihad terrorism. In this regard, we must highlight the importance of the Internet as an extremely useful tool in recruiting CNI staff, due to its easy accessibility, efficiency and low financial costs. As Morell and Brunet (1999) point out, the organization selects the most suitable candidates for the positions it wishes to cover, but the candidates also choose the companies that are most attractive to them. The information that is available on the organization and the jobs offered plays a critical role in this decision, so the Internet has become an essential tool for attracting personnel to the CNI, facilitating the relevant information to future candidates (requirements, profiles required, admission procedure, etc.) and making it appealing, thanks to the audiovisual possibilities the Internet offers.

From the perspective of strategic selection, Salgado (2010) has highlighted the importance of certain personal and professional skills in the performance of all employees. These include emotional stability, communication skills, learning capacity, adaptability, teamwork, flexibility, innovation and creativity, etc. These are attributes that the CNI deems necessary for its future employees, which is why it applies them to its competency-based selection system. This system has shown its efficiency and usefulness, as it encourages the employees to perceive a greater relationship between the content of the selection process and their subsequent performance in the job, while also enabling a better fit



with the post and the organization itself (Salgado, 2010).

The diversity of the jobs offered dictates the use of a wide variety of tests and recruitment and evaluation techniques, it being considered of particular interest to obtain biographical information and to use simulation tests, both highly effective techniques in predicting the future performance of the candidate.

Another fundamental aspect is the emphasis placed on the security requirements, specific to this type of institution and reflected in the strict and thorough security investigations of the candidates, covering various aspects of their personal lives, as well as the obligation not to disclose the contents of the selection process. This has meant that, to date, few details are known about the recruitment process of the CNI (Rueda, 2010, April 22).

In any case, and considering the fact that the number of applications and aspirants to join the CNI far exceeds the number of positions and places offered, we can say that the recruitment system of the Spanish intelligence service is extremely popular and successful, which is crucial for carrying out the functions and missions with which it has been entrusted.

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